The purpose of this isn’t so you can win an argument with a Mormon. It is purely so you know where they are coming from and how to approach them. You can never argue someone into heaven. If you can argue them in you can argue them out. It is for you to understand what they know so you can reach the true love of Christ into them.

**History**

Who founded the church?

The church was founded by Joseph Smith Jr. He was born in Vermont in 1805.

Smith was growing up in New York at the time of the Second Great Awakening. This was a time of spiritual revival in America. IT was the growth of the Protestant church, which is based on the 95 Theses of Martin Luther. We see the Baptist and Methodist churches surging in this time. Out of this time period we also see the birth of the Adventists and as we are going to look at tonight Mormonism.

At the age of 14 Smith was confused about the denominations. His family was split among the different denominations and it left him confused and wondering which one is right. When he was alone in the woods god the father and Jesus both appeared to Smith. They told him that all of the denominations were wrong, that all of their creeds were an abomination and their professors were all corrupt.

Real quickly lets look at what the Bible would say about this.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transformed himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”

John 1:18 “No one has seen God at any time.” – paraphrased

Therefore Smith couldn’t have seen God. Also in the Pearl of Great Price the book of Moses the first thing it says is that Moses saw God. They make exceptions that you can see God if you are quickened in the Spirit. Any time man has seen God it was Jesus, never was it the Father. If it was the Father it was never in His glorified form but in smoke or fire.

Three years later at the age of 17, 1823, an angel named Moroni visits Smith. Moroni claims to be the son of a man named Mormon. Mormon was the leader of the people called the Nephites. We will discuss this in more detail in just a little bit. Moroni tells Smith that there are some golden plates with the Book of Mormon written on them. The Book of Mormon is the account of some people from about 600 B.C. to 400 A.D. He tells Smith that they are nearby in New York, but Smith isn’t ready to receive them at this time. Moroni then disappears for another 4 years.

Maroni comes back to Smith at the age of 21, 1827. This time Smith is allowed to find the plates and is charged with keeping them safe. Smith is told not to reveal the plates to anyone except select individuals. Smith also obtains a device that allows him to translate them since they were written in “Reformed Egyptian”. The translating device was known as the Urim and Thummin. Joseph begins translating the plates and in 1830, the Book of Mormon is published. Upon the finishing of the translation the plates were removed from the Earth by Moroni and to this day are unavailable for inspection.

One month after the book is published Smith starts the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*. This is because Jesus had told him that all other churches were false and thus the planted the “one true church”. While the church was planted in New York it moved around due to persecution. They went to Ohio, Missouri and then finally to Illinois. It is in Illinois that Smith is arrested with his brother for destroying a printing press that was printing information that was harmful to Mormonism. While in prison an angry mob broke in and killed both Smith and his brother.

After Smith’s death the church split into to groups. What we know today as the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints* was the outcome of Brigham Young transplanting the church in Salt Lake City, Utah. He actually founded the town. The other split was led by Smith’s widow. They went back to Missouri and founded the *Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saint* or RLDS also known as the *Community of Christ*.

There are currently over 15 million members worldwide. There are over 29,000 congregations and their doctrine is published into 189 different languages.

They hold four books as their doctrine. Obviously the *Book of Mormon*, then there is the *Pearl of Great Price*, the *Doctrines and Covenants*, and lastly the Holy Bible (KJV with some modifications).

What I am going to present first is a six points that should be focused on to distinguish between Christians and Mormons. There are two basic ways to go about witnessing to Mormons. The first is a sword fight. My Bible and beliefs against yours, whoever is standing at the end wins right. Not very effective because people immediately get defensive. This is made even harder because Mormon’s easily dismiss the Bible because they view it as full of errors. The second way I will talk about at the end. First I want to go through these points and show you what Mormon’s believe and what the Bible says.

