

S M A L L G R O U P Q E S T I O N S

M i l e s M c P h e r s o n
Cult Fiction, Part 4, Mormonism/Latter Day Saints
July 2-3, 2005

A N N O U N C E M E N T S

Book Drive: The Rock Academy is building a school library and we are in need of book donations. If you have books that you would like to donate to our library, you can leave them at the back of the Rock Church Sanctuary next to the Share Ministry Box, drop them by the Rock Academy, or call for a pick up. Contact the Rock Academy at 858-467-4787 with any questions.

Dunamis: Come together with the body of Christ for an evening of worship, the Word, and prayer. Experience Dunamis this **Tuesday, June 28**, 7-9 PM in the sanctuary.

Married Couples of the Rock: Last week to sign up! Our 3rd Annual Married Couples Retreat is coming **July 15 – 17**. What unsaved couple will you invite to join us at La Quinta Resort and Spa? Stop by the Small Group table for more information or register online at: www.therocksandiego.org.

Women of the Rock: What's Your Identity in Christ? (Isaiah 61, "Ashes for Beauty) Join us for a weekend with Nancy Stafford **August 12-14** at the Calvary Chapel Conference Center in Temecula. Activities: icebreakers, the Word, worship, relaxation, jacuzzi, hot springs, swimming, tennis, paddleboats, basketball, volleyball, socializing at the coffee house, ice cream, smoothies, drama, games, dance, fun and rest!!! Registration Fee: \$155 per person. Sign up at the Women's Ministry table in the sanctuary after service.

Tijuana House Building: Your group can come together and build a simple shelter for a family in Mexico. Put some action to your faith and plan to join us during any of the following dates: **September 10, October 29, December 3, or January 28**. For more information, contact Ed Crenshaw at 858.571.3427 or tjhousebuilding@therocksandiego.org.

Memory Verse: *"Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*
– Acts 16:31

Purpose:

- *Learn* more about the person of Jesus
- *Understand* more deeply Jesus identity as God
- *Identify* where the teachings of cults go wrong
- Become more *equipped* to witness to people in cults.

Prayer:

Pray for our Pebbles Ministry. With our church growing so quickly, our children's ministry is quickly bursting at the seams! Pray that God would bring more volunteers, especially during the summer months when many workers are on vacation; for wisdom and discernment for the staff to know how to best use the space at Ruffin Road to be more accommodating to our families with young children; that those with young children will utilize the available options outside of the sanctuary in order to allow everyone to focus their attention on the sermon. Most importantly, pray that Pebbles will continue to further the kingdom!

Connect:

1. Have you ever had a Mormon Missionary knock on your door? Briefly share your experience.
2. If evangelism is not one of your gifts, is sharing your faith optional? Why or why not?

Grow:

3. What are the ramifications if there is not a single, pre-existent, all-powerful God of the universe, but rather a God who progressed from being a man?
4. List some additional beliefs of the Mormons/LDS that are contrary to what the Bible teaches. Locate the Scriptures that refute these beliefs.
 - a. God has a physical body, is ever evolving, and is not eternal.
 - b. Our salvation begins with atonement but is made complete by our good works.
 - c. Jesus had to earn his own salvation, just like the rest of the created beings.
 - d. Referencing James 1:5, Mormons will say the ultimate test for truth is an “inner feeling” or a “burning in the bosom that tells them that the LDS Church is the one true church, and Mormonism is the one true belief system.
5. Mormons and other cults will call themselves Christians, and they will tell you that they believe in the Bible, God, and Jesus Christ (see the Mormon v. Biblical Definitions at the end of this document). Explain why it is important to define terminology if people of two faiths use similar doctrinal words that have different meanings.

Live:

6. If someone tells you they are saved, do you take them at face value, or do you dig deeper? Can you tell if someone is saved? Explain your answer and back it up with Scripture.
7. In 2000, *U.S. News & World Report* declared Mormonism the fastest growing faith group in America. Why? Do you have a sense of urgency in sharing the gospel? Why or why not?
8. What are you actively doing to ensure that you are ready to give a defense for your faith?

