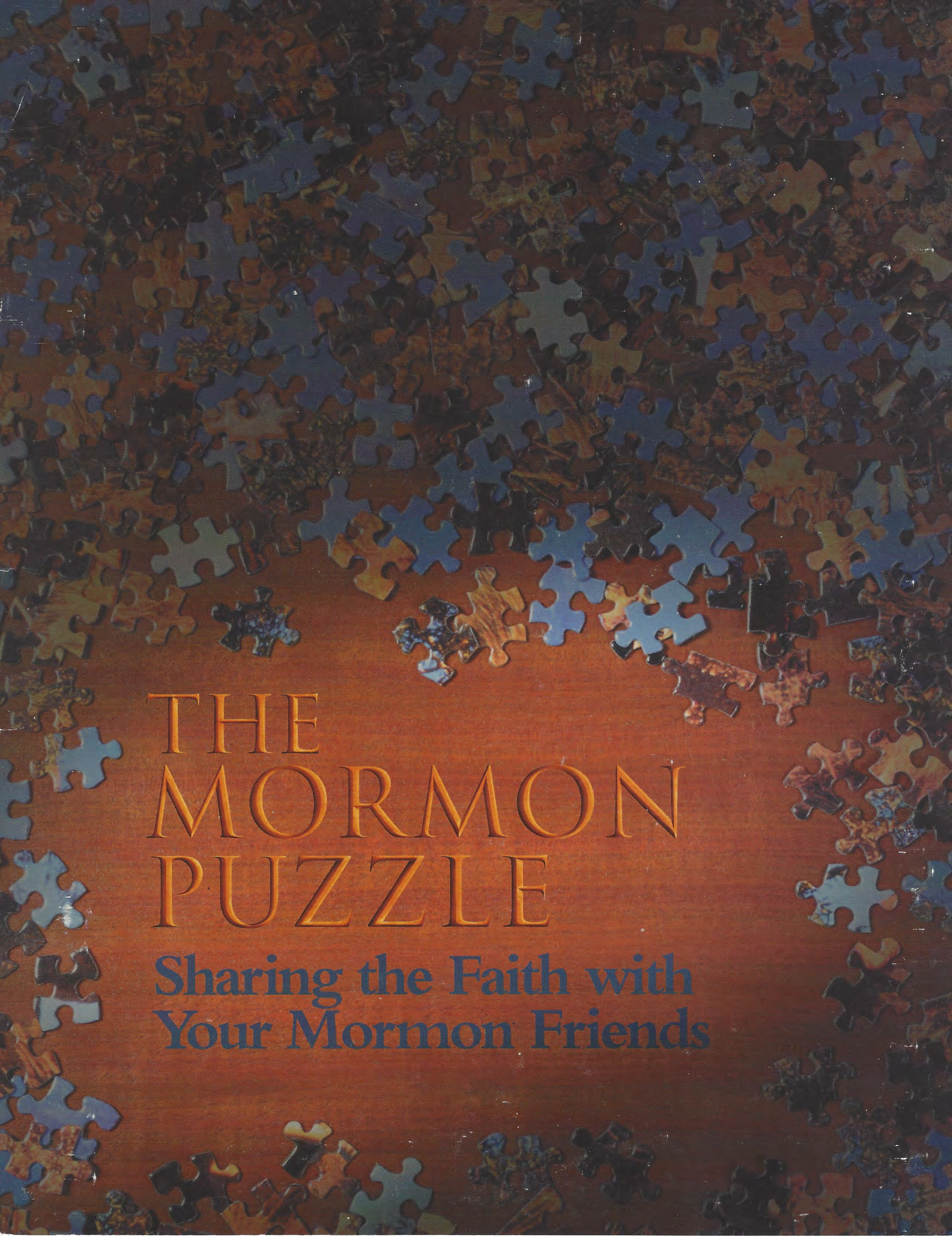




THE MORMON PUZZLE

Sharing the Faith with
Your Mormon Friends

THE MORMON PUZZLE:

SHARING THE FAITH WITH YOUR MORMON FRIENDS

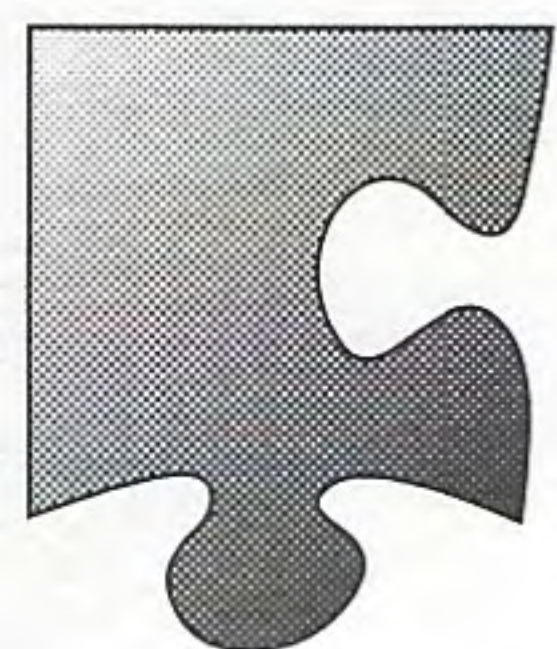
by Michael H. Reynolds

1 Peter 3:15
Mike 1/2

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CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Session One: Preparing to Share Our Faith (part 1)	5
I. Objective:	5
II. Bible Study: Absolutes	5
III. Group Activity	7
IV. Practical Instruction	9
V. Preview of next session	10
Session Two: Preparing to Share Our Faith (part 2)	11
I. Objective	11
II. Bible Study: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman	11
III. Practical Instruction	14
IV. Group Activity	15
V. Preview of next session	16
Session Three: Sharing Our Faith (part 1)	17
I. Objective	17
II. Bible Study: To the Unknown God	17
III. Group Activity	18
IV. Practical Instruction	19
V. Preview of Next Session	19
Session Four: Sharing Our Faith (part 2)	20
I. Objective	20
II. Bible Study: What must I do to be saved?	20
III. Practical Instruction	21
IV. Group Activity: Marking your Bible and <i>Book of Mormon</i>	23
V. Preview of Next Session	23
Session Five: Discipline New Believers	24
I. Objective	24
II. Bible Study: Another Gospel	24
III. Practical Instruction	25
IV. Group Activity: Group Discussion	26
Appendices	27
I. The Key Issue: The Nature of God	27
II. Glossary	28
III. Suggested Readings	30
IV. Outline	31





INTRODUCTION

In the recent past, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) (whose members are referred to as Mormons) has claimed to be Christian. These claims have been made by the leaders of the church, in public television and radio commercials, by approximately 50,000 missionaries, and by church members. With this in mind, why is a seminar needed about sharing the Christian faith with Mormons who claim to be Christian? Two things must be understood. First, just because a church claims to be Christian does not make it so. There are members of every church who are more than likely not Christian. Second, we must share the gospel with everyone, including Mormons, so that they will have the opportunity to experience the new birth found only in Jesus as He is revealed in the New Testament.

The purpose of this seminar is to train Christians to effectively share their faith with people of LDS background who have not experienced the reality of the new birth in Jesus. Official LDS doctrines declare that God is an exalted man who was once just as we are now; Jesus is the literal son of God; men can become gods, which is the gaining of eternal life; and people are saved by God only after they do all they can do. In fact, nearly everyone is saved, and Mormons who obey all the principles of the LDS church may be exalted to godhood. These doctrines are far removed from the Bible and historic Christian faith so it is apparent why Mormons must be evangelized. Those doctrines also indicate the difficulty in witnessing to them.

This seminar attempts to address the basics of LDS doctrines, pertinent cultural factors, and relevant historical issues that enable us to witness to our Mormon friends in an informed and appropriate manner. Participants in the seminar should prepare for the long haul in witnessing, as most Mormons take months and even years to realize the mirage of Mormonism and to receive the true Christ. This seminar does not take the place of the Interfaith Witness Awareness Conference. It is designed to accompany other materials available from the North American Mission Board, including the 50-minute video *The Mormon Puzzle: Understanding and Witnessing to Mormons*.

Other resources available from the North American Mission Board:

“Belief Bulletin: Mormons” (363-58F), free

“Belief Bulletin: Patterns in the Cults” (363-79F), free

“A Closer Look at *The Book of Mormon*” (213-108F), free

“A Closer Look at the Truth About the Mormon Family” (213-94F), free

“A Closer Look at the Mormon Concept of God” (213-117F), free

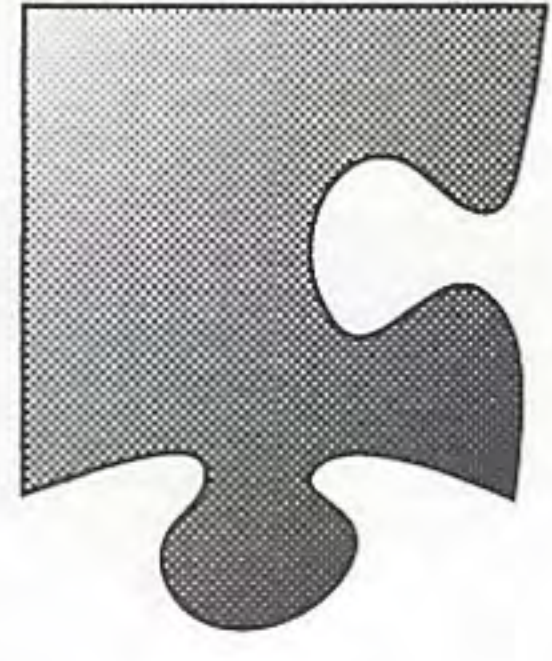
“A Closer Look at the Mormon Plan of Salvation” (213-119F), free

Light on the Latter-day Saints Interfaith Witness Associate Manual (120 pages, 213-46P), \$8.00

To order these or other materials, call NAMB Customer Services, 1 800 634-2462, or fax, 1 800 253-2823.

This book is dedicated to my wife Nancy, whose love for missions and evangelism is an encouragement to me and countless missionaries around the world.





SESSION ONE:

Preparing to Share Our Faith (Part 1)

- I. Objective:** To prepare seminar participants to share their faith by giving attention to opportunities, challenges, and attitudes that relate to this task.

Seminar leader may introduce the study by showing the 50-minute video, *The Mormon Puzzle: Understanding and Witnessing to Latter-day Saints*, and distributing the “Belief Bulletin: Mormons” (363–58F) before the first session. The video could also be shown to a congregation or group as a promotional tool to enlist participants for this class.

