

STAND FIRM AGAINST MORMONISM

By Andy Manning

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I. INTRODUCTION

- a. **1 Corinthians 16:13** “Be alert, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong.”
- b. In this series we will learn how to stand firm against:
 - i. Mormonism
 - ii. Jehovah’s Witnesses
 - iii. Roman Catholicism
 - iv. Glossolalia
- c. Mormonism
 - i. Name:
 1. Official Name: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
 - a. 1838 – Joseph Smith was given this name in a revelation.
 2. Unofficial Name: Mormons, after the Book of Mormon.
 - ii. Famous Mormons
 1. Steve Young – Super Bowl Champ; 49ers
 2. Lindsey Stirling – Pop music star – violinist, dancer
 3. Mitt Romney – 2012 Republican Presidential Nominee; Governor of Massachusetts
 4. Stephen Covey – Best-selling author, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*
 5. Glenn Beck – conservative TV and radio commentator, and owner of conservative TV station Blaze TV
 - iii. Fast-Growing
 1. Membership increases each year at an average of 300,000.
 2. Before WWII, it had more than 2,000 active missionaries around the world. As of 2001, it had 60,850 active missionaries.
 3. In more than half of the states in the US, Mormonism is the fastest-growing religion.

4. Highest birthrate among all “Christian” denominations in America, at 2.69. Baptists are well below that, at 1.96.
- iv. Virtuous Reputation
 1. **Walter Martin**, author of Kingdom of the Cults, said, “According to the teaching of the Mormon Church, Mormons are to preserve their bodies always in the best of health and are cautioned against the use of tobacco and alcohol, and even the drinking of tea, coffee, and other caffeine-bearing drinks, such as Coca-Cola.... The average active Mormon is usually marked by many sound moral traits. He is generally amiable, almost always hospitable, and extremely devoted to his family and to the teachings of his church.”
- v. So what’s wrong with Mormonism?
 1. They are not Christians.

II. HISTORY

- a. 1820 – Joseph Smith Jr. (age 15) had a vision of God the Father and Jesus Christ. They told him:
 - i. All churches were corrupt and an abomination to God.
 - ii. A restoration of true Christianity was needed.
 - iii. He had been chosen to lead the restoration.
- b. 1823 – An angel named Moroni appeared at his bedside.
 - i. Revealed the location of the golden plates on a hill in New York.
 - ii. Moroni buried them 14 centuries earlier before he was transformed from a man into an angel.
 - iii. Written on the golden plates (in reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics) was the history of Moroni’s people, the Nephites, who were Jews that had migrated to America about 600 B.C.
 - iv. Eventually the Nephites were wiped out by the evil, dark-skinned Lamanites.
 - v. The book also states that after His resurrection, Jesus visited the American continent.
- c. 1827 – Moroni appeared again to Smith.
 - i. Ordered him to translate the golden plates into English.

- ii. Gave him a set of magical stones called the Urim and Thummim through which he could look and understand the plates. They looked like a pair of primitive eye-glasses.
 - iii. Smith translated the plates orally while his friend, on the other side of a curtain, wrote down his words.
- d. 1830 – The translation of the golden plate was published as the Book of Mormon.
- e. 1829 – Smith was visited by John the Baptist and was given the Aaronic Priesthood.
- f. 1830 – Smith was visited by Peter, James, and John and was given the Melchizekek Priesthood.
- g. 1830 – April 6, Smith and his associates officially founded the Mormon religion.
- h. 1830 – To escape persecution, the new Mormon sect moved from New York to Kirtland, OH. In just six years they grew to 16,000 in number.
 - i. When word spread to the larger community of Smith’s promotion of polygamy (called “The Principle”), he was tarred and feathered and run out of town.
 - ii. Smith himself married 34 women, including 10 teenagers and 11 women taken from living husbands. Helen Mar Kimball was 14 when she married Joseph Smith.
- i. 1838 – Smith and his followers moved to Independence, Missouri.
 - i. Smith declared it to be the site of the original garden of Eden.
 - ii. Smith declared it to be the place where Christ would return and set up his kingdom.
 - iii. When word spread about the Mormon practice of polygamy, Smith was arrested, and by order of the governor of Missouri, the Mormons surrendered all land and left the state.
- j. 1839 – Smith and his followers settled in Nauvoo, Illinois.
- k. 1844 – Smith ran for president of the USA.
- l. 1844 – The Mormon practice of polygamy was exposed by The Nauvoo Expositor.
 - i. Smith ordered to destruction of the Expositor, which his followers set on fire and destroyed the presses.

