

## Q Did the Christian Church Really Need to Be Restored?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Complete Apostasy

According to Mormon prophets, after the death of Jesus' original apostles, the Christian church gradually slipped into "the Great Apostasy"—a complete and universal abandonment of true Christian principles. Though we do not know exactly when this took place, Christian doctrine became thoroughly corrupted, and the priesthood authority necessary to administer key ordinances like baptism and the Lord's Supper was lost. The importance of believing that the true church was destroyed is underscored by Mormon apostle James Talmage: "If the alleged apostasy of the primitive Church was not a reality, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not the divine institution its name proclaims."<sup>1</sup>

#### Restoration Required

The restoration of true Christianity began when God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to a youth named Joseph Smith in the spring of 1820. In this "First Vision" Jesus told Smith that all the churches were wrong and that all their creeds (statements of belief) were "an abomination."<sup>2</sup> God used Smith to organize His true church again in 1830.

### You Should Also Know...

Though the Latter-day Saints (LDS) church views the many Christian denominations as proof that Christ's "One True Church" was lost, numerous LDS splinter groups exist. The second largest of these groups is the Community of Christ (known originally as the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, or RLDS). Additionally, numerous "fundamentalist" LDS groups believe that the Utah-based LDS church itself became apostate when it officially renounced polygamy in 1890.

### A The Bible Teaches...

#### No General Apostasy

Jesus promised His followers that He would be with them in their ministry of making disciples, baptizing, and teaching, "even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). He promised that He would build His church, and that the "gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Such promises would have been broken had Jesus allowed His church to be "destroyed." While the Bible does mention that "some" shall depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1), it never implies that a universal or "complete" apostasy would take place prior to His return. The fact that "some [would] depart" implies that others would not. The New Testament here and elsewhere portrays apostasy as the acts and attitudes of individuals and groups breaking away from the church (see also 1 Jn. 2:19), not as the church ceasing to exist.



Joseph Smith's "First Vision"  
Stained glass window at the Museum of Church History and Art in Salt Lake City, Utah

## Q Was Joseph Smith a True Prophet of God?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Uniquely Important

Joseph Smith (1805–1844), the church's founder and first president, is a modern "prophet, seer, and revelator" (a person who reveals divine truth). He is ranked in importance second only to Jesus Himself when it comes to the salvation of mankind: "Joseph Smith, the Prophet and Seer of the Lord, has done more, save Jesus only, for the salvation of men in this world, than any other man that ever lived in it."<sup>3</sup> Many believe that the most convincing witness to Joseph's calling as a prophet is the Book of Mormon, which he called "the most correct of any book on earth."<sup>4</sup>

#### Genuine or Fraud

According to tenth LDS president Joseph Fielding Smith, "Mormonism, as it is called, must stand or fall on the story of Joseph Smith. He was either a prophet of God, divinely called, properly appointed and commissioned, or he was one of the biggest frauds this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground."<sup>5</sup>

### You Should Also Know...

Joseph Smith denied the biblical view of God (see Question 6). He falsely predicted that a war between the States would literally become a world war.<sup>6</sup> And although the Bible warns against adding or taking away from what God has commanded, Joseph Smith produced his own version of the Bible in which he took out some parts and inserted others (see Question 3).

Mormon leaders have often made incredible statements about the role and character of Joseph Smith. For

### A The Bible Teaches...

#### Testing Prophets

God provided two main tests for Israelites to determine whether a self-proclaimed prophet was legitimate. First, he must represent the true God of the Hebrews; prophets who introduced false Gods were to be immediately rejected (Deut. 13:1–3). Second, they were to reject professing prophets who incorrectly foretold the future (Deut. 18:20–22). They were also commanded not to add to or take away from the revelations God had given them (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6).



Joseph Smith receives the Book of Mormon from Moroni  
© Bill McKeever. Used with permission.

example, Mormon prophet Brigham Young and his counselor, George Q. Cannon, both insisted that the only way a Latter-day Saint could hope to enter the highest level of Mormon heaven (the celestial kingdom) was if he had Joseph Smith's permission.<sup>7</sup> Mormon apostle Bruce McConkie also declared that "all men in the latter days must turn to Joseph Smith to gain salvation,"<sup>8</sup> and that Joseph Smith aided God the Father in the creation of the earth.<sup>9</sup>



## What Is Mormon Scripture?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Four “Standard Works”

The LDS church accepts four books as its “standard works”:

- The Bible (King James Version)
- The Book of Mormon—a translation of an ancient document that gives an account of three people groups who migrated to the Americas from the Middle East, the latest of these arriving about 589 bc.
- The Doctrine and Covenants—a collection of modern revelations, most of which were given by LDS church founder Joseph Smith.
- The Pearl of Great Price—a collection of smaller works.