II. Bible Study: Absolutes (John 1:1–4,14; Deut 6:4)

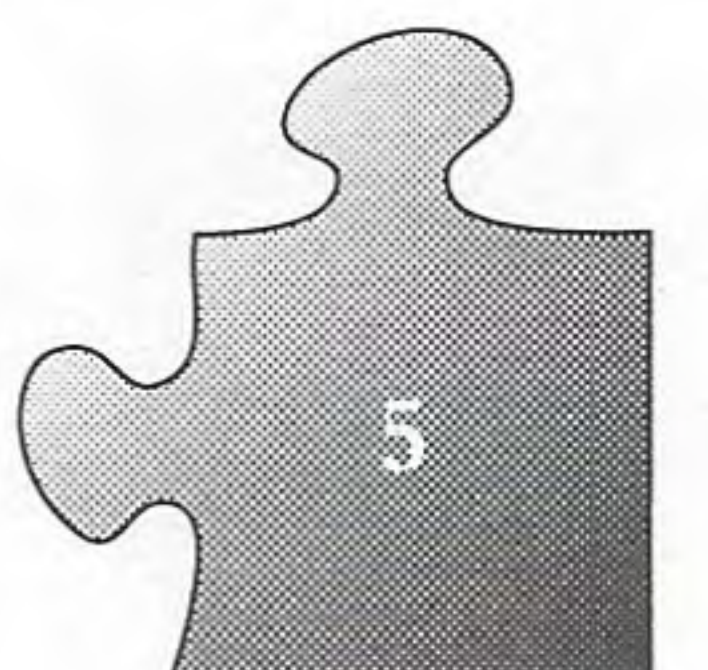
- A. Introduction: In order to properly witness to Mormons, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of both the LDS and the Christian view of God and Jesus. If the nature of God can be agreed on, or at least understood, then you have a common ground to begin witnessing.

Seminar leader may want to refer to Appendix I: The Nature of God by Robert McKay or duplicate and distribute copies of “A Closer Look at the Mormon Concept of God” (213–117F).

1. The LDS church teaches that Jesus is revealed in the Old Testament as Jehovah (YHWH) and Elohim is God, the Father or Heavenly Father. It also teaches that the Trinity is not one God revealed in three persons but three separate and distinct gods and that those gods form the Godhead. Further, Mormonism teaches that there are a plurality of gods in existence today, although they only worship one god who is the God of this world.

Some Scripture in this manual, *The Mormon Puzzle: Sharing the Faith with Your Mormon Friends*, is from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*. However, when talking to a Mormon it is advised that you use the King James Version since that is the official version of the LDS church and the only one the Mormon will accept as Scripture.

2. Even a casual observation of the Old Testament will show that God and Jehovah are interchangeable terms for the same being. One of the clearest of such statements is found in Deuteronomy 6:4.
 - a. Remember that the word most used for God in Hebrew is *Elohim*. This is the word used in this passage. Jehovah is understood to be the Hebrew word for God’s proper name.
 - b. Deuteronomy 6:4 says “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord” (KJV). Two clear points can be made in an analysis of this verse.
 - 1) First, the King James Version is translating the word Jehovah (YHWH) as the word Lord. When you put Jehovah in the place of Lord and Elohim in the place of God,



the verse reads like this: “Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah.” This makes it clear that Jehovah and Elohim are one being. In the context of Mormonism this makes it also clear that Jesus and God are one being.

- 2) Second, this text teaches that there is just one God.
- c. Occasionally, a Mormon will bring up the point that Elohim is the plural Hebrew word for God. While this is true, note that here and in all the places in the Bible where this word refers to the God of Israel, it takes the single form of the verb--which puts the word “Elohim” in singular usage. There is just one God.
3. John 1:1-4,14 (KJV) offers a New Testament insight into the nature of God. Let’s examine the basic claims made in these verses.
 - a. “In the beginning was the Word” (v. 1). This means that the Word--the living Word of God--was already in existence in the beginning. This statement is reminiscent of the passage in Genesis 1:1. John uses this phraseology to tell us that the Word is God.
 - b. “The Word was with God, and the Word was God” (v. 1). John here tells us that if there is any doubt about who and what the Word is--it (He) is God.
 - c. “All things were made by him” (v. 3). Here John identifies the Word as a person by the use of the personal pronoun. Further, John tells us that the Word is the instrument of creation. Remember that Genesis 1:1 states emphatically that God himself and only God created. It should also be remembered that John was raised a Jew. In the first century A.D., most Jews would not entertain the concept of the existence of but one God--the God of Israel.
 - d. “In him was life” (v. 4). John has stated for us that the Word is God; and now he says that Word is life. In John 14:6 (KJV), Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”
 - e. Finally, if there is any doubt as to the identity of the Word, it is ended in John 1:14. “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” Here John tells us that the Word became a human being and lived among humankind. In Matthew 1:23, the angel Gabriel told Joseph that one of Jesus’ names would be Emmanuel, which means “God with us.”
4. Mormonism claims that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost (which in Mormonism is separate from the Holy Spirit) are three separate and distinct gods. While we have not dealt with the complete concept of the Trinity, the Bible has conclusively shown that God and Jesus are one being and that there is just one God.

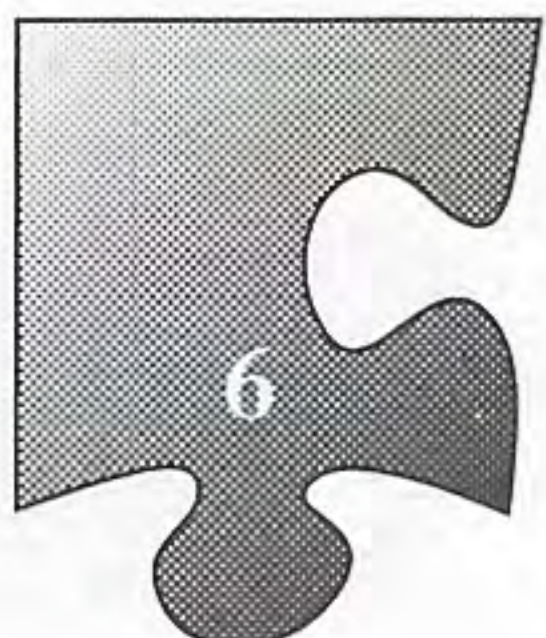
B. Degrees of understanding: What do Mormons really know about Mormonism?

1. Most Mormons know that the LDS church teaches that Jesus and God are separate and distinct beings. To a lesser degree, most Mormons know the LDS church teaches that Elohim is Heavenly Father and Jehovah is Jesus.

“This individual, while acting as the mediator, was none other than Jehovah of the Old Testament.”¹

“Jesus Christ, who was then called Jehovah . . .”²

2. As to the doctrine of many gods, you will find some Mormons who believe it, some who believe it and don’t realize they do, and some who don’t believe it. In fact, many new converts do not even know that the doctrine exists. However, the church does teach it.



“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 Young³

“I will preach on the plurality of Gods. I have selected this text for that express purpose. I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I have preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been the plurality of Gods. It has been preached by the Elders for fifteen years.”

—Joseph Smith⁴

3. Most Mormons don't know that the *Book of Mormon* contradicts the current official LDS teaching about God.

“Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God? And he [Amulek, a prophet of God in the Book of Mormon] answered, No” (Alma 11:28-29).

“Now Zeezrom saith again unto him: Is the Son of God the very Eternal Father? And Amulek said unto him: Yea, he is the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth” (Alma 11:38-39).

“And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God.”⁵

III. Group Activity

A. Examining LDS Attitudes

Teaching Instructions: Ask participants if anyone has witnessed to Mormons and experienced particular attitudes toward their efforts. Lead in a discussion of those experiences. Below is a list of some of those attitudes along with some explanation.

1. For most Mormons, their religion is also part of an entire culture. Therefore, to witness to them about the Jesus of the New Testament and tell them that their church may not be as true as they thought, threatens their entire world. This will color any attempt at Christian witnessing and should be noted. This is why few Mormons have ever been won to Christ in one sitting.
2. Mormons' attitudes toward your attempt at Christian witnessing will also be colored by their “testimony.”
 - a. Christians are familiar with the concept of a testimony. To evangelical Christians, it is the story about how they came to have a personal relationship with Jesus as Savior and Lord. It is usually a heartwarming and moving story that is personal and inviting. For this reason, it is important to share your testimony with others.
 - b. However, a Mormon's testimony has very little to do with Jesus, except as a side issue, and has more to do with what he or she “knows” to be true.
 - c. An LDS testimony may go something like this: “I bear you my testimony that I know that Joseph Smith is a true prophet, and that the *Book of Mormon* is true and that the LDS church is true.”
 - 1) How does he or she “know” these things are true? Is he or she in possession of facts, evidence, or hard documentation that prove his or her claim?
 - 2) The Mormon possesses no evidence that will stand up under scrutiny. He or she



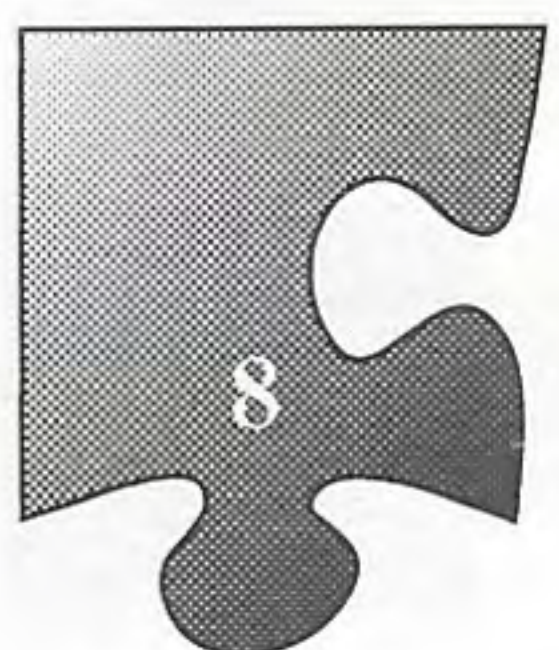
has a vague reference to the “Spirit of God” and the subjective demand in Moroni 10:4--and no objective evidence whatsoever.

- 3) Without doubt, there is always the element of faith in things not seen. However, it is clear that God has provided plenty of objective evidence to verify the record of His Word, the Bible, to man. Therefore, where faith must be exercised in the Bible it can be done with confidence. This is not so in Mormonism. For the most part, the Mormon is merely repeating by rote what he or she has heard many times before. He or she may believe it, but cannot prove it in any kind of objective way.
3. Whenever you bring up a quote from an LDS General Authority that contradicts the Mormon’s view of things you often will get responses like: “that’s just his opinion,” or “he didn’t really mean that,” or “that is not what he said,” or simply, “we don’t believe that.”
4. No matter how practical a Mormon is, he or she does not rely on rationality when it comes to his or her faith. At times you may experience the frustration of putting forward evidence, for example, that the *Book of Mormon* has no historical support and then hearing the Mormon say, “I don’t need evidence, I have a testimony and a prophet.”

B. Practical Suggestions

Teaching Instructions: Lead in a brief discussion of some of the suggestions that others may have gained from their experiences in witnessing to Mormons. Cover those not mentioned from the list below.

