

“A Different Gospel” (Mormonism)

Announcements:

- **Africa Missions Team** - Prayer over missions team - have an elder come up
- **“New Facility Project”** (used to be called **“Facility Fund”** - but confusing - **used some of that fund to “go mobile”**) - **Expecting God to do big things**. Not sure when or how, but planning for it!

Title: “A Different Gospel”

Normally, we teach **Book by Book, Verses by Verse** (**Expositional**) but taking a **3-4 week** break...

- **The Holy Spirit stirred** in my heart as we were teaching through **2 Corinthians** recently...
- People **deceived** by **“Another Jesus”** and **“A Different Gospel”** (2 Cor. 11:2-4)
- **Purity & Protection!**

So, for the **next few weeks**, we will be looking at **a few false Gospels** that present **A different Jesus**.

- I selected these in particular because they are the **most prevalent** and **most missional**.
 - **Week 1: Jehovah’s Witnesses**
 - **Week 2: Mormonism**
 - **Week 3: Islam**
 - *****Praying and seeking the Lord about adding a week 4...*****
- **Go back and listen** (week 1) - I talked a lot about **why?** And I **set the stage**... for the rest...
- For each, we will look at the same **10 points**: **History, Scriptures, Father, Son, Spirit, Humanity, Salvation, Afterlife, Nuances, and how to converse** (**brief with each, some more than others**)
- This is **not a vain exercise** - I got a text, last Sunday after church, a lady went home from Selah Hills and a **knock on her door from a couple of Jehovah’s witnesses!**

Today, I will be **explaining the beliefs** of **MORMONISM** so we can better understand where their **theology departs** from the clear teaching of Scripture.

- **AKA: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints - Or LDS for short** (will refer to often)
- LDS has **17 million members** as of 2023 (twice as large as Jehovah’s witnesses)
- **Over 80%** of them are in **North and South America**. Tiny percentages everywhere else...
- **Less secluded** than Jehovah’s witnesses. **Knock on doors**, but also on **sports teams and at birthday parties and national holidays**. **Not on Sunday’s**. **You likely know some...**
- **Some of the kindest people you will ever meet!**
- **Mormons trying to be viewed as “Christian.”** **Many welcome them** (**Chosen. Gov. Breaky**).
- Other religions are **not trying to fall under the umbrella of Christianity**. (**J-Dubs, Muslims, etc.**)
- **Nuances** in beliefs among them... (**like any religion, variances of beliefs out there...**)
- So, what I’ll be presenting you with today are the **official LDS teachings** directly from their **Scriptures**, and **published materials** on their **website**...
 - We have **easy-grab little booklets for sale for \$5** as well if you wanna grab one...
 - Tons of **validated research**. **Go and fact check me on all this. Why?**
 - Because, **unlike Jehovah’s Witnesses and Muslims**, Mormons will try to **DENY much of what I’m presenting today and what their own organization teaches**. **Disconnect...**
 - **Either not aware?**
 - **Or very deceptive?** (**I like to hope it’s the former**)

- As you will see today - **False religion** leading people astray. I am *unashamed & unapologetic*
- **Love in my heart** for them. They're made in God's image. *But not for grace in my life...*
- If some Mormons are *here today or listening later*, *I have love for you and I pray God would speak to you the clear Gospel!*
- Ephesians 6:12 - *"We do **not wrestle against flesh and blood**, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness..."* - It's a **spiritual battle**. *Not our enemies. Pray for their eternal salvation...*

Let's Pray

Mormonism

>>> History - When, who, and how was it founded?

