

# CHRISTIAN ANSWERS

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## MORMONISM: COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANITY



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### MORMON ORIGINS:

The Mormon Church, otherwise known as 'The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS),' came into being through the efforts of Joseph Smith, Jr. (the name Mormon, coming from their sacred book entitled, *The Book of Mormon*). The church that Joseph built now has over 13,824,854 members worldwide, multi-million dollar holdings in land and business enterprises, and a 53,000 – man missionary force that reaps approximately 200,000 converts a year. Although, Mormonism is not the fastest growing religion in North America (Atheism & Agnosticism are), it does rank in the top 10 religious bodies with the most churches in the United States.

Mormonism, with its peculiar doctrines of men and women becoming gods and goddesses, baptism for the dead, eternal marriage, polygamy, Jesus and the devil being spirit-brothers, etc., stands or falls on the testimony of just one man, Joseph Smith, Jr. The president and tenth 'Prophet' of the Mormon Church, Joseph Fielding Smith made things clear when he said,

*'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 commissioned, or he was one of the biggest frauds this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground.*

*If Joseph Smith was a deceiver, who willfully attempted to mislead the people, then he should be exposed; his claims should be refuted, and his doctrines shown to be false...If his claims and declarations were built upon fraud and deceit, there would appear many errors and contradictions which would be easy to detect. The doctrines of false teachers will not stand the test when tried by the accepted standards of measurements, the scriptures.'* (*J.F.S., Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 1, pg. 188, 1954*)

Joseph Smith, Jr. the founder of Mormonism, was born to Joseph and Lucy Smith December 23, 1805 in Sharon, Vermont. Ample evidence shows that Joseph's father practiced mysticism and treasure digging. He was also implicated in a counterfeit money scheme. Joseph's mother held to extreme religious and superstitious ideas and theories. Raised in this type of environment, the younger Joseph, who did not continue in school beyond the fourth grade, passed much of his time digging for treasures with his family. Besides dabbling in Freemasonry, he also adventured into free-lance work as a fortune-teller, and peep-stone gazer or "glass looker" (one who tells fortunes with a crystal ball.) Unfortunately for Joseph, Jr. he was later convicted of a misdemeanor by Justice

Albert Neely in 1826 for the unlawful practice of "glass looking" (for documentation see Jerald and Sandra Tanner's comprehensive book: *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* Pg 32-38).

The Smith family as a whole was not appreciated by their neighbors and people who knew them best. More than sixty neighbors signed affidavits stating: "We, the undersigned, have been acquainted with the Smith family, for a number of years, while they resided near this place, and we have no hesitation in saying, that we consider them destitute of that moral character, which ought to entitle them to the confidence of any community. They were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time in digging for money which they pretended was in the earth...Joseph Smith, Sr., and his son Joseph, were in-particular, considered entirely destitute of moral character, and addicted to vicious habits." (E.D. Howe, *Mormonism Unveiled*, Painesville, Ohio, 1834, pg 261)

The career of Joseph Smith, Jr., as 'God's Prophet' supposedly began in 1820 when he was 14 years old. While residing in Palmyra, N.Y., he allegedly received his 'First Vision.' He claims he was praying to God as to which church to join when suddenly a pillar of light shone about him and two personages (God the Father and Jesus

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*"exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9)*

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## THE GOSPEL IN BRIEF

There is one, and only one, eternal, true, holy God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Matt 28:19). He created everything by His word. God has told us the truth about Himself in the word He has given us, the Bible, which He commands us to obey. God is compassionate and just to all. God is pure and Holy; sin is destroyed in His presence (Numbers 14:18). However, we have all sinned, falling short in the evil we do, and the good we fail to do. Yet our problem is not just what we do, but also who we are; we are selfish, corrupt, and estranged from God. Because God is just, He will punish sin impartially, yet God still bestows his love to all men. So our Savior, Jesus, the only begotten Son of God (the God-man, John 1:1,14), was graciously sent to suffer and die on the cross for our sins and to purify us from all unrighteousness by the sacrifice of His body and blood. He was born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, and was physically raised from the dead and ascended into heaven. Jesus will physically return to judge the world. God commands everyone to repent and to believe in Him. God's Spirit lives in each of us who believe in Him to guide us into truth, convict us of our sins, and to work in us to sanctify us to live a more holy life, pleasing our Lord. God's children will dwell forever with God, and those who reject Jesus will suffer eternal torment. There is no other way for anyone to come to God except through Jesus (Jn. 14:6). Please do not depend on anyone else, your own efforts, your religion, but simply put your faith in Christ our Master. So as Rom. 10:9 says, "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart the God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." You are urged not to despise God's mercy but call out to the Lord and trust ONLY in Him.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR



Larry Wessels

Welcome to another addition of our newsletter. This issue is focusing on a subject that has been in the news lately, namely Mormonism. Mormonism is just another early 19th century American religious cult that sprang out of the cultic "Church of Christ" Movement (also known as the "Restoration Movement") founded by Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone and Walter Scott back between 1811 and 1832 (W. Scott "restores the ancient gospel"). Out of this "Restoration Movement" (also known as Campbellism) came a former follower named Sidney Rigdon who joined up with a convicted charlatan named Joseph Smith, Jr. to set in motion the new alternate religion of "Restorationism" known as Mormonism.

An array of cults can be traced directly to the original Campbellism movement such as Mormonism (1830), Christadelphianism (1848), Seventh-day Adventism (1861), Jehovah's Witnesses (1879) and others. For much more on this see our YouTube video entitled, "Rise of the Cults: Where Did All These Strange American Religious Sects Come From?" (just type this title into your YouTube search box).