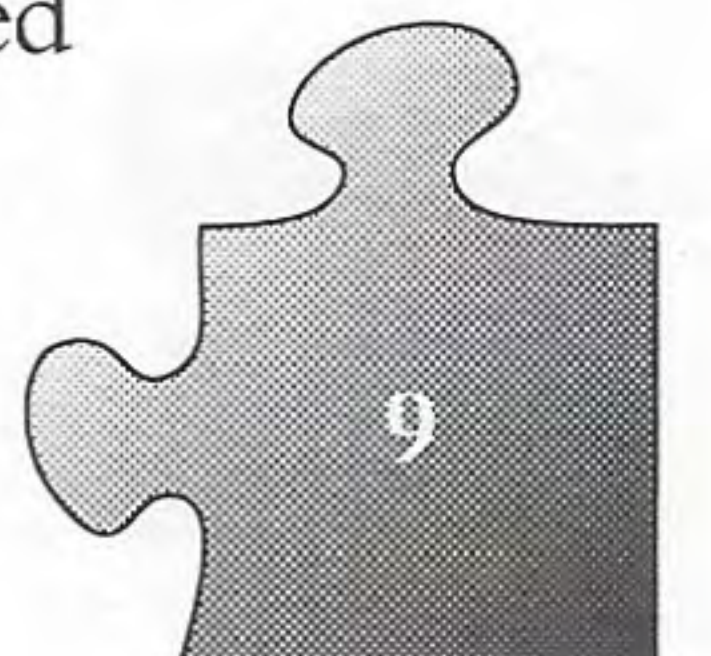
1. Have a good working knowledge of the Bible. Know what you believe and why you believe it.
2. Have a good working knowledge of the LDS faith.
3. Be prepared to call the Mormon’s knowledge into question on major areas. Often you must show a Mormon that he or she cannot always depend on Mormon leaders not to lead him or her astray.
4. Don’t make any claims you cannot back up. The Mormon must see that you are honest, open, and aboveboard.
5. Be as transparent as possible. Have no hidden agendas. Be genuinely concerned for the Mormon.
6. Remember that your conversation with a Mormon may take months or even years to complete. This does not mean that God cannot and will not allow immediate results. However, this observation is based on the experience of those witnessing to Mormons in thousands of opportunities and events.
7. When the Mormon brings up any of the excuses listed in III. A. 3. above, here are some practical ways to deal with them:
 - a. “Just his opinion”: You may want to say, “Surely the prophet, apostle, scribe, etc., has the ability to speak for the church.” (If it is in an official LDS source, make note of that.) Or, “Surely even a prophet or an apostle’s opinion is worthy of note.” Or, “Whose opinion is more helpful in understanding LDS doctrine, yours or a general authority’s?”



- b. "Not what he meant or said": You may want to say, "Surely the prophet of the church knew LDS doctrine and was capable of saying what he meant and meaning what he said." Ask the Mormon to demonstrate from the quote in reference that the LDS leader in question did not mean exactly what the words themselves say.
 - c. "We don't believe that": Of course this is not the issue. You must deal with the point of what the church officially teaches. So, use official LDS sources to determine what the church actually does teach. If the Mormon does not actually believe some part of Mormon doctrine, applaud him or her for it, and then show from the Bible why that is good.
8. It is helpful to speak in terms the Mormon is familiar with whenever possible. Learn the LDS meaning for terms and use them in the same manner as the Mormon does. This will aid in easing apprehension and allow you to converse on his or her level. See glossary for definitions of the following terms: the church, eternal life, salvation, the Spirit of God, and the godhead.
 9. Pick a topic and stay with it.
 10. Maintain a relaxed demeanor.
 11. Above all, witness to Mormons because you love them and, as in every witnessing encounter, pray for everyone involved.

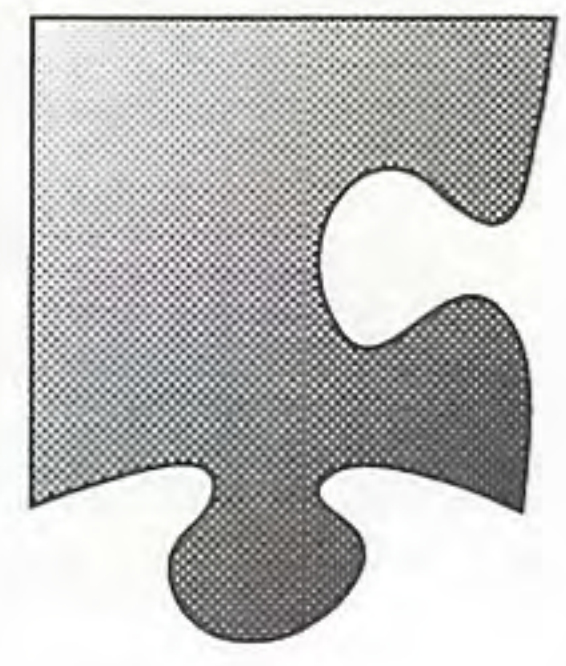
IV. Practical Instruction

- A. Opportunities to witness to Mormons are increasing all across the country.
 1. The LDS church is growing today in places where it traditionally was not present in the past. Mormons are your neighbors, shopkeepers, doctors, and a multitude of other occupations. Look around and ask God to give you opportunities to witness.
 2. The LDS church has about 50,000 missionaries around the world who spend their time going door-to-door telling people about their church. So God may bring an opportunity right to your front door.
 - a. You will probably make little headway with the missionaries. There are only a few documented incidents of Mormon missionaries being won to Christ while on a mission. Nonetheless, you can plant a seed that may grow to fruition in the years to come. There are many examples of this occurring.
 - b. When you have the missionaries in your home, remember that it is your home and that you set the ground rules.
 - c. Make an appointment and commit the missionaries to at least an hour, or you may find out ten minutes into the conversation that they "have an appointment."
 - d. Try to determine their first names and refrain from calling them "elder" whenever possible.
 - e. See other suggestions as outlined in the previous section about dealing with Mormon attitudes toward Christian witnessing.
 3. Not only can you witness to Mormon missionaries at home, but you will also find them in nearly every corner of the globe. If you are traveling in a foreign country they will be delighted to see an American, and you may be presented with a marvelous evangelistic opportunity.



4. Many Christians are finding that they have family members who are LDS. Because of the growing pluralistic nature of American society today, this is an opportunity that must be entered into with great care if equilibrium in the family is to be maintained.
- B. Who are you witnessing to?
1. It is helpful to determine the Mormon's level of commitment.
 2. To do so, there are several things to consider.
 - a. There are five types of Mormons that you may encounter.
 - 1) Mormons who are active, involved, and believe church teachings unquestionably. (Recent converts to Mormonism are really a sub-category of this type of member.) They are extremely zealous but may actually know very little of LDS doctrine.
 - 2) Mormons who are active and involved but do not completely believe. For them Mormonism is a cultural and family tradition more than a faith for these people. These Mormons are probably the most numerous and yet may defend the faith more rigidly than any other.
 - 3) Liberal Mormons stay in the church but question everything from the prophet's statements to the official history of the church.
 - 4) Inactive Mormons are those who do not attend church and may not follow church ethical and moral teachings, yet are still members of the church.
 - 5) Fundamentalist Mormons (in the LDS context, this means polygamists) are few in number and will be low on the list of those you usually have the opportunity to witness to.
 - b. Determine the Mormon's level of activity in the LDS church.
 - 1) Ask what Ward he or she attends or if he or she attends sacrament meeting every Sunday.
 - 2) Determine if he or she was born into Mormonism or is a convert. If a convert, try to find out how long he or she has been in the church.
 - c. Mormons in and from Utah are often different in attitudes, lifestyle, and actions than those from outside that state.

V. Preview of next session



SESSION TWO

Preparing to Share Our Faith (Part 2)

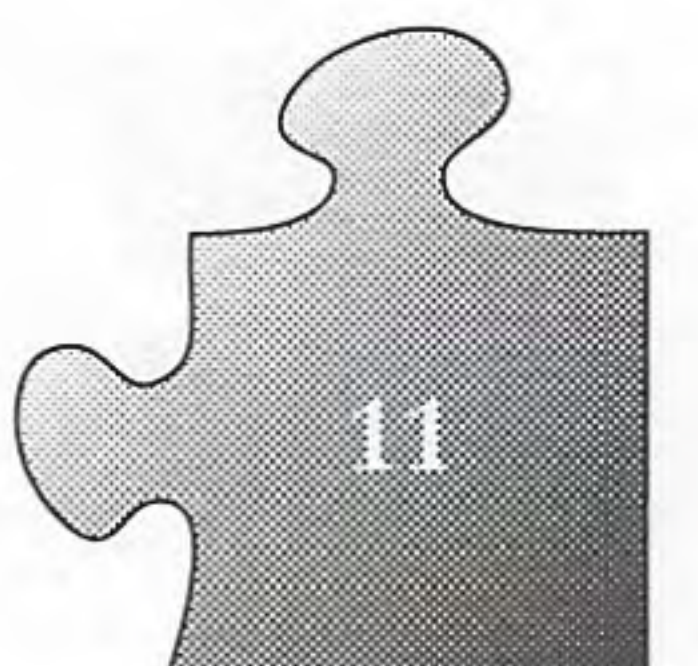
Seminar leader may want to copy and distribute “A Closer Look at the Mormon Plan of Salvation” (213-119F).

I. Objective: To prepare participants to share their faith by studying Jesus’ methods and claims for Himself.

II. Bible Study: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-30)

A. In witnessing to any cult group, including Mormons, it is helpful to have an idea of Jesus’ methods and claims about Himself. John 4:1-30 gives us an example of Christ’s methods of witnessing and insight into His claims about Himself.

1. Jesus went out of His way to witness to people who were difficult to win. In verse 4 (NIV), we learn that Jesus “had to go through Samaria.” While it was true that some Jews did go through Samaria, most did not--especially rabbis. Samaritans and Jews had a mutual dislike for each other dating back to the division of the nation of Israel into two kingdoms after the death of Solomon.
 - a. Jesus knew that He would encounter people of another culture and religion--it would be unavoidable. From the conversation and its location it seems that He intended to meet with this particular woman.
 - b. Note that He sent the disciples away to avoid any distractions, then He sat down by the well at noon. This was an unusual time for the woman to be drawing water. It appears that she was ostracized by her neighbors because of her lifestyle, so she came at a time different from the crowd.
 - c. Mormons are difficult to win to Christ, but if we use the same methods as the Master, we must have compassion on Mormon people and be willing to go out of our way to reach those hard to win.
2. In the conversation with the Samaritan woman, Jesus was kind and gracious. He never attacked her personally but dealt either with her sin or her false beliefs. This can be seen in his conversation about the living Water. Jesus used it to get her attention and to point her to Himself. He could have been caustic when she refused to get the point, but he remained calm. Often Mormons will also fail to get the point for the following reasons:
 - a. Their culture keeps them from it.
 - b. Their doctrine is so ingrained that they cannot understand another definition of a term or word that you are trying to present. This may even be in spite of the fact that the definition you are using is the correct dictionary definition of the word or has been used in the way you are using it by the Christian community since the first century.
 - c. They do not want to get it, because if they do, then they will have to admit that you have a valid point.



