

# ARE MORMONS CHRISTIAN?

Comparing the Differences  
Between Mormonism &  
Biblical Christianity



Truth in Love  
MINISTRY





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# Introduction

## Is Mormonism a Christian religion?

The Mormon (or LDS) church strenuously claims to be Christian:



“Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints unequivocally affirm themselves to be Christians”

**GOSPEL TOPICS ESSAYS, ARE MORMONS CHRISTIAN?**

This sentiment is echoed by members and missionaries alike.

However, claiming to be Christian doesn't automatically make Mormonism a Christian religion. Nor does including Jesus' name in their church name. Many other people and churches make this claim but are not recognized as Christian by traditional Christian churches.

Our ministry team has found a great willingness to engage in spiritual discussions amongst LDS members. However, although we can talk about spiritual concepts using many of the exact words, in the end, we are talking about two completely different faiths.

These differences matter because they reveal stark contrasts in our understanding of ourselves, Jesus and what he has done, and our relationship with God. These differences have an earthly and eternal impact.

## SO, WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

The dictionary defines a Christian as “one who professes belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ.” Therefore, in keeping with this commonly held definition, the key to determining whether Mormonism is Christian or not is ascertaining if its teachings are the ones Jesus taught. So, does the Mormon church teach what Jesus taught?

One of the bedrock beliefs of Christianity is that the Bible accurately conveys Jesus' teachings. Therefore, it is the standard by which all beliefs must be evaluated.

Let's take a look at some of the teachings of the Bible and compare them with LDS doctrine.

Additional articles, videos, and resources are available in the online version of this guide at [tilm.org](http://tilm.org).



EXPLAINING TERMINOLOGY

# Why We Use “Mormon” and “LDS”



When it comes to nicknames of the Church, such as the “LDS Church,” the “Mormon Church,” or the “Church of the Latter-day Saints,” the most important thing *in* those names is the *absence* of the Savior’s name. To remove the Lord’s name from the Lord’s Church is a major victory for Satan. When we *discard* the Savior’s name, we are subtly *disregarding* all that Jesus Christ did for us — even His Atonement.

**THE CORRECT NAME OF THE CHURCH, 88**

We use the names “Mormon” and “LDS” not out of spite for President Nelson’s statement, but solely for practical purposes. It is beyond awkward to write, “the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” every time we refer to them. Most LDS members don’t even do that. Even official LDS sources still commonly use LDS or Latter-day Saints.

By the way, even using LDS or Latter-day Saints go against the reason President Nelson cited for using the full name. In the quote above, note how he emphasizes both the absence and disregarding of Jesus’ name.

It is true that many LDS members are no longer calling themselves Mormon. The reason we retain it is, again, a practical one. Simply put, it is not the name most Biblical Christians associate with them. Almost without fail, when we use “LDS” outside of the Intermountain West in the United States, some Christians ask us who we are talking about. On the other hand, most Christians understand when we use the name “Mormon.”

## ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS?

We sincerely care about you, and have a special message for you at [tilm.org/about-us/to-our-lds-friends](http://tilm.org/about-us/to-our-lds-friends)





## WHO IS GOD?

# God

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT GOD?

The Bible teaches there is only one God — not just of this earth, but anywhere — yet he reveals himself as three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Christian church uses “triune” (three in one) to describe this mystery.



I and the Father are one.

**JOHN 10:30**

Furthermore, God is not merely different in degree from us. He is in a class all his own, entirely different in his very essence. God’s power is unlimited; he is beyond human understanding. He created the universe from nothing and is present everywhere. Moreover, God is unchanging, without beginning or end. There was never a time he did not exist as God.

### WHAT DOES MORMONISM TEACH ABOUT GOD?

There is only one God of this world in Mormonism, but there are countless other gods of different worlds or universes. Mormons often refer to the God of this world as Heavenly Father but believe Jesus and the Holy Ghost are also gods. Mormons believe three separate gods make up one godhead. They are united in purpose but not in personage.

Mormonism teaches that Heavenly Father was once a man elevated to godhood and that his human characteristics limit God’s power. In other words, he’s not omnipresent, and he did not create the universe from nothing.

Additionally, Mormonism teaches that humans, by adhering faithfully to the Mormon plan of salvation, can become not just like God but exalted as gods themselves.



The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 130:22**



## WHO IS GOD?

# God

### WHY THIS MATTERS

If God was formerly a man and humans are gods in embryo, with divine destiny, enormous theological problems arise. This teaching makes man the center of everything rather than God. Man is elevated, and God is diminished.

There is and only ever will be one God, and anyone who seeks to become a god is not following a plan given by God but one deceptively designed by Satan to lead astray. LDS doctrine's ultimate goal or destination, "exaltation," leads one straight off the path of eternal life to eternal damnation in hell.

At first glance, all of God's incredible divine attributes might be disconcerting. However, God being so much higher than humans ultimately brings comfort when we understand that God loves the world and sent his son to live, die, and rise to save sinful mortals.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Deuteronomy 6:4  
Matthew 28:19  
Isaiah 45:22  
John 4:24  
Psalm 90:2

Jeremiah 23:24  
Genesis 17:1  
Psalm 139:1-4  
Isaiah 55:9

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** There is one, all-powerful, triune God who created the universe from nothing.



**MORMONISM:** God was once a man who worked his way to godhood. Heavenly Father, Jesus and the Holy Ghost are three separate gods who make up one godhead.



WHO IS GOD?

# Jesus

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT JESUS?

The Bible teaches that Jesus is God from all eternity. He took on human flesh and became man, born of the Virgin Mary. As a man, he served as our substitute by living perfectly under the law in our place and dying for our sins. As God, this ransom could pay the price for all the world. Jesus' resurrection then proved that sin's penalty was paid in full, making possible the resurrection of all the dead and life eternal for those who trust in this completed work.

As our perfect substitute, the Christian's faith rests solely on Christ's saving work. He did all the "do's" and didn't do all the "don'ts" for us. Put another way, God sent Jesus as the mediator to bring us into God's presence. He is the final prophet and has revealed all we need in the Bible. The Aaronic priesthood was replaced by the Melchizedek priesthood, of which Jesus is the last and only high priest who made the complete and ultimate sacrifice for the world. Jesus also serves as our final king ruling over all things for the church. Through Jesus, every believer has direct access to God.



The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God!  
He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**1 CORINTHIANS 15:56-57**

## WHAT DOES MORMONISM TEACH ABOUT JESUS?

Mormonism teaches that Jesus is the literal son of the Father. He earned his way to godhood in pre-existence before he came to earth. Therefore, he is not equal to the Father. Having achieved exaltation himself, Mormons believe Jesus is the Savior but limit his atonement to providing physical resurrection for all people.

According to Mormonism, Jesus' sacrifice merely opens the gate to the path that leads to eternal life with God, leaving humanity to earn exaltation.

In other words, Mormonism teaches that Jesus is primarily our example.

Therefore, each Mormon must follow the model Jesus provided to prove their worthiness and eventually achieve perfection. Jesus' atonement simply refinanced the debt of sin and spread out the necessary payments. In Mormonism, Jesus raises you from the dead and gets you to judgment, but what happens after that depends on what you have been and become.





## WHO IS GOD? Jesus



And now, my beloved brethren, I know by this that unless a man shall endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God, he cannot be saved.