This issue features my leadoff article, "Mormonism: Counterfeit Christianity" followed by our Director of Research Steve Morrison's "The Views of the Mormon 'Book of Abraham'." Besides all this, I would like to remind my readers of our 17 video playlist on our YouTube channel page CANSWERSTV entitled, "Dealing with Mormonism, the Religion of Mitt Romney & Utah" with over 19 hours of research material - see the end of my main Mormonism article for more on this.

Feel free to make copies of this newsletter and hand them out. Likewise, share our many videos on YouTube with anyone you desire. Our method of Evangelism follows II Timothy 4:2-5 "2. *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.* 3. *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;* 4. *And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* 5. *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*"

## WHAT IS CHRISTIAN ANSWERS ?

Our ministry name is derived in part from I Peter 3:15 which states, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." (KJV). This is the goal of **Christian Answers** in an increasingly anti-Christian society here in America and throughout the world; giving answers and reasons why the Christian faith can be trusted and believed. Christians are to know what they believe and why they believe it.

The Biblical commands to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12), to be "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17), to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), to "be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9), to "put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not" (Rev. 2:2), to "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Matt. 7:15), to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21), "with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 2:25), to follow the example of Paul and Apollos who "vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." (Acts 18:28). These are but a few of the marching orders for the call to ministry, discernment and evangelism.

The inerrant Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17) whereby the gospel is preached, which is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16), is the weapon of our evangelism. As Hebrews 4:12 states, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow: it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." This is the evangelical missionary methodology of **Christian Answers**— to bring the Biblical perspective to a culture that is almost completely ignorant of it; to bring Christian truth, Christian answers to those who, as the prophet Isaiah said, have made "lies...and falsehood" their refuge (Isa. 28:15); to smash lies and falsehoods with the "hammer" of God's word (Jer. 23:29); see also Proverbs 30:5-6, Psalm 138:2b, Isaiah 40:8, John 5:39-47, I Cor. 14:37, and Acts 17:11.

**Christian Answers** utilizes all outreach that God allows us including television, radio, audio cassettes, video tapes, speaking engagements, and the printed page. The materials we have been able to produce have been used by churches, Bible teachers, Christian apologists, laymen and others as well as those seeking life in Christ.

We are not afraid to stand up for Jesus Christ in public forums or wherever the Lord leads. Of course this type of ministry is not for the faint of heart and very often leads to the same type of suffering and persecution that we find in the book of Acts. But as the old saying goes, "one life will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last," and as Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14), knowing this mortal life is short and God's eternity is only a moment away for all.

Our ministry is "exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501 (c) (3) by the Internal Revenue Service". Donations to our ministry are tax deductible, therefore those who contribute will receive a donation receipt good on your US income tax. This applies to donations only, not sales. We are legally registered in the state of Texas.

Christ) appeared and spoke to him: *'I was answered that I must join none of them [the churches], for they were all wrong; and the Personages who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight, that those professors were all corrupt. He again forbade me to join with any of them.'* (From the 1851 Mormon holy book, *The Pearl of Great Price*, Joseph Smith 2:19,20)

Despite this extraordinary vision of all churches, teachings and members being 'wrong,' 'abominations,' and 'corrupt,' documented evidence shows that Joseph Smith, Jr.'s name still appeared in a Methodist 'class book' as late as 1828. Smith's name was only removed when church officials discovered his constant treasure and glass-looking practices.

It is interesting to note, however, that the initial account of the 'First Vision' mentioned only that an angel appeared to Joseph Smith (as found in an official Mormon Church record of sermons and teachings given by their 'prophets' etc., *The Journal of Discourses* 13:77-78) not God the Father and Jesus Christ. In fact, the earliest account of Joe's 'First Vision' appeared in *Times and Seasons* in 1842 –twenty-two years after the supposed fact! Numerous contradictions and conflicts about this vision are found throughout Mormon literature (for further reference see: *The Journal of Discourses* 2:171, 196-97; 6:29, 335; 10:127; 12:333-334; 13:65-66, 294, 324; 18:239; 20:167; 14:261-62).

On Sept. 21, 1823, Smith allegedly received a 'Second Vision' while praying in his room. He stated that an angel appeared and allowed him to obtain 'golden plates' from which the *Book of Mormon* (published 1830) was translated. Apparently, Joseph could not remember if the angel's name was 'Moroni' or 'Nephi' as he openly declared it to be 'Moroni' at times and 'Nephi' at other times (see Dr. W. Martin's

book, *Maze of Mormonism*, pg. 29 for documentation.) I Cor. 14:33 says 'God is not the author of confusion.'

### MORMON STRUCTURES:

In 1984 in late September I had an opportunity to visit the (then) newly built Mormon temple in Dallas before it was closed to all non-Mormons. Not missing the chance, a friend and myself took the "tour" on a dreary Thursday morning.

When we drove up to the temple site, a number of well-dressed "Latter-Day Saints" (Mormons) with walkie-talkies greeted us and politely showed us where to park in the 198 space lot. After getting out of the car we gazed upon the multi-million dollar edifice with its towering spires and austere appearance. Most noticeable was the golden statue of the Mormon angel "Moroni" blowing his horn standing perched atop the front spire of the temple. Near the building a sign informed us that "Moroni" was made of fiberglass and covered in gold leaf.