Note that the woman Jesus talked to appeared to fall into this category twice. This was because she was a Samaritan and Jesus was a Jew--and a rabbi no less--and if she got His point, then she would have to admit that all she had learned was not true.

Yet Jesus carefully guided her to the conclusion that He sought, which was the realization that He was the answer to her religious questions, the problems in her personal life, her relationship with the people in town, and her eternal destiny.

3. Jesus never allowed her to stray from the subject of the conversation. In trying to witness to Mormons, one frustrating problem is their tendency to change the subject. Whenever you get to a difficult place, they wish to alter the conversation to suit themselves. The woman at the well of Samaria was no different. Here Jesus provides an excellent example of what to do.
 - a. In verse 10, Jesus talked about "living water." The woman wanted to have a literal discussion about the fact that Jesus had nothing with which to draw water. Jesus guided her back to the point in verse 14 by defining the water of which He spoke.
 - b. She tried to remain focused on the water, so Jesus confronted her with her sin (more will be said about this later). She changed the subject once again.
 - c. This time she returned to one of the areas that sparked so much contention between the Jews and the Samaritans--the place of worship (vv. 19-20).
 - 1) Historically, the Samaritans, who were a part of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, had places of worship on various mountains. At times these were places of idol worship. Those in the Southern Kingdom of Judah kept the Temple and followed God's commands, at least technically, to worship only there.
 - 2) Jesus turned her attention from the physical place of worship to spiritual worship in the heart.
 - d. Many Mormons like to appeal to the spiritual side of their faith by telling Christians who try to witness to them, "You just don't have the spirit of the Lord." This is normally attempted as a final appeal to their own spiritual superiority. The woman tried something similar in appealing to eschatology as her final attempt to change the subject.
 - 1) In verse 25 she appealed to the coming of the Messiah and said that when He comes, all will be revealed.
 - 2) Jesus pointed her back to the main subject-- Himself--when He declared. "I who speak to you am he" (v. 26, NIV). In that statement, He not only claimed to be the Messiah, he claimed to be the God of Israel. Remember that in verse 12 she asked Jesus, "Are you greater than our father Jacob?" The answer here is yes.
4. Mormons often appear to be upset when you confront their faith, yet, we note that Jesus confronted the Samaritan woman four times.
 - a. Jesus confronted her culturally when as a Jewish rabbi he spoke to her in the beginning of the encounter.
 - b. Jesus confronted her sin in order for her to understand who He was (v. 16).
 - c. Jesus confronted her false doctrine of worship (v. 21).
 - d. Jesus confronted her with Himself (v. 26).

- e. Application: When witnessing to Mormons, confrontational witnessing will necessarily become part of the approach. No matter what the Mormon or anyone else says, we need not feel guilty about this since we have the example of Jesus. We should unapologetically, yet lovingly, confront Mormons:
 - 1) With their false doctrines.
 - 2) With their historical inaccuracies.
 - 3) With the Person of Jesus.
- B. It is important to communicate what Jesus claimed about Himself so that Mormons understand that this is fundamental to the Christian faith. If a person does not believe or comprehend the things that Jesus claimed for Himself, then there is a good chance that he or she is not a Christian.
 - 1. This is imperative because Mormons often speak of their affection for Jesus and point to His name in their church's title. However, many Mormons think more of Joseph Smith Jr. than of Jesus and do not understand the biblical teaching about his nature.
 - 2. With this in mind, point out to the Mormon just what Jesus did claim for Himself.
 - a. He is the living Water--the sustainer of life. In the Old Testament, this was none other than God himself.
 - b. He is the Messiah who is greater than Jacob and any other prophet or patriarch.
 - c. He further claimed deity by using the words "I am he." Since Jesus conversed with this woman in Aramaic and since it was immediately after this statement that the woman understood what he was talking about, it is reasonable to assume that she understood his claim to be Yahweh, which is the Hebrew verb translated, "I am that I am."

C. Dialogue

Teaching Instruction: Ask participants what they think about this conversation, Jesus' style of witnessing, and the Samaritan woman's reactions to Jesus.

- 1. When the Samaritan woman finally realized who was conversing with her, her reaction was powerful.
- 2. There are probably several reasons why she left her pitcher behind.
 - a. She was excited.
 - b. She was in a hurry.
 - c. She no longer needed it because she took Jesus, the living Water, with her.
- 3. She ran to town to tell the very people she had earlier avoided about this Jesus she had met.
 - a. Notice what she said to them. "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did" (v. 29, NIV).
 - b. "Could this be the Christ" (v. 29, NIV)? The language indicates that she anticipated the answer to be yes.
- 4. The long-term results are important to note. Ask: Where was the first spiritual awakening outside of Jerusalem? (See Acts 8:4-7.)

- a. It was in Samaria.
- b. It was led by a deacon named Philip.

III. Practical Instruction

- A. In order to explain to a Mormon how to obtain eternal life, contrast what the LDS church means by salvation and eternal life and what the Bible says about salvation and eternal life.
 - 1. Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) says: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast."
 - 2. At first glance, a Mormon will agree wholeheartedly with you until you examine certain key words and phrases.
 - a. Saved
 - 1) In Mormonism this word is used to indicate general atonement, unconditional redemption, or salvation that is granted to almost all people because of the resurrection. "*Unconditional redemption* is a gift forced upon mankind which they cannot reject, though they were disposed."⁶
 - 2) In Christianity, salvation is the same thing as gaining eternal life. There is no unconditional redemption--only conditional redemption. It is conditional on what you do with Jesus (see John 3:16-18).
 - b. Grace
 - 1) It comes from the Greek word *Charis* and in its earliest meaning the word was used in artistic and architectural language. It originally indicated something that was perfect in its beauty, symmetry, and form and needed no improvement.⁷ The word "grace" is still used in this manner when we see a beautiful dancer or ice skater and remark how "graceful" he or she is.
 - 2) In evangelical Christian terminology, the word grace is used to refer to God's unmerited favor bestowed upon someone who does not deserve it. As one country preacher put it, "Anything plus grace is not grace."
 - 3) Mormonism teaches salvation by grace "after all we can do."⁸
 - c. Gift. There is no way to earn a gift. It is something freely given and all one can do is either accept or reject the gift. This means that grace is free and cannot be earned.
- B. At this point, note the LDS definition of "eternal life."
 - 1. Jesus said in John 3:16 that by believing in Him you will gain eternal life. Christianity equates the term eternal life with salvation.
 - 2. Remember that Mormonism says salvation is gained by everyone and is not necessarily the same as eternal life.
 - 3. In Mormonism eternal life is called *conditional or individual salvation*. It is for the purpose of delivering mankind from spiritual death caused by Adam's sin. It is available only to those who obey "the laws and ordinances of the Gospel."⁹
 - a. Obeying gospel law includes:

- 1) being worthy.
 - 2) obeying the Word of Wisdom.
 - 3) paying your tithe.
 - 4) having a celestial marriage in a Mormon temple. (See “A Closer Look at the Mormon Family,” product no. 213-94F.)
 - 5) performing temple ordinances on behalf of the living and the dead.
 - 6) being baptized by an Aaronic Priest.
- b. In Mormonism eternal life is exaltation to godhood in the celestial kingdom.¹⁰ In other words, when eternal life is gained one is elevated to the highest level of heaven (the celestial kingdom) and is exalted to godhood.
 - c. The biblical concept of salvation (eternal life) is gained by God’s free grace. In Mormonism it must be earned. Thomas S. Monson of the LDS church’s First Presidency said, “It is the celestial glory that we seek . . . Such blessings must be earned.”¹¹
 - d. Since eternal life cannot be gained without obeying Mormon “gospel law” and performing ordinances in a Mormon temple, we conclude that eternal life is gained not through Jesus Christ but through the Mormon church.

IV. Group Activity

A. Degrees of understanding

1. Despite the fact that Mormons know that they cannot have eternal life without earning it, in recent years many Mormons have begun to declare that they know they have eternal life now.
2. This was not always the case and certainly was not taught by Joseph Smith. Most Mormons do not know that officially they cannot know that they have earned eternal life or exaltation until after they have died. However, many still admit that they do not know and cannot know if they have eternal life.
 - a. “But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you have learned them. It is not to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and *exaltation even beyond the grave*”¹² (Original emphasis).
 - b. Compare with 1 John 5:13.

Teaching Instruction: You may want to ask the class to discuss as a group and come up with possible ways to use 1 John 5:13 and any other suggested verses to show a Mormon how to know he or she has eternal life--in spite of what Joseph Smith said.

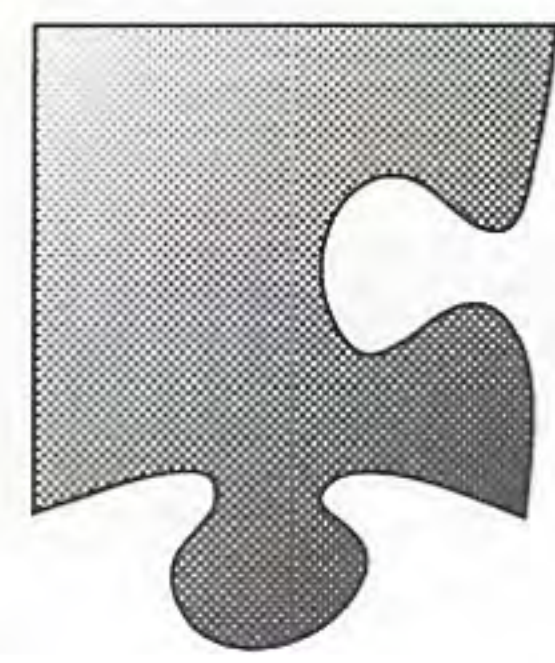
B. Communicating to a Mormon

1. Remember that eventually a Mormon--no matter how well you know him or her--will get upset with you for questioning his or her faith. Sooner or later it will not matter how nice, kind, or gracious you are, he or she will get upset with you. This is a reality to prepare for if you are serious about witnessing to Mormon people. However, there are some ways to deal with this problem and maintain friendship.

Teaching Instruction: Ask the class to suggest some ways that friendship and discussion can be prolonged even if the LDS friend or family member gets upset.

2. Practical aspects of witnessing without losing the person. (Suggestions to supplement discussion.)
 - a. Become his or her friend first.
 - b. At first, ask simple questions that probe gently.
 - c. Be genuinely interested in what his or her family and church are doing.
 - d. Demonstrate that you genuinely love him or her in spite of your disagreement with his or her religion.
 - e. Spend time discussing other things. Don't always talk about religion.
 - f. Be as gentle as possible, and at the same time be firm.
 - g. Be prepared and know where your information sources are located.
 - h. As nicely as possible, ask your friend for documentation to support his or her contentions.