Of these four, only the Bible is considered to have corruptions and is accepted with qualifications (*see Question 4*).

#### Continuing Revelation

Mormons are also instructed to accept the words of their living prophets.

Because of their belief in continuing revelation, Mormons do not view their scriptures as being “closed,” meaning that some doctrines may be changed or added in the future.

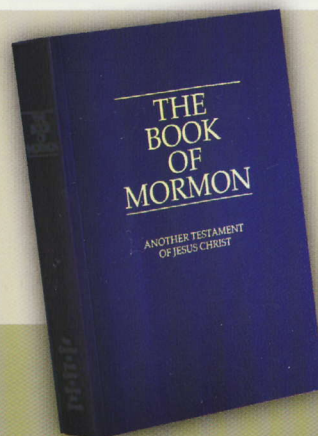
### You Should Also Know...

Doctrine and Covenants 73:4 states that God commanded Joseph Smith to finish a new translation of the Bible. On July 2, 1833, Smith wrote, “We this day finished the translating of the Scriptures....”<sup>11</sup> To call his new Bible a “translation” is very misleading since this Bible, known as the *Inspired Version* or *Joseph Smith Translation* (JST), wasn’t really a translation at all. Smith had no ancient manuscripts in his possession, nor was he fluent in any biblical language. Rather than

### The Bible Teaches...

#### The Bible vs. Mormon Revelations

The Bible says it’s a serious offense to claim God said something when He actually didn’t. Before Mormon scripture can be given any credibility at all it must agree with what God has *already* revealed in the Bible—for example, see Acts 17:11, Hebrews 1:1-2. (The Mormon church takes no such position. In fact, the church’s First Presidency has insisted that the “most reliable way to measure the accuracy of any biblical passage is not by comparing different texts, but by comparison with the Book of Mormon and modern-day revelations.”)<sup>10</sup>



consult ancient texts, Joseph merely opened his Bible and “corrected” whatever he felt was necessary according to his view at the time (for example, adding a prophecy of his own birth to Gen. 50:33). Though the Mormon church does not publish its own bound version of Smith’s complete Bible, it does include Smith’s alterations in footnotes and endnotes of its edition of the King James Version.

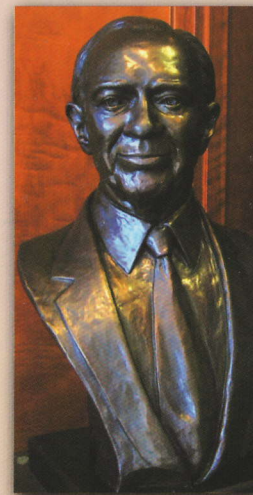
## Is the Bible Trustworthy Scripture?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Unreliable Scripture

The LDS church affirms that “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly.”<sup>12</sup> The church’s First Presidency also cautions that “The Bible, as it has been transmitted over the centuries, has suffered the loss of many plain and precious parts.”<sup>13</sup> Thus, latter-day revelation from the Mormon church’s living prophets always takes precedence over the ancient written word.

As Mormon apostle Orson Pratt asked, “... who in his right mind could for one moment suppose the Bible in its present form to be a perfect guide? Who knows that even one verse of the Bible has escaped pollution, so as to convey the same sense now that it did in the original?”<sup>14</sup>



Bust of President Gordon B. Hinckley in the Conference Center Hall of the Prophets in Salt Lake City, Utah

### You Should Also Know...

LDS criticisms of the Bible typically have more to do with allegations of faulty “transmission” (the copying of the original texts in the same language) than with faulty translation. Mormons are given the impression that the Bible has been extensively revised by corrupt transcribers and religious leaders who either removed important ideas or inserted false teaching. As a result, many Mormons do not feel compelled to reexamine their beliefs when Bible passages contradict what their leaders have told them.

### The Bible Teaches...

#### Reliable Revelations

“All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness” (2 Tim. 3:16). It has been correctly argued that when Paul refers to “scripture” here he means the Old Testament. However, Paul appears to quote the Gospel of Luke as Scripture (1 Tim. 5:18, citing Luke 10:7), and Peter explicitly refers to Paul’s writings as Scripture as well (2 Pet. 3:16).