- ii. Smith and his brother, Hiram, were arrested and placed in the Carthage jail.
- iii. While awaiting trial, a mob of some two-hundred people stormed the jail and murdered Smith and his brother.
- m. 1847 – Brigham Young, the first successor to Smith, led the Mormons to Salt Lake City, Utah, where they are based to this day.
- n. 1852 – Polygamy became an official dogma of the church.
- o. 1890 – After Utah was denied statehood on numerous occasions due to their practice of polygamy, Mormon president Wilford Woodruff claimed to receive a revelation to end the practice of polygamy.
 - i. The US government had also threatened complete dissolution as well as the confiscation of all Mormon property in order to wipe out polygamy.
- p. 1896 – Utah was granted statehood.

III. **MORMONISM VS. CHRISTIANITY**

- a. The danger of Mormonism:
 - i. Lies veiled with truth.
 - ii. **Walter Martin** wrote, “The Mormon religion utilizes biblical terms and phrases and even adopts Christian doctrines in order to claim allegiance to the Christian faith. Mormons have also come to lay much stress upon public relations and take pains to make certain that they do not use language that might reveal the true nature of their theological deviations.... The Mormon Church considers itself alone the true church of Christ in our age, and... they consider all other groups to be Gentiles and apostates from the true Christian religion (*The Kingdom of the Cults*).”

b. GOD

- i. The Mormon Concept of God
 - 1. Polytheism:
 - a. There are countless gods who rule other worlds and universes and galaxies.

- b. Elohim (the Hebrew word for God) is the creator and ruler of our solar system, which he rules from the distant planet Kolob.
 - c. Earth is one of several inhabited planets ruled over by gods and goddesses, who were at one time humans on other planets.
- 2. Tri-Theism: The Father is a God (whom they call Elohim), the Son is a God (whom they call Jehovah), and the Holy Spirit is a God. They are not one God, but three.
- 3. The Nature of God
 - a. Physical: God has a physical body just like ours
 - b. Exalted Human: God was once a normal human being just like us on another planet who worked his way to the place of godhood (exaltation).
 - c. Limited:
 - i. In time: He had a beginning.
 - ii. In power: He did not create the world from nothing, but from materials that already existed. He did not create the laws and materials of the universe, such as gravity, space, time, and matter.
 - iii. In space: Because God has a physical body of flesh and bone just like us, He is not omnipresent. He can only be in one place at one time.
 - iv. In knowledge: Mormons believe that God is increasing in knowledge, power, and dominion, and will continue to do so forever.
 - d. Created: Elohim is the spirit child and creation of another god and his spirit wife.
 - e. Worshiper:
 - i. Before he became a god, he was a mortal man who worshiped and served his god faithfully until he achieved godhood himself.
 - f. Changeable:

- i. Did not always exist.
 - ii. Was first a spirit, and then a body, and then a god.
 - iii. Is always increasing in knowledge, power, and dominion.
 - iv. Was a sinful man just like us before he became a god.
 - g. Polygamous:
 - i. God is literally the Father of all spirit children on our planet, including Jesus and the Holy Spirit, whom He conceived by having sexual relations with his multiple wives.
- ii. The Christian Concept of God
 - 1. Monotheistic: There is only one God. Elohim and Jehovah are the same God.
 - a. **Isaiah 43:10-11** “No god (Elohim) was formed before me, and there will be none after me. I – I am the LORD (Jehovah). Besides me, there is no Savior.”
 - b. (See also Isaiah 44:6-8; Deut 4:35; Deut 32:39; 1 Kings 8:60; Ps 100:3; Zechariah 13:9)
 - 2. Trinity: There is one God in three persons.
 - a. There is one and only one true and living God.
 - b. This one God eternally exists in three persons – God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
 - c. These three persons are completely equal in attributes, each with the same divine nature.
 - d. While each person is fully and completely God, the persons are not identical. (ESV Study Bible, 2513)
 - e. **Mark 1:9-11** 9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized in the Jordan by John. 10 As soon as he came up out of the water, he saw the heavens being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. 11 And a voice came from heaven: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well-pleased.”