Calvary Aurora has a pretty expansive list of topics they have done apologetics on and while reviewing their information on Mormonism I came across an acronym that I am going to use. I don’t typically like them because I can never remember them even though they are supposed to help you remember. I like this acronym because it hits the topics that I wanted to cover.

The acronym is **J. O. S. E. P. H.**

**J – Jesus of Mormonism**

**O – Only true church**

**S – Salvation According to Mormonism**

**E – Enormous problems with the Book of Mormon**

**P – Prophets of God?**

**H – Hell**

**Jesus**

There is a lot of confusion in the world today about what a Christian really is. There are many cults that say they are Christians because they believe in Jesus. We have said it before, they don’t believe in the same Jesus. We will take a good look at that tonight.

A good word to know is **equivocation**. Equivocation is the misleading use of a term with more than one meaning or sense. It is the use of ambiguity: the use of vague or ambiguous and sometimes misleading language.

An LDS apologist made the following statement

“Latter Day Saints are Christians because they emphatically believe in Christ, use His name in their official church title, and believe in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, which testify repeatedly of the reality of Christ and truth of His teachings…Mormons are Christians. Christians are those who accept Christ as their Savior.”

That said they also don’t believe in the traditional Jesus. Their faith and knowledge comes from the witness of a prophet of this day and age (commonly referred to as the Dispensation of the Fullness of Times – this is misused by the Mormons as we live in the Dispensation of Grace).

 Let’s look at who they think Jesus really is. They believe that Jesus was the first of many sons that God bore in the spirit realm. Jesus’ brother is actually Satan. God has many wives and many children. Jesus was the offspring of one of these wives. They also believe that we were all first born in the spirit realm and then born into our bodies, that is how we are able to then join God in “heaven”

For Jesus then to be born in this world God the Father came to earth and had relations with Mary so that He could be born onto Earth. And therefore become a god again. This opens the door for all of man to do the same. This is also how He was the only begotten Son. Because He is the only one that was begotten on Earth.

A couple of other things -

1. We must not worship Jesus as only God the Father is worshipped.
2. We must not pray to Jesus. You can pray in His name, but not to Him.

They both go back to the fact that Jesus is not God. He is a god, but not the god of this world. Satan is a god. The Holy Spirit is a god. There is no Trinity, they are all separate gods. They teach that God the father was the offspring of another god from another world. When we was found worthy then he was able to gain his own planet.

As a side note just as Jesus was the son of God the Father, God the Father is the son of another god. It is a perpetual cycle. He is currently the head god and is said to have created this universe.

**What the Bible says**

Let’s first look at what the Bible says about worshiping Jesus

* John 20:28 “And Thomas answer and to Him (that is Jesus) ‘My Lord and my God!’”
* Hebrews 1:6 “But when He again brings the firstborn into the world, He says: ‘Let all the angels of God worship Him.’”
* Matthew 2:11 “And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child (Jesus) with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him.”
* Matthew 28:9 “And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, ‘Rejoice!’ So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him.”
* Matthew 28:17 “When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.”

Clearly we are to worship Jesus. This appears all over the place, so it is hard to dismiss it as incorrect.

Now to the fact that we shouldn’t pray to Jesus

* Acts 7:59 “And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”
	+ That verse is sick. It says God and then puts in Lord Jesus. This is totally correct, but if anyone is a student of the Bible you would notice that God is in italics meaning that it was added for clarification. Nonetheless Stephen prays to Jesus.
* Romans 10:13 “For ‘whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”
	+ In context Lord is Jesus. You can establish this from verse 9 where it says “if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus”. Lord is the same word used in both verses. This establishes the context for Jesus being Lord in verse 13.

Establish that Jesus was not the Spirit brother of Lucifer. This can be approached two ways.

* Establish Jesus as the creator of all
	+ Colossians 1:15-16 “He is the image of the invisible God, for the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.”
* Establish Lucifer as created
	+ Ezekiel 28:13-19

All of this though is dancing around the real issue. The real problem is they don’t believe in the Trinity and that Jesus and God are one.