***I'll tell you some of the **history first** and then tell you some of the **issues with it after**.

- **In 1820**, as a young teenager, Joseph Smith (*picture*) looked at all the denominational disagreements of his day and started searching...
 - **Vision** of God the Father and Jesus Christ in the woods...
 - *All churches are wrong... All creeds are corrupt...*
- **In 1823**, and angel named, Moroni ("eye" | "ee") - Secret ancient record that would be revealed... - Golden Plates buried in a hill in New York... *go and dig them up...*
 - *(What's up with New York? J-Dubs too... - fence it off!)*
- The Golden Plates were inscribed with a Reformed Egyptian Language written by a Prophet named Mormon.
- Contained a record about an ancient Hebrew people that migrated to the Americas in **600 BC** led by a prophet named Lehi (Nephites, Jaredites, & Lamanites) (*descendants of Indians*)
 - Jesus visited America (*LDS website: "Crowning event of Book of Mormon":*)
- **In 1830**, the plates were translated by Joseph Smith into the Book of Mormon by *"the gift and power of God"* - *Then Moroni forbade Smith to reveal the Golden plates to anyone and they are not available for inspection... How convenient!*
 - **Smells Fishy!**
- Joseph Smith's new teachings gained **lots of opposition in New York**. So, he moved around...
- *Ohio, Missouri, Illinois...* then **in 1842**, Smith became mayor of Nauvoo (*No-voo*), *Illinois*
- Then **in 1844**, there was a big disagreement in that town's city council about Smith's practice of polygamy (*multiple wives*), and Smith tried to destroy printing presses and was **thrown in jail**.
 - **This guy likes to destroy evidence!**
- Before Joseph Smith could be tried on these charges, on **June 27, 1844**, a mob broke into his cell and **killed both him and his brother**.
- Brigham Young (*picture*) took over leadership as the **2nd president of the Mormon Church**.
 - Young led them to relocate in Salt Lake City, Utah (*H.Q. to this day!*)
 - Apostolic Succession and Presidents

Issues:

- Seeing **"God, the Father"** - this should cause immediate questions...
 - *Visions of Jesus?* Yes! All around the world. *Many muslims today....*
 - *Visions of God the Father appearing in human form?* No!

- [Exodus 33:20](#) - "You cannot see My face; for **no man** shall see Me, and live"
- **Moroni = Baloney** :) - [Galatians 1:8](#) - "But even if we **or an angel from heaven** should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!" - **That's clear!**
- [Reformed Egyptian?](#) (**no record** outside of Mormonism) **HIDDEN plates** (only a couple families "saw" them) - The [Bible contains thousands of verified manuscripts](#) that can be viewed today!
- [Archaeological Issues](#) (**zero record** of cities, ruins, coins, monuments, rivers, mountains, etc)
 - **National Geographic Society** | **Smithsonian Institute** | and others have debunked.
 - Even many of LDS own scholars have made the same claim... Look up names like [Dee Green](#) and [Thomas Stuart Ferguson](#) from within their own university... **Zero findings.**
- [DNA issues](#) for American Indians (**of "asian" descent**) - [23 and me](#). [Ancestry.com](#). **others.**
- [No Biblical record](#) of Lehi, Nephites, Lamanites, Mormon, Moroni, or **Jesus visiting America.**

>>> Bible - What Scripture(s) do they read?

***I'll tell you about their **scriptures first** and then tell you some of the **issues with them after.**

- **Four "Standard works":** **(four on screen and then next four on screen)**
 - [Bible \(KJV only\)](#) "So far as it is translated correctly" (8th Article of Faith)
 - [Book of Mormon](#) "Another Testament of Jesus Christ" | "The most correct of any book on earth" - **WOW!**
 - **Takes priority over the Bible** where the two disagree....
 - [Doctrines & Covenants \(D&C\)](#) - Authoritative doctrinal matters & prophetic revelations.
 - [Pearl of Great Price](#) - Collections of teachings lost from the Bible to "clarify" doctrines.
 - The last two contain the stranger beliefs, but not at the front door with those!
- In addition to the Four Standard's, **a few other authoritative writings** (**published by LDS website and used as teaching materials in church services**):
 - [Articles of Faith](#) - [Statement of Faith](#) from Joseph Smith in 1842. 13 Doctrinal Stances.
 - [Gospel Principles](#) - a personal study guide and teacher's manual (47 chapters)
 - [Teachings of Presidents of the Church](#) - As it sounds. Series of Books - 16 to date...
 - [Journal Discourses](#) - 26-volume record of prayers, sermons, public letters & speeches, apostolic theology and thinking, etc.
 - Some strange records of teachings have come under scrutiny. So, LDS has tried to dissociate itself from earlier teachings. gives disclaimer... "not all viewed authoritative doctrine"

Issues:

- *If early church Apostles/Prophets claimed authority, then how come now trying to distance?*
- Many of their published materials have gone through numerous editions over the years...
 - <https://www.mrm.org/gospel-principles>
- Book of Mormon - over 4,000 changes between 1830 and 2013 editions (multiple in between).
- And [Biblical discrepancies](#) (**one example:** [Bethlehem](#) (Luke 2:4) to [Jerusalem](#) (Alma 7:1)).
 - But I thought it was the most correct book on earth | by the gift and power of God?
- [D&C revised a handful of times](#) with BIG changes. Mormons fight over correct editions.
 - **Reversed the polygamy decision (1890)**
 - **Allowed blacks to be in priesthood (1978)**

Biblical:

- **Sola scriptura** acknowledges that the Bible is the *Word of God, inerrant, sufficient, without error, and the source of all truth*.
- All of this **contradicts the clear warning** given to us in the *final chapter of the final canonized book* of the Bible: *Rev. 22:18-19* - "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone **adds** to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone **takes away** from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Who are the Father, Son, and Spirit?

- **Orthodox Christianity = Trinity** (*eternal Godhead, co-equal, co-eternal*), but not Mormons...
- *This is where it starts to get really strange...*

>>> God, the Father - Who is God?

- Mormonism is a **POLYTHEISTIC** religion (*The Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 5:1-21*).
- But they only worship the **god of this universe** = "**Heavenly Father**" or "**Elohim**"
- But our god comes from **a long chain of gods of other planets** (*The Pearl of Great Price, Abraham 3:1-10*). The *highly regarded* and **second LDS president** himself claimed...
 - "*How many Gods there are, I do not know. **But there never was a time when there were not Gods and worlds**, and when men were not passing through the same ordeals that we are now passing through. That course has been from all eternity, and it is and **will be to all eternity.***" (*Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 7:333*)
- In addition to *multiple gods of multiple worlds*, LDS teach that the **God of our universe used to be a man like us**, then **became a god**. *What in the world?*
- Joseph Smith declared: "**God Himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man.**" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, Ch. 2: "God, the Eternal Father"*)

All of this flies in the face of the Bible!

- *Isaiah 44:6-8* - "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel... 'I am the First and I am the Last; **Besides Me there is no God... Is there a God besides Me? ...not one.**"
- *1 Corinthians 8:4* - "There is no other God **but one...**"
- **God is not some exalted man from another planet. That's blasphemous!**

>>> Christ, the Son - Who is Jesus?

LDS refers to the Son as "**Jehovah**"

- There's a **ton of controversy here-say** about Jesus. A lot of it is developed through "*logical deduction*" of many of their *Scriptures and extra curricular publications* (*like the magazine Ensign* (*similar to J-Dubs watchtower*) - *go on LDS website*), but **hard to pin down** and hard to get a **mormon to be clear on it**.
- For example, in many places, it *seems to teach* that Jesus is just one of **many spirit sons of Elohim** (*D&C 93*), and according to *Joseph Smith*, He is our "**elder brother**" in that regard...
 - Some try to make the logical conclusion that Satan and Jesus are spirit brothers
 - This is *not an official doctrinal teaching*, however, **as of yesterday, LDS still shows an edition of their ensign magazine** that contains the following language...

- “On first hearing, the doctrine that Lucifer and our Lord, Jesus Christ, are brothers may seem surprising to some—especially to those unacquainted with latter-day revelations. But both the scriptures and the prophets affirm that Jesus Christ and Lucifer are indeed offspring of our Heavenly Father and, therefore, spirit brothers... ” (Ensign Magazine, June 1986)
- And even some **strange teachings** that Jesus was born out of physical procreation. That God and Mary had physical relations to produce Jesus... (controversial, and not worth getting into)
- But the **main thing for today about Jesus** is that the LDS puts little emphasis on the saving work of Jesus and major emphasis on their own works which we will see in a bit.
- LDS will agree he’s the true son of God, but will **not admit He’s the ONE & ONLY God**.

The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus is God (and not a created spirit being):

- Looked at a few verses last week...
- **John 1:1-3, Isaiah 9:6, Immanuel**

>>> Holy Spirit - Who is the Holy Spirit?

- Not a whole lot to discuss here... Similar to J-Dubs... LDS views The Spirit as an “**impersonal force**” subservient to the Father and Son. Refers to Him as **THE** (never “**he**”) **Holy Ghost**.
- Differs from the Biblical view. Last week we looked at an example in **Acts 5**. **Spirit** is also **God**.

>>> Humanity & Sin - What is the nature of man?