**2 NEPHI 31:16 (BOOK OF MORMON)**



For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 93:20**

### WHAT A BURDEN TO BEAR

Rather than being set free, Mormons believe they still have to pay back the debt to Jesus through good work.

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Although Mormons may profess belief in Jesus Christ, what their church teaches about who Jesus is, what he did, and his role in bringing about the salvation of humanity prevents this from being faith sufficient for eternal life with God.

Those who trust in Jesus alone receive the forgiveness of sins, Christ's imputed perfection, and status as children of God and heirs of eternal life with God. Those who trust in anything other than Jesus are not forgiven of their sins, are still in their state of imperfection, and are not children of God and therefore not heirs of eternal life but eternal damnation.

But there is good news, Jesus not only gets believers to judgment day; he gets them through it.



## WHO IS GOD? Jesus

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

John 1:1-2  
John 1:14  
Luke 1:31  
Galatians 4:4  
Galatians 3:13  
Mark 10:45  
1 Timothy 2:5  
Hebrews 1:1-2

2 Timothy 3:15-17  
Hebrews 7:11-19  
Hebrews 7:23-27  
1 John 2:2  
Ephesians 1:22-23  
Hebrews 12:2  
Galatians 2:16  
Ephesians 3:14-21

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Jesus is our perfect substitute. Eternal life in heaven is ours because of his perfect life and sacrificial death.



**MORMONISM:** Jesus is our example. Mormons must still prove to be worthy through good works.



## WHO IS GOD? The Holy Spirit

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Holy Spirit is God, one with the Father and the Son. One of God's many blessings to all believers is the companionship of the Holy Spirit, who acts as our advocate, counselor, and helper, teaching, guiding, strengthening, and comforting us.

“

And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.

**EPHESIANS 1:13-14**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Mormonism teaches that the Holy Ghost provides inspiration and witness to help worthy Mormons make the right choices. Some describe his work as a burning in the bosom.

In Mormonism, the greater one's worthiness, the stronger the Holy Ghost's presence.

“

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we should make ourselves worthy to receive this special messenger and witness of our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

...

All honest seekers of the truth can feel the influence of the Holy Ghost, leading them to Jesus Christ and His gospel. However, the fulness of the blessings given through the Holy Ghost are available only to those who receive the gift of the Holy Ghost and remain worthy.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 7: THE HOLY GHOST**



WHO IS GOD?

# The Holy Spirit

## WHY THIS MATTERS

When God brings believers into his family through saving faith, he does so through his Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit dwells in believers, who are called God's holy temple, permanently. The Holy Spirit signifies God's ownership of believers and that they are his sons who now call him Father.

The Holy Spirit doesn't come and go based on one's faithfulness; rather, he remains faithful, residing in believers constantly, convicting them of their sin and comforting them with the promises of sins forgiven in Christ Jesus.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Titus 3:6  
1 Corinthians 3:16  
1 Corinthians 6:19

Ephesians 1:13-14  
Galatians 4:6

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** The Holy Spirit lives in every believer, teaching, guiding, strengthening, and comforting us.



**MORMONISM:** The Holy Spirit provides help to worthy Mormons.



WHO ARE WE?

# Life & the Human Condition

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT OUR LIVES?

Christianity teaches that our lives — spirit and body — begin at conception. We are born sinful, and we sin because we are sinful. Our natural inclination is to do evil.



Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

**PSALM 51:5**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT OUR LIVES?

Mormonism teaches that our spirit life begins in the pre-existence where we matured as spirits before coming to earth. Mormonism teaches that man is born without sin, and becomes sinful only when he sins. The LDS church teaches that man's natural inclination is to do good.



Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 93:38**

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Life begins at conception. All people are born sinful.



**MORMONISM:** Life begins in the pre-existence. All people are born without sin.



WHO ARE WE?

# Adam & Eve's Fall

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT THE FALL OF MAN?

The Bible teaches that Adam committed the original sin. This sin was the worst and most catastrophic event in the history of the world. As a result, all of creation was cursed.

“

Just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people

**ROMANS 5:18A**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT THE FALL OF MAN?

Mormonism teaches that Adam and Eve's fall was a necessary part of God's plan resulting in great blessings for man — physical bodies, the right to choose between good and evil, the ability to have children, and the opportunity to gain eternal life. In Mormonism, Adam fell that man might have joy.

“

And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end.

And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin.

But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.

Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.

**2 NEPHI 2:22-25 (BOOK OF MORMON)**



WHO ARE WE?

# Adam & Eve's Fall

## WHY THIS MATTERS

From a human perspective, eating a piece of fruit doesn't seem serious — at least not serious enough to bring sin and death to the entire human race!

That is why this story is so valuable. It reveals that the human perspective is wrong. It exposes the deadly nature of all sin. It underscores there are no harmless or minor sins. Sins are not simple mistakes. Every sin is an act of disrespect and rebellion against God. So much so that even one sin makes people guilty of breaking all of God's commandments.

Nothing good resulted from the Fall. At the Fall, however, something good happened. God did not abandon humankind. Instead, he sought them out and provided for them. He gave them hope by giving them a promise of a Savior.

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** The fall was the worst and most catastrophic event in the history of the world.



**MORMONISM:** The fall was a good thing. It resulted in great blessings for man.



WHO ARE WE?

# God's Holy Temple

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT GOD'S HOLY TEMPLE?

In the Old Testament, God designed the temple as his great classroom. Its structure stressed that sin separates all humanity from God. Its sacrifices portrayed the principle of substitutionary atonement and pointed to Jesus' sacrifice for the world. The temple was not about people working for God. It was all about showing what God would do for humanity in Jesus Christ.

In this striking way, God taught the people about the seriousness of sin. But God didn't use the temple only to teach about the seriousness of sin. He also showed that the blood of a sacrifice was needed to remove sin. As a result, the temple courtyard resembled a slaughterhouse day in and day out as countless animals were sacrificed.

However, no matter how many animals were sacrificed, they couldn't take away sin. They all pointed ahead to Jesus, the true Lamb of God, who alone could remove sin. At Jesus' death, God again used the temple to teach an important truth. The temple veil, for centuries, had symbolically separated God from man. When Jesus died, it was suddenly torn from top to bottom. In this vivid way, God demonstrated that Jesus had reconciled God and humankind.

The New Testament teaches that God dwells in all believers through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all believers are God's Holy Temple. God, in love, bestows this honor on every person who trusts that they are acceptable to God solely because of what Jesus has done for them.

“

The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.

**ACTS 17:24-25**

## WHAT DOES MORMONISM TEACH ABOUT GOD'S HOLY TEMPLE?

The LDS church teaches that worthy Mormons perform ordinances required for their eternal life in buildings dedicated to God as holy temples. Only the worthy may come to the temple to participate in its work. This “salvation work” includes endowments, baptisms for the dead, and marriage sealings. Although performed by the living, much of the work done in the temple is for the dead.





WHO IS GOD?

# God's Holy Temple



All roads lead to the temple, for it is there that we are prepared in all things to qualify us to enter the presence of the Lord.

**BOYD K. PACKER**

**REMEMBER ME: RELIEF SOCIETY PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE P. 1, 84**

## WHY THIS MATTERS

When we study the purpose and function of the temple in ancient times, we see that it was primarily a place of sacrifice. Weddings were not performed in the temple but publicly within the community. It was celebrated openly with family, friends, and neighbors serving as witnesses.

