

MORMONISM - CULT OR ONE TRUE CHURCH?

A Report by

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Theologians define a cult as a religious group of people that teach a different God and Jesus from what the Bible teaches, having additions to the Bible, and having some person or prophet they follow. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons) meets these requirements. Yet these people appear as real Christians who live their faith.

Mormonism teaches they are the one true church and all others are an abomination to God's sight.¹ "All will be damned who are not Latter-Day Saints".² "Both Catholics and Protestants are nothing less than the 'whore of Babylon' whom the Lord denounces by the mouth of John the revelator as having corrupted all the earth by their fornications and wickedness. Any person who shall be so wicked as to receive a holy ordinance of the Gospel from the ministers of any of these apostate churches will be sent down to Hell with them, unless they repent of the unholy and impious act".³ (Yet in other Mormon books we are told Christians will be in one of the two lowest heavens or degrees of glory, because Mormon Apostle and President John Widtsoe said, "In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, there is no Hell").⁴ "There is no salvation outside... the Church (of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints)".⁵ The only one true Church that the Bible speaks of are those people who have received Christ as Savior.

To show the need for the Book of Mormon and that they are the one true church, Joseph Smith taught that all other churches became false, all the Christians became corrupt, and the true Gospel disappeared from the earth. The gospel had to be "restored" and a new revelation given to Joseph Smith.

Jesus said explicitly, in Matthew 24:35, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away". Again, Jesus says in Matthew 28:20 that He would be with His Church and His people "Always, even to the end of the world". Just who was Jesus going to be with if there were not any Churches or Christians left on earth a short while after He died? And Jesus also said, in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my Church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it".

If Mormonism is true, what Jesus said was untrue. For Mormons say that the gates of Hell did prevail against His Church, and total apostasy eliminated His true Church, His true people, and His true Word off the earth for over a thousand years, to be "restored" by Prophet Smith!

David O. McKay said: "The appearing of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith is the foundation of this church"⁶. The Mormon church claims that Joseph Smith had a vision in 1820 - when he was a 14 year old boy. This vision occurred on the "morning of a beautiful, clear day, early in the spring of 1820". Joseph Smith went into the woods to pray for the first time in his life about which of "all the sects was right". While he was praying he saw two personages standing above him in the air. Joseph Smith decided that these personages were God the Father and Jesus, even though there is no mention of one of the personages claiming he was God.

Why couldn't it be Satan and one of his angels in disguise? II Corinthians 11:13-15 says Satan can transform himself into an angel of light. Mormons have to have a complete trust in what a 14 year old boy said.

According to Mormon leaders, "Joseph Smith lived a little more than 24 years after this first vision. During this time he told

but one story - ..."7 This seems a little funny since Joseph Smith claimed his first visitation was from angels.⁸ Because this statement by Joseph Smith contradicted the teaching that the Father and Son appeared to him in the first vision of 1820, the Mormon Church historians altered the words of Smith when they reprinted them in recent editions of the History of the Church. They changed the wording so that the word "angels" was completely left out. Changing, adding, and deleting words like this is not uncommon in Mormonism. Common sense tells us that a person can't witness an incident if he gives two different accounts for that one incident!

If Mormons prefer to stick with the vision where God and Jesus appeared to Joseph Smith, they will run across a little problem. Joseph Smith says in Doctrine and Covenants 84:21-22, "And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the Priesthood, the power of Godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh, for without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live". Joseph Smith was not a 14 year old priest in 1820. He doesn't even claim to be granted this office until sometime in the early 1830's.⁹ If his revelation that no man could see God without the priesthood were true, then Joseph Smith has never seen God, and his claim of seeing God in 1820 was not true. If his 1820 claim were true, then his revelation from God in 1832 that no man could see God without the priesthood was false. Either way this would label Joseph Smith as one who was not the prophet of God some people thought he was!

Mormon additions to the Bible are called the Standard Works. They are the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price. God says in Proverbs 30:6 not to add to His words, unless He reprove you, and you are proven a liar. If God would

Speak to us, it would be revealed through a prophet. But Hebrews 1:1-2 says God doesn't speak through prophets anymore, but now speaks to us through Jesus. Jesus speaks to us through the New Testament of the Bible. He made our gospel complete, whereas the prophets made the Old Testament complete.

The God of Mormonism has a body of flesh and bone.¹⁰ Mormons are polytheistic - believe in more than one God and that they too can become a god.¹¹ The Mormon God has wives and children.¹² This God also appeared and talked with Joseph Smith.

The God of the Bible is Spirit (John 4:24), is invisible (Colossians 1:15), and therefore doesn't have a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39). He isn't limited to a body, but is everywhere (Jeremiah 23:24, I Kings 8:27, and II Chronicles 2:6). God says in Isaiah 44:6 and 8 that besides Him there is no God, and He doesn't even know of any other God. Satan told Eve the first lie in the Garden of Eden. He told her she could become a god. Also in Isaiah 14, Satan was thrown out of Heaven because he wanted to be equal to or greater than God. This true God of the Bible exists as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Also no one can see this God and live (Exodus 33:20). Not even Joseph Smith! Although there were several times in the Old Testament where only one personage of God appeared to men in a visible manifestation. Sometimes this would be in the appearance of an angel and sometimes the appearance of a man. John 1:18 and 6:46 says that no man has seen the Father. Who, then, did some of the Old Testament men see if it was not the Father? Jesus answers that question by saying it was Himself before He was born unto Mary. He said He appeared to Abraham in John 8:56-58, and to Isaiah in John 12:37-41. Jesus always was (John 1:1 and 14).