V. Preview of next session



SESSION THREE

Sharing our Faith (Part 1)

I. Objective: To demonstrate how participants can share their faith by “bearing their testimonies” and learning a gospel presentation in words that Mormons can understand.

II. Bible Study: To the unknown god (Acts 17:22-34)

A. As you attempt to witness Mormons, it is helpful to understand that even though they believe that their god is the same as the God of the Bible, this is not so. It is also helpful to see a clear presentation of the gospel to those who worship another god. Paul provided that for us in his address to the Athenians in Acts 17:22-34.

1. Paul introduced his message by mentioning the statues honoring the various gods there in Athens.
2. He pointed out how religious the Athenians were and came to his point of contact--the unknown god. Here Paul made reference to the god that they acknowledged, but about whom they confessed ignorance.¹³
3. This is a good place to witness to Mormons. They claim to worship the God of the Bible but are, for the most part, ignorant of the God of Christianity as He is revealed in the Bible. (Refer to Appendix I for an in-depth look at the LDS doctrine of God.)
4. Note that Paul accurately portrayed the Biblical God in clear and plain language without even giving a reference to Scripture.¹⁴ With Mormons, it is important to articulate what you believe in clear and plain language. This is easily done when you understand what a Mormon believes about God and how he or she states it and when you have a good understanding of what the Bible says.
5. What did Paul claim about God? (Acts 17:24-31)
 - a. God is creator and Lord (vv. 24-26).
 - b. He desires a relationship with humans (vv. 27-28).
 - c. God is not an idol of stone or metal (vv. 29-30).
 - d. God calls all people to repentance (vv. 30-31).
 - e. Judgment is coming and it will be based on the standard of the one God appointed (Jesus) and the proof is that God has raised Him from the dead (v. 31).

B. Look at how the Athenians responded to Paul's claims.

1. There are three basic responses. The first was to sneer or to mock what Paul said (v. 32).
2. The second response was a desire to hear more (v. 32).
3. The third response was to accept the New Testament gospel as it was presented (v. 34).

C. Look at LDS responses to the gospel. Mormons respond to the gospel the way they do for two reasons. One, they are ignorant of what the Bible actually says and of sound principles of biblical interpretation. Two, they have been taught to believe only that which the LDS church tells them is true.

1. Many Mormons will claim that you are attacking them because you maintain that Christianity has a different God from Mormonism.
2. Many Mormons are threatened by the fact that Christians have a different God.
Defensiveness may come when you produce biblical verses to demonstrate what you believe and then produce documentation from LDS sources to show that you know what you are talking about. They find they cannot answer you, so they may even resort to ridicule.
 - a. There is little to be done to avoid this problem of Mormon defensiveness--even with those who are your family members and friends.
 - b. Demonstrate that you care for them and do not hold their view of God in ridicule (no matter how strange it may be). Explain that you simply find that the Bible disagrees with it.

III. Group Activity

A. An example of an LDS testimony.

1. An LDS testimony can be on various subjects such as the *Book of Mormon*, Joseph Smith, or the truthfulness of the Mormon church.
2. An LDS testimony typically encompasses all three: "I bear you my testimony that the *Book of Mormon* is true and that Joseph Smith is a prophet and that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true. This is my testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen."
 - a. This testimony is normally repeated as if by memory, with little inflection or emotion.
 - b. It is based on Moroni 10:4-5 (*Book of Mormon*, for further review see Session One).
 - c. Do Mormons actually believe their testimony that they are so quick to offer?
 - 1) No doubt some believe it sincerely.
 - 2) While it is difficult to ascertain with any degree of certainty just how many really "know" that their testimony is true, it is obvious that many do not "know" it yet.
 - 3) Apostle Boyd K. Packer said, "A testimony is to be found in the bearing of it." Note that a testimony is to be gained, not through study or a personal relationship with Jesus, but by the continual sharing of that which you "hope is true."¹⁵

B. Here is an example of how to share your Christian testimony in terms a Mormon will understand. Ephesians 2:8-9 is a basis for this testimony.

I bear you my testimony that I have gained salvation, which is eternal life by God's grace and of no effort or worthiness on my own, through faith in Jesus Christ. I am able to accept God's gift of eternal life through Christ because of His death on the cross and His resurrection. I know this is true because of what the Bible says and what I have experienced in Him. This is my testimony in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

C. Outline testimony and practice.

Teaching Instruction: Have participants write down their Christian testimony using the above structure and practice sharing it with a partner.

1. I bear you my testimony . . .
2. I am able to accept God's gift of eternal life through Christ because . . .
3. I know this is true because ...

IV. Practical Instruction

A. As you prepare to share your testimony with a Mormon, here are some practical guidelines.

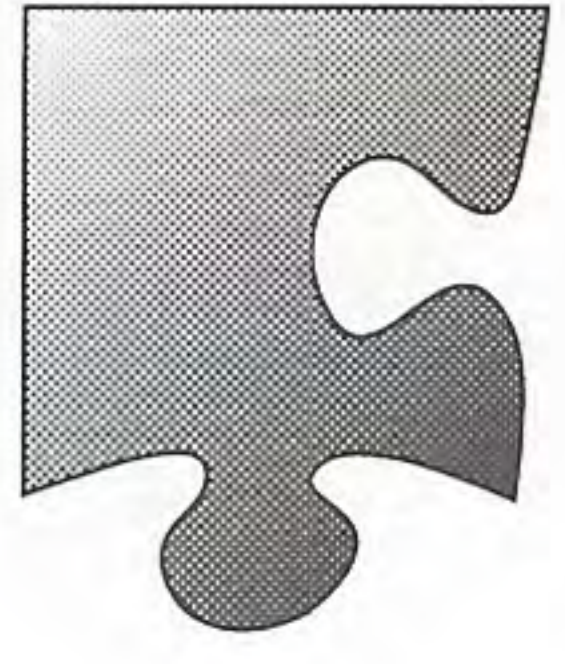
1. As the Mormon shares his or her testimony, listen carefully and give him or her your full attention.
2. Be careful not to call his or her testimony Christian.
3. When you share your testimony, be prepared to do so from memory.
4. Before sharing your testimony, say to the Mormon: "You did expect me to accept your testimony as true, did you not?" If yes, then say: "Then I ask you to accept mine on the basis of what the Bible says."

B. Share several New Testament verses that validate your testimony.

1. However, be aware that, in witnessing to Mormons, often when a verse from the New Testament is used the Mormon will say, "That is just what we believe."
2. It is good to understand LDS interpretations of various passages from the New Testament. This can be done by using the NAMB manual, *Light on the Latter-day Saints* (213-46P); the "Belief Bulletin: Mormons" (363-58F); material discussed in this book; and the glossary in the back. A suggested list of verses follows:
 - a. John 3:16-18
 - b. Romans 3:23
 - c. Romans 6:23
 - d. Ephesians 2:8-9
 - e. 1 Corinthians 8:1-8
 - f. 1 John 5:13

Teaching Note: As time permits, briefly discuss the above verses with explanations that Mormons can understand.

V. Preview of next session



SESSION FOUR

Sharing Our Faith (Part 2)

I. Objective: To equip participants to share their faith by practicing the gospel presentation and learning how to deal with questions.

II. Bible Study: What must I do to be saved (Luke 18:18-27)?

- A. Here the rich young ruler came to Jesus. This story followed immediately on the heels of Jesus and the children and was seen in contrast to it. The young man asked the question, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?"
1. His question seems to inquire how he might inherit eternal life through his own efforts or exertion.¹⁶ He wanted to know what he could do to gain eternal life.
 - a. Remember at this point that eternal life in Mormonism is different from simple salvation. Salvation means entrance to one of the two lower levels of heaven, called the telestial and terrestrial kingdoms, and is available to almost everyone because of Jesus' resurrection. Eternal life means exaltation to godhood in the celestial kingdom, available only to baptized Mormons.
 - b. In other words, the ruler wanted some formula of things to do in order to prove his worthiness to gain eternal life or "receive the kingdom" (v.17).
 2. Jesus' reply indicated that He understood what the young man wanted.
 - a. In verse 20, Jesus gave him a list of things that he should do. This list contained five of the ten commandments.
 - b. The man stated that he had obeyed all of these and apparently had done so externally.
- B. Jesus then told him that one thing was lacking. According to Jesus, the young man needed to show his obedience to the law and his commitment to God by selling everything, giving the proceeds to the poor, and following Jesus.
1. The young man's refusal shows that, while he appeared righteous by his outward observance of the law, inwardly he was not righteous. If anyone truly obeyed the law entirely, then it would lead to eternal life. This would make him or her worthy of it indeed. Yet, because no one except Jesus has ever been able to do that, then no one is worthy of eternal life except Jesus alone.¹⁷
 2. The rich young ruler had the same misconception that many Mormons have now, that they must be worthy to gain eternal life. However, according to the Bible worthiness entails perfection, so they are doomed to failure before they begin.
 - a. The LDS church puts enormous pressure on a person to be "worthy" to enter the temple and thus gain "eternal life." Mormon scriptures, quotes from leaders, and literature are filled with statements that encourage worthiness and that eternal life must be earned. Some of those quotes can be found earlier in this book.
 - b. Eternal life is not something that can be ensured by performing some act but can only be gained through faith in Jesus Christ. Below are some Scripture verses that demonstrate this clearly.¹⁸

- 1) John 3:16-18
- 2) Acts 2:21
- 3) Romans 10:9-10
- 4) Ephesians 2:8-9

III. Practical Instruction

A. Dealing with questions:

1. Witnessing to Mormons is difficult because they ask questions from their LDS perspective that throw the unsuspecting Christian off track and hinder any clear witness of the New Testament gospel. In his book, *Answering Mormons' Questions*, Bill McKeever put together 38 questions that Mormons ask as you attempt to witness to them. Below are five representative questions from that book with a summary of McKeever's answers. Those who witness to Mormons regularly have found McKeever to be extremely insightful and accurate in not only pointing out the questions but in the answers as well.
2. Proper answers to these and other questions will allow the person witnessing to steer the Mormon back to the proper path.

B. The questions:

1. Which church is true if the LDS church is not true?¹⁹

This question implies that there was a general apostasy in which the true Christian church was removed from the earth shortly after the death of the last apostle. There is no historic evidence to verify this Mormon claim. The true church is not found in buildings or organizations but in those people who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

2. Why don't Christian churches have apostles and prophets as the foundation of their church as the Mormon church has?²⁰

- a. Mormonism stands or falls on its foundation of prophetic and apostolic leaders. To support their claim they refer to Ephesians 2:20 (NIV). It says: "Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone."

The problem is that Mormons only look at half of the verse. Jesus is described as the "chief cornerstone." Webster defines cornerstone as foundation.²¹ What is the foundation of the apostles and prophets? Jesus Christ Himself. There is no place in the New Testament that commands that the organization of the church for all time have these officers.

