

BIBLICALLY TESTING THE SPIRITS
"Part II: Testing MAJOR Mormon Beliefs With John 1:1-18"
(John 1:1-18)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

(1) You may have seen the television ad: a cyclist who is first splattered from a puddle by a passing motorist graciously stops to help that motorist when he later has car trouble. The ad talks about loving others as Jesus taught us to love. When it closes with an offer to send you a free King James Bible from the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," you realize the **Mormons** are behind the ad, trying to make a pitch to reach **Evangelicals!** It may make you annoyed!

However, we may wonder, "Well, WHAT DO I believe so that I can KNOW just WHY I cannot accept the Mormon beliefs?!"

(2) These questions are worth answering, for the whole Mormon belief system has some very serious problems:

(a) Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormons, started out as a member of a Freemasonry lodge in Vermont. So many of his converts became part of the lodge that, threatened by their numbers, the lodge excommunicated them. (cf. Ed Decker's book, The God Makers).

Well, Smith's claim to have been given the book of Mormon on gold plates by an angel Moroni, except for the changes in names, just happens to duplicate the Freemasonry Tale of Enoch! In fact, Dr. Durham, the head of Mormon Archaeological artifacts once addressed the General Assembly of Mormon Church Officials in Salt Lake about it! Thinking he had stumbled onto a great new truth, Durham stated he felt that Joseph Smith was not trying to get back to original Christian belief, but to original ancient oriental religious beliefs in Freemasonry!

That was a mistake for Durham! He was defrocked, and barely maintained his membership in the Church by signing a Mormon doctrinal statement! Because his address mentioned Freemasonry symbols commonly existed on Mormon statues of art, overnight many statues in Salt Lake City were altered to remove such symbols! (Ibid., Decker; Dave Hunt's newsletter, The Berean Call)

(b) Joseph Smith was killed by the husband of a woman with whom he'd had an affair! While dying, the words Smith spoke according to **Mormons** fit an unfinished phrase a **mason** speaks when in need and seeking help from fellow **masons!** (Ibid., Decker; Hunt)

So, in view of the questionable basis of Mormonism, can we learn WHY we believe as WE do opposite Mormonism?

(We turn to the sermon "Need" section . . .)

Need: "I've run into Mormon 'elders' and know their beliefs are a problem, but I need to know where I stand, and WHY! Any ideas?!"

- I. **We must test all beliefs, for there is much error around, 1 John 4:1.**
- II. **GOD via Scripture GUIDES the WAY for us to do so (as follows):**
 - A. We must see if a group properly asserts the Incarnation of Christ, that He is the Creator God come in the flesh, 1 Jn. 4:2-3; 1 Cor. 12:3.
 - B. We must see if a group properly asserts salvation by faith alone in Christ or if it wrongly makes man's merit a means of it, Gal. 1:8-9; 3:3.
 - C. In discussing false doctrine, we must view Scripture with each error:
 1. Paul tells us to be wise in the truth **while staying** "unmixed" with error, Rom. 16:17, 19 (B.K.C., N.T., p. 501)
 2. This ends in God's giving us discernment victory over Satan, v. 20.
 3. So as an aid to keep ourselves **unmixed** with error, we view Scripture **WHILE VIEWING EACH errant view as we go!**
- III. **Accordingly, we view these MAJOR Mormon ERRORS using John 1:1-18, taking each errant view with Scripture as we go:**
 - A. Regarding the deity of Christ, though Mormons say Jesus is Adam's son and Adam is God the Father, and that upright men can become gods, John 1:1, 3, 8, show Jesus is **always** the only Creator God:
 1. Mormonism teaches "Jesus our elder brother was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the Garden of Eden and who is our father in heaven." (Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, p. 50, as cited in Salem Kirban's Mormonism, p. 40)
 2. Mormonism also teaches godly men become creator gods as well: Mormon Doctrine, p. 169 and Doctrines of Salvation, v. 1, p. 74, 75 state: "Christ...was aided in the creation of this earth by many of the noble...Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Peter, James, and John..." (as cited in Kirban, op. cit., p. 36).
 3. Yet, John 1:1,3,8 show Jesus **always** is the **sole** Creator God:
 - a. Jesus as God become flesh (John 1:1, 14) is said in John 1:3 to have created everything that has come into being!
 - b. Since no one creates Himself, John 1:3 means Jesus was not created, and then is not the son of the created Adam of Eden, but the sole Creator God of the Old Testament!