Mormons even make Jesus into something He really isn't. The Jesus of Mormonism has wives and children.¹³ He is the spirit brother of Satan.¹⁴ Also, this Mormon Jesus is not fully God, but is one among many Gods.¹⁵ Mormons don't accept the virgin birth of Christ, not being conceived by the Holy Spirit, but rather through the Father having sexual relations with Mary.¹⁶ This Jesus was born in Jerusalem.¹⁷

The Jesus of the Bible is fully God in the flesh (John 1:1 and 14, and Colossians 1:15). Therefore, He could not be a brother of Satan. Also because Jesus, being God, created everything, even Satan (Colossians 1:16)! Christ's Bride is the Church (Ephesians 5:22-33), not women! If it were a certain group of women, He'd be showing partiality toward the rest of the world with His intimate love for His wives. And there is no partiality with God (Romans 2:11). Jesus was born by a virgin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18). Even the Book of Mormon goes along with this subject in Alma 7:10. This true Jesus was born in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:1), not Jerusalem!

Whereas, the Bible teaches in I John 4:1 and 2 that we are not to believe every spirit, but to test the spirits and the scriptures to see whether they are from God or not; Mormons are taught to test the truth of the Book of Mormon by their minds, their feelings, and by prayer. Mormon Doctrine, page 502 says, "The spirit of revelation consists in having thoughts placed in one's mind. But the Bible says that we can not trust our own thoughts because we have "reprobate" minds (Romans 1:28), "carnal" minds (Romans 8:7), "vain" minds (Ephesians 4:17), "defiled" minds (Titus 1:15) and our thoughts continually lean toward evil (see Genesis 6:5 and Matthew 9:4, 15:19). In trying to prove the Mormon teachings, Mormons claim they have a

burning in their bosom as in Doctrine and Covenants 9:8. This burning in their bosom "proved" the Holy Spirit was testifying to them of the truth of the Book of Mormon and Mormonism. Moroni 10:4 in the Book of Mormon says if we ask God with a "sincere heart", He will manifest the truth of the Book of Mormon to you. The psychology of this is obvious: You must be convinced that the Book of Mormon is true, or you are insincere! Another problem with this is that you are praying to another God, as we have seen earlier.

This is not God's approved way for finding truth. First God says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). Hearing does not come from a burning in our bosoms or even from the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit! God never asks us to pray for wisdom about something that we know from His word is wrong already. Second, for the most part, Mormon doctrine is not even in the Book of Mormon. Though Mormons claim the Book of Mormon is the fullness of the everlasting Gospel, it does not contain any of the following doctrines which form the heart of Mormonism: (1) Pre-existence, (2) Genealogies, (3) Baptism for the dead, (4) Celestial marriage, (5) Three degrees of Heaven, (6) Godhood promised to man, and (7) temporary Hell. How can prayer and feeling or experience determine the truth of something that isn't even included in the book you are reading? Third, and most dangerous, the Holy Spirit is not the only powerful spirit in this world. One might be deceived by trusting only in prayer and feeling or experience. The mighty evil spirit the Bible calls Satan is posing as an "angel of light", and deceiving all he can to Hell. When we set aside the true God's way of finding truth, we are totally without protection and open to Satan's delusions.

I Corinthians 14:33 says, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints". (Not the Latter-Day Saints)! It can be little comfort to know that many cults began with a vision because they would not believe the Word of God, or because they believed the Word of God wasn't enough. God therefore sent them "strong delusions" that they should believe a lie (see II Thessalonians 2:10-12).

Mormons need to seriously consider Galatians 1:8, "But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed".

Mormon or non-mormon, the true Jesus loves you. He said, "Call on my name, and I'll save you" (Romans 10:13). Call on the Jesus of the Bible to save you from your sins that are leading you to Hell, and He will. Jesus can not lie.

ENDNOTES

1. Doctrine & Covenants 1:30, and Documentary History of the Church (Joseph Smith) 1:5,6
2. Ora Pate Stewart, We Believe. Taken from Keith L. Brooks, comp., The Spirit of Truth & The Spirit of Error (Chicago Moody Press, 1963), p.7.
3. Orson Pratt, The Seer, a publication founded by Orson Pratt, in memory of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. 1852, p. 255.
4. Evidences and Reconciliation (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960) p. 216.
5. Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), p. 138, see also p.p. 81, 136.
6. David O. McKay, Gospel Ideals (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1953), p. 85.
7. Joseph Smith the Prophet, 1944, p. 30.
8. Deseret News, Vol. 2, No. 15, May 29, 1852.
9. Bruce R. McConkie, Ed. Doctrines of Salvation (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, Inc., 1954), vol. 1, p. 4.
10. Doctrine and Covenants 130:22
11. Documentary History of the Church (Joseph Smith), 6:306. and Journal of Discourses (Brigham Young) 6:4, and 7:238.
12. The Seer, p. 172.
13. The Seer, p. 172, Journal of Discourses Vol. 1, p.p. 345 - 46, vol. 2, p. 210, vol. 4, pp. 259 - 60, and 1853 Millennial Star, vol. 15, p. 825.
14. Gospel Through the Ages by Milton R. Hunter, p. 15.

15. Bruce R. McConkie, What the Mormons Think of Christ (tract)
(Salt Lake City: Deseret News Publishers) p. 36, and Documentary
History of the Church (Joseph Smith) 6:308.
16. Journal of Discourses, vol.1, p. 51, Doctrines of Salvation,
vol. 1, pp. 18 - 19.
17. Alma 7:10 (Book of Mormon).