

Mormonism
Witnessing to a Mormon
Class Notes

Intro: This is a study of the Church of the Latter Day Saints who headquarter in Salt Lake City Utah. There are five splinter groups, but only one of significance. That is, The Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints. They reject the teaching of polygamy, that God is mutable, and that man can become God.

Video (Session I & II)

I Cult definition (Session III)

- 1 "A group of persons gathered about a specific person or person's interpretation of the Bible"¹

II Characteristics of a Cult (Session III)

- 1 They reject one or more of the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. E.g., Deity of Christ, justification by faith, Trinity, Sufficiency of Scripture, bodily resurrection and God as defined in Scripture.
- 2 Receive and rely upon extra biblical revelation.
- 3 They have the only correct interpretation.
- 4 They follow a latter day prophet who supersedes what Christ said or Christ himself.
- 5 Ask members for total commitment to organization.
 - (1) Watchtower, Salt Lake City tells them everything to believe; in contrast, we use different books from different denominations.
- 6 Over emphasize minor doctrines
- 7 Closed worship services—like Secret temple worship.
- 8 Defective Christology and or Trinity—modalism, phantom, God or man, created etc.

III Language Barrier (Session III)

- 1 They redefine Christian terms to fit their system of belief.
 - (1) God in Mormonism is Adam
 - (2) Salvation by grace means plus be a good Mormon
- 2 They capitalize on the average Christian not detecting these subtle redefinitions
 - (1) Be extremely specific in your use of terms

¹ Walter Martin's definition from Kingdom of the Cults

A Jesus the unique, fully God/Fully man Son of God, incarnate God.

B Born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit.

3 They begin with what we all agree on, like morals, or topics people are generally interested in like prophecy.

4 They quote the Bible freely, giving the appearance of really knowing Scripture.

(1) ***Never hop scotch through the Bible***

5 Their literature is written the same subtle way.

IV Psychological Structure of Cultism (Session III)

1 Each cult system has its own belief system and way of arriving at that belief.

2 Certain Psychological traits

(1) Close-minded: The organizational structure or a person interprets the facts to the cultist.

A They can compartmentalize and not follow their beliefs out to their logical and necessary conclusions. This makes them at times almost impenetrable.

a If Joseph Smith received his revelation from God, and God cannot err. Then how did Smith err?

(A) Mormons are aware that the first book of Mormon and the present edition are quite different in a number of places. Joseph Smith corrected many errors after they were pointed out.

(a) They try to get away from the autograph, and we try to get back to it. That is a major difference.

(2) General Antagonism: The cultist almost always identifies his dislike of the Christian message with the messenger.

A Therefore, do not show any animosity, or dislike of the cultist because of his/her belief.

B He will wonder how you can genuinely accept him and not accept his beliefs.

C Most cult systems indoctrinate their disciples to believe that anyone who opposes them cannot be motivated by any thing except Satan, Ignorance, or prejudice. An encounter with a Christian who does not fit this pattern can produce startling results.

D Christians must demonstrate:

a Being unprejudiced

b Reasonably learned in the Scripture

c A genuine love and concern for the welfare of the cultist.

(3) Their system or leader has all the answers. Therefore, they need not look anywhere else for help because everyone else is wrong since they do not agree with their leader or system.

A Joseph Smith or other prophets

B JW and the Watchtower

C Rev. Moon and the Moonies

D This results in an institutionalized dogmatism and pronounced intolerance for any position but their own.

a Smith, his word came from God.

b Charles Taze Russell said, “his writings were indispensable to the study of the Scripture, and not to use his writings was to go into spiritual darkness.”²

3 Isolationism

(1) They can be cutoff from you. You may be working with a JW, and then all of a sudden, they refuse to meet with you any longer.

(2) They are the only one that is right.

(3) Literature that they read

(4) Name change, remove from familial environment

(5) Dietary changes

V Their Authority (Session IV)

1 The King James Bible: He received revelation from God in the King James English.

(1) They did not speak King James English

(2) He has exact quotes from the KJV which we now know are inaccurate because they were not made from the best—oldest—manuscripts.

2 The Book of Mormon: This is about Jews that Jesus later came to and started a church. Christians who lived on this continent before modern era. Jews whom God delivered from Babylonian captivity in 586b.c. and brought them to America.

(1) Problem of authenticity

A No ancient manuscripts to support the BOM.

a This is in comparison with the New Testament 5000 Greek manuscripts and 9000 other.

B No independent record outside of Joseph Smith to substantiate that such a culture ever existed.