God’s Word stands forever and will not fail to accomplish His purpose (Isa. 40:8, 55:11; see also Matt. 24:35). These passages indicate that God has guaranteed that His Word in Scripture would be preserved sufficiently to accurately convey His revealed truth.

While original documents by the hands of biblical authors no longer exist, critical examination of the thousands of available manuscript copies allows us to determine with great accuracy precisely what the original writers wrote. Although no two ancient manuscripts of the Bible read exactly the same, the differences (called “variants”) are essentially minor and do not support radically different religious ideas—such as the Mormon belief that God the Father was once a man.



5

## Is the Book of Mormon an Ancient Document?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Miraculous Translation

The Book of Mormon is a miraculous translation of an ancient document. By “the gift and power of God,” Joseph Smith interpreted the “reformed Egyptian” characters on the golden plates that the angel Moroni gave him in 1827.

The Book of Mormon gives an account of three people groups (the Lehiters, Jaredites, and Mulekites) who migrated from the Middle East and inhabited the American continents “between about 2,000 BC and AD 400.”<sup>15</sup>

#### Biblical Prophecy

The coming forth of the Book of Mormon was foretold centuries ago in Ezekiel 37:16-17, in which the “sticks” described are actually two books: the Bible and the Book of Mormon.



Mormons regard American Indians as descendents of the Lamanites. Photo by Edward S. Curtis

### The Bible Teaches...

#### Nations—Not Books

The Hebrew word for “stick” in Ezekiel 37 is never used in connection with books and is consistently translated as a literal stick, a branch, or some other wood product (see Num. 15:32, 33; 1 Kings 17:12; 2 Kings 6:6). In Ezekiel 37, the prophet himself explains that the sticks represent two *nations*: the ten northern tribes of Israel and the two southern tribes of Judah. Israel and Judah had been separated since the reign of King Rehoboam, and each kingdom had its own set of kings. Ezekiel was predicting that God would one day make them a single nation ruled by one king.

### You Should Also Know...

Unlike many editions of the Bible, the Book of Mormon is published with no maps. In fact, the LDS church cannot locate even one unique Book of Mormon city, and it has failed to provide undisputed proof that the peoples it describes (such as Nephites) really existed. Despite the claim that the Book of Mormon is an ancient document, its 19th-century origin is exposed by the way it quotes and paraphrases passages from the New Testament (for example, compare Matt. 19:30 with 1 Nephi 13:42;

John 12:40 with 1 Nephi 13:27). It also mentions topics relating to freemasonry and doctrinal controversies (such as infant baptism) that were hotly disputed during Smith’s lifetime.

The Book of Mormon mentions types of animals, weaponry, and plants which were not present in the New World during the Book of Mormon time period. New DNA research undermines the Mormon claim that the “Lamanites” (described as the “principal ancestors of the American Indians”) are actually of Semitic origin.

6

## Is the God of Mormonism the God of the Bible?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Many Gods

The one whom Christians call “Our Heavenly Father” is one God among many Gods stretching into eternity past. This same God was at one time a mortal, finite human who attained his current exalted (deified) state by obedience to eternal laws and principles. Joseph Smith proclaimed, “We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and will take away and do away the veil, so that you may see.”<sup>16</sup>

#### We Can Become Gods

Fifth LDS president Lorenzo Snow stated, “As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become.”<sup>17</sup> God the Father has “a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s”<sup>18</sup> and can only be at one place at any one time. The view of God held by millions of Christians is a perversion of the truth.

In the words of Mormon apostle Orson Pratt, “If we should take a million of worlds like this and number their particles, we should find that there are more Gods than there are particles of matter in those worlds.”<sup>19</sup>

### You Should Also Know...

Christianity has always declared that the God of the Bible is the primary cause of all things; He is the *uncaused cause*. LDS church leaders often speak of *eternal laws*, but it is inconceivable that the God worshiped by Mormons is responsible for these laws since, according to Joseph Smith, God was not eternally God. Though Mormonism teaches that men have the ability to become Gods, it insists that Mormons who achieve godhood will never become more powerful than