Mormon Temple  
San Antonio, Texas

Not far away, young Mormon missionaries were distributing a colorful pamphlet entitled, "Dallas Temple." The pamphlet stated:

*The temple is considered by members of the Church to be the "House of the Lord," a building with purposes so sacred that after its formal dedication, only faithful, active members of the Church may enter."*

My friend and myself made our way passed numerous television sets mounted outside of the temple entrance. The sets were running quick

video shows discussing Mormon temples. We then entered the temple and got our first look at the inside.

The interior was quite impressive. Immaculate furnishings and decorations were the order of the day. Ever-smiling temple attendants lined the hallways as they policed the large number of visitors who moved through the roped-off, winding corridors. We saw dressing rooms and locker rooms, the "Sealing Room" (where families and newly wedded couples are "sealed for time and all eternity"), the Ordinance Room (an instruction room concerning Mormon gospel principles), the Celestial Room (a room representing "mankind's highest potential"), and the baptismal font which sat upon 12 life-size oxen (where the baptisms for the dead take place). The more important rooms contained a video display terminal hooked up to a main computer. We were then herded into a room where a temple attendant 'bore his testimony' that this building and the works performed within it "were of God."

After leaving the temple itself we went into the information center behind the temple where we were told that Mormon temples are similar to Old Testament temples like Solomon's. We were shown numerous pictures including some of the church's more famous members such as Marie Osmond, Danny White, and Mr. Marriott (of hotel fame). Young Mormon missionaries then greeted us and solicited our phone numbers and addresses for a 'possible' visit. Thus ended our visit.

The Mormons are proud of their temples and proud to describe themselves as "Temple Builders." Since their beginnings in 1830 they have spent a lot of time, effort and money in their temple-building. Currently they have 138 temples now operating with another 15 under construction throughout the world and 14 more announced.

Currently in the United States 579 Christians a day are being converted



to Mormonism (60% of these are Baptists). According to the publisher of the *Utah Evangel*, John L Smith, The Mormon Church had set their goal to convert 30,000 Christians during the first year the Dallas temple was open.

The Mormons, who claim to be the only true church and therefore the only true Christians, teach doctrines and beliefs which may astound the most liberal Bible reader. The 'Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints' (LDS) and its writings teach that men and women may become gods and goddesses, that Jesus and the devil are spirit-brothers, Adam is God and 'the only God with whom we have to do' (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, pg 50), the blood of Christ does not atone for all sins (*Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1, pg 133-138), Jesus was a polygamist and denial of a "plurality of wives" means damnation (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 4, pg 2259; Vol. 3, Pg. 266), and on and on to name a few. With all this in mind, what do Mormon leaders say about the importance of their expensive temples?

Gordon B. Hinckley, a past Mormon prophet stated in the book, *Temples of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints* (1979), p. 6: "its primary purpose is to afford members of the church the resources needed to identify their dead ancestors that they might extend to them the blessing that they themselves enjoy."

Elray L. Christiansen, a Mormon "Assistant to the Twelve" said temple ceremonies and rituals are "necessary for the progression and exaltation of the living and the dead." (ibid, pg. 14)

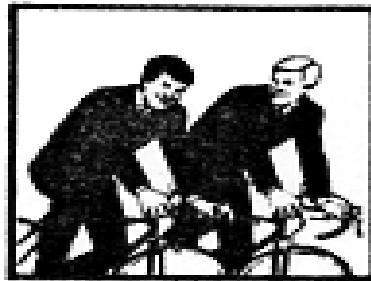
Mark E. Petersen, a respected apostle in the LDS church said, "they desired salvation in the presence of God. They understood that temple ordinances were essential to that salvation." (ibid. pg. 60)

About 98 percent of all rituals

performed inside the Mormon temple are done on behalf of dead people. The official LDS church magazine, *The Ensign*, stated, "During one hundred years of the Logan, Utah Temple's existence, more than 28 million ordinances have been performed there" (Aug. 84'. Pg. 80). Statistically speaking, more than 27 million ritual ceremonies were performed for dead people while less than one million were done in the temple for the Mormons themselves.

### MORMON DOCTRINE:

So far we have looked into the origins of the Book of Mormon, the background of the Mormon 'Prophet,' Joseph Smith, Jr., and 'Latter-day Saints' (LDS) temples. We will now be taking a look at Mormon doctrines concerning polytheism (the belief in many gods) and their belief that men and women can become gods and goddesses.



Mormon Missionaries

Before I begin this journey into modern-day mythology I would like to note that as I was indeed in the act of writing this article, two Mormon missionaries came to my front door. The missionaries, much to my surprise, were young women who had come by in response to a visitor's card I had filled out while I was investigating the Mormon temple in Dallas. The missionaries called themselves 'Sisters' (male missionaries are called 'Elders') and they wanted to share what they called the "Restored Gospel" (Mormon belief system) with me. I invited them in and we talked for about an hour and a half. At the

end of our discussion they asked if they could come by again and I of course, as a I Peter 3:15 Christian apologist, said yes.

Readers, one point of warning here: I do not believe you should engage in a discussion with veteran Mormon missionaries unless you are at least moderately knowledgeable of God's Word. LDS missionaries are skillful in 'scripture twisting' and they prey on people who are shallow or ignorant of the Word of God. Don't forget that in the United States on the average 24 Baptists convert to Mormonism for every one Mormon who converts to being a Baptist. The Bible clearly warns us in 2 Peter 3:16-17: *"There are some things in (Paul's letters) hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do to other scriptures. You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, beware lest you be carried away with the error of lawless men and lose your own stability."*

Well anyway, let's get back to the subject at hand, namely, the Mormon belief in many gods and that they themselves will become Gods of their own planet some day.

The founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, Jr. declared: *"In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it"* (J. Smith. Jr., *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 6. pg. 5. 1844) Mr. Smith also plainly stated: *"Here, then, is eternal life -to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you -namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one -from grace to grace. From exaltation to exaltation..."* (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pg. 346-47).

And again Joseph Smith Jr. said:

*I will preach on the plurality of Gods...I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods...Hence the doctrine of the plurality of Gods is as prominent in the Bible as any other doctrine. It is all over the face of the Bible...The heads of the Gods appointed one God for us; and when you take (that) view of the subject, it sets one free to see all the beauty, holiness and perfection of the Gods.” (J. Smith Jr. History of the Church, Vol. 6, pg. 474. 1844).*

The belief in millions of Gods and that mortal men can attain to immortal Godhood is still taught by the LDS church as the following quotes show: Lorenzo Snow, fifth president of the Mormon Church announced, “As man is, God once was; as God is, man may become.” (*Millennial Star*, 54, 404). John A. Widtsoe, a prominent Mormon author, stated “In short, man is a god in embryo” (*A Rational Theology*, pg. 26).

Mormon theology demands masses of Gods. Not only does Mormonism teach polytheism, but that Gods were once men (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pg. 245-46 where Smith exclaimed, “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heaven!). Mormon theology (see *Doctrine and Covenants*. Chap. 132:19-20, 37) describes how men and women can become gods and goddesses by marrying according to the Mormon “new and ever-lasting covenant.” Husbands and wives married in Mormonism (usually through their temple rite) are “sealed to each other for time and all eternity” and after this life they shall be “exalted” to Godhood.

How should the Christian react to all this? The same way Paul did when he was in Athens as “his spirit was stirring in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry” (Acts 17:16). This old lie of men

becoming gods is the same line the devil gave Eve in the garden. This idea of polytheism directly contradicts the Word of God and smacks of blasphemy against the true and living God.

God’s Word is clear on this whole subject of multitudes of Gods:

*“Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he before me there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me.” (Isa. 43:10).*

Also Isa. 44:8 says, “*Ye are even my witnesses. Is there a god besides me? Yea, there is no god, I know not any.*”

For further study see Deut. 6:4, I Cor. 8:4-8, Ex. 20:3, and Isa. 43:10-12, 44:6-8, 45:5-6, 14, 18, 21-23.

I pray that people will come out of Mormon darkness and into the marvelous light of Jesus Christ who is “the way, the truth, and the life” and the “light of the world” (John 14:6, 8:12). Amen!

## The 17 Points of the True Church?

Before this writing I was pondering whether to expose the many false prophecies given by the founder of the Mormon Church, Joseph Smith, Jr. (such as his prophecy that Christ would return to the earth somewhere around the year 1890; see *History of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 182; *Joseph Smith’s Diary*, March 10, 1843–July 14, 1843) or Mr. Smith’s anti-Black attitude (see *History of the Church*, vol. 2 pp. 436-38; vol. 3 p. 29; vol. 5, p. 218) or his shifting teaching concerning the necessity of plural marriage (see *Doctrine and Covenants*, published by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1966, 132:1-4, 19, 20, 34, 35, 38, 39, 52, 60-62; *Elder’s Journal*, as cited in *History of the Church*, vol. 3, p. 28), etc. However,

after having been visited by two Mormon missionaries, I’ve decided to respond to a challenge which they gave me in the form of a small yellow card. The missionaries asked me to research the points mentioned on the card and then come to a conclusion.

The little yellow card boldly declares, “Seventeen Points of the True Church” and lists seventeen characteristics of the only true church and then concludes with: “Does your church meet the test? The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does. Try it!” Let’s see how the Mormon Church stands up under its own criteria for what the true church of God is. The following are the “Seventeen Points” with related comments:

### 1. Christ organized the church.

No argument here since Christ did indeed establish the church and He stated that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). Whether or not Christ organized the Mormon Church is another matter.

2. The true church must bear the name of Jesus Christ. The LDS Church has a problem here because originally their official name was “The Church of Christ” (1830-1834) and then in 1834 the Mormons changed their church name the “The Church of Latter-day Saints” (1834-1838). Finally, in 1838, they changed their name to include the name of Jesus Christ. The copyright page of current issues of *Doctrines and Covenants* still show these other church names. Therefore, the Mormon church at its very beginning could not have been the true church because it did not have Jesus Christ’s name in its title (according to their own standard.)

3. The true church must have a foundation of Apostles and Prophets. Ephesians 2:19-20 says, “...of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets...” The Scripture says, “the foundation” not “a foundation.” The true church of God is based on

the teachings of THE apostles such as Paul, Peter, John, etc., (I Cor. 14:37), not a group of men who are given titles ("Apostles," "Prophets," "Seventies") by other men.

4. The true church must have the same organization as Christ's church. The Mormons claim the "organization" is found in Ephesians 4:11 which says, "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers..." The LDS Church has created titles for some of these positions, i.e. "apostles," "prophets," and "teachers" but they do not have title positions for "evangelists" and "pastors." This then would disqualify the Mormon Church from being the true church. Of course, when Eph. 4:11 is read in context one immediately discovers that the passage is speaking of Christ's gifts to His church, not some rigid organizational structure.