* John 10:28-30 “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. I and My Father are one.”
* Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” – it doesn’t mention prophets or anyone else. Why is it specific to these three?
* You can walk them through Revelation 2:8, 21:6, and 22:12-13.
* 1 John 1:-3
* Jude v4 “For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”
	+ Then in v9 Michael contends with Satan, not Jesus contending with Satan, and Michael says “The Lord rebuke you!” With Jesus established as Lord then why would Satan obey if he was Jesus’ brother, because he isn’t.
* You could also get into who raised Jesus from the dead, all three of them did.
* Malachi 3:6 “For I am the Lord, I do not change”
* Isaiah 44:6 “I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God.”
* Isaiah 43:10 “Before Me there was no God formed, nor shall there be after Me.”
* Isaiah 46:9 “For I am God, and there is no other, I am God and there is none like Me.”
	+ There is none like Him means that there is no one to create Him, there is no one to rule over other worlds.

There are many other places to take this, these are only a few.

**Only True Church**

According to Joseph Smith’s vision in the woods there are three main things to take away.

1. All the churches were wrong
2. Their creeds were an abomination
3. Their professors were all corrupt.

What Smith taught was that a complete apostasy of the church had occurred around the time of the Apostles. Apostasy is a renouncing of the faith. They believe that when the Apostles died the church no longer had revelation to guide the church.

This is why Smith started the LDS church. He was established as an “apostle” and was given the guidance by Jesus as to what the true church was. Since all the other churches are apostate they believe that God hates them and to be baptized and partake in communion is an abomination outside of the LDS church.

**What the Bible says**

* Matthew 16:18 “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”
	+ Why would Jesus establish a church that was going to fail?
* Matthew 28:20 “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
	+ Jesus says He will be with us always, so how did we get abandoned by Him and the church fell apart?
* Hebrews 13:5 “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’” (Deut. 31:6)
* 1 Peter 1:25 “But the word of the Lord endures forever.”
* Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”

**Salvation**

Salvation as taught by the Mormons is not the same as our salvation. They say the same things but they don’t mean the same things that we do. They believe in a general salvation. That since we are all spiritual brothers and sisters born to God, just like Jesus, that Jesus’ death on the cross brings about a general salvation for all mankind. The result is we all go to heaven. When I say all, I mean all. Everyone, Mormons, non-Mormons, everyone.

That being said, they have three different heavens one can go to.

1. Celestial Kingdom –highest level – to get in here you need to know the secret hand shake and the right password to get in. I AM SERIOUS.
2. Terrestrial Kingdom – middle level – This is where most Mormons go. Those who weren’t as good as those who really bought into all the temple practices and junk.
3. Telestial Kingdom – lowest level – This is where the wicked people spend eternity. Side note we will look at a little later is that there is a fourth place called the Outer Darkness. This is their hell, but it is seldom taught and they don’t really believe anyone goes there.

 The ultimate goal of Mormonism is to go to the Celestial Kingdom and become a god yourself. This is actually our purpose according to Brigham Young.

To obtain individual exaltation, godhood, you must have repented, been baptized in the Mormon church and lived a life of obedience to the laws and teachings of the Mormon church. This includes baptisms for the dead, a regular tithe schedule, learning the hand shake and words to say to Adam when you meet him at the door to heaven, you have to have been married in the Mormon temple. There are many many more works that are required, but that is what they teach, is works based salvation.

A Mormon student handbook is quoted as having in it “one of the most fallacious doctrines originated by Satan and propounded by man is that man is saved alone by the grace of God; that belief in Jesus Christ alone is all that is needed for salvation.”

They do have a second individual salvation though. This salvation can only be obtained

**What the Bible says**

Since salvations is based on works it is easily shown that is not what the Bible teaches.