### The Bible Teaches...

#### Only One Eternal God

God has always been eternally God (Ps. 90:2), and He is responsible for all things created (John 1:3). God is spirit (John 4:24), and one does well to believe that there is only one God (James 2:12). The Bible declares that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God (Rom. 1:7; John 20:28; Acts 5:3-4), yet it also proclaims firmly that God is one (Deut. 6:4) while making a clear distinction among the persons. The God of the Bible is all-knowing (omniscient), yet He declares that He knows of no other gods (Isa. 44:8). God insists that before Him no god was formed, neither shall there be any god that comes after Him (Isa. 43:10, 44:6). The Apostle Paul noted the foolishness of those who change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like that of corruptible man (Rom. 1:22-23). In brief, the God described in the Bible is not the God in which Mormons believe.

the God over this world currently is or will be. Since Mormons teach that each Mormon male has the potential of becoming deity, this allows for the possibility of literally millions of Gods.



All-seeing eye (symbol for God) on Mormon temple in Salt Lake City. From [www.hismin.com](http://www.hismin.com). Used by permission.



# Tips for Talking with Mormons

**Don't** assume that a Mormon defines a word in the same way you do.

**Do** define your terms — and have them define theirs. (For example, “What do you believe about salvation? About eternal life? Are they the same, or different?”)

**Don't** assume what an individual Mormon believes. Not all Mormons agree with their leaders. This could be because they are not aware of what their leaders have taught. For example, if a Mormon appears to answer a question biblically, you may respond by saying something like, “That is exactly what the Bible teaches; however, are you aware that prophet so-and-so said just the opposite? Shouldn't they be in harmony with the Bible if they are getting their information from the same God who gave us the Bible?”

**Do** ask Mormons what they believe. Rather than accusing, ask a question.

**Don't** dwell on topics that are especially sensitive to Mormons and should only be addressed after they feel more comfortable discussing religious issues with you. Talking about the temple ceremony, the sacred garments, polygamy, or racism will almost certainly bring the discussion to a close. Use your time wisely.

**Do** concentrate on core issues. What the Mormon believes about God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, as well as the issue of salvation, should be primary. Do your Mormon acquaintances have the assurance that when they die all of their sins are forgiven? Do they feel

confident they will receive the best their religion has to offer (godhood, eternal increase)? If so, how so? If not, why not?

**Don't** be surprised if Mormons are suspicious of Christian literature. Mormons often feel that information written about their church, but not by their church, is almost always inaccurate. If you do use Christian material, make sure it is well-documented. Rather than insisting that the material is correct, have Mormons show you where the information could be wrong. To do this they will need to read the material and check the references.

**Do** memorize certain points and quotes. This often works better than using printed material because it shows the Mormon that you have taken the time to read LDS resources. Quote directly from LDS sources if possible. Statements from LDS leaders work best.

**Don't** think you need to cover every topic in one sitting. Sometimes dealing with one or two subjects makes it easier to remember what you talked about.

**Do** be patient. Mormons are led to believe that leaving the LDS church will lead to damnation. This is not a decision most Mormons make in an instant.

ISBN-10: 1-59636-117-4

ISBN-13: 978-159636-117-1

9 0 0 0 0 >



9 781596 361171

**ROSE**  
PUBLISHING

© 2006 RW Research, Inc.  
4733 Torrance Blvd., #259  
Torrance, CA 90503 U.S.A.  
email: info@rose-publishing.com  
www.rose-publishing.com

All rights reserved. It is illegal to copy, transmit electronically, or reproduce this pamphlet in whole or in part in any form. Printed in the USA. May not be posted or transmitted on the internet. 020207SP

General Editor: Paul Carden, Executive Director, Centers for Apologetics Research (CFAR). Principal Author: Bill McKeever, Founder and Director, Mormonism Research Ministry. Contributor: Robert M. Bowman, Jr., MA in Biblical Studies & Theology.

Stock #579X 10 Questions & Answers on Mormonism pamphlet  
Retailers: Package of 10 pamphlets = Stock #580X (ISBN-13: 978-159636-118-8)



7

## Q Does Mormonism Teach the Truth About Jesus?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Jesus “Preexisted” with Us

Jesus preexisted in Heaven before He became a man, died on the cross, rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into Heaven. However, *all* human beings preexisted in Heaven before becoming human; Jesus is the firstborn of God’s spirit children and the first (of many) to have become a God. Although Jesus is a member of the “Godhead,” one should not pray to Jesus. As a human being, He is the *literal* son of God the Father through a physical union: “Jesus is the only person on earth to be born of a mortal mother and an immortal father.”<sup>20</sup> By His death and resurrection, Jesus secured “immortality” for all human beings—whether they believe in Him or not. After He rose from the dead, Jesus went to the Americas to preach to the Nephites there.<sup>21</sup>



Mormon statue of Jesus in Salt Lake City  
© Bill McKeever. Used with permission.