- c. Though **God sent** upright John the Baptizer as a witness of Christ, John 1:8 clearly shows there was no divine light in John, meaning he was not nor becoming a creative deity as Mormonism teaches will happen! Mormonism greatly errs here!
- B. Regarding salvation, where Mormonism says one gains eternal life by faith **plus** baptism, works, enduring and *arguably* via polygamous unions, John 1:12-13 asserts it comes by faith alone in Christ alone:
 - 1. Mormonism has taught salvation is by faith plus repentance, baptism, enduring to the end & *questionably* by polygamous union!
 - a. The Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 27:15f) reads: "[God **allegedly** says] And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless...when I...judge the world."
 - b. Also, on the **one** hand, Mormonism's Doctrine and Covenants, Sec. 132, ver. 1,4,16-17 teaches polygamy to be an "everlasting covenant...if ye abide not in that covenant, then ye are damned" (cited in A. Durnan's "Mormonism Unmasked", Bib. Evangelist, 6/1/92). On the **other** hand, The Book of Mormon at Jacob 2:27-28a reads: "For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women..." **Thus, no Mormon can be SURE if he can gain salvation as there exist these opposing views on polygamy in key Mormon sources!**
 - 2. Yet, John 1:12-13 **affirms** that salvation is by **faith alone** in Christ:
 - a. If one **believes** on **Christ**, God gives him the right (*exousian*, Ibid., B.K.C., N.T., p. 272) to be a "born" son (*tekna*) of God, John G. Mitchell, Fellowship, p. 63; UBS Grk. N.T., p. 321).
 - b. Now, becoming a "born" son of God occurs apart from any human **effort** or **merit** so even polygamy is not an issue: (a) John writes that the spiritual birth arises free of natural human descent ("not of blood"). (b) He notes this relation arises free of any parental **decision** to produce children ("nor of the will of the flesh"). (c) He notes that this relation arises free **even** of a **husband's** (literally *andros*) will where the **wife** may **not** have willed it (UBS Grk. N.T., p. 321)! Thus, John **labors** to show that this spiritual birth is **NOT** of **human** production in any **imaginable** way, but is **entirely** of **GOD** via faith **ALONE**!

Lesson Application: (1) According to John 1:1-18, in **CONTRAST** to **MAJOR** beliefs by Mormons, (a) **Jesus of Nazareth is ALWAYS the ONLY Creator Jehovah God (Jn. 1:1,3, 14)**. Also, (b) **salvation is ASSUREDLY by God's unmerited favor as God saves all who ONLY believe in Christ as their personal Savior from sin (Jn. 1:12-13)**. (2) **Hence, we must reject errors on these points that are made by Mormonism and believe in Christ alone to be saved!**

Conclusion: (To illustrate the sermon lesson . . .)

In case we think that Mormons are so indoctrinated that they are too tough to evangelize in the truth, consider the following:

I once was invited to attend a home Bible study where a former priest of the Mormon Church was to talk on witnessing to Mormons.

Now, there are two tiers of priests in the Mormon Church: the lower tier consists of those in the Aaronic priesthood while the Melchizedekan priesthood is the higher priestly order. This former Melchizedekan priest and influential Mormon priest was now saved and concerned that others know how to reach Mormons for Christ.

In teaching us at this study, the former Mormon leader asked us what Bible verse we might think we could use that would most correct and challenge a Mormon to come to the truth. He would **gently** play the part of a Mormon so as to guide us in the process!

One person went to one Bible passage, another used another, and each time, this former Mormon priest gave the typical Mormon reply, explaining the Evangelical view away in defense of Mormonism.

However, when one of us mentioned Galatians 1:8-9, this former Mormon Melchizedekan high priest replied, "That passage gives the Mormons a tough time -- they really cannot answer it. You see, Mormons teach that the angel Moroni gave a corrected gospel to Joseph Smith, a gospel that corrects the 'corrupted' version of salvation by grace alone found in Christianity. However, Paul there states that 'Though we or an angel from **heaven** [like the alleged angel, Moroni], preach any other gospel unto than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.' Thus, in a single stroke, Paul counters the 'corrected' version of the alleged angel, Moroni, and challenges a showdown with the teachings of Joseph Smith. I recommend you use that passage to defend your faith against Mormons and their errors!"

God knew of Joseph Smith's borrowing Freemasonry teaching in formulating the story about the angel, Moroni back when Paul wrote Galatians, and had Paul write Galatians 1:8-9 so we could answer Mormons about the hope we have in Christ!

Thus, let us adhere to the Word and answer every man who asks us why we believe as we do, ESPECIALLY if he is a Mormon who is searching for the truth that we have in Christ!