

## Pastors' Perspective! June 2009

### Supporting Christian Witness to Mormons

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Because "some men are wanting to change the gospel of Christ" (See Galatians 1:7)

#### Inventions of Modern Mormon Religion

Two common arguments Mormons use to attract converts were discussed in the May issue of *Pastors' Perspective!* [[click to read](#)]. In brief: (1) God answers prayer; therefore, people should ask Him, and He will tell them that Mormon religion is true; and (2) because God is "our *Father* in heaven" we have a *Mother* there, too, and all mortals are their *children*; therefore, quite naturally, everyone has seeds of divinity within and potential to become divine, heavenly parents.

Here are two more Mormon arguments:

#### 3. Mormons Argue—

God loves his children — believers and nonbelievers, the upright and the wicked. He will provide all of them a glorious everlasting kingdom after they are dead, resurrected, and judged. Some will be judged more worthy than others, however, and be assigned to more glorious kingdoms. The best of the best will become heavenly parents (in a state called "exaltation" or "eternal life").

Even after death, God's children will have opportunity to learn and improve. Those who never heard the Gospel will hear it (yes, there are missionaries working among the dead). By acknowledging the doctrines preached by Mormons and accepting water baptism and other rituals (such as marriage) performed on their behalf by living Mormons, the dead may qualify for a higher level of glory. One of the missions of the Mormon church is to "save the dead."

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The ideas can appeal to many: a second chance after death; universal salvation; interaction between the living and dead. Even Christians can be puzzled, if not tempted, by such arguments.

Christians can help themselves and others by sticking with the truths of Scripture: Saved by faith (Eph. 2:8-9). Justified by faith (Rom. 3:28). Living by faith (Rom. 1:17). The certainties of eternal life — and eternal condemnation, too (John 3:15-18).

And Christians can mention confidently to their Mormon acquaintances reliance entirely upon the grace and righteousness of Christ for eternal life

and the most glorious eternal future. Don't argue; just tell them. If Mormons know their own religion, the better news — the Good News — will become obvious to them.

#### 4. Mormons Argue—

God has always used prophets to communicate His will. He spoke through prophets in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament the Apostle Paul wrote that prophets were among those who were to serve the church "for the perfecting of the saints,...work of the ministry,...[and] edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12).

Today only Mormons have a holy priesthood and living prophets and apostles who are literal, legitimate successors to ancient church leaders. The church strayed shortly after the Resurrection, and God removed all priesthood authority from the earth for 1500 years: no true church, no authentic leadership. He reestablished His church early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Ancient, resurrected prophets and apostles visited Joseph Smith in America to instruct him and convey to him true priesthood authority. Mormon men pass on that authority to other Mormon men and boys by the laying on of hands.

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Perspective: Faithful Mormons "follow the living prophet," who creates new scripture, revises the old, and oversees rigorous requirements for members who want to gain eternal life. While this is comforting to some Mormons, the doctrines and practices of the Mormon church are to be tested against Bible standards—where Mormonism fails.

#### Give Feedback to Mormons

From childhood Mormons are immersed in the traditions and language of their unique religion; they hear the same pleasant message and wishful thinking expressed in the same words. Mormons may defend their arguments. Some don't believe them or don't care. Often they don't know or understand the differences with established Christianity.

Hearing their arguments rephrased by *you* into plain English — their ideas, but not necessarily their words — can open their eyes to important Christian truths. What you read in this and other *Pastors' Perspective!* papers is carefully digested from current Mormon resources; what you read accurately reflects contemporary Mormonism.