

Cultural Apologetics

Engaging with our Latter-Day
Saint (LDS) Neighbors

October 5th, 2023



Quick Review

Introduction
(Pastor Kevin)
9.7.23

Presup Method
Of Apologetics
(Nick Duncan)
9.19.23

(LDS)
(Pastor Vinnie)
10.5.23

Next Class
10.19.23

3 Aspects of Apologetics



Apologetics as proof

- Proving Christianity to be true



Apologetics as defense

- Answering objections to unbelief (or strengthening beliefs)



Apologetics as offense

- Help others to examine and deconstruct the inconsistencies of their worldview and beliefs

We are here

Presuppositional Apologetic Method:

“Resting upon the authority of the living God rather than that of independent human reasoning, the apologist must presuppose the truth of Scripture and lay siege to all apostate presuppositions.”

- Greg L. Bahnsen



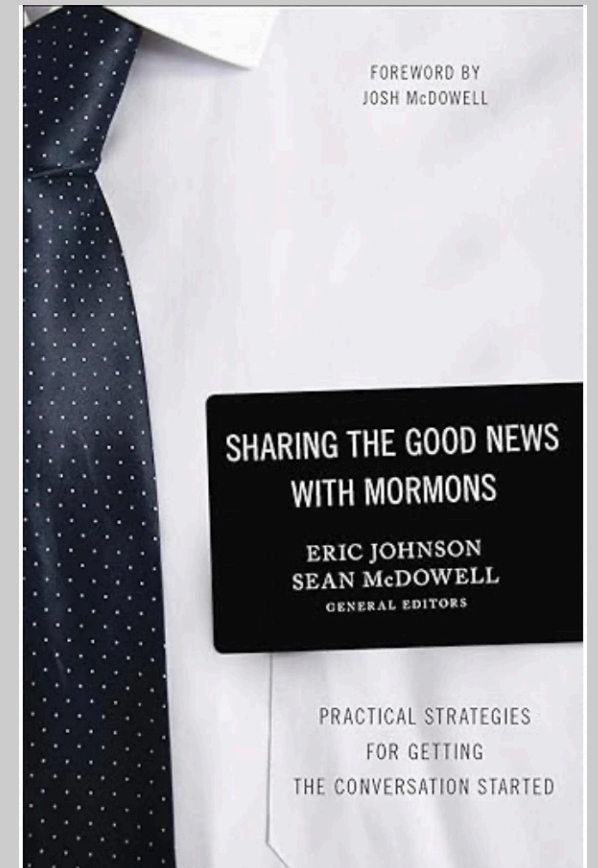
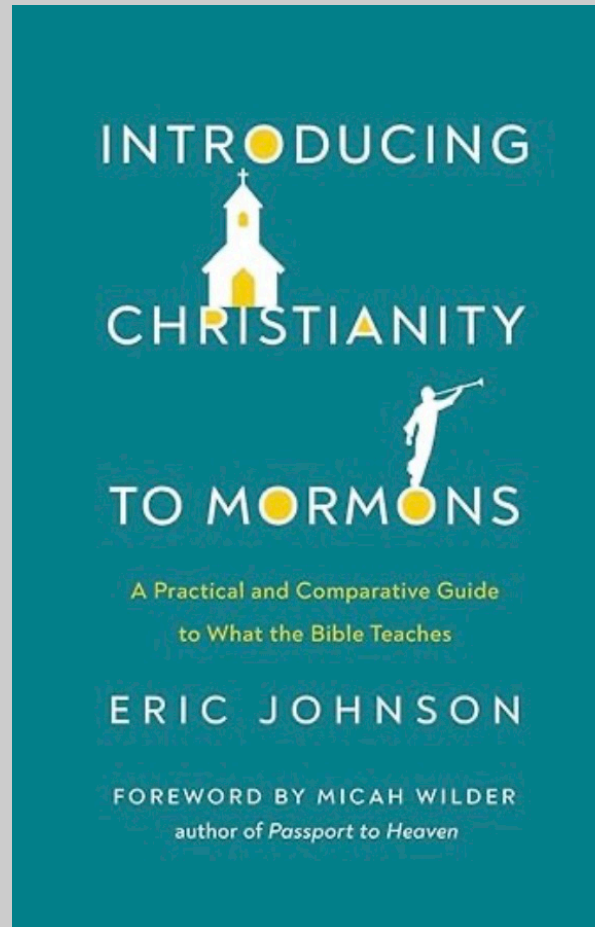
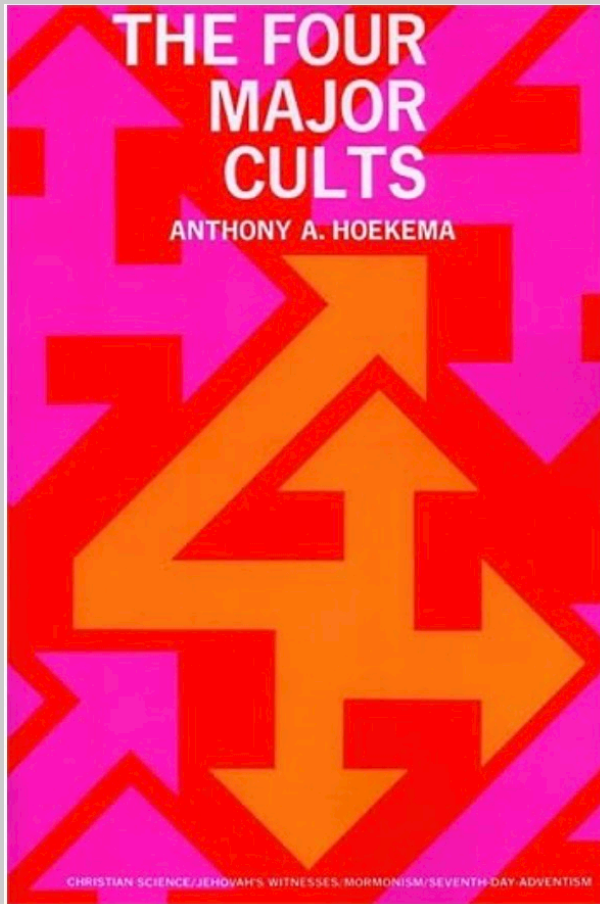
Presuppositional Apologetic Method:

“The task of apologetics must be exercised upon the infallible and presupposed authority of the Word of Christ in Scripture.”

- Greg L. Bahnsen



Book Recommendations:



Why discuss Mormonism ?

2022 the LDS church counted 17 million members

In 2021 57,000 members were recorded in the Treasure Valley Area and 473,894 Total Church Membership in Idaho

In 2021 Idaho recorded a population of 1.9 Million people

25% total Population or 1 in 4 people in Idaho

(<https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/facts-and-statistics>)



Is Mormonism a Cult?

Cult: A designation for a religious community that has developed around a new set of beliefs and practices.



Attributes of a Cult:

1. A hierarchical authoritarian structure of leadership
2. An extremely narrow set of doctrines and practices
3. An adherence to extra biblical revelation



Brief History of the LDS Church

1820 Joseph Smith Jr. (14yrs old) reported receiving a revelatory vision from two divine beings whom he said were God, the father and Jesus Christ.

1823 Smith reports a second vision. The angel Moroni and several gold plates with religious inscriptions.

1827 Smith begins the translation work of the gold plates which become the book of Mormon.

1830 Smith founded the “church of Jesus Christ”

1838 Smith changes the name to

“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints”



Authoritative Texts of the LDS Church

The Book of Mormon – Joseph Smith

The Doctrines and Covenants – Joseph Smith

The Pearl of Great Price – Joseph Smith

The King James Bible (An “Authorized version” by Joseph Smith was unfinished)

(<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/pgp/js-h/1?lang=eng>)



Four Core Beliefs of the LDS Church

1. Continuing Revelation - In Mormonism, divine revelation is not limited to the four books, but also includes the utterances of living prophets. The president of the Mormon church is considered a living prophet.

2. Humanized Deity - Mormonism believes in a plurality of gods who pre-existed as material spirits.

3. Preexistent Humanity - every human being existed before birth as an eternal spirit child of flesh and bone god parents.

4. Atonement and Afterlife - Mormons, believe that Jesus is the redeemer, who died on the cross not to atone for sin, but to guarantee the resurrection of all people.



Four Main Beliefs contrasted with Biblical Christianity

1. The Old and New Testaments alone are the inspired and infallible word of God
(2 Tim 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21)

2. The God of scripture is the true and living God (Deut 6:4, 1 Thess 1:9) God was, is and forever will be eternally unchangeable (Ex 3:14, John 8:58) God is spirit and exists in three persons (John 1:14, 4:24, 2 Cor 13:14) The Son is equal to the Father and the Spirit in all things (John 1:1, 10:30, Rom 9:5, Phil 2:6, Heb 1:3)

3. God created humanity in His own image and likeness in true righteousness, holiness, and knowledge.

(Gen 1:26, Eph 4:24, Col 3:10)

4. Jesus died in place of His people on the cross in order to atone for their sins, propitiate the wrath of God. On the last day all who believe in Christ will be raised to eternal life.

(1 Cor 15:3, 2 Cor 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24, Rom 5:9, 8:1, 1 Thess 1:10, Mark 10:30

John 3:15-16)