Nowhere can we find that believers in the Bible ever practiced or observed the rites of eternal marriage, endowments, or performing ordinances on behalf of the dead. On the contrary, rituals to enhance the deceased's afterlife were considered pagan practices.

The LDS temple system takes away from the completed work of Christ and gives the effort to humankind. However, sinful human beings cannot do salvation work for other sinners. Only sinless Jesus could do that, and he did. Salvation's work is done.

Having done all that was necessary to carry out his mission on earth, Jesus now intercedes for us. The temple is no longer where one goes to find intercession with God. In Christ, we have complete access to God at any time and in any place.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

James 2:10  
John 19:30  
Hebrews 10:10-14  
Hebrews 10:19-23



WHO IS GOD?

# God's Holy Temple

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** All believers are God's Holy Temple as the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts all believers.



**MORMONISM:** God's Holy Temples are buildings where worthy Mormons perform ordinances required for their eternal life.



## WHO ARE WE? God's Family

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT GOD'S FAMILY?

The Bible teaches that only true believers have been given the right to become children of God. Believers are adopted into the family of God through faith.

In Adam, all humanity fell. Consequently, all are born in sin and are enemies of God. Sin makes us children of wrath deserving condemnation and eternal separation from God. But through faith (trust) in the work of Jesus, the enemies of God are reconciled to him and made his children!



Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

**JOHN 1:12**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT GOD'S FAMILY?

Mormonism teaches that all people are the literal spirit children of God. They are the product of Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother. Satan and his demons are also literal children of God who rebelled and were cast out.



Man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal [physical] body.

**TEACHINGS OF PRESIDENTS OF THE CHURCH: JOSEPH F. SMITH [1998]**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Mormonism's teaching about God's family seems comforting at first, but it minimizes the sacrifice and work of Jesus. The gift of God's grace in favor is diminished.

Trust in Jesus and his completed work is what makes one a child of God. Those who do not trust



## WHO ARE WE? God's Family

Christ and Christ alone are not God's children but rather are God's enemies who will be eternally separated from him in hell.

Hearing that we were not born as children of God is frightening. But when we dig a little deeper to understand how God makes people his children, we find lasting comfort. We were his enemies, but God lavished his love upon us by adopting us as his children and making us righteous through faith in the finished work of Jesus. God calls those who trust in Jesus "sons" and "daughters" and declares them to be heirs of eternal life with him.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 5:12  
Psalm 51:5  
Ephesians 4:18  
Romans 3:23

Romans 5:10  
Galatians 3:26  
John 1:12

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Only believers have been given the right to become children of God.



**MORMONISM:** All people are the literal spirit children of God.



## WHO ARE WE? Salvation

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT SALVATION?

God has given us salvation based on Jesus' work. All believers are guaranteed the forgiveness of sins and eternal life in God's presence. Salvation includes both the resurrection of the body and the restoration of our relationship with God.

Salvation, literally "being saved," is God's rescue of sinners. Salvation is not a plan we must follow. Instead, it refers to the freedom won by Jesus' saving work. Salvation is deliverance from physical death, sin, AND eternal death. Since salvation is complete, believers have full confidence they are forgiven of their sins and will live eternally with God.



For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast.

**EPHESIANS 2:8-9**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT SALVATION?

Mormonism teaches that God has given a plan of salvation. This plan demands that Mormons earn their position in eternal life. For most Mormons, salvation is equivalent only to physical resurrection, which is the only free gift in Mormonism. Many Mormons say they believe they are saved by Jesus alone, but what they mean is they don't have to do anything to gain resurrection for their bodies.



## WHO ARE WE? Salvation

When it comes to salvation from sin, Mormonism teaches:

“

You will not be completely saved from sin until you have finished your life on the earth, having faithfully endured to the end. Note that you cannot be saved in your sins; you cannot receive unconditional salvation simply by declaring your belief in Christ with the understanding that you will inevitably commit sins through the rest of your life. Through the grace of God, you can be saved from your sins. To receive this blessing, you must exercise faith in Jesus Christ, strive to keep the commandments, forsake sin, and renew your repentance and cleansing through the ordinance of the sacrament.

**TEACHINGS OF PRESIDENTS OF THE CHURCH: JOSEPH F. SMITH [1998]**

“

For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.

**2 NEPHI 25:23 (BOOK OF MORMON)**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Mormon soteriology, what they believe and teach about salvation, affects their Christology, what they believe and teach about Christ. Because the Mormon view of salvation is vastly different, so is their idea of Jesus.

Mormons and Christians may be talking about the same historical Jesus but not love, trust, and worship the same theological Jesus. One view leads to eternal life in heaven, the other to eternal suffering in hell.

Satan, parading as an “Angel of Light,” leads his Mormon victims to think they will find life and salvation in a “lookalike” gospel, a Jesus + Me theology. It starts with Jesus but quickly turns back to self, rules, and human requirements.



## WHO ARE WE? Salvation

Although all humanity was held captive by sin, and the demands of God's law stood against us, Jesus came to set humanity free. In his own body, he paid the ransom for our sins. By shedding his blood on the cross, Jesus satisfied the demands of the law. He did for us what we could never do for ourselves.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

John 3:17  
Ephesians 1:7  
Ephesians 2:8-9

Hebrews 9:26  
Revelation 21:3  
John 3:16

John 19:30  
Romans 6:23  
1 Corinthians 15:22

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** God has given us salvation as a free gift.



**MORMONISM:** God has given a plan of salvation. We must work the plan.



WHO ARE WE?

# Our Purpose on Earth

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT OUR PURPOSE ON EARTH?

Christians believe we will live in eternity with God. While we're still on earth, God graciously credits us with Jesus' righteousness, making us perfect right now. Our purpose on earth is to glorify God.

“

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

**1 PETER 2:9**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT OUR PURPOSE ON EARTH?

Mormonism teaches that the ultimate goal is to live in eternity as a god. To reach this goal, Mormons must strive each day to do all they can do to become perfect.

A Mormon's righteousness is proportional to their obedience to the law. To that end, Mormonism teaches that a Mormon's purpose on earth is to be tested in this pursuit.

“

Agency makes our life on earth a period of testing.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 4: FREEDOM TO CHOOSE**

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Our purpose on earth is to glorify God.



**MORMONISM:** A Mormon's purpose on earth is to be tested.





# The Purpose of the Law

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW?

The entire content of the Scripture of God can be rightly divided into two parts:

- commandments — Law, and
- promises — Gospel

The basic distinction is straightforward: The Law tells us what we ought to do; the Gospel tells us what God has done.

The Law, with its “you must’s” and “you must not’s,” both define the universal standard of divine goodness and reveal human weakness. It typically does its work of accusation in the form of a commandment attached to a condition. “If you do/are \_\_\_\_\_, then you will \_\_\_\_\_.”

God’s Law, summarized in the Ten Commandments, reflects God’s perfect expectations for us. Any infraction is a serious offense to God punishable by eternal death.

Every single law we break proves our unworthiness and earns us eternal punishment. Because God’s standard is perfection, breaking even a single commandment is the same as breaking the whole law. This means that even one sin is enough to damn us.

“

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God’s sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.

**ROMANS 3:19-20**

“

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

**ROMANS 3:23**



# The Purpose of the Law

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW?

Mormonism teaches that God would never give us commands that we could not keep. The Law was given so that humans could prove worthiness by following it. Therefore, every law a person keeps increases their worthiness. Obedience is how humans make progress in the process of eternal life.