- b. In fact, Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us that God used to speak through the prophets and now he communicates with His people through Jesus Christ.
- c. Another point the LDS church misses is that, in the Old Testament, prophets were the leaders and spokesmen for God. However, in the New Testament they are secondary to apostles (see 1 Cor. 12:28). The fact that the LDS church has reversed this order is an indication that it misunderstands the concept of leadership within the church.

3. Where do you get your authority?²²

- a. The LDS church claims that its authority comes through the restoration of the true priesthood on the earth through Joseph Smith. This was accomplished first with the Aaronic priesthood and later with the Melchizedek priesthood. This authority, they claim, gives the ability to lead the one true church and speak on behalf of God.
 - b. "The spiritual significance of the Aaronic, or Levitical, offices ended with the death of Christ" (John 19:30). The word "priest" in Hebrew means "one who stands up for another and mediates his cause." Since the death of Christ, no priest is needed to mediate the sacrifice because Jesus became the sacrifice for all men. The Levitical priesthood was reserved only for Aaron and his descendants (Num. 3:10-12, see also D&C 107:16). Although Mormons and the general public are led to believe that this is a restoration of the original priesthood; it is not.
 - c. Mormons also claim the Melchizedek priesthood, which they believe to be a higher office. In reality, they have no right to claim this, since Melchizedek and Jesus are the only two ever mentioned in the Bible connected with this office.
 - d. Those who have trusted in Jesus Christ as their Savior are all called to a "royal priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9), and unlike Mormons, get their authority straight from the word of God. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power [authority] to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12, KJV).
4. Doesn't 1 John 3:2 say we will be like Jesus, proving we will be gods?²³
- a. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:2, KJV).
 - b. Resurrected Christians will certainly be like their Savior, but to assume that this means "godhood" is to believe something the Bible does not teach: "Before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Isa. 43:10, KJV).²⁴
5. If there is no baptism for the dead, what about all those who died without having heard the gospel?
- a. This question is often asked by Mormons when their theory of salvation after death is refuted by Scripture. The question itself shows a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of God and a lack of faith that God has the ability to judge righteously.
 - b. What will God do with those people who have never heard the gospel? An honest answer must be that we do not know, but that our responsibility is to tell the gospel to as many as possible. On that basis, since God is holy, righteous, and just, then any decision He makes will be righteous and just.
 - c. The Bible declares in Psalm 96:13 that God will judge with righteousness.

IV. Group Activity

Seminar leader may want to copy and distribute “A Closer Look at the *Book of Mormon*” prior to the following activity.

A. Rationale for using the *Book of Mormon* in witnessing to a Mormon.

1. Mormons claim to believe the Bible but they, in fact, do not trust it. It is believed to be in error and missing many “plain and precious parts.”
2. They do claim to believe the *Book of Mormon*, even though they are generally unaware that it does not support Mormonism as it is today. The purpose of using the *Book of Mormon* is to show them the untrustworthiness of Mormonism and then lead them to the Bible. Of course, the purpose is to get their relationship to Jesus settled first.

Teaching Instruction: Using a paperback copy of the *Book of Mormon* and a Bible of your choice, mark them for use in witnessing to a Mormon. The following passages are suggested:

B. Marking the *Book of Mormon*:

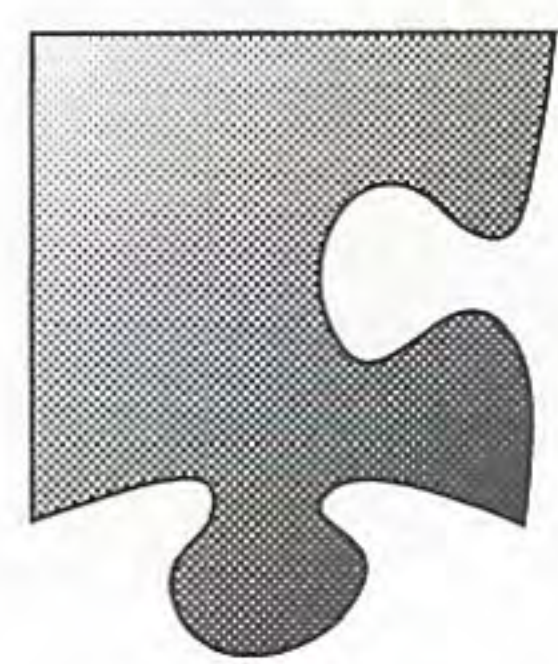
1. Who is Jesus (Ether 3:14a, Mosiah 14:3-4)?
2. What must a person do to inherit eternal life?
 - a. He or she must be born again (Mosiah 27:25-26).
 - b. This is accomplished by believing in and trusting Jesus as one’s personal Savior (Mosiah 5:7; 2 Nephi 25:20b).
3. Is eternal life acquired by grace or by works (2 Nephi 10:24b)?
4. Can you know that you have eternal life (2 Nephi 2:3b)?

C. Using the same questions, mark the Bible as follows.

1. John 1:1-4, 14, 10:30; Hebrews 1:8a
2. John 3:7, 16-18; Acts 4:12
3. Ephesians 2:8-10
4. 1 John 5:13

D. Have participants practice a presentation of the Christian faith using their marked *Book of Mormon* and Bible. Remind them to keep in mind the LDS definitions of key words and phrases.

V. Preview of next session



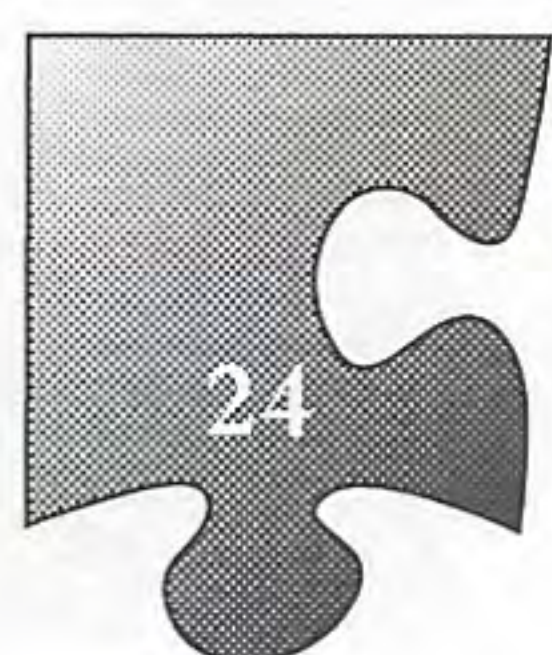
SESSION FIVE

Discipline New Believers

I. Objective: To equip participants to involve prospects in ongoing Bible study and discipleship.

II. Bible Study: Another Gospel

- A. In Galatians 1:6-8, the Apostle Paul gave one of the strongest warnings in the Bible about straying from the gospel presented in the New Testament.
1. The basic point of the letter to the Galatians emphasized that the gospel Jesus provided, and the one which Paul preached, was a gospel of free grace. It is evident from Paul's writings that he believed wholeheartedly that there was nothing a person could do to earn the love of God. All a person could do was cast himself or herself on the mercy of God and accept His offer of forgiveness on the basis of faith.²⁵
 2. Following Paul's ministry in Galatia, others came preaching a gospel that was tied to the Jewish law and required a person be obedient to the law before coming to Christ.
 3. Paul declared that if anyone came preaching a gospel other than the one he had already proclaimed, that person was condemned.
 - a. Paul used the term *anathema* which means under the curse or condemnation of God.
 - b. Paul's conviction was that anyone who corrupted the gospel of free grace was not preaching the same gospel that Jesus proclaimed.
- B. In 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, Paul said that those who preached a different gospel proclaimed a different Jesus or a different spirit.
1. Jesus, who and what He is, is the single most important aspect of the Bible.
 - a. If for some reason you should trust a Jesus other than the one who is revealed in the New Testament, then your trust is in vain, even if by some chance the rest of your theology is intact.
 - b. The plain message of the gospel is centered in the person of Jesus. If He is altered, then the message of the gospel is altered. If this occurs, then there is no hope for those who trust in this different Jesus.
 2. One essential factor for those who become Christians out of Mormonism, or any other cult for that matter, is reeducation. They may have trusted Jesus as their Savior, but they may not understand, at first, all of what this means.
 - a. At this point they are worse than infants because an infant is a clean slate, as far as knowledge is concerned. Former Mormons must learn how to redefine almost every aspect of their faith, from the nature of the church to the nature of God.
 - b. Paul's experience with the Galatian and Ephesian churches tells us that just because a person becomes a Christian does not mean that he or she is aware of the totality of Christian theology, nor does he or she leave behind old beliefs immediately. He or she must be taught and disciplined.



III. Practical Instruction

- A. Coming out of Mormonism, a person must deal with his or her beliefs about a god who is nothing more than a man, a Jesus who is less than God, a Holy Spirit that is a different kind of god altogether, and a church that is the only true one. A Mormon that meets the New Testament Jesus and trusts Him does not always understand that problem.

Ex-Mormon Latayne Scott, in her book, *After Mormonism, What?*, said that the Christians where she worshiped, following her conversion, took for granted that she relied on the Bible as her sole source of theology. She further related that no one told her how to use the Bible for study and as a guide to life instead of the proof texts she had been taught. *In short, no one sat down with her and addressed her deep needs for spiritual nurture.*²⁶

- B. Many Christians have misconceptions of what a Mormon is and may assume that a person who becomes a Christian instantly stops being anything related to Mormonism. This is not true for those who leave Mormonism and do not become Christians--and it is not true for those who are converted to Christ out of Mormonism.
1. Remember that Mormonism is as much a culture as it is a religion. When a person leaves Mormonism, his or her entire belief system, culture, and way of life collapse. Mormonism dictates when and where you go to church, what you eat, sometimes when you eat, your friends, scriptures, and belief systems. A person with no Christian background will not immediately divorce himself or herself from an entire culture and way of life without discipleship.
 2. A person witnessing to Mormons must be aware that the Lord will bring some of them to Himself and must be ready to disciple those who are reached.
- C. Common problems for ex-Mormons
1. When an ex-Mormon becomes a Christian he or she often begins seeking the "true church." The belief in one true church is a strong Mormon concept.
 2. Often the ex-Mormon does not know whether he or she can honestly trust another organized church. He or she may feel betrayed and deceived by LDS, which claimed to be the only true church.
 3. The Mormon world view hinders understanding almost every aspect of Christianity and how the church works. These aspects will include common practices such as:
 - a. Receiving offerings during a worship service.
 - b. Paid pastors and church staff.
 - c. The nature of Christian missionaries and their support.
 - d. Their own opinion counting in how the local church operates and how that impacts the state and national organizations.
- D. Redefining everything
1. Almost every aspect of the religious life of the ex-Mormon from theology to church life must be redefined. Some of these changes will take time, while others are more immediate, for the ex-Mormon/new Christian.

2. Latayne Scott, in her book *After Mormonism, What?*, lists several factors she considers the most important to be redefined.
 - a. The nature of God.
 - b. The basis of salvation.
 - c. The concept of church.
 - d. The role of Scripture.
 - e. The concepts of obedience to the church and trust in others.