5. The true church must claim divine authority. Claiming divine authority and having divine authority are two entirely different things. The Bible must be the final authority on all claims such as this. Isa. 8:20 states, "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

6. The true church must have no paid ministry. According to Bob Witte, a former Mormon for ten years and director of *Ex-Mormons for Jesus Ministries*, the General Authorities of the Mormon Church are paid through stipends granted them by the many companies the church owns. Witte also says that professors and teachers at seminaries and colleges owned by the Church are likewise paid for their ministry to others. The Bible makes it clear that ministers, etc. should be supported financially by the members of the congregation (see I Cor. 9:7-14, I Tim. 5:17-18).

7. The true church must baptize by immersion. I happen to believe that baptism by immersion is the Biblical way BUT it should not be a

prerequisite for determining who the true church is. Many outstanding Christian leaders down through time have practiced alternate methods of baptism and their faith in the risen Christ was no less great.

8. The true church must bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. There is no record in the New Testament that Christ ever laid hands on any of the apostles for any reason whatsoever. In Acts 10:44-48 we see that Cornelius and others received the Holy Ghost without the laying on of hands (or baptism for that matter). Mormon theology states that one who is not baptized is unsaved, does not have the remission of sins, and is not in the kingdom (*Doctrine & Covenants 84:74; 83:12; 3 Nephi 11:33-34, 38; 5:34-35, 40; Pearl of Great Price, Moses 6:52ff*). Mormon teachings also state that an unbaptized person may not baptize others, nor may the priesthood be conferred by him, or upon him. However, in the LDS holy book *Pearl of Great Price* (Joseph Smith 2:68-72), we find a messenger conferring the "priesthood" on Joseph Smith who was unbaptized and unsaved—a clear violation of Mormon teachings. Therefore, Joseph Smith, because of the illegal "priesthood" bestowal, received no "authority" to either confer "priesthoods" or practice the "laying on of hands" and thus undermined the "authority" of the Mormon Church from the very beginning.

9. The true church must practice divine healing. Where are the great manifestations of divine healing within the LDS Church? Cannot one get healing reports from psychic healers, voodoo witchdoctors, Hindus, Muslims, cultists, mainline Christian denominations, etc.? Of course you can get healing reports from almost any religion but the big question is: "Who is doing the healing?" The Bible speaks of the workings of Satan in II Thess. 2:9, "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power

and signs and lying wonders." The devil can work miracles to deceive people but God's Word is "a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psalm 119:105).

10. The true church must teach that God and Jesus Christ are separate and distinct individuals. The Scripture teaches that there is a distinction of persons within the Godhead (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) but not in the sense that the Mormon Church means it. Mormonism teaches that there are three separate and distinct gods (God the Father is a completely different god from Jesus who is another god while the Holy Spirit, according to Mormonism, is yet a third god). The Bible, however, totally contradicts Mormon teachings here (even the *Book of Mormon* contradicts "Point Ten" because it asserts that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost "is one God" on its testimony page and that Jesus is the eternal Father, i.e. Mosiah 16:15, Alma 11:38-39). I Cor. 8:4 in the Bible reads, "...there is none other God but one." God said, "Before me no God was formed, nor will there be one after me...Is there any God besides me? No, there is no other Rock: I know not one... Turn to Me and be saved, all you ends of the earths; for I am God, and there is no other" (Isa. 43:10, 44:8, 45:22).

Scripture makes it abundantly clear that there is only one God and likewise Jesus makes it clear who this one God is in Matt. 28:19 when he commands baptisms to be performed "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." The Word of God declares that the Father is God (II Peter 1:17), Jesus is God (John 20:28, Heb. 1:8, I John 5:20), and the Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4, Matt. 12:32) therefore within the nature of the one God are three distinct persons, the Father, Son, and Spirit all sharing the same nature and essence of deity making them co-equal and co-eternal (the Holy Trinity not three different Mormon gods). While the Bible stresses the

composite unity of the Godhead, i.e., Deut. 6:4, etc. there are many scriptures showing the distinction of persons within the Godhead (John 8:17-18, 6:38, 16:7-8, 13-14, 5:23; Matt 3:17, 17:5; Mark 1:11; to name a few). John 1:1, when looking at the original Greek, shows an especially clear distinction between Jesus the Word and the other members of the Godhead (“...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”).

11. The true church must teach that God and Jesus Christ have bodies of flesh and bone. It is true that Jesus is God and that at the time of his birth he was “made flesh and dwelt among us” but it is ridiculous to assert that God the Father had a body of flesh and bone as Mormon theology declares. Jesus spoke the truth when he said, “*God is spirit, and his worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth*” (John 4:24). Not once did Jesus say that God the Father was simply an exalted man with a body of flesh and bone. In fact, the *Book of Mormon* states in Alma 18:24 that God is a “Great Spirit” as it does in Alma 22:9-11 thus contradicting “Point Eleven.”

12. The officers of the church must be called of God. Reverend Moon believes he has been called of God, the Hare Krishnas clanging their cymbals on the sidewalk believe they have been called of God, as do millions of other religionists across the world so what’s the difference? Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words...He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings...” (John 14:23-24). Those who believe they are called of God but do not accept God’s word as revealed in the Bible are self-deceived (Isa. 8:20 Luke 16:28-31).

13. The true church must claim revelation from God. Claiming revelation from God and having it are two different things. I Cor 12 and I Cor 14 show the many gifts God has bestowed upon his church but God’s greatest blessing is still his revelation concerning his Son as found in

found in Scripture “which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. 3:15).