“

There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated — and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 130:20-21**

“

The Ten Commandments are eternal gospel principles that are necessary for our exaltation.

The Ten Commandments are a vital part of the gospel. Obedience to these commandments paves the way for obedience to other gospel principles.

**GOSPEL TOPICS ESSAYS: TEN COMMANDMENTS**

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Mormons view the Law as a way to gain God's favor. However, earning favor by good behavior is impossible because we would have to keep ALL of his commandments perfectly. Instead, God gave his Law as a mirror to show us our sins.

One can only believe they are making progress in keeping the whole of God's Law by changing it and watering it down so that obedience seems possible. Unfortunately, such rationalization of sin gives a false sense of achievement and eliminates the need for a substitutionary Savior. The Bible teaches that those who try to justify themselves by the Law have severed themselves from Christ and have fallen away from grace.



# The Purpose of the Law

We cannot cleanse ourselves by trying to keep the commandments. That is not their intent. They are only diagnostic tools. Instead, we use them in the way God intended and then apply the only God-given cure by forsaking all trust in our own works and putting all our trust in what Jesus has already done for us.

It is shocking to see ourselves in the mirror of God's Law and observe how much sin has infected us. But it's so important — especially because God has given us the cure, namely Jesus. Scripture says he is the only antidote for sin.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 3:19-20  
Romans 7:1 – 8:4  
Romans 10:4  
Romans 3:23

Galatians 2:16  
Galatians 5:4  
1 John 1:7

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** God has given us the law so that we can see our sin and will turn to him for salvation.



**MORMONISM:** Mormonism teaches that God has given the law so that humans can prove worthiness by following it.



## SIN & THE LAW

# What is Sin?

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT SIN?

The Bible teaches that all sin is against God and that any sin is equal in its power to separate humans from God.

“

Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight

**PSALM 51:4**

Christianity teaches that humans sin in thought, word, and deed. And that there are sins of commission, or sins we actively do, and sins of omission, things we fail to do that by that failure result in sin.

“

What shall we conclude then? Do we have any advantage? Not at all! For we have already made the charge that Jews and Gentiles alike are all under the power of sin. As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;  
there is no one who understands;  
there is no one who seeks God.  
All have turned away,  
they have together become worthless;  
there is no one who does good,  
not even one.”

“Their throats are open graves;  
their tongues practice deceit.”

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.”

“Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

“Their feet are swift to shed blood;  
ruin and misery mark their ways,  
and the way of peace they do not know.”

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

**ROMANS 3:9-18**



## SIN & THE LAW

# Sin

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT SIN?

Mormonism teaches that sin is against self. In Mormonism, mistakes, slip-ups, oversights, and indiscretions are not really sin, as sin requires forethought, intent, and deliberate action.



Sin is knowingly choosing to do wrong or not to do right.

**PLAN OF SALVATION, P.9**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Since sin is such a serious offense to God, no one with sin can enter his presence. This guilt brings condemnation for all people. The punishment is eternal death. Thankfully, because Jesus' atonement has covered sin, Christians are confident they have forgiveness right now.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 5:18  
Romans 6:23  
Ephesians 1:7

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** All sin is against God.



**MORMONISM:** Sin is against self, and it requires deliberate action.



## SIN & THE LAW

# Perfection

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT PERFECTION?

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says:



Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**MATTHEW 5:48**

This establishes God's standard for his people — to be perfect. Because we are credited with Jesus' righteousness through faith, all true believers are perfect right now.

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT PERFECTION?

Mormonism teaches that it is impossible to be perfect in this life.

Because the LDS church also teaches that God wouldn't give a command people couldn't keep, they often interpret Jesus' teaching to mean "become perfect." In Mormonism, perfection is achieved "eventually" by striving to do all one can do.



If we persevere, then somewhere in eternity our refinement will be finished and complete.

**ELDER JEFFREY R. HOLLAND, "BE YE THEREFORE PERFECT—EVENTUALLY"**  
**(ENSIGN, OCTOBER 2017)**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

God does expect us to be perfect. But we can't. But he was. And he credits that perfection to believers through faith. This is the only way perfection is possible.

God isn't waiting for humans to work their way towards perfection and make themselves righteous. Instead, God covers believers with Jesus' righteousness. He drapes them completely with it so



## SIN & THE LAW

# Perfection

that all he sees when he looks at them is Jesus' perfection. He sees them as perfect right now and worthy to live with him for all eternity.

When one is covered with Christ's perfection, the Lord looks at them like a bridegroom looks at his bride walking down the aisle. This is how pleasing, how attractive, Jesus' righteousness makes believers — right now!

When you trust that Jesus has already done everything for you — that he not only paid the price for your sins but also kept all the commandments for you — you can be confident, cheerful, and at peace. Then you can dedicate yourself to thanking God for his great gifts.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Isaiah 61:10  
Hebrews 10:14

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Believers in Jesus are perfect right now because we are credited with Jesus' righteousness through faith. Jesus is enough.



**MORMONISM:** Mormons must strive to become perfect. Knowing perfection is impossible, Mormons strive to "do all we can do."



## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Faith

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT FAITH?

Faith is synonymous with trust in God's Word in Christianity. The Bible says that eternal life is through Jesus — complete and absolute trust in Jesus' works alone and not our own. The Bible also assures us that one already has eternal life from the moment of their conversion. This is because true faith is always in Jesus' work, and his work has been judged perfect.

What's more, through faith, God gifts to his children forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and the companionship of the Holy Ghost. God gives them voluntarily, without obligation, payment, or condition.



We...know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.

**GALATIANS 2:15**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT FAITH?

In Mormonism, faith is accepting the Mormon plan of salvation and the power God gives Mormons to resist sin and perform works. This faith is a commitment to keep the commandments of Mormonism, and you can strengthen your faith by keeping the commandments. Like all blessings from God in Mormonism, faith is obtained and increased through individual obedience and righteous action.



To have faith in Jesus Christ means to have such trust in Him that we obey whatever He commands.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 18: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST**





## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Faith

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Faith is belief or trust in something. Just as a foundation is important to a building, faith is only as good as what it places its hope in. We will lack certainty if our trust relies upon, even in part, ourselves or our efforts.

This certainty is why God encourages us to trust in Christ's saving work alone for eternal life. Through faith in Christ alone, the merits of Christ's saving work become ours personally. Moreover, this faith provides complete certainty and confidence.

The merit of human righteousness cannot earn eternal life with God. We can never do enough to make ourselves worthy. The law will not bring us to eternal life with God, only Christ can do that, and his work is finished. The LDS teaching on faith puts man and his inadequate efforts at the center of everything, shifting trust away from God and the redeeming work of Christ.

Through faith in Christ alone, the merits of Christ's saving work become one's personally. Moreover, this faith provides complete certainty and confidence. But, on the other hand, one will lack eternity certainty if their trust relies on, even in part, themselves or their efforts or works of the law.

Mormons don't have certainty of their eternal destiny today because it is based on their worthiness, not the work of Jesus.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1 Corinthians 12:3  
Romans 3:30  
Hebrews 11:1  
Galatians 5:4

Isaiah 64:6  
Romans 3:23-24  
Galatians 1:6-9

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Faith is full and complete trust that Jesus is enough.



**MORMONISM:** Faith is the commitment to keep the commands of Mormonism.



## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Grace

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT GRACE?