² Kingdom of the cults in loc

a Smithsonian Institute states: "...It can be stated definitely that there is no connection between the archeology of the New World and the subject matter of the *Book of Mormons*"³

(A) Compared to the evidence for Ur, Babylon, Jerusalem, etc.

(B) 20 Secular historians refer to the historical person of Jesus in Israel.⁴

C We do know a lot about early American history, and none of it confirms his notions about it.

- 3 Doctrine and Covenants: This is the record of revelations to Joseph Smith in this revelation.
- 4 Pearl of Great Price: This is an inspired version of ancient documents, which have been restored, in the latter days
- 5 The living prophet
- 6 The burning in the bosom
 - (1) Ask how a Mormon how he knows that the Book of Mormon is true, and he will answer that he has a burning in the bosom.
 - (2) Ask how he knows that the burning of the bosom is a reliable test in determining the veracity of the BOM, and he will say because it says so in the BOM (Moroni 10:4 & 29).
 - A This is called begging the question or circular reasoning.
 - B This is not the test of a true prophet as given in Deut. 18 & 13

VI The Bible is reliable (Session IV)

- 1 14,000 manuscripts
 - (1) Over 4000 Greek manuscripts. Greek scholars tell us that only one in one thousand words are in question. None of these affect any doctrine of the New Testament.
 - (2) We correct copies. They correct originals
- 2 Jesus said, "...not the smallest letter or stroke of the law shall pass away..." (Matt. 5:17-18).
 - (1) Smallest letter=*iota*, (I) in Greek, and yod,(י)(sort of) in Hebrew
 - (2) Stroke=*keraiia*, part of a letter.
- 3 Jesus said, "Sanctify them in truth, thy Word is truth." (John 17:17)
- 4 Dead Sea Scrolls: We have manuscripts that existed when Jesus was on the earth, and we also have the LXX.

³ The Kingdom of the Cults, p 162

⁴ Dr. James Kennedy on Radio in summer of 2000, I have these filed under Christ.

- 5 They must answer how they know that the manuscripts are not accurate.
- (1) If it is because it does not agree with the book of Mormons? That is our point.
 - (2) The test of the infallibility of Scripture is Scripture, and the test of the infallibility of the books of Mormonism is Scripture.
 - A The words must be consistent with previous revelation about God, man, salvation, etc. (Deut. 13:1-6).
 - B The prophecies of the prophet must come to pass with 100% accuracy (Deut 18:15-22).
 - a Failure in either account, equals a false prophet worthy of death
 - b Joseph Smith fails on both accounts.
 - C The New Testament and the Old Testament are consistent.
 - (3) How can an all-knowing God contradict Himself?
- 6 The Bible was written by 40 human authors (All cults by one human).

VII God (Session V)

- 1 “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”⁵
- (1) Polytheism:
- A Duet. 6:4; Isa. 43:10-11; 45:5-6; 44:6-8; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Rev. 1:17-18
 - B Note: There are other gods mentioned in Scripture, but they are gods by acclamation and not by nature. Ex. 7:1; 2Cor.4: 4
- 2 “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...”⁶
- (1) The Father is incorporeal
- A The father is Spirit (John 4:24)
 - B A Spirit does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39)
- (2) They misuse metaphors, similes, and anthropomorphisms
- A They argue that the Scripture says that God has the attributes of man, “the eye of the Lord,” the hand of the Lord,” etc.; therefore, God has a body like a man.
 - a Problem
 - (A) Psalms speaks of God “covering with his feathers, and man “trusting under his wings.” I guess this proves that God is a chicken

⁵ Journal of Discourses, Vol. VI, Sermon by Prophet Joseph Smith, page 5

⁶ Doctrine and covenants, Sec. 130:22

(B) “For our God is a consuming fire” (Heb. 12:29). Now I guess God is a blast furnace.

(C) Jesus a door (John 10:9), a vine (John 15:1), a loaf of bread (John 6:51).

3 “As man is, God once was: as God is, man may become”⁷ “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man...”⁸

(1) God the Father has always been (Gen. 21:33; PS. 90:2; 102:24; Hab. 1:12; 1 Tim. 6:16)

(2) God is immutable: “...God is unchangeable in his essence, attributes, consciousness, and will. All change must be to the better or to the worse, but God cannot change to the better, since he is absolutely perfect; neither can he change to the worse, for the same reason. The immutability of God is due to the simplicity of his essence.... Neither improvement nor deterioration is possible.”⁹

A James 1:17; PS. 102:26f; Mal. 3:6; Heb 1:12; Rom. 4:20; Ps. 33:11; Isa. 46:10; 1King 8:56; 2Cor. 1:20; Ps. 103:17; Gen. 18:25; Isa 28:7

