

# Are Mormons Christian?

Tim Conway | [illbehonest.com](http://illbehonest.com)

Well, one thing that's definitely evident to me in our day, at least in our city - you guys have all seen the "I'm a Mormon" billboards around, we're in San Antonio here. And it's really obvious that those who style themselves "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" or commonly the members are called Mormons, it's really evident - what kind of people do you have on the billboards? You don't have ugly people. You don't have frowning people. You've got guys surfing, guys riding motorcycles, pretty people, handsome people. What's that all about? Obviously, it is seeking to make Mormonism look desirable, to make it look normal, to make it look exciting, to make it look acceptable. Unquestionably, they are on an aggressive advertising campaign to make Mormonism look like something that you want.

And if there's anything that stands out to me as far as the Mormon approach, it's that they're aggressively trying to sell themselves in our day as being Christian. (incomplete thought) A week or ten days ago, actually when we were supposed to film the first time and we postponed, but of all things, that night, I had a couple Mormons come to the door. And the fact is that I can tell this firsthand, I can see it by the things that they are putting out on the Internet. If there's one thing that's true of Mormonism today, it's that they want to appear Christian. They are using Christian terminology.

I mean, the truth is, these guys don't show up at your door and start talking about planet Kolob or the star Kolob. They don't start talking about polygamy. They don't tell you Brigham Young basically said that blacks had a curse on them. They don't show up at your door and start talking about spirit children and the fact that there's many gods. The moment you open the door, they don't say Jesus and the devil are brothers. I mean, they hide all that. They believe all that, but that's not what they hit you with. They hit you with verbiage that sounds very Christian. And I've seen it. One of their so-called "apostles" is on the Internet, and he is really making a case for the fact that Mormonism is Christian. And so you can see that. That is their agenda. They're selling themselves as Christian.

And so, really, all I wanted to do is I wanted to answer that question: Is Mormonism Christian? It's not going to be the object or the scope of what I want to try to accomplish here to prove the doctrines of Christianity, or not even necessarily to prove or to debate which one's right or which one's wrong. What I simply want to prove is what Christianity claims, believes, the foundational doctrines for the last 2,000 years are absolutely rejected by Mormonism. That's what I want to show. I just want to show that whatever Mormonism is by definition, and whatever Christianity is by definition, they're not on the same page. Argue which one is right and wrong, like I say, it's not the scope.

Mormonism teaches - we're going to get into depravity of man and the way of salvation now. Again, historically, what has Christianity taught? I guarantee, it's not what Mormonism teaches. You know what Mormonism teaches? That Elohim had these two sons: Lucifer and Jehovah - Jesus, and that both of them set forth plans for the redemption of man. And God the Father rejected the plan of Lucifer and went with the plan of Jehovah (Jesus). Guess what the plan supposedly of Lucifer was? It was basically a plan to override the free will of man and

cause him to do something that he did not have a natural disposition to do. And supposedly God rejected that and said no, we're going to go with the free will plan of Jehovah. Listen to this, Mormonism teaches that Jesus and the devil offered these two plans, but the devil offered a plan that would only be by grace. One in which the free agency of man would be imposed upon, and the Father would draw men to come to Christ for salvation.

You see what he's saying? They're saying that the devil's plan was one of grace where God would overstep man's free will, violate his free will if you will, and save men aside from what they had a natural bent to do which is amazing. "Mormons believe that one of the most fallacious doctrines originated by Satan and propounded by man is that man is saved alone by the grace of God; that belief in Jesus Christ alone is all that is needed for salvation." And that is a direct quote from "The Miracle of Forgiveness" by Spencer Kimball, page 206.

But what has the church believed? We believe that man willfully sinned against God. We believe that in that fallen state no one seeks for God. There is none righteous. There is none that seeks after Him. And Jesus specifically said unless My Father who has sent Me draws a person to Me, they will not come. "No one can come to Me unless My Father who sent Me draws him." You think that's overstepping man's free will? You better believe it. Man in his natural disposition rejects God. He runs from God. He doesn't want anything to do with God. He now so thoroughly bears the guilt and the nature of Adam, that he is conceived in sin, he comes forth from his mother's womb in sin, he does nothing but sin, he's at enmity against the law of God. By nature, we are told from Scripture that man is dead in sin. He's under the power of sin. Men by nature are children of wrath. By nature, they have hearts that are deceitful, desperately wicked. By nature, the truth of God is folly to man. And in this state, God declares that men are absolutely incapable of any good whatsoever, whether in thought, in deed, in our best attempts, our righteousness are filthy rags.