3. The Nature of God

- a. Spiritual: **John 4:24** “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and in truth.”
- b. Unlimited:
 - i. In time (eternal): **Psalm 90:2** “Before the mountains were born, before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from eternity to eternity, you are God.”
 - ii. Power (omnipotent): **Job 42:2** “I know that you can do anything and no plan of yours can be thwarted.”
 - iii. Space (omnipresent): **Jeremiah 23:23-24** “23 Am I a God who is only near”—this is the Lord’s declaration—and not a God who is far away? 24 Can a person hide in secret places where I cannot see him? —the Lord’s declaration. “Do I not fill the heavens and the earth?” —the Lord’s declaration.”
 - iv. Knowledge (omniscient): **Isaiah 40:28** “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the whole earth. He never becomes faint or weary; there is no limit to his understanding.”
- c. Creator: **Jeremiah 51:19** “He is the one who formed all things.”
- d. Unchangeable: **Malachi 3:6** “Because I, the LORD, have not changed....”
- e. Worshiped: **Matthew 4:10** “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”
- f. Different from humans: **2 Samuel 7:22** “This is why you are great, LORD God. There is no one like you, and there is no God besides you, as all we have heard confirms.”

c. JESUS CHRIST

i. The Mormon Concept of Christ

1. Created:

a. Jesus is the spirit child of God the Father and a heavenly wife. He was created by God the Father.

b. He is the firstborn spirit child of God.

2. Temporal: Jesus is not eternal, but had a beginning. The firstborn spiritual son of God.

3. Unequal to the Father: Because He was created by Elohim, he is not equal to Elohim.

4. Not conceived by the Holy Spirit: Conceived when God the Father came down to earth in his physical body and had sex with Mary.

a. This is both incestuous, because Mary is the spirit child of God.

b. And it is adulterous, because Mary was already engaged to Joseph.

5. Not born of a virgin: Mary was not a virgin because she conceived by having sex with God the Father.

6. Same as us: Jesus started out as a spirit child, equal to us, our elder brother, and eventually earned godhood.

7. Imperfect – earned his way to godhood: Because he earned his way to godhood, He is not perfect, but has past sins.

ii. The Christian Concept of Christ

1. Creator:

a. Not created.

b. **Colossians 1:16** “For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through him and for him.”

2. Eternal:

a. **John 1:1** “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

3. Coequal with the Father: **Colossians 1:16** “For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and

the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through him and for him.”

4. Conceived by the Holy Spirit: **Matthew 1:18** “The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way: After his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they came together that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit.”
5. Born of a virgin: Matthew 1:18
6. Different: Fully human, but also fully divine.
 - a. **Colossians 2:9** “For the entire fullness of God’s nature dwells bodily in Christ”
7. Perfect: **2 Corinthians 5:21** “He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

d. AUTHORITY

i. The Mormon Concept of Authority

1. A Five-fold Authority

a. 4 Books of Scripture – “The Four Standard Works”

i. The Book of Mormon: a record of God’s dealings with the ancient inhabitants of American from 2000 BC to 400 AD.

1. Published: 1830.

2. Smith: “the most correct book of any on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”

ii. Doctrine and Covenants (D&C): a collection of revelations and inspired declarations given for the establishment and regulation of the Mormon Church. Written between 1830-1978 AD.

iii. The Pearl of Great Price: A selection of revelations, translations, and writings of

Joseph Smith. Clarifies doctrines and teachings that were lost from the Bible and gives added info about the creation of the earth.

iv. KJV Bible: “The word of God as far as it is translated correctly.”

1. As it has been transmitted over centuries it has suffered the loss of many plain and precious parts.
2. Must be interpreted through the Book of Mormon and modern-day revelations.
3. Book of Mormon teaches that only fools say the Bible is sufficient and that other scripture is not needed.

b. The Prophet:

- i. The church’s president is regarded as a seer, a revelator, a translator, and a prophet.
- ii. Each succeeding president claims the same authority as Joseph Smith – infallible prophetic succession.
- iii. The only one who can bring forth new doctrine. When he does, he declares it as a revelation from God.

