

How to answer a Mormon

A. We SHOULD answer a Mormon

1) Many Christians are not prepared to give an answer, or are afraid of losing the argument...

2) Some believe that 2 John 7-11 commands us NOT to greet them or invite them in our house.

Recap 2 John 7-11 discussion—comment that **if you can't let a Mormon or a JW in, then you can't let anyone in your house that doesn't bring the teaching of Christ! This includes unsaved secular friends and family members, too.**

HISTORY OF THE LDS CHURCH

Dec. 23, 1805—Joseph Smith born

1820 Spring—Joseph Smith claims vision of God the Father and Jesus in a grove of trees.

In the spring of 1820, Joseph went to a grove of trees near his home and prayed to learn which church he should join. In answer to his prayer, Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to him. Joseph wrote: “When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” Joseph was told to join none of the churches that existed at that time.

Years in New York

September 21, 1823—revelation from the angel Moroni, whose Father, the prophet Mormon had written The Golden Plates. Joseph was told that these plates were hidden in a hill near Palmyra, N.Y. [Hill Cumorah]

1823-1827—four years of trials and temptations

1827—Moroni visits Joseph again, instructs him to remove the plates after his marriage to Emma Hale

Sept 22, 1827—Translation of the plates begins

May 1829—The Aaronic priesthood received by Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery from John the Baptist—and later the Melchizedek priesthood from Peter, James and John

April 6, 1830—LDS church begins at home of Peter Whitmer, Sr. in Fayette, N.Y.

April-November 1830—Oliver Cowdery sent on a mission to the American Indians. He went to Ohio and met Sidney Rigdon and his communal colony of Campbellites [an early denomination]. These Campbellites were baptized into the Mormon faith

Years in Ohio

November 16, 1830—60 LDS New Yorkers + 150 Campbellites = 210 Mormons. The New Yorkers move to Kirtland, Ohio to be with the new converts

1836—Temple built in Kirtland. Joseph Smith prophesies that the New Jerusalem would be built in Independence, Mo. [DC 57:1-5]

Problems in Ohio—flee to Missouri

1836-1838—church split in Kirtland, fighting, Mormon bank fails, Smith and Rigdon flee to Far West, Mo. Many LDS follow them

Riot in Missouri

August 6, 1838, Far West, Mo—Election day—non Mormons attempt to prevent Mormons from voting. A Riot ensued. Smith was taken prisoner. He was sentenced to be shot, but the order was not carried out. A few days later the Mo. State militia attacks the Mormons at the “massacre at Haun’s Mill”—Mormons leave for Illinois

Illinois: death of Smith and split of the church

1838-1844—8,000 LDS moved from Missouri to Illinois. Smith escapes prison a few months later and Nauvoo is established. Two excommunicated contractors expose polygamy and publish this in the Nauvoo Expositor. The city council approved destruction of the press, and the owners charged Smith with rioting. Smith, his brother, and three others were jailed in Carthage, Ill.

June 27, 1844—militia attacks four Mormon leaders while they were in jail. Joseph [38 years old] and Hyrum Smith killed.

1844—Church split

- 1) Sydney Rigdon is rejected as successor and moves to Pennsylvania to start a new church
- 2) Smith family leaves the main body, claiming that leadership must remain in the family. They formed what today is called the Reorganized Church of Jesus-Christ of the Latter-Day Saints.
- 3) Other splits: James J. Strang, Martin Harris, Alpheus Cutter

Comment on church splits: In *History of the Church*, Vol.6, p.408-409; Joseph Smith says, “I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam. A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man ever did such a work as I.”

May 1845—Temple dedicated in Nauvoo, Illinois—but most Mormons begin to leave...