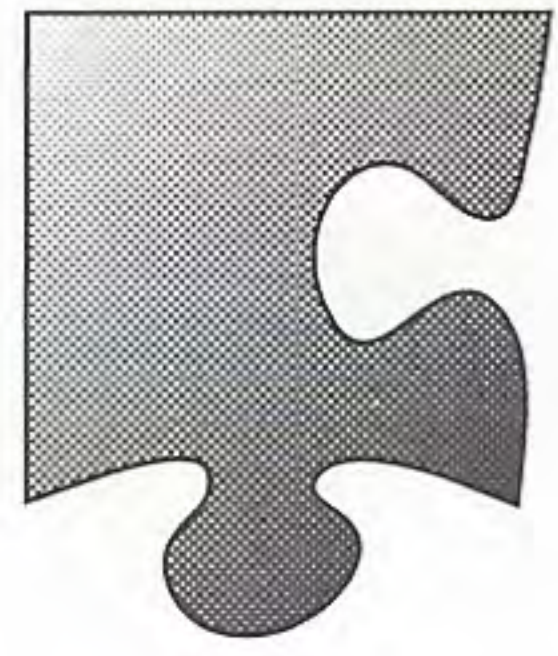
IV. Group Activity

A. Small groups

Teaching Instruction: Divide the class into small groups and ask them to discuss among themselves how they would go about redefining the above factors.

B. Large group

Teaching Instruction: Conclude with group discussion.



APPENDIX I: THE LDS DOCTRINE OF GOD

Robert McKay

The Mormon doctrine of God is different from the historic Christian view. This can be seen by using a standard Trinitarian formula. In Christian doctrine, the following propositions are held as absolute truths:

1. There is one God, and only one God.
2. This one and only one God exists in, and manifests Himself as, the three Persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. Each of these three Persons is distinguished from the others. The Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.
4. Each of these Persons, though distinguished from the other two, is equally and fully God. Just as the Father is God, so the Son and the Holy Spirit are God; there are not one God and two divine beings less than God, and there are not three gods. There is but one God, in three Persons.

Mormons disagree with each of these four propositions. Below is a brief discussion of how Mormons express their disagreement.

1. There is one God, and only one God.

According to Mormonism, the statement above is simply not true. The LDS church explicitly teaches a) there are three separate and distinct gods in the Godhead, and b) there are many other gods outside of the Godhead.²⁷

2. This one and only one God exists in, and manifests Himself as, the three Persons of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As is clear from the above remarks, Mormonism rejects the notion of the Trinity. The LDS church holds that the three “personages” of the Godhead are not the same God, but are rather “one God in purpose only.”²⁸

3. Each of these three Persons is distinguished from the other. The Father is not the Son or the Holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father or the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father or the Son.

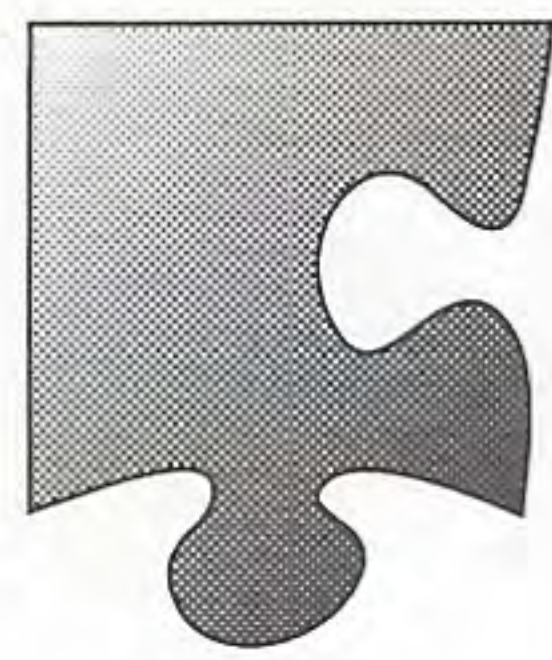
Mormonism would agree with this proposition, due to its contention that there are three separate gods in the Godhead.

4. Each of these Persons, though distinguished from the other two, is equally and fully God. Just as the Father is God, so the Son and the Holy Spirit are God; there are not one God and two divine beings less than God, and there are not three Gods. There is but one God, in three Persons.

Viewing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as three gods, Mormonism of necessity does not regard all three Persons as God. When Mormons speak of “God” they almost always mean the Father; only rarely is the term applied to the Son and never to the Holy Ghost.²⁹

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APPENDIX II: GLOSSARY OF LDS TERMS

Apostle: The second highest governing body of the LDS church is the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. Members of this body are ordained as apostles and are believed to hold the same office as Peter or Paul. The President of the Mormon church is also an ordained apostle.

Branch: A Mormon congregation too small to be organized as a ward (see Ward).

Book of Mormon: The best-known of the distinctly Mormon scriptures. It is believed to be another testament of Jesus Christ which supplements the Bible.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The: The official name of the Mormon church. Usually it is known as the Mormon or LDS church, and members are known as Mormons.

Degrees of glory: Mormonism says that there are three kingdoms of glory hereafter into which almost all men will go. The lowest is the telestial, the middle is the terrestrial, and the highest is the celestial. The celestial kingdom is further divided into three heavens. All who enter one of these degrees of glory are saved, but only those who enter the highest heaven of the celestial kingdom gain eternal life. See Eternal Life, Salvation.

Eternal Life: The highest glory hereafter. Those who receive eternal life enter the highest heaven of the celestial kingdom (see Degrees of glory), live in the married state and beget children throughout eternity, and are gods. The term exaltation means the same thing. See Salvation.

First Presidency: The highest governing quorum of the LDS church. The First Presidency consists of the President of the church and his Counselors. The usual number of Counselors in the Presidency is two, though there have been more at various times in the church's history.

General Authorities: The highest echelons of Mormon leadership. There are several different groups of General Authorities: the First Presidency, the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, the Presidency of the Seventy, the First and Second Quorums of the Seventy, and the Presiding Bishopric.

General Conference (also known as Conference): A meeting held each April and October in Salt Lake City, Utah, where Mormon leaders deliver sermons and the members sustain their leaders. Conference sermons are the closest thing modern Mormonism has to revelation.

Gospel: The system of laws and ordinances the LDS church says is necessary to obtain eternal life. Essentially equal to Mormonism.

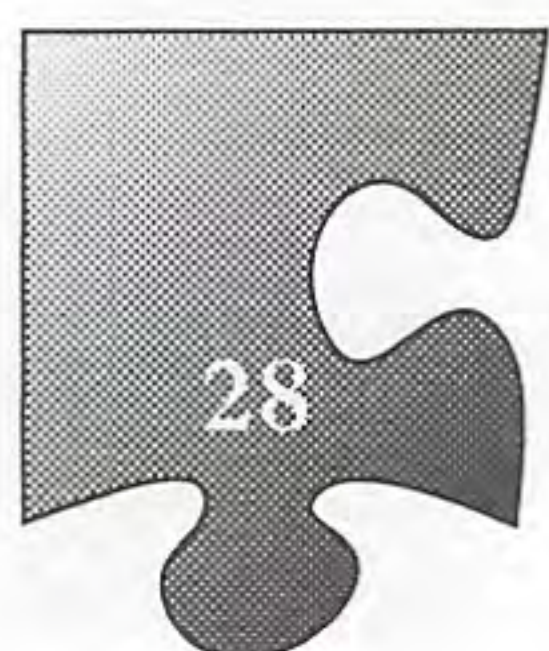
LDS: The acronym for Latter-day Saint(s), taken from the official name of the Mormon church.

Mormon: The nickname for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members. The name comes from the *Book of Mormon*.

Moroni: The "angel" who gave Joseph Smith the gold plates from which he translated the *Book of Mormon*. Moroni was the last Nephite and the last person to add to the text of the *Book of Mormon* and is now a resurrected being.

Presidency of the Seventy: A quorum of seven men who preside over the two Quorums of the Seventy. This is the only Mormon presidency which is not composed of three men.

Presiding Bishopric: This is the lowest ranking of the Mormon church's quorums of General Authorities. The Bishopric presides over the Aaronic priesthood of the church and has responsibility for financial matters.



Quorum of the Twelve Apostles: The second highest quorum of LDS leadership. The man who has been an apostle longest is automatically the President of the Twelve, and automatically becomes the President of the Mormon church upon the death of his predecessor.

Quorums of the Seventy: There are two such quorums. Members of the First Quorum of the Seventy receive permanent calls, and are given emeritus status upon reaching age 70. Members of the Second Quorum of the Seventy are called for terms of five years. The Seventy are the area administrators of the church, and supervise the stakes and branches which constitute local leadership levels. The Seventy can be considered the church's middle management.

Salvation: All men (with the exception of a very few, see Sons of perdition) are saved in Mormon theology. Salvation in Mormonism is entering one of three kingdoms of glory hereafter (see Degrees of glory), and since all men will enter one of these kingdoms, all men are saved, including those who actively reject Jesus or the very existence of God.

Scripture: In Mormonism, the four Standard Works (the Bible, *Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *Pearl of Great Price*) and anything else spoken or written by a Mormon when "moved upon by the Holy Ghost." It has been said that General Conference sermons are scripture equal to the standard works.

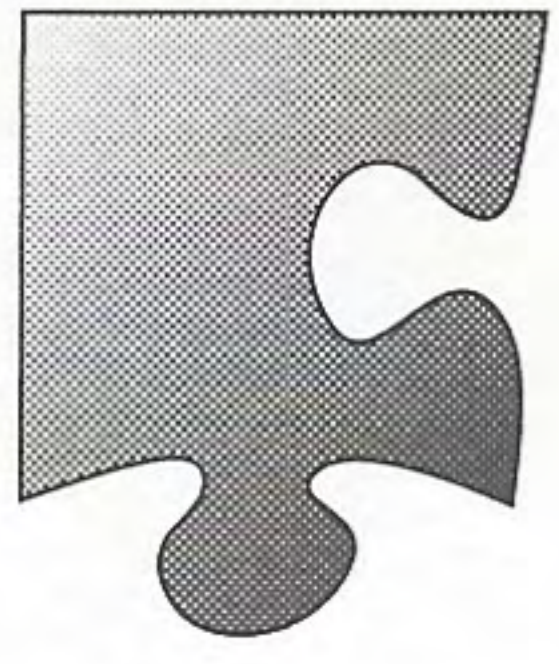
Joseph Smith: The founder of the LDS church. Smith produced more revelations than any other Mormon leader, but was unable to provide stable leadership or create a stable church.

Sons of perdition: This is a very small group, consisting of those who gained a perfect knowledge that Mormonism is true, and then fought against it. Apparently only former Mormons who become critics of the LDS church can become sons of perdition. Only the sons of perdition are not saved.

Stake: A Mormon ecclesiastical division consisting of several wards and equivalent to a Baptist association or Catholic diocese.

