

Pastors' Perspective!

Supporting Christian Witness to Mormons

Because "some men...are...wanting to change the Gospel of Christ." Galatians 1:7

Monthly since 1997
September
2007

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MORMONISM: THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE?

1. Mormon missionaries defend the Gods.

In our August issue we mentioned Mormon hymn #27 and a few comments about it by two Mormon missionaries. The hymn (in its words) hails the Prophet Joseph Smith, now ascended to heaven, where he mingles and plans with Gods. The hymn foresees the day when kings and nations will extol and revere the Prophet, who will enter his kingdom and be crowned among the ancient prophets.

We asked two other Mormon missionaries about the hymn. They had been dispatched from their local mission headquarters specifically to answer questions about the hymn. Here's what they said.

- The Gods have physical bodies, but they can visit spirits living temporarily in paradise in the spirit world. They are Gods and can go wherever they want. The false idea of one God (the Trinity) was invented centuries after Christ's earthly life.
- Joseph Smith has not been resurrected yet, as far as we know. He could have a body when he mingles with Gods — but we don't know — because the Gods could make another body for him if they want to.
- We revere Smith, but don't worship him. It's like showing respect for the flag you have displayed here in your yard. He might have become a God by now, but maybe not yet; becoming Gods is a normal development, a potential, for all of God's children.
- Yes, kings and nations will extol and revere Smith when they recognize how God has blessed the world through the man and this restored, true church.
- These things aren't known in your church and all of the other churches because many truths were lost shortly after the first centuries of the Christian church. That's why God restored truths in our church.
- We know this church is true, and the restored gospel has brought us happiness, which we want to share with others.

AN ASIDE: Like scores of thousands of missionaries seeking converts every day, these young men simply are to testify how happy they are because they know their church is true, and "preach" their superficial similarities to Christian faith. The missionaries seemed to know little about the Bible, and even their modern-day scriptures, and were blissfully unaware of the underlying blasphemy of the Mormon message.

Note: The following item addresses only the concept of false Christs and prophets. It does not address Bible doctrines of the last days, *per se*.

2. False prophets, false Christs, then and now.

Jesus warned, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15).

Later, responding to a question about the last days, Jesus said (see Matthew 24):

Take heed that no man deceive you.

For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

...And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

Paul, Peter, and John wrote of false apostles, prophets, and teachers even in the early days of the church. Christ and the apostles expected true believers then and now to reject the approximations and imitations of truth offered by such pretenders.

Mormon leaders claim that they are today's only legitimate living Christian prophets and apostles — that exclusive authority to rule over the final days of the Christian church before the Second Coming was bestowed on them by the laying on of hands by ancient resurrected prophets and apostles and their modern-day successors. Clearly that's a false claim.

[False? Yes, and documented in modern-day Mormon "scriptures," spurious Mormon church accounts of its history, and Mormon attacks and denials of essential Christian beliefs. But that's not the subject at the moment.]

But have Mormon leaders claimed to be Christ?

Here are the facts. ☐ Jesus said, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me**" (John 14:6). ☐ The Mormon church, in a current scripture study guide, quotes from an apostle's address to the church: "This Church was given to be a light to the world and to be a standard for God's people and for the Gentiles to seek to. **This Church** is the ensign on the mountain spoken of by the Old Testament prophets. **It is the way, the truth, and the life**" (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*). And ☐ Mormon leaders have said no one can "return" to the Father without recognizing Joseph Smith and his unique, essential role in these days.

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