14. The true church must be a missionary church. Almost every religion has a missionary outreach; of course some are larger than others. The Mormons boast of over 53,000 missionaries in the field throughout the world but this is not that significant when one considers that Jehovah’s Witnesses have over 7,000,000 workers in the field (here in the U.S. and throughout the world) and they have approximately half the total number of members in their religious organization as the Mormons do. Estimates reveal that only about 20 percent of all eligible Mormons actually go on their 18-month missionary tour.

15. The true church must be a restored church. Christ’s true church does not have to be “restored” because Jesus promised since the beginning that “*upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*” (Matthew 16:18). Mormonism teaches that the true Christian faith disappeared soon after the apostles died and was not “restored” until the LDS Church came on the scene in 1830 but Romans 8:28-39 indicates that God would not let the world be in darkness without hope for so long.

16. The true church must practice baptism for the dead. Mormons try to use I Cor. 15:29 to sanction their practice of baptizing dead people. However, a careful analysis of verse 29 in context with the rest of the chapter shows that Paul is not advocating or condoning this rather strange practice. He is merely acknowledging its use by some of the Corinthians and using it as an argument for the resurrection. There is no second chance at salvation (Hebrews 9:27)

17. By their fruits ye shall know them. “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening

wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits” (Matthew 7:15-16a). Mormonism has an ugly & unbiblical past. See the following useful websites for much more information:

<http://concernedchristians.com>

<http://www.mrm.org>

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### See Our YouTube Playlist “Dealing with Mormonism, The Religion of Mitt Romney and Utah” -It’s Free

See all our videos on Mormonism by simply going to **YouTube** online. Once on **YouTube** search **CANSWERSTV** or “Larry Wessels Mormonism” in the YouTube search box. Click the “**CANSWERSTV**” link to arrive at our Christian Answers of Austin, Texas **YouTube** channel. Once there scroll down the channel page and notice the 19 playlists on the right hand side. Our Mormonism playlist is the fourth one down. These videos are free to view and can be e-mailed and shared by anyone. Titles of our some of our Mormonism videos are:

\* Mormonism : “Gods Many” Polytheism #1: Origins of Joseph Smith Jr.’s Religion

\* Mormonism : “ Gods Many” Polytheism #2: Mormon Terminology & Theological Semantics

\* Mormonism : “Gods Many” Polytheism#3: Mormon Doctrines-Men Shall Become Immortal Planetary Gods

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\*Mormons In My Living Room (Part 1): Mormon Missionaries Invade Larry Wessels’ House -Truth Changes?

\*And Many More!

## Steve's Q & A



Steve Morrison  
Christian Answers  
Director of Research

### TWO VIEWS OF THE MORMON "BOOK OF ABRAHAM"

#### \*What is it?

The *Book Of Abraham* is a book in the Mormon scripture the *Pearl of Great Price*. The Mormon (LDS) Church claims it is God's Scripture. Non-Mormons claim it is a fake. Who is right?

This article is not meant to be pro-Mormon or anti-Mormon, but to objectively show both sides so you can make an informed decision.

#### \*The Origin of the Scrolls

Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism and translator of the Book of Mormon, obtained some ancient Egyptian scrolls in July, 1835. Joseph stated they contained the writings of Abraham, and his divinely inspired translation of them became Mormon scripture.

#### \*Their Significance

While people back then could not read ancient Egyptian to test his claim, people today can. By comparing the scrolls with his translation, we could know whether he

was a miraculous translator, or 2) was a fraud, a deceitful prophet. He must be one or the other.

#### \*Why Is This So Important

If Joseph Smith was unable to translate the *Book of Abraham* from ancient Egyptian, he could not

translate the *Book of Mormon* from ancient Egyptian either. If he could not translate one, then he could not divinely translate both.

Assuming God did inspire Joseph Smith, then all (Mormons and non-Mormons) who want to follow the true God should believe this true prophet. Assuming Joseph Smith is a fraud, then all (Mormons and non-Mormons) who want to follow the true God must reject this con-man. Do you agree? Are you someone who wants to follow the true God?

The reiterate, if the Mormon Christ is right, truth-lovers are compelled to join Mormonism. If the Mormon Church is wrong, then the truth-lovers are compelled to reject Mormonism. May the Holy Spirit guide you to truth as you read on.

#### \*Non-Mormon Viewpoint

1) Since he tried to translate, and 2) we have the correct scrolls, and 3) we can compare the two, and 4) comparing them is laughable, and 5) the captions sound obscene, then the *Book of Abraham* is a fake, Joseph Smith is a fraud, and no honest, informed person should believe Mormon lies.

#### \*Mormon Viewpoint

1) If he did not try to translate, or 2) we do not have the correct scroll, then the *Book of Abraham* is no barrier to all honest, informed people believing Mormon truth.

Let's look at each point, and then you can make an informed decision.

#### 1. Joseph Smith's Words

"A translation of some ancient Records, that have fallen into our hands from the catacombs of Egypt. —The writings of Abraham written by his own hand, upon papyrus." *Pearl of Great Price* p. 29.

Mormon Benjamin Urrutia, wrote that the idolatrous Egyptian scrolls might be written in secret code. Thus a pagan teaching was really written by God with secret messages for believers. To be fair, it must be said that the LDS Church has not sanctioned this view. The only "Official" view the author knows of is Joseph

Smith's own words.