- LDS - We’ve all sinned and done wrong, but **not condemned** by our sin
- “Because of the Fall of Adam and Eve, all people live in a fallen condition, separated from God and subject to physical death. **However, we are not condemned by what many call the “original sin.”** In other words, we are not accountable for Adam’s transgression in the Garden of Eden...” (LDS website: Topics & Questions: Original Sin)
- LDS - we all existed as **spiritual children w heavenly parents**, before we existed here:
- “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that all human beings, male and female, are **beloved spirit children of heavenly parents**, a Heavenly Father and a **Heavenly Mother**...” (Gospel Principles, 2010, p. 275 | LDS website: “Mother in Heaven”)
- LDS - **We can become gods** just like Jehovah & Elohim. **No difference...**
- **Mormons try to deny this point** for some reason... but **their faith system teaches it**.
- **Joseph Smith** taught this regularly as well as other LDS presidents like **Lorenzo Snow**:
- “**As man is, God once was: as God is, man may become.**’ ...This particular doctrine has been taught not only by Lorenzo Snow, fifth President of the Church, but also by others of the brethren before and since that time... It is clear that this is both acceptable and **accepted doctrine in the Church today**.” (LDS website, verified 5/21/24)
- And, it’s **false teaching**. **God was never a mere mortal and we will never be His equal**.

The Bible teaches:

- We are **not “gods” like He is**, but we are **God’s creations** made from the *dust of the earth* (Gen 2:7).
- That was actually **Satan’s big deception**. Eat of the fruit and “*Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God*” (Genesis 3:5). - **Spoiler alert, that backfired...**
- **Isaiah 43:10** - “**Before me no God was formed, nor will there be one after me.**”
- **Sinful men in need of a glorious savior!**

>>> Means of Salvation - How can I be saved?

- **Universalism** for salvation (more on this later...). But *not all go to the same level* of heaven...
- The **ultimate goal** is **EXALTATION** to **become gods...**
- For true eternal life with God in the highest sense of heaven, faith plus **MANY good works**
- *"We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by **obedience to the laws and ordinances...**" (Articles of Faith, 3)*
- *"It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation **even beyond the grave**" (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 268).*
 - Joseph Smith used the phrase, *Climbing a ladder* - cross is merely the beginning, works are needed to progress to exaltation (*here's a list of works from all their teachings...*)
 - *Repent and place faith in Christ*
 - *Baptism into Mormon church*
 - *Laying on of hands to become a confirmed member and receive the Holy Ghost*
 - *Obedience to all laws and teachings of Mormon Church*
 - *Brethren must receive the Melchizedek Priesthood (preaching throughout the world)*
 - *Must make temple endowments (sacred covenants and ordinances to follow)*
 - *Committed to Eternal Marriage (marriage lasts forever)*
 - *"It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave" (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith [2007], 268). **Given chances after death (Final Judgment)!***
- **Don't even have time to get into all of those doctrines and practices!**
- Ask a Mormon if it's *faith alone or faith and works*. That will **NOT say faith alone**. (*and if they do, they will have denied their entire faith system in doing so...*)

Biblical View

- Salvation is by: **by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone**.
- Saved by grace **FOR** good works, not **FROM** good works.
- Read all of **Romans Chapter 3** later. **All sinners. All need a savior. Can't be earned...**

>>> Views on the Afterlife - Where am I going?

- *"...**All people will be resurrected and saved** from physical death... At the time of the Resurrection, we will be judged according to [our] works. ... The eternal glory we receive **will depend on our faithfulness...**" (LDS website: Topics and Questions: Resurrection)*
- **All humans receive resurrection and immortality (universalism)** - a gift from Jesus, but **not all exalted to ETERNAL LIFE (highest level of glory)**
- *"**Three kingdoms of glory in heaven... the celestial is the highest, and the terrestrial is second**. Through latter-day revelation we learn that the **third kingdom is the telestial kingdom**" (D&C 76:81, D&C 131:1, Gospel Principles, 2011, ch. 47)*
- **Three "degrees" of glory:**
 - **Celestial Kingdom (sun)**
 - **Highest level**. Where Christ and Elohim dwell and we can be *like just them*.
 - Completed 'works' and 'faithfulness' (*that **ENTIRE** list I mentioned earlier*)
 - **Terrestrial Kingdom (moon)**
 - *Non-mormons*, and *less than faithful mormons*, but people who lived **good lives**
 - **Telestial Kingdom (stars)**