And basically, the way of salvation that we love, that we hold to, is one that the Mormon church - the very Gospel - the Mormon church says is of the devil. Mormons believe Jesus' sacrifice was not meant to cleanse us from all our sins. It was only made in order to make it possible.

And you know what? The Mormons actually put more or as much emphasis on Jesus' sweating of blood in the garden and they take the attention off the cross. Have you heard that? They won't deny that. They really make a big deal about that. But they say straight up, Mormons believe that Jesus' sacrifice was not able to cleanse from all their sins. That comes from "Journal of Discourses," Volume 3, 1856, page 247. They specifically say good works are necessary for salvation in their "Articles of Faith" by James Talmadge, page 92. They say there is no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith as a prophet of God. That's found in "Doctrines of Salvation," Volume 1, page 188. They say the first effect of the atonement is to secure all mankind alike, exemption from the penalty of the fall, thus providing a plan of general salvation. The second effect is to open a way for individual salvation whereby mankind may secure remission of personal sins. That's in the "Articles of Faith," James Talmadge, page 78-79. What you have to understand there is the death of Christ secures nothing. It makes it possible. They say this grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they expended their own best efforts. That is "Latter-day Saints Bible Dictionary," page 697. "We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do." That's not grace.

That comes from "The Book of Mormon," 2 Nephi 25:23. Several Latter-day Saint leaders have exposed their disdain for the biblical teaching of salvation by grace through faith alone. Joseph Smith, on page 192 of "The Restoration of All Things," stated, "one of the most pernicious doctrines ever advocated by man is the doctrine of justification by faith alone which has entered into the hearts of millions since the days of the so-called Reformation." And Joseph Smith calls it "the so-called Reformation."

In fact, do you know what Joseph Smith did in all of his revisions of the Bible? He went into Romans 4:5, and I'm quoting the King James because that's the one they claim that they use. Listen to what it says in the King James. Romans 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." One of the most glorious doctrines. In my estimation, it is the most glorious verse on the doctrine of justification found. There's many others, but I think it's the most glorious, simply because it says that God justifies the ungodly. He says, "to him that works not, but believes on Him that justifies the ungodly..." God is called "Him who justifies the ungodly." He declares righteous ungodly men and women, not by any works that they do themselves. For some unknown reason, Smith added the word "not" into the passage. He shows his absolute disdain for the doctrine of justification by faith. Our souls hang on that doctrine. That is at the heart of the Gospel. You reject justification by faith, you have no Gospel. Joseph Smith added the word "not." Listen to how the Joseph Smith translation of Romans 4:5 reads. "But to him that seeketh not to be justified by the law of works, but believeth on him who justifieth not the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." He didn't even take the doctrine away, because it still says his faith is counted as righteousness. But he put the word "not" in there. He calls God, "him who justifieth not the ungodly," and yet, he didn't alter the second part of the verse that comes right around and says his faith is counted for righteousness.

I mean, he shows his absolute absurdity. He shows how he hated the doctrine; he sought to corrupt Scripture, and at the same time, he shows his... I don't know what. I mean, obviously, God foiled him in his attempt, because even in his change he didn't take it away. He still left it. His faith is counted for righteousness. He shows his ignorance. He really didn't eliminate the doctrine. But he shows a fearlessness in changing the Word of God. I would not want to be in his shoes. I mean, we find that salvation is through Christ alone. Salvation is looking to the finished work that Christ did - the Christ who was not created. The Christ who in the beginning was the Word of God; the One who is the image bearer of His Father; the One who is eternally God. God in three persons revealing Himself in a Trinity to us. The Son who being with God forever, being sent from the Father to take upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh, and in all respects being made like the offspring of Abraham, He came to earn salvation for those who by faith will look to Him and be justified based on the merits, by the obedience of Him, the many are made righteous. That is the foundation for us. God says that our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. It's not according to our works and we're thankful that it's not. But our salvation comes this way, through the Gospel that is revealed in the Scriptures, and then as men read that, as they see it, they hear it, they behold the Christ of the Gospel, and they're born again, their ears are opened, God has mercy on them, they run to Christ in faith. They flee to Him.