B “Immutability is not to be confused with immobility. God is active and enters into relationships with changing men. In these relationships, it is necessary for an unchangeable God to change in his dealings with changing men in order to remain unchangeable in his character and purposes. God deals differently with men before salvation than after (Prov. 11:20; 12:12; 1 Pet. 3:12). The God who cannot repent (Num. 23:19), repents (i.e., his dealings with man change) when man changes from evil to good, or good to evil (Gen. 6:6; Ex. 32:14;”¹⁰

a If God did not change in how He deals with men when they change from sinful to saint or the reverse, He would have to change who He is; hence, He would not be God.

(A) In another words, the God who cannot tolerate sin would have to tolerate it.

(B) Repentance on God’s part means a change in the way God deals with man. It is anthropomorphism.

VIII The virgin birth of Jesus Christ (Session V)

1 Brigham Young stated: “When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who was the Father? He is the first of the human family; ... Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the

⁷ Lorenzo Snow, former president of the Mormon Church, Millennial Star, Vol. 54

⁸ Journal of Discourses, Vol. VI, page 3

⁹ Thiessen p 83

¹⁰ ibid

garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven....When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him...He is our FATHER and our God, and the only God with whom WE have to do.”¹¹

- (1) Mary did not conceive by the Holy Spirit
 - (2) God is Adam,
 - (3) God is married
 - (4) God is a polygamist
 - (5) God, Adam, had sexual relationship with Mary and conceived of Jesus.
- 2 “...His [Christ’s] unique status in the flesh as the offspring of a mortal mother [Mary] and of an immortal, or resurrected and glorified, Father [Adam God]...”¹²
- (1) This is why Mormons would rather affirm their belief in the virgin birth than to explain it—make them explain it.
- 3 The biblical response
- (1) Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary supernaturally (Matt. 1:18-20; Luke 1:35).
 - A Isa. 7:14 gave the promise of the supernatural birth where a virgin would conceive
 - a Hebrew word is *Almoh or Almah*. This means young maiden, damsel, or virgin.
 - b The Greek word for virgin is *parthenos*. It means virgin. It is used about 14 times in the New Testament.
 - c Thus, when you put the two together, Jesus would be conceived of by the Holy Spirit in the womb of a young virgin.
 - (A) The Adam God notion is:
 - (a) Contrary to the explicit statement of Scripture that conception was by the Holy Spirit.
 - (b) Contrary to the nature of God—He is Spirit.
 - (c) Contrary to the meaning of virginity—impossible to have had intercourse and remain a virgin.
 - d Matt. 1:16, the relative pronoun “whom” is in the Feminine, singular, genitive, which equals “from whom—a woman and not a man.

IX Salvation and Judgment (Session VI)

1 The Savior:

- (1) Christ is the spirit brother of Lucifer (the devil) ¹³

¹¹ Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1 pages 50 and 51

¹² 1925 edition of the Articles of Faith page 473, ed. 1974

- (2) He married both of “the Marys and Martha, whereby he could see his seed before he was crucified”¹⁴
- (3) Jesus has 23 chromosomes from God the Father and 23 Chromosomes from Mary.¹⁵
- A This makes Jesus ½ man and ½ God
- B Jesus is not a separate manifestation of God, but a separate personage¹⁶
- (4) The Scripture is clear that Jesus is fully God and fully man without any commingling. He has two complete and distinct natures.
- A John 1:1, 1:14,
- (5) He is not our elder brother. He is categorically different (Heb. 1:8; Rev. 21:6).
- (6) He is not Lucifer’s brother.
- A Lucifer is a created being, an angel who is now fallen
- B Jesus is God and created everything that has been created. Hence, he created Lucifer (John 1:1-2)
- 2 Salvation by the atonement—shedding of blood
- (1) “There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. *The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, your own blood must atone for it;* and the judgments of the Almighty will come, sooner or later, and every man and woman will have to atone for their covenants...”¹⁷ (italics added)
- A Mormons try to explain this away by saying that Young was talking about a criminal being executed for his crimes.
- a However, this was not the context or subject being addressed.
- b In addition, he declared that what Christ blood could not atone for, man’s blood could.
- B The following verses make it clear that Jesus sacrifice paid for all sin (John 1:29; 1 John 1:7; Heb. 10:10 & 14), and that man cannot atone for his sin (Rom. 3:28).
- 3 Salvation by grace
- (1) Mormons will readily proclaim that they are saved by grace alone; however, many of their writings contradict this claim.