1850—Temple in Nauvoo destroyed by a tornado

On to Salt Lake City

Winter 1846—Spring 1847—travel to Utah

1847 Arrival at Salt Lake City—**Brigham Young** is declared President

Presidents of the LDS Church

Joseph Smith	1830-1844
Brigham Young	1844-1877
John Taylor	1877-1887
Wilford Woodruff	1887-1898
Lorenzo Snow	1898-1901
Joseph F. Smith	1901-1918
Heber J. Grant	1918-1945
George Albert Smith	1945-1951
David O. McKay	1951-1970
Joseph Fielding Smith	1970-1972
Harold B. Lee	1972-1973
Spencer W. Kimball	1973-1985
Ezra Taft Benson	1985-1994
Howard W. Hunter	1994-1995
Gordon B. Hinckley	1995-present

“The Golden Plates”

Sept 21, 1823, Moroni visits 17 year old Joseph Smith and tells him where a set of Golden plates delivered by Jesus during the three days between His death and resurrection, and shortly thereafter. He apparently delivered them to the ancient inhabitants of America. Smith found the plates the next day, but was forbidden by Moroni for exactly 4 years from taking them.

Shortly after marrying Emma Hale, he began work on translating these large Golden plates with two magic stones, The Urim and the Thummim. Also, very large spectacles were found with the plates. One lense was apparently about the size of his head. The plates were fashioned together, according to Smith, like a book with golden wires.

Smith undertook the translation in private, behind a curtain, and for some time apparently no one saw the plates [Mormons now claim that 11 men saw the plates]

A New York farmer named Martin Harris planned to pay for the publishing of the book. But he first took copies of some of Smith's translations to Professor Charles Anthon of Columbia University. Smith claimed that Anthon give kudos to the translation of the "reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics", Chaldaic, Assyriac, and Arabic letters. But Professor Anthon wrote a lengthy letter calling the entire thing a hoax. Upon hearing of the entire story, he deemed it a scheme by Smith to cheat the farmer of his money. The Professor gave his opinion in writing to the farmer. The farmer still supported Smith and mortgaged his farm to cover the expenses.

Mormons today claim that the Professor at first gave a certificate "authenticating" the characters, but when he learned that they came from an angel, he took it back and destroyed it. The Reformed Church of Jesus Christ of LDS maintains that they own the paper that Smith copied the characters from the plates onto.

Mormons today claim that Professor Anthon was not able to read the characters in fulfillment of Isaiah 29:11-12.

The "witnesses" to the plates

Oliver Cowdery—left the Mormon church

David Whitmer—left the Mormon church

Martin Harris—admitted that he never saw the plates physically

Mormons also claim an additional 8 witnesses.

Answers to the "Plates":

1) It does not matter what the Professor said about the characters. The fact remains that the characters do not constitute any known language either past or present. Therefore the LDS church claims that God essentially gave an entire volume of Scripture to one man...Joseph Smith.

2) It also does not matter even if the plates existed at all. For their existence would not in and of itself prove that they came from God. If they did exist, it also does not matter if a million people saw the plates, because the "letters" are still unknown to everyone except Smith, and we are still left with an entire volume of Scripture given to one man in a totally "foreign to the entire world" tongue.

3) The giving of Scripture to man has always been through Inspiration and written in a commonly known language. Before Christ these languages were Hebrew and Aramaic. After Christ, the language was Koine Greek. Koine Greek was the common language of nearly the entire world of the time. For God to give Scripture not through Inspiration, but rather through the excavation of ancient plates inscribed with foreign characters is totally out of step with how God gave Scripture in the past. Furthermore:

4) Hebrews 1:1-2 says, "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son..." For God to speak through prophets, and then through His Son, and then to go back to a prophet is also totally out of step, for this would not leave Christ as the final prophet, but just "a" prophet.

The Book of Mormon---brief overview

First wave of immigrants to America in 2,250 BC when a group of Jaredites left the area of the Tower of Babel. But great civil war ensued here in America, and all but one of them died.

Second wave of immigrants: Lehi, a Jewish prophet and his son Nephi arrived in 600 BC in South America. Nephi and his brother Laman had family members that rebelled against God and God cursed them with black skin [II Nephi 5:21]. The Book of Mormon therefore claims that American natives were descended from the Jews. The other descendents of Nephi built large civilizations and were visited by Jesus in AD 34.

A large battle in AD 385 killed everyone of these people except Moroni, the son of Mormon. This battle occurred near hill Cumorah where Joseph apparently found the golden plates.