The Bible defines grace as the immeasurable love of God expressed through his free and undeserved gifts of faith and eternal life. Grace is God's unmerited, unearned favor. Grace is unconditional, undeserved, and unlimited. Grace comes at no cost to us, but at great sacrifice to the giver. Grace is God's unbelievable love for us. The preeminent example of this love is Jesus doing everything to save us. He kept the law perfectly for us. He died as payment for all our sins.

There's a popular acronym that explains grace as “**G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense.”

“

This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.  
There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned  
and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace  
through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

**ROMANS 3:22-24**

### WHAT DOES MORMONISM TEACH ABOUT GRACE?

In Mormonism, grace is the power of God granted conditionally to the worthy to help them do what they could not do on their own. Mormons often speak of grace as “making up the difference” between “all we can do” and perfection.

A popular LDS saying goes, “I’m trying my best, and God will do the rest.” As long as you are working hard and doing your best, God will add to it so that you can eventually achieve all that is necessary for exaltation.

“

This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on  
eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts.

**LDS BIBLE DICTIONARY**



## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Grace

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Grace is not an enabling power to help us do things to gain God's favor. On the contrary, grace is God's favor already won for us by Jesus' saving work.

A Christian's faithfulness is like a flower that blooms after much plowing, planting, and watering on the Lord's part. And this is the way it works with all of us. None of us is faithful to God on our own. It is only once we have been shown God's unmerited grace — once we have been united to Jesus — that we are able to respond with faithfulness. God's favor leads to faithfulness, not the other way around.

A Christian's confidence is not in God's grace plus our effort. Our solitary confidence is in Jesus Christ and his one act of righteousness for humanity. God's love for us is so much greater than we can truly fathom. Believing that we can do anything to add to the gift of grace ruins the gift and offends the giver.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Romans 3:24  
Ephesians 2:8-9  
Titus 3:5

Romans 5:20  
Galatians 5:4  
Romans 11:6

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** The freely-given, immeasurable love of God.



**MORMONISM:** The power of God, granted conditionally to those who are worthy.



FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Our Response to Faith

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT THE BELIEVER'S RESPONSE TO FAITH?

The Bible teaches that through the power of God's Word (the Bible), we are turned by the Holy Spirit from sin and a focus on ourselves towards a focus on God and his forgiving love.

Now, Christians respond freely to the gift of faith with a contrite heart, desiring to seek God's will by following his loving commands, through works of faithful love, and by giving all glory to God.



I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

**JOHN 15:5**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT THE RESPONSE TO FAITH?

In Mormonism, conversion is marked by acceptance of the Mormon Plan of Salvation and commitment to progression.

To progress, Mormons must now increase focus on themselves through their worthiness, their works, their godhood, and their eventual glory — where they will receive the honor of becoming a god and the ability to walk up to God as an equal.



Faith involves doing all we can to bring about the things we hope and pray for.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 18: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST**

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Transformation by the Holy Spirit, from sin and self towards God and his forgiving love.



**MORMONISM:** Accepting the Mormon Plan of Salvation and committing to progression.



## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Hope

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT HOPE?

The Bible teaches that from the moment of conversion, God assures us that we already have eternal life.



Very truly I tell you, the one who believes has eternal life.

**JOHN 6:47**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT HOPE?

In Mormonism, it's impossible to know one's eternal destiny until Judgment Day, where Mormons will find out if they are worthy enough.



As we repent of our sins, giving up every impure thought and act, the Holy Ghost will change our hearts so we no longer have even the desire to sin (see Mosiah 5:2). Then when we are judged, we will be found ready to enter into God's presence.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 46: THE FINAL JUDGMENT**

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** We have sure hope because we have eternal life with God, right now.



**MORMONISM:** Mormons hope that they will be judged worthy enough on Judgment Day.



## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Good Works

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT THE PLACE OF GOOD WORKS?

The Bible teaches that a “good work” is defined both by its action and its motivation. Once someone is regenerated through the Holy Spirit by faith in Jesus Christ, they are born-again as new creations. They then produce the fruit of true faith, which includes the proclamation of the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, when one truly believes and has saving faith (the right roots), they will do good works and produce (the right fruits).

Only a believer who understands that he has already been saved can truly perform good works. Good works are motivated by thankful love for God, not a need to prove one’s worthiness or earn salvation. Good works glorify God and not man.



Lord, you are my God;  
I will exalt you and praise your name,  
for in perfect faithfulness  
you have done wonderful things,  
things planned long ago.

**ISAIAH 25:1**

Good works are the natural response of all believers. It is like breathing to someone who is alive. Because God did everything, including giving believers the gift of faith, Christians center their lives on praising him. Christ is at the center of their lives.

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT GOOD WORKS?

Although Mormonism teaches that works should be motivated by thankfulness to God, they are a necessary part of one’s progression. A “good work” is defined by its action. The greater the sacrifice, the greater the work, the greater the increase in a Mormon’s worthiness and the greater their progression to godhood.

Mormonism teaches that while God did his part to set the stage, it is now up to individual Mormons to strive to be worthy, to do all they can do to progress to godhood and receive the power and glory that comes with it.



## FAITH, GRACE & WORKS

# Good Works



Only through sacrifice can we become worthy to live in the presence of God. Only through sacrifice can we enjoy eternal life. Many who have lived before us have sacrificed all they had. We must be willing to do the same if we would earn the rich reward they enjoy.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 26: SACRIFICE**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

The idea that *my* effort, *my* works, *my* faith, *my* response, and *my* obedience keep me in God's good graces undermines the clear biblical teaching that things between Christians and God are forever settled because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross.

Believing that our work adds anything to our worthiness indicates to God that we'd rather stand on our record than be covered by Christ's righteousness. God's Word is clear: There is nothing we can do to earn the free gift of eternal life.

*Why then do Christians do good works?* Christians recognize that they have been freed from sin to do good works. God now works in and through believers due to our new life through Christ. Rather than a duty or obligation, works are done in response to Christ's saving work. Forever freed from our need to pay back God or secure his love, we are now free to love and serve others.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1 John 4:19  
Ephesians 2:8-10  
Galatians 2:20

Hebrews 11:6  
Galatians 5:22-23  
John 15:5

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Good works are about giving God all the glory.



**MORMONISM:** Good works are about increasing worthiness to advance progression to godhood.



## FORGIVENESS Repentance

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT REPENTANCE?

The Bible teaches that repentance is a change of mind and heart that indicates regret for all sins and turns toward trust in Jesus and his offer of forgiveness.



In repentance and rest is your salvation

**ISAIAH 30:15**



Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out,  
that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

**ACTS 3:19**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT REPENTANCE?

In Mormonism, repentance is a series of steps Mormons must take, including feeling sorry for the sin, never committing the sin again, making restitution for the sin, enduring any punishment for the sin, keeping all of God's commands, and forgiving anyone who sins against you.



It is not enough to simply try to resist evil or empty your life of sin. You must fill your life with righteousness and engage in activities that bring spiritual power.

**SPENCER W. KIMBALL, QUOTED IN *SHARING THE GOSPEL COURSE MANUAL***



Nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the  
Lord shall be forgiven.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 1:32**





## FORGIVENESS Repentance

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Repentance *is not* about abandoning sin. It's about abandoning any trust in our own works. Repentance, through and through, is turning completely away from trust in one's goodness to trust in Jesus' perfection for us.