* John 3:15 “that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.”
* John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
* John 3:18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
* John 11:25 “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.”
* Romans 10:9 “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.”
* Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter the kingdom of heave, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”
* Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not works, lest anyone should boast.”
* Titus 3:5 “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit”
* Galatians 2:19-21 “For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

**Enormous problems with the Book of Mormon**

The Book of Mormon has been classes as the most correct of any book on earth. This of course coming from Joseph Smith himself. It is the basis of their religion and helps get you closer to God by abiding its precepts.

The book was written by Smith and a scribe. Smith would put the seer stone (Urim and Thumin) in a hat and put his face in the opening. This removed all light and then something like a parchment would appear with a character on it in Reformed Egyptian and under it the translation into English. Smith would tell the scribe who would write it down. If it was written down correctly then the image would disappear and a new one would appear. Essentially the gold plates were useless since he didn’t use them in the translation. This has later been changed by people within the faith to make it seem like the seer stone was only used until he understood the language and could translate it without them.

The really funny thing about this is that this kind of occult glass reading as it was called, was very popular in the 1820s. You would see an image in the glass that would bring you to a hidden treasure.

Sound familiar?!?!?

With the fantastic claims that it is the most correct book on earth and how it was translated make it seem like it would be without error.

Since it was originally published in 1830 the Book of Mormon has had 3,913 changes through the mid 1970s. The 1981 edition made between 100 and 200 changes.

So if God revealed by His power and confirmed the correct wording of the book, why did it ever have a single change?

While many Mormon members deny changes to the Book of Mormon there are some who do state that. The changes have been minor in their eyes addition of words to clarify or revision of words to clarify. But either way these revisions change the meaning a lot of the time.

Example from the book of 1 Nephi 13:40

“These last records…shall make known to all kindreds, tongues an people, that the Lamb of God is the **Eternal Father** and Savior of the world”

Today it reads “These last records…shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the **Son of the Eternal Father** and Savior of the world”

Is the Lamb of god the eternal father or the son of the eternal father. This is a contradiction they call a clarification.

There is plagiarism in the Book of Mormon, entire stories with the same words used. Example being the story of Lazarus. You can parallel the KJV and the book of Mormon and see how sentences were taken directly out of the KJV and put into the Book of Mormon.

One problem that arises from this is that the Book of Mormon also utilizes the italicized words which were added by the translators of the KJV. If the Book of Mormon was written 1200 to 2000 years prior to the KJV how could they have the same interpretation?

The Book of Mormon claims to tell the stories of a people that came to America from Israel. It tells of all these major cities and wars that took place. It tells how America had an advanced civilization on it prior to Columbus coming. There is no archaeological evidence to support the claims the Book of Mormon makes. With the Bible you can take it, trace the steps and find places we didn’t know existed, recently done to find earlier versions of the temple. You can also trace Paul’s mission trips to real cities/ruins of cities all over. None of these things can be done with the Book of Mormon.

The last big claim they make is that the American Indians are descendants of the Lamanites, one of the peoples who came to America from Israel in 600 BC. After all the warring they were the only ones left. DNA evidence tells a different story. DNA shows that the origins of the American Indians is 99.4% Northeast Asia and 0.6% African and European decent. There is no Jewish decent.

**What the Bible says**

* They deny the Bible because of its errancy
	+ 2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and its profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
	+ Jude v3 “Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was **once for all** delivered to the saints.”
		- Once is all that is needed. It is for all. There are no variations of it
	+ Galatians 1:6-10 “I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For it I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.”

**Prophets**

Smith was the first Prophet of the LDS church. His role was to restore the gospel in preparation of the second coming of Christ. He is the preeminent prophetic witness of Christ. Since Smith the president of the LDS church has taken on this role of Prophet. They stand as revealers of Christ to the world. They echo to the world and expound and unfold what God has revealed through them.

The Bible defines a prophet in Deuteronomy 18:20-22 and it says that if anything the prophet says doesn’t come to pass then he isn’t a prophet.