2. Continual revelation:

- a. “We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God.”
- b. Apostolic revelation is inspired, and can supersede previous revelation, including that found in their scriptures.

ii. The Christian Concept of Authority

1. Inspiration of Scripture: **2 Timothy 3:16-17** “16 All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, 17

so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

2. Inerrancy of Scripture: Since God is its author, and He does not lie, the Bible is truth without any mixture of error for its matter.
3. Sufficiency of Scripture: The Bible is the only work of inspired Scripture, and it contains all we need for salvation.
4. Illustration: Sola Scriptura
 - a. In the 16th century the leaders of the Protestant Reformation summarized the essential of the faith in five short statements. They are called the five solas: Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone); Sola Fide (faith alone); Sola Gratia (faith alone); Solus Christus (Christ alone); Soli Deo Gloria (to the glory of God alone).
 - b. Sola Scriptura (“Scripture alone”): The Bible alone is our highest authority. Nothing is equal or superior in authority or effectiveness:
 - i. Not the Pope; not personal experience; not Reason; not the Koran; not the Book of Mormon or the other Holy Books; not the church; not the Mormon President; not a denomination; not tradition; not creeds and confessions and catechisms; not science; not a political leader or political party.

e. MANKIND

- i. The Mormon Concept of Mankind
 1. Preexistent spirits:
 - a. We pre-existed and matured as the spirit children of God and His multiple wives on the planet Kolob before coming to earth.
 2. Born good: We only become sinful when we sin. Our natural inclination is to do good.
 3. Gods in embryo:

- a. “As man is, God once was: as God is, man may become.” Prophet Lorenzo Snow
 - b. The ultimate purpose of life is to earn your way to exaltation – godhood, in which we can become the gods of our planet and have our own spirit children.
- 4. The Fall was a good thing:
 - a. The Fall of Adam and Eve resulted in great blessings for mankind.
 - b. One can only achieve godhood with a physical body.
 - c. God sent two spirit children to earth to start the process – Adam and Eve.
 - d. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they were changed from spirit beings to physical beings who were able to reproduce and form physical bodies for other pre-existent spirits to inhabit.
 - e. The blessings of the Fall: Physical bodies, the right to choose between good and evil, the ability to have children, and the opportunity to achieve godhood.
- ii. The Christian Concept of Mankind
 - 1. Not preexistent:
 - a. Created by God on the sixth day of creation.
 - b. **Genesis 1:26-27** “Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.’ So God created man in his own image; he created them male and female.”
 - 2. We are inclined to sin: **Psalms 51:5** “Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me.”
 - 3. The ultimate goal is not to achieve godhood:
 - a. Glorify God: **1 Corinthians 10:31** “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”

- b. Walk with God: **Micah 6:8** “Mankind, he has told each of you what is good and what it is the Lord requires of you: to act justly, the love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.”
 - c. Eternal life with God: **1 Thessalonians 4:17 (NIV)** “After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”
4. The Fall destroyed everything:
- a. **Romans 6:23** “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
 - b. The Fall introduced sin to the world, and sin brought death: spiritual death; relational death; physical death; emotional death; financial death; vocational death; political death; environmental death.

f. SALVATION

- i. The Mormon Concept of Salvation
 - 1. Universal salvation (immortality):
 - a. Through the atonement of Christ, everyone goes to heaven, regardless of their actions or beliefs.
 - b. This what they mean when they claim to believe in “salvation by grace alone.”
 - 2. No hell:
 - a. Hell is only reserved for the devil and his demons, and Mormon apostates.
 - 3. 3-Levelled Heaven Based on Works:
 - a. Lowest level: Celestial Kingdom
 - i. For bad people.
 - ii. Allowed entrance into the Celestial Kingdom only after suffering sufficiently for their sins in spirit prison.
 - b. Middle level: Terrestrial Kingdom