Repentant people don't think they have to quit sinning to remain in God's good graces. God knows they can't. Repentant people remain trusting completely in what Jesus has already done for them. So much so that they can remain confident of God's favor even when they do sin.

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** A change of mind and heart away from sin and towards trust in Jesus and his offer of forgiveness.



**MORMONISM:** Completion of all of the steps of repentance.



# Full, Free Forgiveness

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT FORGIVENESS?

Jesus paid the full price for everyone's sins. Forgiveness is a free gift from God, but only believers accept this precious gift through faith. We are assured that our forgiveness is full in that it covers every sin, and free in that we don't need to do anything to earn God's forgiveness. Additionally, God no longer remembers our sins!

“

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
so great is his love for those who fear him;  
  
as far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

**PSALM 103:11-13**

## WHAT DOES MORMONISM TEACH ABOUT FORGIVENESS?

Mormonism teaches that forgiveness is based on our actions and is conditional based on Mormon repentance. Depending on the severity of the sin, it can be a long, drawn-out process that takes many years.

Mormonism rejects the teaching of full, free forgiveness, instead teaching that Jesus only gained us time to pay for our own sins. We must keep striving to abandon and pay for all of our sins. Mormons argue that forgiveness can't be free, because then there would be no incentive to stop sinning.

“

Peace comes only through forgiveness. But forgiveness has a high price.  
Elder Kimball said:

“To every forgiveness there is a condition. ... The fasting, the prayers, the humility must be equal to or greater than the sin. There must be a broken heart and a contrite spirit. ... There must be tears and genuine change of heart. There must be conviction of the sin, abandonment of the evil, confession of the error to properly constituted authorities of the Lord”

**TEACHINGS OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE CHURCH: SPENCER W. KIMBALL**



## FORGIVENESS Repentance

### WHY THIS MATTERS

God forgives us not because we worked ourselves back into his good graces. He forgives us “according to the riches of his grace.” God doesn’t wait to forgive until we are worthy of forgiveness. God doesn’t prescribe a painful process of sorrow and bettering ourselves before he is ready to tell us we are forgiven. It’s the direct opposite. God forgives us based on Jesus’ death. Now he says to us: “I have forgiven you. Believe it!”

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** God grants full, free forgiveness and forgets our sins!



**MORMONISM:** Forgiveness is based on our actions. We must strive to abandon and pay for all of our sins.



# Judgment & Justification

## WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT JUDGMENT?

We are judged “not guilty” because we place faith in the perfect works of Christ. When God looks at us, all he sees is Jesus’ perfection.

Our works act as a testimony to our faith, but we are saved by our faith in Jesus’ perfect work. It’s our faith that credits us with the righteousness of Jesus’ perfect works.

“

For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

**ISAIAH 61:10**

## WHAT DOES MORMONISM TEACH ABOUT JUDGMENT?

Mormonism teaches justification is being pardoned by Christ, and that Mormons accept the “gift” by performing all the works and requirements of Mormonism. If Mormons don’t do the work, they believe God will withdraw his offer.

In Mormonism, good works act as a testimony to a Mormon’s worthiness. Mormons believe they are judged by their works, and if they are found worthy enough, they will be saved.

“

As we repent of our sins, giving up every impure thought and act, the Holy Ghost will change our hearts so we no longer have even the desire to sin (see Mosiah 5:2). Then when we are judged, we will be found ready to enter into God’s presence.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 46: THE FINAL JUDGEMENT**



FORGIVENESS

# Judgment & Justification

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Asking God to judge us based on our own imperfect record would be a terrifying prospect. Relying on our record — even in part — could never yield a not guilty verdict.

Yet, through faith, believers stand on Christ's perfect record and are personally assured of this acquittal. Through faith in Christ's saving work, his merits are credited to us, and we are reckoned righteous.

Believers enjoy a new status before God as "the righteous" and "saints." They already know the verdict and can look forward to Judgment Day. This brings peace with God.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Galatians 2:16  
2 Corinthians 5:21  
Romans 5:1

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** We are judged not guilty because of Jesus.



**MORMONISM:** Mormons are judged based on their works.



ETERNITY

# Life After Death

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH?

After death, all who believe in God's true gospel go to heaven to live eternally with God. Unbelievers — those who have rejected the gift of Jesus' redemption, either outright or with a Jesus-plus theology — go to hell to live eternally with Satan. Our eternal fate is sealed at our physical death.

There are only two destinations after death, heaven and hell. Those who do good will live eternally with God. Those who are evil will be eternally separated from him.

Those "who do good" are believers who have been purified from their sins and covered with Jesus' robe of perfect righteousness. They will be judged according to Jesus' perfect works and are therefore worthy to dwell eternally with God. Those who do evil are those who have rejected God and his gift of salvation.

While heaven is sometimes described as a destination, it is more often referred to as the dwelling of God with his people forever. It will have no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain. In contrast to this eternal joy, those who have not been purified from their sins and covered with Jesus' robe of perfect righteousness are evil and deserve eternal separation from God. They will go to the place prepared for the devil and his angels, a place of torment.



Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom."  
Jesus answered him, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise."

**LUKE 23:42-43**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH?

Mormonism teaches that all people first go to spirit paradise or spirit prison, based on one's worthiness. Spirits in these places continue to work towards exaltation. According to Mormonism, anyone who didn't have a chance to accept Mormonism may do so in the spirit world after physical death.

Mormonism also teaches that there are multiple eternal destinations: the celestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom, the telestial kingdom, and outer darkness. Only Mormons who are worthy enough during their life on earth will receive the highest destination of the celestial kingdom and



ETERNITY

# Life After Death

become gods with “eternal families.”

Other less faithful Mormons and non-Mormons receive lower destinations in the telestial or terrestrial kingdoms. Mormons believe that only those who reject the church and persecute it go to Outer Darkness, Mormonism’s version of hell.



The spirit world is a place of waiting, working, learning, and, for the righteous, resting from care and sorrow. Our spirits will live there until we are ready for our resurrection.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 41: THE POSTMORTAL SPIRIT WORLD**

## WHY THIS MATTERS

What makes heaven so glorious is not anything we have achieved but rather the redemptive work of Jesus. Through faith in his saving work, all believers have the sure hope of living eternally with God in heaven.

Many reject the saving work of Jesus and choose instead to stand before God on their own imperfect records. Since a holy God is repulsed by sin, his perfect justice sends the sinner out of his presence forever. Tragically, this will be the eternal fate for the many who choose the wide gate and broad path that leads to destruction. Yet God does not want anyone to perish but wants all to be saved. This desire is why he commands his people to share the gospel with all.

God is loving, and he has provided a path to heaven, but that path is through the person and work of Jesus Christ alone. Any other way leads away from Christ and away from eternal life.

By leading its people to work for celestial glory, the teachings of Mormonism lead people further away from God and his ways, to eternal separation from God in hell.



# ETERNITY Life After Death

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Ephesians 2:1  
Ecclesiastes 12:7  
Romans 6:23  
Matthew 7:13  
2 Peter 3:9  
1 Timothy 2:4

Mark 16:15  
Revelation 7:9-17  
Revelation 21:4  
Job 36:28  
Genesis 1:14-19  
1 Corinthians 12:2

Luke 23:43  
Revelation 2:7  
Philippians 1:21  
Revelation 21:22-23  
1 Peter 1:3-5

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** All who believe in God's true gospel go to heaven to live eternally with God. Unbelievers go to hell to live eternally with Satan.