#### 2. The Right Scrolls?

Three ways we know these are the scrolls Smith tried to translate: 1) the pictures match, 2) the characters (hieroglyphs) were copied to the English originals, and 3) Joseph Smith even wrote his own *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*.

1. The pictures match and captions are the same. The only difference was a penciled in spot on picture #1 that was in ink in the BOA. 2. The hieroglyphs were copied to 3 of the 4 English originals. (Joseph would dictate to one to four scribes.) Of the eighty-odd Egyptian hieroglyphs on the scroll, 20, 13, and 10 hieroglyphs were written on manuscripts #1, #2, and #3. When there were gaps in the scroll 7, 6, & 6 restored hieroglyphs were added.

3. The church still has Joseph Smith's bound, 34-page book called *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. The book has the hieroglyphs and a very similar English "translation."

#### 3. Comparing Translations

Here is Dr. Klaus Baer's translation of the scroll. (Dialogue: *A Journal of Mormon Thought*. Autumn 1968 p. 119-120.)

"Osiris shall be conveyed into the Great Pool of Khons —and likewise Osiris Hor, justified born to Tikhebyt, justified —after his arms have been placed on his heart and the Breathing Permit (which [Isis] made and has writing on its inside and outside) has been wrapped in royal linen and placed under his left arm near his heart; the rest of his mummy bandages should be wrapped over it. The man for whom this book has been copied will breathe forever as the bas of the gods do." ("Bas" are souls.)

#### 4. The Egyptologists' Verdict

Smith translated thousands of English words from about 80 hieroglyphs. Joseph said this was the writing of Abraham and the word of his god. Actually it was a variant of *The Book of the Dead*, a pagan Egyptian magic book filled with heathen idols, often buried with



mummies.

Dr. Richard Parker of Brown University in a personal letter to Marvin Cowen dated Jan. 9, 1968 said, "I have seen Joseph Smith's *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar*. The interpretation of the signs purported to be Egyptian have no resemblance to the meaning ascribed to them by Egyptologists."

Dr. A.B. Mercer said 50 years ago, "Any pupil of mine who would show such absolute ignorance of Egyptian as Smith does, could not possibly expect to get more than zero in an examination in Egyptology." (*Improvement Era*, v. 16, p. 615).

Dr. John A. Wilson wrote, "...as far as I am concerned I see pieces of two or possibly three different papyri and every one of them looks like a traditional *Book of the Dead*." (letter Jan. 5, 1968.)

### 5. Comparing the Captions

Smith said these were God's scripture. Professional scholars say they are from the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*. See what you think?



Picture #1

The *Book of Abraham* caption says this [Min] is god. It must be noted here that the LDS Church has never officially said their god is a copulating bull without equal.



Picture #2

## The Actual Origin of the Book of Abraham

### II. A Matter of Time

This theory says that before Smith got the Egyptian papyrus God gave him a vision of both a scroll and the English translation. The scroll the Mormons purchased in July 1835 was not the same scroll; Joseph mistook it for the same scroll because the pictures on each were so similar. Thus the *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* was Joseph's misguided attempt to match a true divine inspiration with his own, erroneous view of the scroll.

There is no evidence to support this intriguing theory. Joseph Smith's words of his Diary stand against it as well as *The Documented History of the Church* (DHC). The Diary refers to translating October 7 and November 14 through December 3 all in 1835. Warren Parish was hired to write for Joseph October 29, 1835. Joseph Smith's Diary has no references at all to writing a *Book of Abraham* before this very significant purchase. The DHC was written in 1843, but it too has corroborating evidence. Its earliest mention translating a *Book of Abraham* is July 1835, DHC 2:238:

"The remainder of this month (July, 1835) I was continually engaged in translating an alphabet to the *Book of Abraham* and arranging a grammar of the Egyptian language as practiced by the ancients."

No Mormon, including Joseph Smith, has given any indication of there being a *Book of Abraham* prior to July 1835. While Christians claim Joseph dreamed up the Book of Abraham, Joseph never said that.

### III. No Connection at All

A third explanation is to deny any connection with the pagan book.

Hugh Nibley's book *The Message of the Joseph Smith Papyri* postulates the Egyptian characters next to the three English manuscripts as later unauthorized additions by members who attempted to translate

themselves. This can be proved false because in *Egyptian Alphabet and Grammar* Joseph Smith personally directed the placement of the Egyptian and the English.

### IV. A Last Stand

A final "last stand" this author has heard by Mormon defenders is this - Joseph Smith was admittedly deceived in thinking he was really translating the scrolls. Maybe God still used the admittedly idolatrous text to inspire Joseph. Like a burning candle could inspire a mystic's vision the scrolls were perhaps a "spark" God used to start him off.

Those who hold this view do not know the character of our Lord. The True God would not let a true prophet be deluded in inventing imaginative descriptions of the Egyptian cultic funeral scenes. Smith's god guided him to his own scripture. At least Joseph thought so. If the True God did not give Joseph the English translation, which god was Joseph listening to? The fruit of Smith's work glorifies Joseph's god. As long as it advances Mormonism, some do not even care that Satan was the source of the scrolls Joseph was clearly in deception and the result honors images of idols.

**Deuteronomy 32:15b-21a, 39** says, "then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee. And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, 'I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very forward generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities...See now that I, even I, and he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.'"