For Additional Study

Mormon v. Biblical Definitions

ADAM	LDS - Father of physical mankind. Adam is also known as Michael the archangel, the ancient of days.	Bible - the first created man by whom all of humanity descends. He was not Michael the archangel.
ATONEMENT	LDS - The sacrifice of Christ that made resurrection possible along with the possibility of our earning forgiveness of sins.	Bible - The substitutionary sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf. He died for our sins (1 Peter 2:24 ; 1 John 2:2).
AARONIC PRIESTHOOD	LDS - A lesser priesthood in the LDS church. It is still used in LDS church practices and is held by the very young.	Bible - A priesthood that is no longer necessary now that we have the full revelation of Christ.
BAPTISM	LDS - A necessary ordinance for salvation in the Mormon church. By it sins are washed away.	Bible - An ordinance of the Christian church that is not necessary for salvation (Rom. 5:1).
BIBLE	LDS - The Bible is correct only as far as it is correctly translated. It is basically trustworthy. It is the only one of the four standard works (Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and Pearl of Great Price) that is not considered infallible. The KJV is the official Bible of the LDS church.	Bible - the Bible is the inspired inerrant word of God (2 Tim. 3:16).
BISHOP	LDS - an office in the Melchizedek Priesthood of the LDS church.	Bible - An office held by a male member of the Church.
CELESTIAL HEAVEN	LDS - The highest of the three levels of heaven where faithful Mormons are exalted to Godhood.	Bible - There is no such thing as a celestial heaven.
CHURCH	LDS - The LDS church with its organizational structure, laws, and proper name.	Bible - The body of believers in the true and living God through Jesus. It is comprised of those who are redeemed and is not limited to an earthly structure.
DAMNATION	LDS - Basically, anything lesser than exaltation: becoming a God.	Bible - The state condemnation, judged by God in eternal hell (Matt. 25:46).
ETERNAL LIFE	LDS - Exaltation (exaltation to a Mormon means obtaining Godhood) in the Celestial Kingdom.	Bible - Forgiveness of sins and life eternal with God (John 17:3 ; Rom. 6:23).
EXALTATION	LDS - The state of becoming a god in the celestial heaven.	Bible - No such thing as becoming a God in the Bible.
FALL OF MANKIND	LDS - A blessing. A necessary step in the progression of humanity to the level of Godhood.	Bible - The open rebellion of Adam and Eve against God resulting in their condemnation and the fall of mankind.
GOD	LDS - One of countless gods in existence. An exalted man from another world who created the earth who's name is "Elohim." He became a god by following the laws and ordinances of his god on the other world. He has a body of flesh and bones.	Bible - The one and only God in all the universe, (Isaiah 44:6,8).

GODHEAD	LDS - An office held by three separate Gods: the Father who is a god; Jesus who is a god; and the Holy Ghost who is a god.	Bible - God Himself, not an office. Three persons in one God. A Trinity : The Father; the Son; and the Holy Spirit.
GOSPEL	LDS - The laws and ordinances of the Mormon church.	Bible - The death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus for the forgiveness of the sins of all who would trust in Him (1 Cor. 15:1-4).
HEAVEN	LDS - Divided into three Kingdoms: Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telestial. The Celestial is for perfect Mormons, the Terrestrial is for moral people and lukewarm LDS, and the Telestial Kingdom is for everyone else.	Bible - The dwelling place of God (1 Kings 8:30). Christians go to heaven.
HELL	LDS - The temporary abode in the spirit world between death and resurrection for those awaiting telestial glory. Hell will come to an end.	Bible - the eternal dwelling place of those who rejected the atoning work of Christ.
HOLY GHOST	LDS - "A spirit man. He can only be at one place at one time..." (Mormon Doctrine by Bruce McConkie, p. 359.) The Holy Ghost is contrasted with the Spirit of God which is the influence of the Godhead that fills the immensity of space which enables God to know what is going on. It is likened to electricity."	Bible - Third person of the Trinity. Same as Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4).
HOLY SPIRIT	LDS - The presence of God as distinguished from the Holy Ghost who is a god in the mormon trinity.	Bible - An equivalent term to Holy Ghost, third person in the Trinity .
JESUS	LDS - Literal offspring of God the father. Spirit brother of Satan. A god in the Godhead. He is Jehovah of the O.T. compared to Elohim being the Father. He was the first spirit child to be born to the Father and Mother gods. Ordained as the Christ in the pre-existent Grand Council before coming to earth.	Bible - Jesus is God, second person of the Trinity (John 1:1,14 ; Col. 2:9).
KINGDOM OF GOD	LDS - Celestial heaven. The kingdom of God on earth is the LDS church.	Bible - All the believers of Christ (Matt. 13:41-43).
MARRIAGE	LDS - An eternal bonding of husband and wife that continues into the afterlife. These couples will continue to have children.	Bible - the holy covenant between a man and a woman that is broken at death.
MELCHIZEDEK PRIESTHOOD	LDS - A greater priesthood in the LDS church held by elders.	Bible - A priesthood held by Jesus alone.
PRE-EXISTENCE	LDS - We existed in heaven with God our (literal) Father and mother before we became human.	Bible - We did not exist before we came to earth (1 Cor. 15:46).
SALVATION	LDS - Two fold meaning: Simple bodily resurrection of all people. Also, forgiveness of sins.	Bible - Forgiveness of sins with the result of a present new life and in the future eternal life with God (1 Cor. 15:1-4 ; Rom. 6:23 ; 10:9-10).