**MORMONISM:** A person's destination after death depends on their work and worthiness on earth.





ETERNITY

# Eternal Life & Eternal Families

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE & ETERNAL FAMILIES?

All true believers have eternal life and will spend eternity living with God in heaven. Together, all believers form the body of Christ. In heaven, there are no barriers of marriage or lineage that separate the body of Christ from being one family.

“

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

**REVELATION 7:9**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT ETERNAL LIFE & ETERNAL FAMILIES?

Mormonism teaches that only Mormon believers who perform all the requirements and are worthy enough will receive eternal life, spending eternity as a god with their own world or universe, which they will populate with their own spirit children, making up their own eternal family.

“

And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the keys of this priesthood...to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 132:19**



ETERNITY

# Eternal Life & Eternal Families

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Eternal life is intimately connected to life with God. This is not something we attain by obedience, but instead is a gift of God. When one receives this gift of new birth through faith, they have this new life.

For believers, eternal life is a present reality. The new life believers enjoy through a restored relationship with God is just a foretaste of what awaits. For this reason, eternal life is equated with heaven, when believers shall live eternally with God. Any life outside of God's presence could only be described biblically as hell.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

John 10:10  
Romans 6:23  
John 3:3

1 John 5:12  
John 6:47  
2 Corinthians 5:5

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** All believers have eternal life and form the body of Christ as one family.



**MORMONISM:** Mormon believers who are worthy enough will receive eternal life, spending eternity as a god with their own spirit children, making up their eternal family.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Sources of Authority

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT SOURCES OF AUTHORITY?

God's Holy Word (the Bible) is the ultimate authority.

The Bible is the inerrant Word of God. In it, God has promised not to let it become lost. For nearly two thousand years, faithful disciples of Jesus Christ have preserved the Word of God — many to their martyrdom. The thousands of Greek and Hebrew copies in existence verify the miraculous accuracy of these manuscripts and various modern translations of them.

God also tells us to put our trust in his Word, to seek his truth in his Word, and to use his Word to measure the truth of everything else. God has warned us not to use feelings as a way to discern the truth.

“

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll:

If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.

**REVELATION 22:18-19**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT SOURCES OF AUTHORITY?

Mormonism teaches that man's word, logic, and emotions are the ultimate authority. This includes the living prophet and apostles, a Mormon's feelings, and Mormon scriptures including the Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants, Pearl of Great Price, and the Bible (KJV) as far it is translated (transmitted) correctly.

Mormonism teaches that there are thousands and thousands of errors, deletions, and deliberate falsifications in all written versions of the Bible. Joseph Smith “retranslated” thousands of passages of the KJV, but the LDS church doesn't use all of those retranslations.

LDS leaders purport that the Book of Mormon is far more accurate than any current Bible and that Mormonism's additional teachings restore “plain and precious truths” lost during a universal apostasy. Finally, Mormons believe that if they are sincere, God will let them know what the truth is through their feelings.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Sources of Authority

“

And, behold, and lo, this is an ensample unto all those who were ordained unto this priesthood, whose mission is appointed unto them to go forth —

And this is the ensample unto them, that they shall speak as they are moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

And whatsoever they shall speak when moved upon by the Holy Ghost shall be scripture, shall be the will of the Lord, shall be the mind of the Lord, shall be the word of the Lord, shall be the voice of the Lord, and the power of God unto salvation.

**DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS 68:2-4**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

Mormonism's additional sources of authority don't restore lost truth.

On the contrary, they add to the gospel and, in so doing, subtract from it and cause it to lose its saving power. The man-made institutions of the LDS church destroy the perfect work of Christ and lead one to focus attention on individual efforts, setting up unnecessary mediators between God and man. These teachings stand in stark contrast to the biblical teachings concerning prophets, the church, and the steadfastness of God's Word.

If you don't believe the whole Bible, you might as well believe none of it. If any of it is false, then its complete credibility is lost. If God was not able to preserve his Word, then he is not as powerful or as loving as he claims to be.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Matthew 24:35  
Matthew 16:18

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** The Bible is the ultimate authority.



**MORMONISM:** Man's word, logic and emotions are the ultimate authority.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# The Priesthood

### WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD?

In the Old Testament, priests represented the people before God. As the people's representatives, one of their primary responsibilities was to offer sacrifice for the people.

As our ultimate priest, Jesus didn't sacrifice animals for us; he sacrificed himself! His sacrifice was unique because Jesus was and is a unique person. From all eternity, he was God himself. This is why his one death could pay for the sins of all people. When Jesus died, it was nothing less than God sacrificing himself for us! God purchased us with his own blood. Only he could make this sacrifice because no person can pay for the sins of even one other person. Jesus — and only Jesus — could pay for our sin. This is why he is the Christ, the anointed one, the ultimate priest.

The Old Testament Aaronic priests not only sacrificed for the people, but they also prayed for them. This is something Jesus still does for his believing children, interceding on our behalf.

In the New Testament, the Aaronic priesthood was replaced by the Melchizedek priesthood, of which Jesus is the final and only high priest who made the complete and ultimate sacrifice for the world. Now all believers in Jesus' substitutionary work form a royal priesthood, a people belonging to God for the purpose of praising him. The priesthood was never lost. All believers are given the authority to act in God's name.

“

...You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says:

“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, “The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone,” and, “A stone that causes people to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.”

They stumble because they disobey the message — which is also what they were destined for. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

**1 PETER 2:5-9**



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# The Priesthood

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT THE PRIESTHOOD?

The LDS church teaches that the priesthood is the power and authority of God to act on his behalf. All worthy male members enter the priesthood. Only they can properly administer the ordinances; thus, the LDS church does not recognize Christian baptism. They believe the priesthood also gives them power to receive revelations. There are two priesthoods: the Aaronic and the Melchizedek.

The Aaronic priesthood serves as the entry point into the priesthood for boys twelve and older and adult male converts. It is responsible for the church's temporal affairs.

The Melchizedek priesthood is for all worthy adult male members.



Our Heavenly Father delegates His priesthood power to worthy male members of the Church.

**GOSPEL PRINCIPLES, CHAPTER 13: THE PRIESTHOOD**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

The LDS teaching of the priesthood causes people to look to man rather than Christ as the mediator before God.

Jesus became our high priest and prophet forever when he offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice, and his body (community of believers) is now the temple of God. That newly inaugurated, living way is through his very own body, which the temple curtain foreshadowed.

When Jesus ushered in the new covenant of grace, he fulfilled all the old covenant's priesthood, prophets, temples, and ordinances. When Jesus hung on the cross paying for the sins of the world, he cried out, "It is finished." At that time, the temple veil or curtain was supernaturally torn in two, from top to bottom, from God down to man, signifying the end of the separation between men and God, giving us free access to the Father through the righteousness of the Son. The curtain, which formerly stood between God and man, is now replaced with the God-man Jesus who unites divinity and humanity in himself. Through him, we have bold and confident access to the Lord himself.

Mormonism rehanges the veil that Jesus tore through his death.