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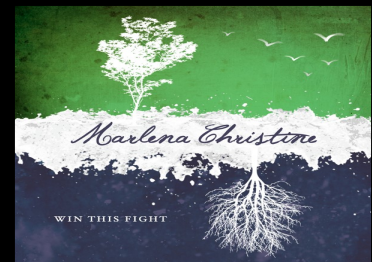
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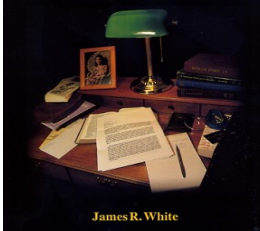


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## Letters to a Mormon Elder



## Letters To a Mormon

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*Letters to a Mormon Elder* is the ideal book to give to the inquiring Mormon, for in it he or she will find the Gospel of Christ lovingly presented. The Latter-day Saint who reads this book will be invited to trust in the all-sufficient grace of God.

James White is Director of Alpha and Omega Ministries, a Christian apologetics and counter-cult missionary based in Phoenix, Arizona. He holds a B.A. degree in Bible from Grand Canyon College, and an M.A. degree in Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary. He has written and published numerous tracks and articles, and is the author of *The Fatal Flaw*, *Answers to Catholic Claims*, and many others.

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page 8: Book of Abraham?  
page 10: Our YouTube Videos

*“exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict” (Titus1:9)*

## LETTERS FROM THE FRONTLINE



### *Christian Debater Guide*

Hey Larry,

Just filled out the online invite from the Mormon missionaries to come over to my place, so I can convert them and “save a soul from hell.” Wouldn’t be able to do it without having repeatedly watched your Mormon videos! Your reward will truly be great.

-M.S. (Canada)

Hello,

I’ve been watching some of your **YouTube** videos and I love what you are doing. I watched “*The Agony of Deceit*” series and I love it. I tried downloading the book but it didn’t work, it says it’s locked. Also, I tried buying from Amazon and it says they don’t ship to Canada. Please can you send me this book? Thanks.

-A.B. (Canada)

Dear Pastor,

I am very blessed with your ministry. Could you possibly send me copies of your newsletter on a regular basis? Thanks and God bless you all!

-B.B. (From the internet)

Brother Wessels,

I have seen a few of your shows on the public access channel and I am very pleased with your effort to educate the church of today. You are very knowledgeable and I have enjoyed your topics. Thank you again.

-B.G. (Austin, TX)

Hi Larry,

Thank you so much! Last night I viewed the “*Jehovah’s Witnesses: Deceived Deceivers #4*” video. I was so captivated by the contradictions you kept pulling out of their own books and magazines, like *The Awake* (1959 pg 96) where it talks about praying to Jesus! I mean I was just blown away. The Lord has blessed you big time with the most wonderful gifts!

-J.M. (from the internet)

Hi Larry,

Thank you for your ministry and your passion for defending the Word! [www.Biblequery.com](http://www.Biblequery.com) and your **YouTube** videos are a true blessing to

all Christians. I first found out about you last year, I read a book by Bart Ehrman, critiquing the Bible, but essays on [biblequery.org](http://biblequery.org) really helped remove all doubts. I became a Bible believing Christian last March, coming from a Russian Orthodox Mary cult. One of the hardest things was for me to find answers, your logical answers on **YouTube** really helped me. I now attend a really great Bible school in La Grange, Wyoming. Have a great day!

-K.Y. (Wyoming)

Hello Larry Wessels,

We had a falling out because of my study of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. I have found the error of my ways through constant study and am now back in Evangelical Christianity. I hope and pray that you would let me back into your establishment; i.e. **YouTube** channel, **Facebook** and also if I could still get the *Christian Answers* newsletter. I am sorry, we all make dumb mistakes. Thank you for your time! God bless you and your ministry.

-B.O. (from the internet)

I have been a Jehovah’s Witness for 50 years, I appreciate your reply. It’s a blessing from up above. I’ve found out lately that the Watchtower is a cult and they are wicked and without mercy. You are absolutely correct, we never look at the founders and history and practice of this so-called organization. Satan is very powerful to blind us. All I ever wanted to do was worship a loving God and be a good boy! I feel ashamed. I’ve spent all my life in this organization working hard. My time and money for nothing. Worshipping the wrong way; wow! This hurts big time. Thanks to you and others, the Almighty has people like you to open the eyes of the blind one and I was able to see the light. Better late than never and die on it. I will discard the 4 page letter I was preparing for them, I will study hard and will use questions as they did with me. I need to help my children reason with their own publication. They tell me they would

die for them. I am praying to God to help me control myself and be very discreet as you said, “I need to be patient.” I ordered all the DVDs you had on Watchtower and should be receiving them soon. I would like some publications on how the Watchtower originated as shown on **YouTube**. May God bless you. I have not disfellowshipped myself from this dragon, but will keep myself on low profile until I can remove my children and others discreetly. I still cannot believe this is true, but it is! I will become like you and help all I can with God’s help. Then my other problem would be where is the true worship? I will find it. Everything looks different! Thank you.

V.C. (Florida)

Hello,

I am from New Zealand, living in Australia. Thank you so much for your advice and sharing the Words of God. I understand what you say and enjoy your shows. It’s helped me heaps, and still is. God bless.

-M.S. (Australia)

Christian Debater,

Christian Greetings from the Philippines! I am an avid listener to your shows on **YouTube**. I am always blessed and have learned many things about true bible doctrines. Hallelujah!! I am really happy that I have found your programs on **YouTube** because it makes my faith in God stronger every time I listen to your debates and even your Bible expositions. Thank you and God bless you and your ministry.

J.D. (Philippines)

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