Those early guys, those early Mormons, they would say that murder is an unpardonable sin. I have a salvation that beats that one. And they think that you have to do everything that you possibly can - again, I have a salvation that's better than that one. And you know, the problem with any works system is what hope would you have given to the thief on the cross? The problem with any kind of works salvation is he can't really make it to the confessional. He can't really sit down with the priest. He can't try to do good works to undo his bad ones. He's really kind of nailed up there. Catholicism and Mormonism alike believe that baptism washes away sin. You know, he's kind of being prevented from that right at the moment. You know, false religions have nothing to say to the thief on the cross. Nothing to say. Christianity does. We can say, "We've got really good news for you. We have a way of salvation that's entirely based on the merits of another, not on your own." And in a moment of time, if your faith be like the size of a mustard seed, and you look outside yourself and trust what this One has done, which that thief on the cross did - "Lord, remember me." He called upon Another. That is a very hopeful message. The truth is false religions can't go on death row (incomplete thought). You hear about Whitefield and Wesley, they would spend the night. I hear about some of these old pastors who would go into prisons and they would spend the night with prisoners who were going to the gallows the next day, and they would preach the Gospel to them all night long. If they had a works salvation, they wouldn't be going. It's hopeless. These people have sealed their doom. And a lot of those guys were murderers. Mormonism doesn't have anything to offer them. Mormonism says - some of their leaders have said - that it's an unpardonable sin.

One of the problems that the Mormon church has is that the men who have gone before said a lot of radical things that they are not really comfortable with today. They're not politically correct. There was a day when Mormonism was very quick to say, "we're the only true church. If you don't believe like we do, you're damned." Now, they're taking more the position they're trying to pawn themselves off as real Christianity. And so what they're doing is they're conveniently trying to gloss over some of these things that were real hard to accept. Brigham Young basically said African Americans bore the mark of Cain, the mark of Ham, the mark of Canaan, that they were under a curse. You can find where he said these things. Those things I'm pretty certain, there's lots of stuff on the racism of Mormonism out there. But you will see that they claim that they had a revelation in 1978 whereby there was supposedly a change in their take on blacks. You know, they have their teaching of this Melchizedek high priesthood, and they basically said and taught that blacks could not be a part of this priesthood. And it's very interesting if you look at the billboard. They have African Americans now. So again, they're trying to come across politically correct. They're trying to appeal to everybody. They're not wanting to come across in any way to open themselves up for ridicule on those points. So, yeah, they're changing. And that's so often the truth. One thing that's true about Christianity, it stays the same. One thing that's typically true about that which is false religion, is it's a chameleon. It will change colors to blend in with its background. You know, you have Catholicism that is constantly seeking to appear in different colors and Mormonism the same.

The burning in the bosom. Two weeks ago probably when the Mormons showed up here, both of them said absolutely dogmatically, "We have experienced the burning in the bosom. We are absolutely certain that Joseph Smith is a prophet of God. We are absolutely certain that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a true church. We are certain."

And what I told them is I don't doubt that you had a supernatural experience, but Satan comes as an angel of light. I mean, bottom line is what is the test, what is the measuring stick, what's the ruler, what is the lens through which we must examine all of our experiences? Well, as soon as you want to say: not this book because it's full of errors, which is what the same guys were telling me.

You see what they're telling me? I've had an experience and I'm trusting it, but this book, it's full of errors and I can't trust it. Well, all of a sudden, where is our basis for truth? Where is the starting point? I mean, the thing is, I don't want a starting point with myself. Because I know I'm weak, I know that I come from sinful stock, I know that I come from stock that was totally deceived with a heart that was deceitful and desperately wicked, I loved to believe lies, I was a child of the devil who is the father of lies, I was a liar and was going to find my place in the lake of fire if God had not come to rescue me. Outside of this truth, where am I going to look for truth? Not in myself. And are we going to look for it in the news? In the press? In this world that's controlled by Satan? Where are we going to go? Well, they're going to say, well, we've got these other books over here that we need to go to.

But again, my argument would come back to this: This book says that if they don't speak according to what's written here, it's because there's no light in them. This book tells me that God promised He's going to preserve His Word, and you know what? I'm banking my soul on that. And one of the reasons that I believe that this is the Word is because in reading it and exposing myself to it, I was born again. Just like it says: born again. Living, abiding Word of God. Incorruptible. I was born again through it. Such life transformation. It wasn't a burning in the bosom. It was a life-transformation from ungodliness to one where holiness and hunger and thirst for righteousness, and where practicing righteousness became my desire. It's this book - basically what this book says can be confirmed on all sides. You know the way that this book describes man, we can look around and as sinful as it says man is, we look around and we see he's exactly like that. The very thing that man needs - a righteousness that was earned by One who came into this world to earn it that we couldn't earn ourselves - that's exactly what we need.