- Carnal, sinful folks, but God still gives them a degree of heaven in His mercy

- Two degrees of hell:

- Temporary Abode
 - “First, it is the temporary abode in the spirit world for those who were disobedient in mortality. In this sense, hell has an end. The spirits there will be taught the gospel, and sometime following their repentance they will be resurrected to a degree of glory of which they are worthy” (D&C 76:81–86; 88:100–101 | LDS Guide to the Scriptures, 2006, “Hell”)
- Outer Darkness -
 - “Second, it is the permanent location ...for those who are found “filthy still” This is the place where Satan, his angels, and the sons of perdition—those who have denied the Son after the Father has revealed Him—will dwell eternally (D&C 76:43–46, 88:35, 102). Those who reject the universal salvation offered again at the end of the millennium.
 - Only a few and only the most evil go there.

Biblical view:

- Degrees of heaven - bad translation of 1 Cor 15 - (speaking of “earthly vs heavenly” bodies) - go back and listen!
- Temporary hell flies right in the face of Luke 16 - Rich man & Lazarus = permanent choices
- Two locations: Matthew 25:46, NIV - “They [the unsaved] will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.” Heaven or hell. Two options. Two roads. Two destinations.

>>> Extra Nuances - Anything else I should know?

- Secret temple ceremonies (baptism for the dead as “proxies” if the deceased “accept” it)
- Polygamy (while some still practice, and was permitted for a time, it is largely prohibited now)
- No alcohol, Tobacco, or caffeine (wanna get out of convo? invite to a bar or coffee shop?)
 - I respect people’s personal convictions as long as not legal burdens
- Extremely loving people and taught to be that way - Christians take note.
 - We had a lady attending first year, and we failed her in this area. Husband was seeking.
- Joseph claimed to be better than any apostle that ever lived. Including JESUS!
 - “I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam. A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him; but the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet...” (History of the Church, Vol. 6, p. 408). Okay, for me, if we said nothing else today, that’s enough right there...

Biblical Response:

- Matthew 7:15-16 - “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits...” - **This fits Joseph Smith.**
- Jesus is the King of Kings, Lord and Lords, and head of the church. Not us!

>>> Conversation - What do I say to them?

- Know that YOU are their main target audience. Young curious believers that aren’t rooted.
- They view us as “apostate” and it is their job to “restore true Christianity”
- They are trying to convert you. **Be VERY CAREFUL:** children. Teenagers, young believers.

- **Be kind, compassionate and respectful.** We should always be this way...
- **Pray for them.** They are working to earn the highest kingdom of heaven. It's a **burden**. They act confident on the outside, but on the inside they are insecure and striving for perfection. Constantly wondering "Am I worthy enough?"
 - Partly due to church and partly **(mainly) due to "FAMILY" pressures**
 - **Excommunication is a real thing.** I have personal friends that have gone through this.
- They will try to give you the **Book of Mormon. Don't accept it.** It's a display of accepting them and their doctrine if you do. 2 John - not in your home!
 - Tell them you've read some. You have by being here today!
- **Ask them questions.** Way better approach than arguing doctrinally. Or even quoting our bibles, they will just say "that part was not translate correctly" (not with all verses)
- Want to **plant seeds** of them with their own Three main Spiritual books.
- Archaeology - zero evidence? Why? Do you have any non-mormon evidence?
- DNA of Hebrews not in America, why? Do you have any DNA evidence?
- Book of Mormon - "most correct book" - yet gone through over 4,000 changes. Why?
- **Best Verse:**
- Isaiah 43:10 - "Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me."
- Isaiah 64:6 - "We are all like an unclean thing, And all **our righteousnesses are like filthy rags**"

Closing

As you can see, they are stuck in a **plethora of false doctrines** and **ever changing teachings**.

- Trying hard to be included in Christianity, but they are **NOT a Christian denomination**
- They are a false religious system leading people astray. **Another Jesus / A Different Gospel**
- Don't get sucked into their false theology, especially because of **how loving** they are.
- Have a heart for them and pray for them. They are **made in God's** image and loved dearly.

Galatians 6:6 - "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the **grace of Christ**, to a different gospel"

PRAY