### You Should Also Know...

Mormons believe that God the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are three Gods, though united in *purpose* as the one “Godhead.” This is not the

### A The Bible Teaches...

#### One of a Kind

Jesus Christ is *not* the first of God’s billions of preexistent spirit children; instead, He is the *only* human being to have preexisted as a spirit in Heaven. Speaking of Jesus, John the Baptist said that “he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all” (John 3:31). Jesus is from Heaven; we are not. As God, Jesus is addressed properly in prayer (John 14:14; Acts 1:24, 7:59–60; 2 Cor. 12:8–9). He was not born as God’s literal earthly son by a sexual union, but was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35). By His death and resurrection, Jesus secured resurrection to eternal life only for those whom God redeems through faith (1 Cor. 15; *see Question 8*). There will also be a resurrection of the wicked to face eternal condemnation (Dan. 12:2; John 5:29; Acts 24:15). Since Jesus ascended to Heaven, He has been and will remain there until His return in glory (Acts 1:9–11, 3:19–21). Therefore, He did not go to the Americas to preach there.

same as the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, in which there is only one true God (Deut. 6:4) existing eternally in the three persons of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Mormons also believe that in addition to a Heavenly Father, all humans and spirits have a Heavenly Mother—despite the fact that there is no mention of her in the Bible or any Mormon scripture.

8

## Q Can We Earn Our Salvation?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Immortality for All

Salvation by grace alone (“immortality”) enables humans to be resurrected from the dead. However, a life of obedience to God’s commandments is necessary to have one’s sins forgiven and receive “eternal life”—exaltation (and godhood)—in the celestial kingdom where God the Father dwells.

#### Eternal Life by Our Efforts

Thomas Monson of the LDS First Presidency stated, “It is the celestial glory which we seek. It is in the presence of God we desire to dwell. It is a forever family in which we want membership. Such blessings must be earned.”<sup>22</sup> A person’s eternal destination depends on individual efforts here on earth: “Every person will inherit a glory of salvation, which will be the one that he has earned.”<sup>23</sup>



### You Should Also Know...

The Book of Mormon teaches that the grace of Christ only takes effect after the Latter-day Saint has denied himself “of all ungodliness.”<sup>24</sup> Though both biblical

### A The Bible Teaches...

#### Eternal Life by Grace Through Faith

Because mankind is incapable of meeting the standard of perfection necessary to abide in God’s presence (Rom. 3:19–20, 23), God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to pay the total debt for the believer’s sins and mercifully credits to his account Christ’s righteousness (Rom. 3:21–28, 5:1–11; 2 Cor. 5:18–21). Jesus’ gracious act of atonement was complete and covers all sin (Col. 2:13–14; 1 Jn. 1:9). Salvation is not based on good deeds, but according to the mercy of God (Titus 3:4–5). Believers are justified by faith; it is a gift given by God’s grace (Rom. 4:3–8; Eph. 2:8–9). A true, living faith will result in a desire to live a holy, loving life of good works (Eph. 2:10; Gal. 5:6; James 2:14–26), but failure to be absolutely successful at righteous living does not negate the believer’s justified status.

Christianity and Mormonism have a concept of repentance, in Mormonism this involves successfully abandoning *all* sin: “...Incomplete repentance never brought complete forgiveness.”<sup>25</sup> “Those who receive forgiveness and then repeat the sin are held accountable for their former sins.”<sup>26</sup> Sin that is not overcome robs the Mormon of any assurance of reaching the celestial kingdom (eternal life). According to Mormon president Spencer W. Kimball, “Living all the commandments guarantees total forgiveness of sins and assures one of exaltation....”<sup>27</sup>

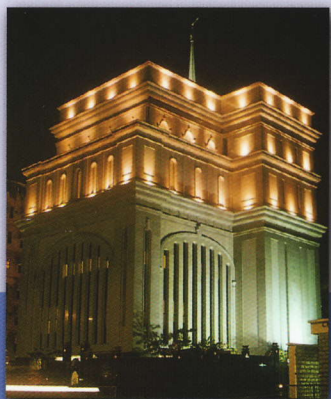


## Why Do Mormons Build Temples?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Rituals for Both Living and Dead

Unlike chapels where members meet on a weekly basis, Mormon temples are special buildings in which various rites necessary for exaltation are performed. The ritual most often performed is baptism for the dead, whereby a living substitute is baptized on behalf of a deceased person. Joseph Smith claimed: "The greatest responsibility in this world that God has placed upon us is to seek after our dead." Members who neglect this "do so at the peril of their own salvation."<sup>28</sup> Temples are also used for marriage ceremonies binding husband and wife together not only for "time," but also for eternity. "Sealing" ceremonies are performed to unite children with their parents for eternity.