Listen, I've just been reading out of Luke. I go to Luke's Gospel, and I start reading, and you know what I find? I find that it states things like this - it talks about Galilee. It talks about Nazareth. Here I am in Luke. "In those days, Mary arose. She went to the hill country." There's a town in Judah. There's literal people. Zechariah, Elizabeth... you go through all these things. You find "in those days..." There was Caesar Augustus. "The world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria." And Joseph also went up from Galilee, the town of Nazareth, city of David, Bethlehem. You go through all these things and you find "15th year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea." Herod being tetrarch of Galilee. His brother Phillip, tetrarch... You know what the thing is about this book? It talks about real places and real people that archeology and history validate. The more we find out, the more is discovered... they find Sennacherib's six-sided deal that shows all about his conquerings and his quests, and guess what? There's really a King Hezekiah. And it specifically says that he trapped him in his city, and he basically walled him up like a rat or something like that, but he never entered it and that's exactly what God said. That's exactly what His own testimony bears witness to. Caesar, Tiberius - he's real. We know about him historically. Pontius Pilate - he's real. We know about him. Quirinius - we know about him. There

is a place called Syria. There is a place called Bethlehem. All these places are real. The Book of Mormon is entirely fictitious and they can't prove any of the places, any of the people, at any of the times. None of it stands up to archeology. None of it stands up to anything. History doesn't bear it out. Archeology doesn't bear it out. There's no proof for anything in it. Yet, everything written in this book bears up.

"Add to these words, and you shall have added to you the plagues." Now, Mormons are going to come along and say yeah, but all that's saying is, similar words are said in Deuteronomy, similar words are said in Proverbs. They would say, well, we're not supposed to add to Proverbs. We're not supposed to add to Deuteronomy. We're not supposed to add to Revelation. By the way, Joseph Smith changed them all. How does that figure? He added to them and deleted from them. The very books - even if the Mormons want to say that, if they want to say that those words apply to those books only, Joseph Smith came right along and changed them. Those very books. So their argument doesn't stand up. They show who they really are. The devil came along in the beginning, and he challenged the Word of God. Jesus said, "Sanctify them with Your truth, Your Word is truth."

You know what that tells me? That if God doesn't keep His people through all generations with the Word, that Jesus' prayer can't be true. He didn't say sanctify them with the Book of Mormon. It doesn't say that the Book of Mormon is God-breathed. It says all Scripture is. It says that Scripture - God-breathed - is sufficient to fully equip the man of God. Doctrine and reproof and correction and instruction in righteousness. No mention made of "The Pearl of Great Price." No mention made but of Scripture which is God-breathed. This is it. Lose this book, and your foundations are gone. Why does every false religion start by attacking here? Because that's what their father did in the beginning. The devil gives himself away all the time. He levels the guns at this book. Catholicism? Our tradition trumps this book. Mormonism? Our Book of Mormon... just the fact three of their books are infallible of the four that they use, that they claim, are their religious books. Three are infallible. This one isn't. But what does that tell you? Either God's incompetent or somebody's behind that religion that doesn't like this book. I would not opt for the first. I would opt for the second.

When they came here two weeks ago, that was one thing that I really wanted to establish right up front is your christ and my Christ are not the same. You can use the same terminology, but the Bible talks about other christ. And it talks about other gospels, not that there truly is another christ or another gospel, but it speaks about it that way and I just wanted to make certain, our Christ isn't the same. Because what they want to do is they want to come and say, "Well, we believe in Jesus Christ." Well, wait a second. The Christ of the Scriptures - the One who is represented by that name, has all sorts of attributes associated with Him, and they deny those. And they have a whole other thought about who He is.

You know, if we go beyond salvation, we just think about the eternal state of man. We look at heaven as a paradise. We look at heaven as a place where we are married to Christ. Again, Mormons totally reject that. They see heaven or they see the afterlife for those who were good in this life as being perpetually married and having all these wives by which they'll populate their own worlds now that they have become like Elohim; they've become like God Himself, and they've got all these wives and they're having all these spirit children and they basically become like Him. But didn't Jesus say to the Sadducees, you've got it all wrong. You

don't understand the Scriptures. We become like the angels. There is no marriage among us. We go to the marriage supper of the Lamb. We wait for a Bridegroom, that's true. But we become married to Him. The church is the bride. The marriage in glory is to Christ. It's not that we become like Christ in the sense that we become exactly as He is - a God like He is God, and we have our own spirit wives and have this constant celestial sex through all the ages. That's what they teach. In fact, they taught that Jesus Himself had wives. Mary Magdalene was one of them. He had three or four wives. That is not what we find in Scripture. The eternal state is marriage to Christ.