Mormonism re-separates humanity from God.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# The Priesthood

However, because Jesus continues to serve as our priest, we don't need any earthly mediator to help us approach God. In Jesus, we have full access to him. This is tremendously comforting. Wherever believers are, whenever it is, they can approach God through Jesus and be confident he will forgive and help them. All because Jesus is the ultimate priest.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Acts 20:28  
Psalm 49:7  
John 19:30  
1 Peter 2:5-9

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** All believers form a royal priesthood.



**MORMONISM:** Worthy male members may be priesthood holders.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Living Prophet

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT A LIVING PROPHET?

Jesus is our living Prophet, Priest, and King. No one can take these roles from him.

The purpose of prophets in the Old Testament was to prophesy to the coming of the Messiah. Those prophets pointed toward the hope in the One who would come to redeem Israel, take away the world's sin, and fulfill the law. Through faith in Jesus, God's children have direct access to him at all times and in every need.

God has given us all we need to know about him in his Word, the Bible.



In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

**HEBREWS 1:1-2**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT A LIVING PROPHET?

Mormonism teaches that the LDS church will always have a man on earth as their living prophet. They believe he is the infallible servant of God. He tells the LDS church of God's current desires.

Also called the "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator," or the president. They believe that he, and he alone, receives direct revelations for the entire church. These revelations take precedence even over their written scriptures.





## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Living Prophet

“

Our greatest safety lies in strictly following the word of the Lord given through His prophets, particularly the current President of the Church. The Lord warns that those who ignore the words of the living prophets will fall (see Doctrine and Covenants 1:14–16). He promises great blessings to those who follow the President of the Church:

“Thou shalt give heed unto all his words and commandments which he shall give unto you as he receiveth them, walking in all holiness before me;

“For his word ye shall receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith.

“For by doing these things the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; yea, and the Lord God will disperse the powers of darkness from before you, and cause the heavens to shake for your good, and his name’s glory” (Doctrine and Covenants 21:4–6).

**GOSPEL TOPICS ESSAYS: PROPHETS**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

We don’t have to look to mortal men as mediators between God and us. Jesus is now our only mediator with the Father, and only through him do his children have access to the throne of God’s grace. LDS prophets are an unnecessary and unholy barrier between man and God. Rather than helping people come unto Christ, they are leading people away from him.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Living Prophet

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Hebrews 1:1-2  
1 Timothy 2:5  
Hebrews 9:24

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** Jesus is our Prophet, Priest and King.



**MORMONISM:** A man on earth serves as the Living Prophet in Mormonism.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Apostles

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT APOSTLES?

Literally, apostle means “sent out,” “one who is sent out.” With that idea in mind, the title of Apostle is reserved for those twelve men who Jesus personally instructed and commissioned to spread the gospel after Christ’s resurrection.

These are the only Apostles. There are no Apostles today.

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT APOSTLES?

In Mormonism, apostles are called by God, though not personally commissioned by Jesus. Mormonism teaches that the original Apostles should have been replaced, but the early church failed and went into total apostasy.

“

An ‘apostle’ is an ordained leader in the Melchizedek Priesthood in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Apostles are chosen through inspiration by the President of the Church, sustained by the general membership of the Church, and ordained by the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles by the laying on of hands. ... In addition to serving as witnesses of Jesus Christ to all the world (Doctrine and Covenants 107:23), as Jesus’ apostles did, members of the current Quorum of the Twelve Apostles hold the keys of the priesthood — that is, the rights of presidency (Doctrine and Covenants 107:35; cf. 124:128).

**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MORMONISM, 1:59-60 (1992)**

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** The twelve, personally instructed and commissioned by Jesus.



**MORMONISM:** A priesthood office of high authority.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Continuing Revelation

### WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT CONTINUING REVELATION?

We have no need for continuing revelation. God's Word (the Bible) continues to be relevant and provides all we need for salvation. Its wisdom is inexhaustible. Lifelong study will not exhaust its teachings.

“

The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
but the word of our God endures forever.

**ISAIAH 40:8**

### WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT CONTINUING REVELATION?

Mormonism teaches that continuing revelation is needed so that Mormons know what is important today.

“

Revelation continues in the Church: the prophet receiving it for the Church;  
the president for his stake, his mission, or his quorum; the bishop for his ward;  
the father for his family; the individual for himself.

**WE BELIEVE ALL THAT GOD HAS REVEALED (ENSIGN, MAY 1974)**

### WHY THIS MATTERS

It is immensely significant that right after he rose, Jesus pointed people to the Bible. By doing so, he showed that his resurrection didn't nullify its importance. Instead, it confirmed it. And never once in his entire ministry did Jesus even hint that there were additional or lost scriptures. Throughout his ministry, he pointed exclusively to the Bible.



## ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Continuing Revelation

The Bible is the one and only true scripture. The Bible is where you will come to know the only true God and Jesus Christ. The Bible tells you the only way to obtain eternal life, namely, by trusting that Jesus did everything to make you right with God. Believe this, and you will spend eternity living with God.

### SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** There is no need for continuing revelation.



**MORMONISM:** Because times have changed, continuing revelation is needed.



# Apostasy & The True Church

## WHAT DOES **THE BIBLE** TEACH ABOUT THE TRUE CHURCH?

Jesus promised the church would forever prevail. Therefore, there can never be a complete apostasy.

Moreover, all who believe in Christ's redemptive and substitutionary work are members of the invisible (true) church. It crosses denominations and is built on the 'rock' of faith Jesus Christ himself. It is not one physical church.

This worldwide body of believers encompasses followers of Jesus from all corners of the globe, representing countless denominations, congregations, and fellowships — yet one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, all adhering to the Word of God as their standard for truth. Each one works together to glorify God through the building of his body, the church.



Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

**MATTHEW 24:35**

## WHAT DOES **MORMONISM** TEACH ABOUT APOSTASY & THE TRUE CHURCH?

Mormonism teaches that for more than 1600 years, the church did not prevail. There was a complete apostasy from shortly after the time of the Apostles until Joseph Smith restored the true church, which Mormons recognize as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Mormons believe that no other church or denomination has the fullness of the gospel or the authority given by God.



And after they go forth by the hand of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews unto the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that great and abominable church, which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away.

**1 NEPHI 13:26 (BOOK OF MORMON)**



ADDITIONAL TEACHINGS

# Apostasy & The True Church

## WHY THIS MATTERS

Mormonism's exclusive claim of being the one true church is not biblical. Only the Lord knows those who are his. Therefore, the holy Christian church is invisible and cannot be identified with any church organization or denomination. Moreover, Mormonism's false focus on an earthly institution leads its followers to place faith in the church, not in Christ.

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

1 Corinthians 3:16  
Ephesians 1:23, 4:12  
Matthew 16:18  
Romans 12:4-5

Galatians 3:26  
1 Samuel 16:7  
2 Timothy 2:19

## SUMMARY



**CHRISTIANITY:** There can never be a complete apostasy. All who believe in Christ's redemptive and substitutionary work are members of the invisible (true) church.



**MORMONISM:** There was a complete apostasy from shortly after the time of the Apostles until Joseph Smith restored the true church.



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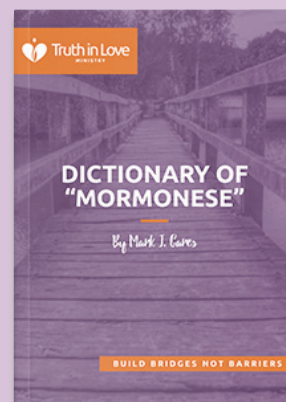
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