Smith prophesied that New Jerusalem would be built in Missouri and dedicated by his own hand. He died and no New Jerusalem had been built.

Smith prophesied that unless the government of the United States make up for the wrongs committed against the LDS church in Missouri and punish the government officials that committed these wrongs then in a few years the government would be utterly overthrown and wasted. This was in 1843, the government still stands today.

Brigham Young said that the Civil War wouldn’t free the slaves.

Brigham Young said in 1866 that Utah would never become a state because they wouldn’t abandon polygamy in order to do so. Utah abandoned polygamy in 1890 and became a state in 1896.

Based on the Biblical definition of a prophet found in Deuteronomy 18:20-22 these prophets fail the test and should be stoned to death. The Bible is sufficient for our every use, go back to 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

**Hell**

I mentioned earlier the Outer Darkness. This is their hell. They believe, however, that a person only goes there for a time to be punished. Once their punishment is over they will move into the Telestial Kingdom, this is the lowest level of heaven. They also teach that Satan will be tormenting them there. Only the son of perdition, those who have given themselves over to Satan will remain in Hell forever.

**What the Bible says**

* Matthew 25:46 “And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”
	+ Clearly there is a heaven and a hell, and both are eternal. There is no changing from hell to heaven. The word for everlasting and eternal are the same. So you cannot put a length on everlasting without putting one on eternal.
* Matthew 13:30 “Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”
* Matthew 13:49-50 “So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”
* Revelation 20:11-12 “Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.
* Revelation 20:15 “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”
	+ Obviously they read revelation because Joseph Smith prophesied about the building of New Jerusalem which comes in Revelation Chapter 21. So how do you just skip the judgment?
* Revelation 21:8 “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

**Witnessing to them**

We took a look at what they believe and what the Bible says. Like I said getting into a sword fight with anyone is useless. But a lot of the verse references are good for witnessing to them. Especially the last section on Hell. There are few who actually want to go to hell, and if you are talking to a Mormon they won’t want to go to hell. So you can use those verses to show them hell is real.

When witnessing to a Mormon, or really any works base theology, is to break down what the Bible says about good works. In works based religions people may appear to be calm and confident on the outside, but inside is always doubt. Tug at that thread. They have no assurance of salvation. What if your works aren’t good enough for God? You can’t judge good works, there is no standard by which to judge your works. Isaiah 64:6 says that our good works are like filthy rags to God.

There is, however, a standard to judge your sins. It is quite easy to establish with someone that they are a sinner. Ask them four questions.

1. Have you ever told a lie?
	1. You are therefore a liar.
2. Have you ever stolen anything?
	1. You are therefore a thief.
3. Have you ever used God’s name in vain?
	1. You are a blasphemer?
4. Have you ever lusted after someone?
	1. You are an adulterer.
	2. Matthew 5:28 “But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman in lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Everyone is guilty. That is only four of the 10 commandments. What is the penalty for each time you have broken the commandments? How do you know that your good works will cover those sins? The Bible says that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). So how are you ever going to pay for your sins with works? There is no possible way to make yourself good. As you live day by day you go deeper into sin debt.

This will open the door for the gospel. Salvation through Grace. Hebrews 10:14 “For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”

Another good tool to make them think is Hitler. For Mormons everyone will eventually make it to Heaven right. Their deeds will be punished and they will be allowed into the Telestial Kingdom. So Hitler was responsible for the death of approximately 6 million Jews. World War II which he is responsible for starting cost the lives of approximately 85 million people. Tell me that Hitler does not deserve to be in hell forever. You really think that after some amount of time he might be able pay off his sins and be in heaven? There is always a shadow of doubt in works based religions.

**Famous Mormons**

Joseph Smith

Brigham Young – Ben Young’s Great great grandfather…

Steve Young – Actually is a descendant of Brigham Young

Glenn Beck

Mitt Romney

Jon Heder

Ryan Markey