Mormonism and Christianity

The Doctrine of God Theology Proper



Christianity	Bible References	Mormonism	References
<p>God is one in essence and is the only God who exists. This is called monotheism (Mono = one, theism = belief in God).</p>	<p>Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 1 Timothy 2:5</p>	<p>Three separate gods (father/son/spirit) who are “one in will, purpose and love.” Trithiesm, not monotheism.</p>	<p>Mormons assume that the biblical verses referring to “one God” mean “one purpose,” not “one in essence.”</p>
<p>God is Spirit.</p>	<p>John 1:18, 4:24; Romans 8:2,14; 2 Corinthians 3:17</p>	<p>God has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s.</p>	<p>D&C 130:22</p>
<p>God is Omnipresent and is not limited by spatial restraints.</p>	<p>Psalm 139:7-12; Proverbs 15:3 Isaiah 66:1 Jeremiah 23:23-24 Amos 9:2-3</p>	<p>God’s body is localized in space and is not bodily omnipresent.</p>	<p>D&C 88:6, 7, 13</p>
<p>God originated everything out of nothing. (Latin creatio ex nihilo)</p>	<p>Genesis 1:1 Isaiah 37:16, 45:7, 18, 66:2 Job 33:4, John 1:3; Colossians 1:15-17</p>	<p>God organized the world out of preexistent materials (Latin: creatio ex materia)</p>	<p>Book of Abraham 4:1; Joseph Smith’s King Follett discourse 1844</p>
<p>God is the only true God in all the universe; all other gods are false.</p>	<p>Deuteronomy 4:35; 1 Kings 8:60; 1 Chronicles 17:20; Isaiah 43:10-11, 44:6,8; 45:21-22</p>	<p>Multiple true gods existed before Elohim (God the father) and there will be gods who will follow him.</p>	<p>Book of Abraham chapters 4 – 5</p>
<p>God is Omnipotent (All Powerful) to do all things logically possible, although there are some things He cannot do, including sin or lie (Numbers 23:19, Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18).</p>	<p>Genesis 1:1, 18:14; Job 42:2 Isaiah 40:28; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:37; 1 Corinthians 6:14</p>	<p>While he has power over everything, God is limited because he is subject to eternal “natural law.” God organized elements already in existence but He was unable to create out of nothing.</p>	<p>Book of Abraham 3:22 and 4:1 refer to multiple true gods who collaborated on the creation of the universe. Elements, intelligence and law are coeternal with God (D&C 88:34-40; 93:29, 33, 35)</p>

Mormonism and Christianity

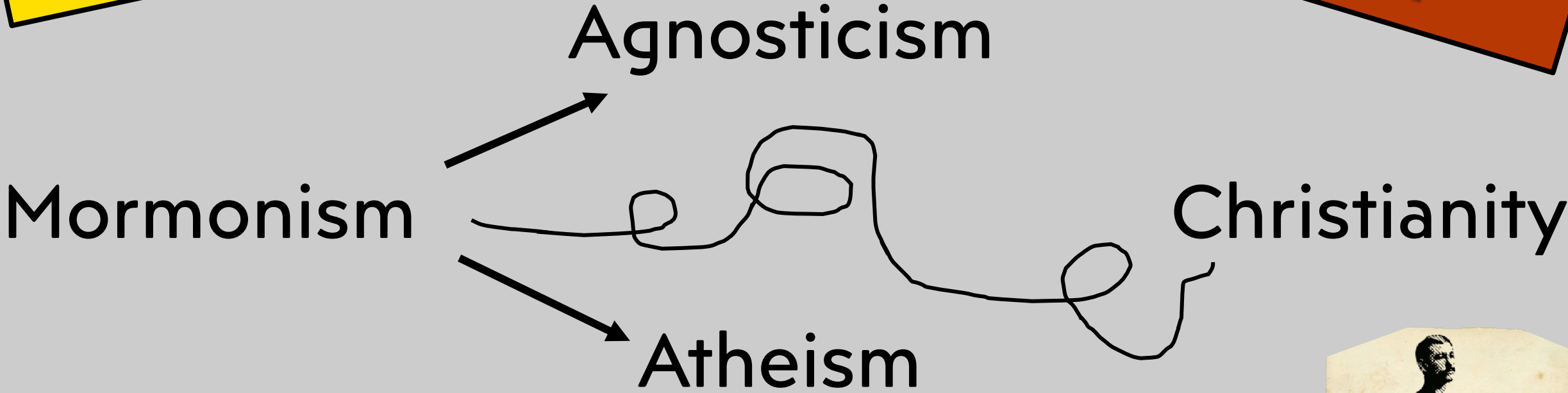
Apologetic Strategies



Words of Care!

CAUTION

DANGER



Apologetic Strategy:

Relational Method



Hospitality Approach:

**When the Elders go Marching 2 x 2
Hoorah!**

The Missionaries at your Door Approach



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

1. Pray for wisdom and patience



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

2. Be kind and respectful



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

3. Ask them to dinner



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

**4. Don't fake interest in
Mormonism**



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

5. Think of your time together as seed planting.



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

6. Be prepared to share the evidences for the preservation of the New Testament.



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

7. Share about your relationship with God and how He has forgiven your sins, answered your prayers, carried you through hard times, etc.



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

8. Challenge the missionaries to read the New Testament.



When Missionaries Knock on the Door:

9. Add the missionaries to your prayer list.



Apologetic Strategy:

Relational Approach



Apologetic Strategy:

Engaging Conversations Strategy



When Conversing with Mormons:

**Remember to
L.I.S.T.E.N.**



When Conversing with Mormons:

Learn their story

Invest time in them

Search for gaps

Throw light on the conversation

Expose the gaps

Navigate in the conversation