¹³ The Pearl of Great Price, Book of Moses, Chapter 4, verses 1-4; Journal of Discourses, Vol. 13:282

¹⁴ Apostle Orson Hyde, Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4, pages 259-260

¹⁵ Video The Mormon Puzzle

¹⁶ *ibid*

¹⁷ Journal of Discourses. Vol. III, page 247, and vol. IV, pages 219-220

- (2) B.R. McConkie, in What the Mormons Think of Christ says, “Grace is simply the mercy, the love and the condescension God has for his children, as a result of which he has ordained the plan of salvation so that they may *have power to progress and become like him.... All men are saved by grace alone without any act on their part, meaning that they are resurrected and become immortal because of the atoning Sacrifice of Christ....* In addition to this redemption from death, all men, by the grace of God, have the power to gain eternal life. *This called salvation by grace coupled with obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.* Hence Nephi was led to write: ‘We labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ and to be reconciled to God; for we know that *it is by grace that we are saved after all we can do.*’

Christians speak often of the blood of Christ and its cleansing power. Much that is believed and taught on this subject, however, is such utter nonsense and so palpably false that to believe it is to lose one’s salvation. Many go so far, for instance, as to pretend and at least, to *believe that if we confess Christ with our lips and avow that we accept Him as our personal Savior, we are thereby saved. His blood, without other act than mere believe, they say, makes us clean....* Finally in our day, he has said plainly” ‘My blood shall not cleanse them if they hear me not’.... Salvation in the kingdom of God is available because of the atoning blood of Christ. But *it is received only on condition of faith, repentance, baptism, and enduring to the end in keeping the commandments of God.*”¹⁸ (italics added)

- A This is clearly theological double talk.
 - B Clearly a works salvation
 - C Gospel is the Mormon gospel.
 - D No Mormon can say that he is saved, but only that he is trying to be.
 - E Act 16:31; John 1:12; Titus 3:5;
- (3) They teach universalism
- A There will be a universal resurrection, and every one will go into one of the three heavens.
 - a The terrestrial: Heathen and people who reject the gospel.
 - b The Celestial: Christians who do not accept the Mormon message, and men/women of good will
 - c The Telestial: This has three abodes
 - (A) The highest abode is for those Mormon couples that were married in the temple.

¹⁸ Pages 27-33

(a) They receive godhood, and a planet to populate and become as Elohim is for us.

(B) The other two abodes are where all other Mormons go.

(C) This is pure polytheistic mythology

B Matt. 7:21-22; 25:41-46; Rev.20: 14;

X Share your testimony of grace (Session VII)

- 1 Share your life before salvation
 - 2 Share salvation experience
 - 3 Share life since salvation
- (1) They do not know of a truly grace salvation.

XI Witnessing pointers (Session VII)

- 1 Be specific in what you say
 - 2 Make them define what they say
 - 3 Show love and concern
 - 4 Do not hop scotch through the Bible
 - 5 Tell them to come back so that you may get ready
- (1) Read this and other information
- (2) You control the direction and topics of the meeting
- 6 Use only the KJV or NAS Bible
- (1) Ask how they reconcile what it says with what their other books say.
- 7 Show them salvation by grace alone: John 1:12; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 6:23; 8:1, Acts 16:31;
 - 8 Plan on more than one meeting
 - 9 Befriend them
 - 10 Avoid missionaries unless you are ready.
 - 11 Make the main thing the main thing, Scripture, God, Jesus, man, Salvation.
 - 12 Realize that rarely is a cultist won in one meeting.

XII Four possible world views (Session VII)

Atheism: There is no God. Everything is explained naturally.

- (1) Humanism, Naturalism, Evolutionism, Communism, agnosticism, acognosticism.

- 2 Pantheism: Everything is God, and God is everything. God is impersonal. It is monistic, meaning one is all and all is one. God is radically immanent, but He is not transcendent. Destroy the world, is to destroy God.

- (1) Hinduism & eastern mysticism

- 3 Monotheism: The one true transcendent and immanent God. All other gods are false.

- (1) Judaism, Christianity and Islam

- 4 Polytheism: Many personal non-eternal, non-infinite gods.

- (1) Greek and Roman mythology, Mormonism and Voodoo.

A Notice that we are further away from Mormonism than we are from Islam.

XIII The Plan of eternal progression: (Session VIII) (handout chart & definition of terms)

- 1 This is the Mormon gospel and it answers three questions.

- (1) Where did we come from?

- (2) Why are we here?

- (3) Where are we going?

- 2 Pre-existence: Question # 1, where did we come from?