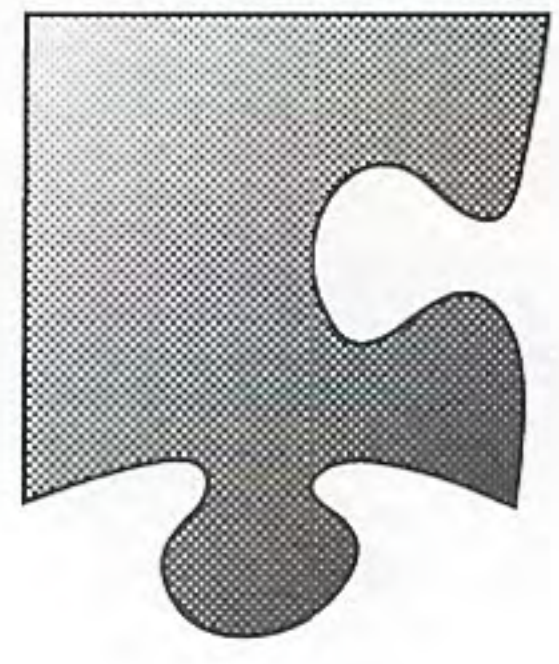
Ward: A standard Mormon congregation, equivalent to a Baptist church or Catholic parish. See Branch.

Young, Brigham: The second President of the Mormon church. Young led the largest faction of the original church to Utah after the death of Joseph Smith. He provided the stability that was needed to turn the early LDS church into a secure and powerful organization.



APPENDIX III: SUGGESTED READING

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- Geer, Thelma. *Mormonism, Mama and Me*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1986.
- Davis, Tal and Gary Leazer. *Light on the Latter-day Saints*. Atlanta: Home Mission Board, 1991.
- Farkas, John R., and David A. Reed. *Mormons, Answered Verse by Verse*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1992.
- Farkas, John R., and David A. Reed. *How to Rescue Your Loved Ones From Mormonism*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994.
- McKay, Robert. *What is Mormonism?* Marlow, Okla.: Utah Missions., Inc., 1988.
- McKeever, Bill. *Answering Mormons' Questions*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1991.
- McKeever, Bill, and Eric Johnson. *Questions to Ask Your Mormon Friend*. Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1994.
- Scott, Latayne C. *After Mormonism, What?* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994.
- Scott, Latayne C. *Why We Left Mormonism*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990.
- Smith, John L. *Hope or Despair?* Marlow, Okla.: Utah Missions, Inc., 1987.
- Smith, John L. *Witnessing Effectively to Mormons*. Marlow, Okla.: Utah Missions, Inc., 1975.
- Tanner, Gerald, and Sandra Tanner. *Mormonism: Shadow or Reality?* Salt Lake City: Utah Lighthouse Ministries, 1987.



APPENDIX IV: OUTLINE

SESSION ONE: Preparing to Share Our Faith (Part 1)

- I. Objective:** To prepare seminar participants to share their faith by giving attention to opportunities, challenges, and attitudes that relate to this task
- II. Bible Study: Absolutes (John 1:1-14, Deut. 6:4)**
 - A. Introduction: The nature of God and Jesus--an examination of the Bible's teachings on God and Jesus compared to the LDS church teachings
 - B. Degrees of understanding: What do Mormons really know about Mormonism?
- III. Group Activity**
 - A. Examining LDS attitudes
 - B. Practical suggestions for dealing with those attitudes
- IV. Practical Instruction**
 - A. The opportunity to witness to Mormons
 - B. Who are you witnessing to?
- V. Preview of next session**

SESSION TWO: Preparing to Share Our Faith (Part 2)

- I. Objective:** To prepare participants to share their faith by studying Jesus' methods and claims for Himself
- II. Bible Study: Jesus and the Samaritan Woman (John 4:1-30)**
 - A. Jesus' methods
 - B. Jesus' claims for Himself
 - C. Dialogue: What do you think?
- III. Practical Instruction**
 - A. The dual nature of Mormon salvation: unconditional vs. conditional
 - B. The Mormon concept of eternal life
- IV. Group Activity**
 - A. Degrees of understanding: Christianity
 - B. Communicating to a Mormon
- V. Preview of next session**

SESSION THREE: Sharing our Faith (Part 1)

- I. Objective:** To demonstrate how participants can share their faith by "bearing their testimonies" and learning a gospel presentation in words that Mormons can understand



II. Bible Study: To the unknown god (Acts 17:22-32)

- A. How Paul approached the unknown god
- B. Responses from his listeners
- C. LDS responses to the God of the Bible

III. Group Activity

- A. An example of an LDS testimony (*Book of Mormon*, Moroni 10:4-5)
- B. How to share your testimony with a Mormon
- C. Outline testimony and practice

IV. Practical Instruction

- A. Guidelines for talking to a Mormon
- B. New Testament verses

V. Preview of next session

SESSION FOUR: Sharing Our Faith (Part 2)

- I. Objective:** To equip participants to share their faith by practicing the gospel presentation and learning how to deal with questions

II. Bible Study: What must I do to be saved (Luke 18:18-27)?

- A. Worthy vs. Jesus
- B. Earned vs. Grace

III. Practical Instruction

- A. Dealing with questions
- B. The questions
 1. Which church is the true church if the LDS church is not true?
 2. Why don't Christian churches have prophets and apostles?
 3. Where do you get your authority?
 4. Doesn't Jesus say that men can become gods?
 5. If there is no baptism for the dead, what about all of those who died without having heard the gospel?

IV. Group Activity: Marking your Bible and Book of Mormon

- A. Rationale for using the *Book of Mormon*
- B. Marking *Book of Mormon*
- C. Marking Bible (KJV)
- D. Practicing presentation

V. Preview of Next Session

SESSION FIVE: Discipline New Believers

I. Objective: To equip participants to involve prospects in ongoing Bible study and discipleship

II. Bible Study: Another Gospel

A. Galatians 1:6-8

B. 2 Corinthians 11:3-4

III. Practical Instruction

A. After Mormonism, what?

B. Dealing with misconceptions about Mormonism

C. Common problems for ex-Mormons

D. Redefining everything

IV. Group Activity

A. Small groups

B. Large group

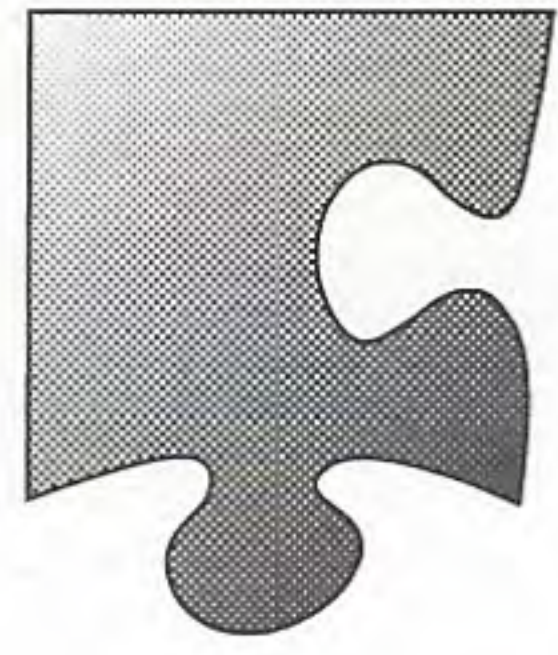
Appendix

I. The LDS Doctrine of God

II. Glossary of LDS Terms

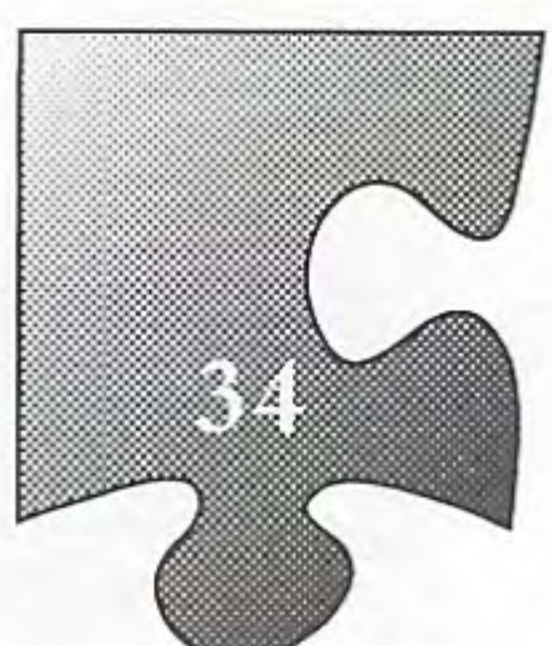
III. Suggested Readings

IV. Outline



ENDNOTES

1. Milton R. Hunter, *The Gospel Through the Ages* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Stevens and Wallis, Inc., 1945), 17.
2. *Gospel Principles* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1992), 17.
3. Joseph Smith Jr., *The Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1971), 87.
4. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Co., 1967), 370.
5. Joseph Smith Jr., *The Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1987), The Testimony of Three Witnesses.
6. Bruce R. McConkie, comp., *Doctrines of Salvation, Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith*, vol. 2 (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), 10.
7. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 9, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1974), 372-399.
8. Joseph Smith Jr., *The Book of Mormon* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), 2 Nephi 25:23.
9. James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1978), 87.
10. Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985), 195.
11. Thomas S. Monson, "Invitation to Exaltation," *Ensign* (June 1993): 4.
12. Joseph Fielding Smith, comp., *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1967), 348.
13. J.W. MacGorman, *Acts, The Gospel for All People* (Nashville: Convention Press, 1990), 82.
14. Ibid.
15. Boyd K. Packer, "The Candle of the Lord," *Ensign* (January 1983): 54-55.
16. Norval Geldenhuys, *The New International Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub. Co.), 458.
17. Ibid.
18. Robert J. Dean, *Layman's Bible Commentary*, vol. 17 (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1983), 114.
19. Bill McKeever, *Answering Mormon's Questions* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1991), 20-21.
20. Ibid., 27-32.
21. *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, Tenth Edition (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 1993).
22. McKeever, 37-41.
23. Ibid., 82.



24. Ibid., 90.
25. William Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 10.
26. Latayne C. Scott, *After Mormonism, What?* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1994), 15.
27. Boyd K. Packer, "The Pattern of Our Parentage" *Ensign* (November 1984): 68; Gordon B. Hinckley, "A Thought From the Scriptures" *Church News* (Sept. 9, 1989): 16; Milton R. Hunter, *The Gospel Through the Ages* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1958), 24; Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1985), 71.
28. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966) 171; Stephen E. Robinson, *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, computer software, Infobases, 1992, vol. 1, Doctrine, LDS Doctrine Compared with other Christian Churches.
29. *Gospel Doctrine: Selections From the Sermons and Writings of Joseph F. Smith, Sixth President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Deseret, 1977), 68; Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 319; David H. Yarn, Jr., *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, computer software, Infobases, 1992, vol. 2, GOD; Edward L. Kimball, ed., *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 3-4.