- i. Inhabited by Christians who rejected the teachings of Mormonism, as well as Mormons who did not live up to the church's standards, and good people of other religions who rejected Mormonism.
 - c. Highest level: Celestial Kingdom (eternal life)
 - i. 2 Levels:
 - 1. Lower level: For single Mormons who lived a worthy life and good people of other religions (including Christians) who did not have a chance on earth to hear about and accept Mormonism.
 - 2. Highest level: For married Mormons who lived a worthy life.
 - ii. Blessings include:
 - 1. Eternal life in the presence of God.
 - 2. Become gods.
 - 3. Be able to have children who will have the same relationship to us as we do to our Heavenly Father. An eternal family.
 - 4. Fullness of joy.
 - 5. Everything that the Father and Christ have – all power, glory, dominion, and knowledge.
 - iii. Conditions: 12 Steps of Mormon Salvation
 - 1. Faith in Christ.
 - 2. Repentance confessing and abandoning all sin and restoring or resolving all damage done by one's sin. Spend the rest of your life trying to obey the commandments of the Lord so he can eventually pardon and cleanse you.
 - 3. Baptism by immersion into the Mormon Church.

4. Laying on of hands by a Mormon Priest to receive the Holy Ghost.
 5. Ordination as a Melchizedek Priest (males only).
 6. Receiving the Temple Endowments. A ceremony of anointing and other similar rites.
 7. Celestial marriage: Married for eternity to your spouse in the Mormon Temple. Only then can you achieve godhood, have spirit children, and populate your own planet.
 8. Observe the word of wisdom: By abstaining from the following: Alcohol, tobacco, coffee and tea, illegal drugs, and other harmful or addictive substances.
 9. Sustain the prophet: Respect the prophet as the sole revelator and representative of God to the church.
 10. Tithing: Give one-tenth of your gross income to the church.
 11. Sacrament Meetings: A weekly gathering of local Latter-day saints when they sing, testify, and share the sacrament of bread and water.
 12. Obedience: to the church, its teachings, and the prophet.
- iv. Illustration: In *Gospel Principles*, an official publication of that Church, a parable describing the Mormon plan of salvation is told. A debtor begs his creditor for mercy as his debts are large and long overdue. Just as the cruel creditor is about to cast the man in prison a friend intervenes and pays the debt. He then

says to the debtor, "You will pay the debt to me and I will set the terms. It will not be easy, but it will be possible."²⁴ The friend who intervened, not with a free gift, but with a loan to be repaid, is symbolic of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Each devout saint therefore is now working hard to pay off his or her debt to the Church. The Mormon gospel (good news) is no gospel. It is not the gospel of freedom through Christ, it is a gospel of servitude and obligation to a religious organization.

4. Ultimate goal is godhood:
 - a. The ultimate goal is to make it to the celestial heaven, and then to slowly progress to godhood (exaltation), in which you and your spouse will create, and populate, and rule your own planet.

ii. The Christian Concept of Salvation

1. Only two possible destinations: Eternal life or eternal punishment.
 - a. **Matthew 25:46** "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
2. Only through Jesus Christ:
 - a. **John 14:6** "Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."
3. Only by faith in Jesus Christ:
 - a. **John 3:16** "For God loved the world in this way: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life."
4. Only by grace:
 - a. **Ephesians 2:8** "For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift"
5. Ultimate goal is the enjoyment of God for eternity

- a. **John 14:1-3** “Don’t let your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many rooms; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. 3 If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, so that where I am you may be also.”
- b. Westminster Shorter Catechism: What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

IV. CONCLUSION

- a. Illustration: Otters.
 - i. Years ago a new restaurant opened up near Office Depot on Pinhook called Otters. They sold chicken tenders. So Lydia and I decided to give it try, and it was terrible. It was one of the worst experiences. The chicken was like rubber.
 - ii. To say that Mormonism is the same as Christianity is like saying that Otters is the same as Raising Canes. They are not the same thing.
 - iii. Mormonism is not the same as Christianity.
 - iv. Mormons are not Christians.
 - v. Mormons are going to spend eternity in hell, because they are trusting in works and working to achieve equality with God.
 - vi. Mormons are leading millions of people around the world astray.
- b. Stand firm against Mormonism
 - i. Do not be deceived by their false teaching.
 - ii. Be prepared to witness to them.
 - iii. Pray for their salvation.