Mormon temple in Hong Kong  
© Institute for Religious Research.  
Used with permission.

### You Should Also Know...

Mormons are compelled to promise that they will not speak of what they have learned in the temple "endowment ceremony," even to other "temple Mormons." In the endowment, participants are taught special handshakes (called "tokens"), arm gestures ("signs"), and special phrases

### The Bible Teaches...

#### Sacrifices—Not Sealings

The primary function of the temple in ancient Israel was the sacrifice of animals, a ritual that has never been a part of Mormonism. The focus was on repentance and forgiveness. People went into the temple because of their unworthiness, offering sacrifices for their sins. This is the opposite of the earned "worthiness" that Mormons believe is essential for Mormon temple participation (*see Question 8*).

There is no biblical mention of any marriages performed in the temple, let alone baptisms for the dead. (Paul's comment about baptism for the dead in 1 Cor. 15:29 refers to it as something that "they"—those who were denying the resurrection—do, not something Christians do.)

Jesus told the Samaritan woman that temple worship would one day cease (John 4:21-24). Because Christians as a whole represent the "temple of God" (1 Cor. 3:16), and because Jesus offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice, temple worship is no longer necessary.

("key words"). Brigham Young taught that after a Mormon departs this life, knowledge of tokens, signs, and key words will be necessary in order to pass the angelic sentinels who guard the way back to the presence of God.<sup>29</sup> Visitations from the dead in Mormon temples are regarded as a positive experience by many Mormons.<sup>30</sup> Few Mormons realize that the "ancient" endowment ritual has undergone many significant changes since 1845, the most recent in 2005.

## Does Mormonism Teach Polygamy?

### Mormonism Claims...

#### Once Essential

Between 1852 and 1890 the practice of polygamy became essential for any Mormon hoping to achieve exaltation. Brigham Young proclaimed that the "only men who become Gods, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy."<sup>31</sup>

#### Still Valid

Though it was necessary for Mormon leaders to formally renounce plural marriage in 1890, the principle remains valid, and the earthly practice of polygamy will one day resume. "Obviously the holy practice will commence again after the Second Coming of the Son of Man and the ushering in of the millennium."<sup>32</sup>



Portrait of sixth president Joseph F. Smith and family  
Source: Utah State Historical Society

### You Should Also Know...

Jacob 2:24 in the Book of Mormon condemns the plural marriages of David and Solomon; however, Jacob 2:30 states that God could allow polygamy should He wish to "raise up seed." Many Mormon apologists have argued that this nullifies any contradiction some see in verse 24. However, during the polygamy era in Utah there were more men than women, making polygamy unnecessary.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Jacob 2:30 certainly

### The Bible Teaches...

#### Never Encouraged

There is no denying that great men such as Abraham, Jacob, David, and Solomon practiced plural marriage. However, the practice of polygamy never had any bearing on an individual's personal salvation. Instead, we find polygamy being *tolerated* by God rather than commanded by Him, because it often caused conflict and sometimes led the family into idolatry. Monogamy was always the rule, and polygamy was always the exception. A man was to cleave to his wife (not wives), and as Jesus confirmed, these "two" shall become one (Gen. 2:24; Mark 10:8). Paul wrote that every man should have his own wife and every woman her own husband (1 Cor. 7:2), assuming monogamy as the norm. This pattern is also expected for those seeking office in the church (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6). The New Testament never condones anything but a relationship between one man and one woman.

was not the basis for Joseph Smith's plural wives. Though the doctrine of polygamy was announced publicly in 1852, it was being practiced secretly by a select few leaders long before that date. Mormon historian Richard L. Bushman concedes, "All told, ten of Joseph's plural wives were married to other men."<sup>34</sup>



# Glossary of Mormon Terms

**Adam:** According to Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) 27:11, Adam is Michael the Archangel, the Ancient of Days. He will one day return to the Garden of Eden (located in western Missouri, at a place called Adam-ondi-Ahman; D&C 116:1).