SATAN	LDS - The opposer of God, literal son of God, brother of Jesus and all people begotten in the pre-existent spirit world.	Bible - A fallen angel who rebelled against God.
SCRIPTURE	LDS - Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price.	Bible only
TEMPLE	LDS - A present day temple used to practice the ordinances and ceremonies of the gospel of the LDS church on behalf of the living as well as the dead.	Bible - The Old Testament building where God dwelt, sacrifices were offered, and holy priestly rites were administered. There is no longer a need for temples.
TRINITY	LDS - Three gods: a god called the Father; a god called the son; a god called the Holy Ghost.	Bible - The one and only God in all existence who is comprised of three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. See Trinity .

For a list of Mormon words & definitions, go to: <http://scriptures.lds.org/bd/contents>

Difficult Questions for Mormons to Answer

- If the Book of Mormon is true, why do Indians fail to turn white when they become Mormons? (*2 Nephi 30:6, prior to the 1981 revision*).
- If the Book of Mormon is true, then why has the Mormon church changed it? Examples are: 1 Nephi 11:21; 19:20; 20:1 and Alma 29:4. Compare these with the original Book of Mormon. (Gerald and Sandra Tanner have counted 3913 changes in the book of Mormon, excluding punctuation changes.)
- How did Joseph Smith carry home the golden plates of the Book of Mormon, and how did the witnesses lift them so easily? (They weighed about 230 lbs. Gold, with a density of 19.3 weighs 1204.7 lbs. per cubic foot. The plates were 7" x 8" by about 6". See *Articles of Faith, by Talmage, page 262, 34th ed.*)
- If Moroni devoutly practiced the Mormon Gospel, why is he an angel now rather than a God? (*Doc. & Cov. 132:17,37*)
- Why do Mormons emphasize part of the Word of Wisdom and ignore the part forbidding the eating of meat except in winter, cold or famine? (*Doc. & Cov. 89:12,13*).
- Why did the Nauvoo House not stand forever and ever? (*Doc. & Cov. 124:56-60*).
- If Jesus was conceived as a result of a physical union between God and Mary, how was Jesus born of a virgin? (*Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, page 50*).
- How did Nephi with a few men on a new continent build a temple like Solomon's while Solomon needed 163,300 workmen and seven years to build his temple? (*1 Kings 5:13-18 and 2 Nephi 5:15-17*).
- Why was Joseph Smith still preaching against polygamy in October 1843 after he got his revelation in July 1843 commanding the practice of polygamy? (*Doc. & Cov. 132; and History of the Church Vol. 6, page 46, or Teachings of the Prophet, page 324*).
- God rejected the fig leaf aprons which Adam and Eve made (Gen. 3:21). Why do Mormons memorialize the fall by using fig leaf aprons in the secret temple ceremonies?

The above information was taken from a booklet, "Ask Your Bishop" by Ira T. Ransom