- (1) We do not remember it. We were on the star Kolab.

- (2) How did we get there? Father Elohim and His wives had spirit children. We are those spirit children.

- (3) Before we came to earth, we lived on Kolab with our brothers and sisters.

- (4) We looked like we do now, except that we had spirit bodies.

- (5) We were happy, but a decision was made that we had to have a savior, which would either be Lucifer (Satan) or his brother Jesus. Jesus won the vote.

- (6) This made Lucifer very mad because he was a sore loser.

A He then convinced 1/3 of our brothers and sisters to rebel against God.

B We sided with Jesus during a bloody battle in heaven.

C Some were neutral in the battle, and they did not fight with or against Lucifer. These have been cursed, and they can never enter into the Mormon priesthood.

- a You will know these who are cursed because they have black skin.

- b In 1978, God changed His mind—even though the mark of the curse is still there.

- c He changed 2 Nephi 30:6 from "...white and delightsome people" to "...a pure and delightsome people"¹⁹
 - D We could not stay in heaven because we had to progress.
- 3 Earth: Question #2, Why are we here?
- (1) To get a body, you cannot progress without a body.
 - (2) We are here to sin.
 - A We must experience sin so that we can know right from wrong.
 - a Adam did right. He fell upwards. He experienced sin.
 - b We are here to repent of sin.
 - c We are here to believe the Mormon gospel.
 - d We are here to be baptized by the proper authority—a Mormon elder.
 - e We are here to obey the laws and ordinances of the Mormon gospel.
 - f We are here to be married in the Mormon temple for time and eternity
 - g We are here to do temple work.
 - B Why do Mormons have large families because there are millions of spirit children waiting to be born? They want to be born into a Mormon family. Therefore, there is pressure to have children in Mormonism.
- 4 Paradise, Hell and beyond, Question #3, where are we going?
- (1) At death, everyone goes to the spirit world.
 - (2) Mormons go to Paradise
 - (3) Everyone else goes to Spirit prison—hell
 - (4) Mormons leave Paradise, visit those in prison, and teach them the gospel.
 - A If you're in Spirit prison and you now believe the gospel you must be baptized, but it is too late for you to be baptized.
 - B Therefore, a living Mormon will be baptized for you. This is why they have baptism for the dead in the temple and the vast genealogical records.
 - a They have 600 staff that work with the genealogical records.²⁰
 - b 30-35 Mormon temples in the world
 - c Send husband and wife's names to Salt Lake City.
 - d A guy will go into a golden baptismal for a dead person and tell the baptizer the person's name and he will be baptized for him.

¹⁹ BOM, 1974 & 1982 editions respectively.

²⁰ James walker president of Watchman Fellowship, was a fourth generation Mormon from Lakeside notes

- (A) Now the person can go to paradise.
 - (B) 98% of rituals in the temple are for the dead.
 - C Is this it. Were you married in the temple if not, two Mormons will be married for you by proxy. Now they are in paradise.²¹
- 5 Judgment: at the end of the millennium there will be a universal resurrection and judgment. Everyone will stand before Elohim, Jesus, and Joseph. Everyone will go to one of the four places.
- (1) Hell, only for the sons of perdition and Mormons who knew Mormonism is true and left the church.
 - A Some Mormon theologians say some can go to Telestial.
 - B Between each heaven, there is a barrier.
 - C To be dammed means that your eternal progression is stopped.
 - (2) Telestial Kingdom, Hitler, drunks etc.
 - (3) Terrestrial Kingdom, honorable men, good Christians, bad Mormons
 - (4) Celestial Kingdom, the top level is reserved for Mormons married in the Mormon temple. They will receive godhood and one day the couple will have their own earth.
 - A The lower levels of this kingdom are for Mormons who were not married in the temple.
 - B God is in this heaven
 - (5) It does not end here for the ones in the upper level of the Celestial Kingdom because they get godhood and this process is eternal; hence, the law of eternal progression.
 - A This is the heart dark secret that is central to Mormonism that the missionaries do not mention.
 - a If a person makes it all the way to the top of the celestial—exaltation—the husband and wife will get a planet of their own and become God and goddess, ruling their own world. They will have spirit children, who will populate the new planet, and they will ultimately experience godhood, get their own planet and this progression repeats itself eternally.
 - b Elohim at one time was a human on earth and had a God over him etc.
 - c Always been this way, and it always will be this way. The system is eternal.
 - d As man is, God was, and as God is, man may become.

²¹ ibid

(A) Mixture of eastern pantheism and Greek mythology with no resemblance to the Scripture.