**Apostasy:** In general use, a falling away from one's faith. Mormonism teaches that Christianity became completely apostate after the death of the original apostles, making it necessary for God to restore it.

**Baptism for the Dead:** Temple ritual in which a Mormon "proxy" (living person) is baptized on behalf of a deceased person.

**Book of Mormon:** Translated by Joseph Smith from gold plates he allegedly received from the angel Moroni. The plates are believed to contain a record of ancient American inhabitants who are descendants of the "House of Israel." After being translated, the plates were taken back to heaven.

**Celestial Kingdom:** The highest kingdom of glory awaiting faithful Latter-days. Entrance into this kingdom is gained by complete obedience to the Mormon gospel.

**Endowment Ceremony:** Secret temple ritual performed by living persons, sometimes on behalf of the dead. Required for exaltation.

**Eternal Increase:** The ability for exalted persons to procreate throughout eternity.

**Eternal Life:** Also known as individual salvation, exaltation, or godhood. Eternal life is only gained by faithful Mormons who keep all of the commandments (celestial law).

**Exaltation:** Synonymous with eternal life. Only those who gain exaltation have the ability to become gods and procreate throughout eternity.

**First Vision:** An event that Mormons claim took place in the spring of 1820 in which God the Father and Jesus Christ appeared to Joseph Smith and told him that all the churches were wrong, and that their creeds were an abomination.

**God the Father:** Also known as Heavenly Father or Elohim. The God of Mormonism was once a human and currently inhabits a body of flesh and bones.

**Jesus Christ:** The literally begotten son of God the Father and Heavenly Mother. The Jesus of Mormonism is the firstborn of God's offspring, including all angels, demons, and humans.

**Joseph Smith:** The founder of the Latter-day Saint movement. He is considered to be a modern-day prophet who was called by God to restore "true Christianity" to the earth after centuries of apostasy. He died in 1844 during a gun battle with an angry mob while incarcerated in Carthage, Illinois.

**Mormon:** A Nephite leader; father of Moroni. It is Mormon from whom the Book of Mormon gets its name. Also, a nickname given to followers of Joseph Smith and the church he founded.

**Moroni:** The son of Mormon. Moroni buried the gold plates containing the Book of Mormon and later appeared as an angel to Joseph Smith to tell him of their location. His image is found on many LDS temples throughout the world.

**Nephites and Lamanites:** According to the Book of Mormon, followers of Nephi and Laman, the sons of the Prophet Lehi who led his family to the New World prior to the capture of Jerusalem (around 600 BC). Those who followed the wicked Laman were shown God's displeasure by being cursed with a dark skin (2 Nephi 5:21–25); they are considered the ancestors of the American Indians and Polynesians.

**Priesthood:** The priesthood gives Mormon males the power and authority to act on behalf of God. It consists of two orders: the Aaronic Priesthood (the lesser priesthood) and the Melchizedek (the higher priesthood). Males of African descent were denied the Mormon priesthood until 1978.

**Repentance:** Involves confessing and forsaking sin (D&C 58:43). Only Mormons who abandon their sins are considered truly repentant.

**Salvation by Grace:** Also known as general salvation. All humans, by the fact that they are resurrected from the dead, are "saved by grace," though most never receive eternal life.

**Standard Works:** Includes the Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. Only the Bible is accepted with qualification and is not to be fully trusted.

**Temples:** Special buildings reserved for ordinances for the dead, marriages for "time and eternity," and "sealings" of families for eternity.

# Resources

The inclusion of a work does not necessarily mean endorsement of all its contents or of other works by the same author(s).

## LITERATURE

### Christian Authors/Publishers

*Answering Mormons' Questions* by Bill McKeever (Bethany House, 1991)

*Becoming Gods* by Richard Abanes (Harvest House, 2004)

*By His Own Hand Upon Papyrus: A New Look at the Joseph Smith Papyri* by Charles M. Larson (Institute for Religious Research, 1992)

*Mormon America: The Power and the Promise* by Richard and Joan Ostling (HarperSanFrancisco, 1999)

*Mormonism 101* by Bill McKeever and Eric Johnson (Baker Books, 2000)

*One Nation Under Gods* by Richard Abanes (Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003)

*Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons* by Mark Cares (WELS Outreach Resources, 1998)

*The Rise of Mormonism* by H. Michael Marquardt (Xulon Press, 2005)

*What Every Mormon (and Non-Mormon) Should Know* by Edmund Gruss and Lane Thuet (Xulon Press, 2006)

### Mormon Authors/Publishers

*An Insider's View of Mormon Origins* by Grant Palmer (Signature Books, 2002)

*Early Mormonism and the Magic World View* by D. Michael Quinn (Signature Books, 1998)

*In Sacred Loneliness: The Plural Wives of Joseph Smith* by Todd Compton (Signature Books, 1997)

*Mormon Polygamy: A History* by Richard S. Van Wagoner (Signature Books, 1992 [2<sup>nd</sup> ed.])

