

# CHAPTER XVIII

## Mormonism

### HISTORY

Mormonism (also known as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) was organized in 1830 in Fayette, New York. An angel named Moroni was supposed to have appeared to Joseph Smith, Jr., revealing to him the place where golden plates were buried which contained the history of ancient America.

Also, according to Mormon belief, Smith received a pair of special eyeglasses (called “Urim and Thummim”) which turned the “reformed—Egyptian characters” of the plates into English. Smith had a friend copy down the writing on the plates as he (Smith) read it to him. This later became the Book of Mormon, which is claimed by the Mormons to be an additional “revelation” for these latter days. They say it is as authoritative and inspired as the Bible.

In the early days of its history the members of the group were forced to migrate from one part of the country to another. With their pagan teaching of polygamy and frequent charges of a criminal nature against their leaders, the followers were pushed from “pillar to post.” Joseph and his brother, Hyrum, were finally shot to death by an angry mob while they were awaiting trial in jail.

Today the Mormons are divided into two groups: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, who followed Brigham Young after Smith’s death, and the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, composed of those who gave their support to Smith’s son instead of to Brigham Young. Those who followed Young are the larger of the two.

### THEIR DOCTRINE versus THE BIBLE

(1) They have added to the Word of God. They claim other equally inspired books are The Book of Mormon, The Doctrine and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price.

Scripture warns against adding to what God has said. “Add thou not unto His Words, lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar” (Proverbs 30:6). “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man (including Joseph Smith) shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18).

(2) They teach salvation by works. In the Articles of Faith of the Mormon Church it is stated, “The sectarian dogma of justification by faith alone has exercised an influence for evil since the early days of Christianity” (1925 ed., p. 479).

**“Salvation” to the Mormons is received through following a system of rules. Their requirements for salvation are:**

**Belief in Christ**

**Public Confession**

**Water Baptism**

**Laying on of Hands**

**Obedience to the Ordinances of the Church.**

How different this man-made system is from God’s way of saving man through the Lord Jesus Christ. John 1:12 says, “As many as received Him, to them gave He power ( the right) to become the sons of God, even to THEM THAT BELIEVE ON HIS NAME.”

(3) They believe Christ was created . . . in the same way that we were created. They teach men existed in eternity past as spirit beings. Later on we were given physical bodies. Christ was simply another spirit being before He came to earth.

If Christ is only one of us, what would that make us? Their book *A Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel* answers the question for us. “God Himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens” ( p. 190 ). This teaching is complete blasphemy against the clear teaching of the Word of God. A religion such as this could never be considered “Christian” by the Lord Jesus Christ!

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR WITNESSING TO MORMONS**

(1) When speaking to one, always get him to agree to use only the Bible in the conversation. You can do this with a statement like: “Since you believe the Bible is God’s Word, and I do, too; and since I do not believe the Book of Mormon is God’s Word, let’s confine our conversation to what the BIBLE says. After all, if both books are from God, they certainly wouldn’t contradict one another.” He will usually agree to this. Once he does, you can make much better progress. Because the Mormon is not familiar with the plan of salvation, it will be good news to him.

(2) Do not allow the Mormon to leave a passage until he has faced up to it. This is especially important if he tries to quote from the Book of Mormon to prove a point which is contradictory to Scripture.

(3) Remember that the issue is still “grace and works.” Don’t let the conversation deviate from this if at ALL possible. The more you talk about other things, the more time it will take to lead him to the Lord, and the more difficult it will be to do so.

(4) If the Mormon speaks of some strange doctrine that may get your curiosity up, just let it drop . . . or you will find he will be doing all the talking and you won’t be covering the plan of salvation.

(5) It is always important as you are witnessing to be praying for God to give you wisdom and to direct the thoughts of the unsaved person toward the gospel. “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

***“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place” (II Corinthians 2:14).***

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