You know, one of the things you want to look for any time you're wondering if something is Christian you want to look at their doctrine of hell. They deny eternal hell. Now, they'll talk about a hell, but it's temporary at best. They'll talk about eternal fire, but it's like that - it's not really fire. It's just like that. And they say whatever hell is, it's not forever. That basically, it's extinguished. It comes to an end. Mormons teach this. They say, "therefore, if you have a man and he repents not and he remains and dies an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire." You see how they say that? That's what it says in Mosiah 2:38. Listen to this. Joseph Smith himself taught, "these are they who are liars, sorcerers, adulterers, whoremongers, and whosoever loves and makes a lie. These are they who are cast down to hell and suffer the wrath of Almighty God until the fullness of times." There's an end. "...When Christ shall have subdued all enemies under His feet and shall have perfected His work." In other words, hell is for now, but when all of Christ's enemies are subdued, then it's over. It's not perpetual. It's not ongoing. It's not forever and ever. It's not this eternal punishment. It's not the smoke of their torment going up day and night forever and ever. It's not a: these will depart into everlasting punishment. They deny that. They deny the eternity of hell.

Look what we're faced with. We're faced with a religion that claims to be Christian. We're faced with a religion that when they come to your door, they talk Christian terminology. They talk about atonement. They talk about Jesus Christ. They talk about God. They talk about Christ being the Son. They talk salvation words. And they put a Christian face on these things, but their meanings behind them are not the same as ours. Every cardinal doctrine, every fundamental doctrine. They absolutely deny the Christian doctrine of the sufficiency of Scripture, the inerrancy of Scripture, they absolutely deny what we believe to be true about the Person of God, His character, His eternal character as God, His unchanging character as God, the fact that He is spirit. They absolutely deny the person and the work of Jesus Christ. They claim that He's created. They claim that He's brother to the devil. They claim that He's the firstborn among all of us, maybe just like us, and we just like Him - no difference in His very essence of being. He's just like us. They basically deny that the cross is really the point of the shedding of blood - without the shedding of blood, there's no remission. It doesn't say "without the sweating of blood." Without the shedding of blood. They put emphasis on what He did in the garden. They say that His atonement really only made it possible. It didn't accomplish anything. And in the end, all they're saying is that it made it possible to accomplish is to rid us of the guilt of Adam's sin. As far as our own sin, we have to do everything within our own power and then maybe His atonement finishes it off at the end. But we have to do everything within our own power to be

good and to fulfill all the laws and all the obligations of the church of Latter-day Saints. That's basically how you get to heaven. That's basically how you get the approval of God. It is through our works.

You see how they absolutely detest the doctrine of justification by faith upon which is the very heart and soul of our Gospel. We have no Gospel unless we have the doctrine of justification. They absolutely deny it. They hate it. Joseph Smith himself changed the Scriptures to seek to undo it. Their ideas about heaven are totally unlike the Christian ones. And their ideas of hell are [too]. So they deny the person of the Father. They deny the person of Christ. They deny the way of salvation. They deny eternal punishment. They deny our ideas about eternal paradise. These are all the core doctrines. They deny what we believe is essential about the Scriptures. I mean, the thing is, are we going to call that Christian? They are in absolute denial of every major doctrinal statement, orthodox Christian doctrine statement that has been created. You begin to look up just in the circles we run in. You think about the 1689 London Baptist Confession, the 1644, the Philadelphia, the New Hampshire, even the different articles that have been put out by the Southern Baptists over the years. I mean, you look at the Baptist confessions. You look at the Westminster Confession. You look at the Heidelberg. You look at these statements of faith. Everything that we hold dear, essential in these about the person of God, the way of salvation, about the truths about Scripture, the Mormon church denies.

Are they going to come along and sell us on the fact that they are Christian? They are absolutely not Christian. Not by any sound definition of what Christianity is. Not by any biblical definition of what Christianity is. And not by any historic definition of what our forefathers have declared to be essential to the core beliefs of Christianity that have gone before us. So absolutely not. They are not Christian.