## VIDEO/DVD

*Burying the Past: Legacy of the Mountain Meadows Massacre* (Patrick Film Productions, 2003)

*DNA vs. the Book of Mormon* (Living Hope Ministries, 2005)

*Mormonism's Greatest Problems* (Truth in Depth, 2004)

*Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons* (WELS Media, n.d.)

*The Bible vs. the Book of Mormon* (Living Hope Ministries, 2005)

*The Lost Book of Abraham* (Institute for Religious Research, 2002)

*The Mormon Puzzle* (North American Missions Board, 1997)

## POWERPOINT®

*10 Questions & Answers on Mormonism* (Rose Publishing, Inc., 2006)

## INTERNET

Christian Research and Counsel [www.crcmin.org](http://www.crcmin.org)

Concerned Christians [www.concernedchristians.org](http://www.concernedchristians.org)

Living Hope Ministries [www.lhvm.org](http://www.lhvm.org)

Mormonwiki [www.mormonwiki.org](http://www.mormonwiki.org)

Mormonism Research Ministry [www.mrm.org](http://www.mrm.org)

Mormons in Transition [www.irt.org/mit](http://www.irt.org/mit)

Truth in Love to Mormons [www.truthinlovetomormons.com](http://www.truthinlovetomormons.com)

Utah Lighthouse Ministry [www.utlm.org](http://www.utlm.org)

## Quick Facts

**Names:** Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (official); Mormon Church, LDS Church (informal)

**Year/Place Founded:** 1830 in Fayette, New York (USA), originally as the "Church of Christ"

**Founder:** Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805–1844)

**World Headquarters:** Salt Lake City, Utah (USA)

**Estimated Adherents:** 12.5 million in over 160 nations and territories (2005)

**Full-Time Missionaries:** 61,000 (including those on "special service assignments")

**Materials:** include Book of Mormon (over 100 languages)

**Temples:** Nearly 130 in more than 40 countries

## SOURCE REFERENCES

- 1 *The Great Apostasy*, Preface, p. iii
- 2 Joseph Smith — History 1:19
- 3 Doctrine and Covenants 135:3
- 4 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 194
- 5 *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, p. 188
- 6 Doctrine and Covenants 87
- 7 *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 7, p. 289; *Gospel Truth*, Vol. 1, p. 255 [1974 ed.]
- 8 *The Millennial Messiah*, p. 334
- 9 *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 169
- 10 First Presidency letter of May 22, 1992
- 11 *History of the Church*, Vol. 1, p. 368
- 12 8th Article of Faith
- 13 "Letter Reaffirms Use of King James Version of Bible," *Church News*, June 20, 1992, p. 3
- 14 *Divine Authenticity of the Book of Mormon*, p. 47
- 15 *Gospel Principles*, p. 53
- 16 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 345
- 17 *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, p. 1
- 18 Doctrine and Covenants 130:22
- 19 *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 2, p. 345
- 20 *Gospel Principles*, p. 64
- 21 Book of Mormon, 3 Nephi
- 22 *Ensign*, May 1988, p. 53
- 23 Mormon apostle John A. Widtsoe, *Joseph Smith — Seeker after Truth, Prophet of God*, p. 170
- 24 Moroni 10:32
- 25 Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 212
- 26 *Gospel Principles*, p. 253
- 27 *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp. 208–209
- 28 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 193, 356
- 29 *Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 416
- 30 As fourth LDS president Wilford Woodruff observed, "The dead will be after you, they will seek after you as they have after us in [the temple at] St. George [Utah]" (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 19, p. 229).
- 31 *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 11, p. 269
- 32 Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2d ed., p. 578
- 33 "The United States census records from 1850 to 1940, and all available Church records, uniformly show a preponderance of males in Utah, and in the Church" (apostle John Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, p. 391).
- 34 *Joseph Smith: Rough Stone Rolling*, p. 439