LDS Scriptures

KJV Bible [“insofar as it is correctly translated”]

Holy Bible, Inspired Version [translation by Joseph Smith]

Book of Mormon

Doctrines and Covenants

Pearl of Great Price

Book of Abraham

Book of Moses

Joseph Smith History

Joseph Smith—Matthew

Articles of Faith

Other inspired works

Times and Seasons [written in Nauvoo, Ill by various apostles]

Teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith

Journal of Discourses

Mormon Doctrine

History of the Church

Doctrines of Salvation

Lectures on Faith

Other official lectures or speeches by LDS prophets

BELEIFS

Mormons have extremely complicated and changing theological beliefs.
The central doctrine and the most important to discuss is:

The Law of Eternal Progression and the Nature of God

“As man is, God once was, and as God is, man may become”—prophet Lorenzo Snow

God the Father has a physical body which we can see

In the spring of 1820, Joseph went to a grove of trees near his home and prayed to learn which church he should join. In answer to his prayer, Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, appeared to him.

Joseph wrote:

“When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!” Joseph was told to join none of the churches that existed at that time. [JS-H v.17]

[D&C 130: 22] The ^aFather has a ^bbody^{*} of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of ^cSpirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not ^d dwell^{*} in us.

Answers:

I Timothy 6:16—NOT changed by Smith in “Inspired Version”

John 4:24—changed by Joseph Smith in “Inspired version” to “For unto such hath God promised his Spirit”

John 1:18

John 6:46

Matthew 16:17 KJV—NOT changed by Smith in “Inspired Version”

Alma 18:28 “And Ammon said: This is God. And Ammon said unto him again: Believest thou that this Great Spirit, who is God, created all things which are in heaven and in the earth?”

Father God [Elohim] was created by another God

"We were begotten by our Father in Heaven; the person of our Father in Heaven was begotten on a previous heavenly world by His Father; and again, He was begotten by a still more ancient Father; and so on, from generation to generation, ... we wonder in our minds, how far back the genealogy extends, and how the first world was formed, and the first father was begotten" (*Orson Pratt, The Seer, p.132*).

[Orson Pratt was baptized into Mormon church on Sept 19, 1830. He became an elder on December 1, 1830, being ordained by Joseph Smith. Ordained a High Priest Feb 2, 1832 by Sidney Rigdon. Member of standing high council of Zion, July 7, 1834. Ordained an Apostle April 26, 1835 by Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer.]

"Some people are troubled over the statements of the Prophet Joseph Smith.... The matter that seems such a mystery is the statement that our Father in heaven at one time passed through a life and death and is an exalted man. This is one of the mysteries.... The Prophet taught that our Father had a Father and so on. Is not this a reasonable thought, especially when we remember that the promises are made to us that we may become like him?" (*Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 1, pp.10, 12*).

"Times and Seasons" by Joseph Smith

<http://www.centerplace.org/history/ts/v5n15.htm>

Times and Seasons Volume 5, Number 15, page 613

First God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, is a man like unto one of yourselves, that is the great secret. If the vail [veil] was rent to-day, and the great God, who holds this world in its orbit, and upholds all things by his power; if you were to see him to-day, you would see him in all the person, image and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion and image of God; Adam received instruction, walked, talked and conversed with him, as one man talks [talks] and communes with another. In order to understand the subject of the dead, for the consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary they should understand the character and being of God, for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined that God was God from all eternity. These are incomprehensible ideas to some, but they are the simple and first principles of the gospel... The head God called together the Gods, and set [sat] in grand council. The grand counsellors [counselors] sat in yonder heavens, and contemplated the creation of the worlds that were created at that time.

Answer: Isaiah 43:10-11; Isaiah 44:6-8—NOT changed by Smith in "Inspired version"

Isaiah 45:21-22

Alma 11:26-31; "And Zeezrom said unto him: Thou sayest there is a true and living God?

And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God.

Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God?

And he answered, No.

Now Zeezrom said unto him again: How knowest thou these things?

And he said: An angel hath made them known unto me."

God has evolved from man to exalted man

"God himself was once as we are now and is an exalted man." [Joseph Smith, Journal of Discourses vol. 6 p. 3]

Answer: Malachi 3:6; "For I am the Lord, I change not."

Psalm 90:2; "from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God."

Man has the potential to become like God

“You have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves; to be kings and priests to God, the same as all gods have done; by going from a small degree to another, from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you are able to sit in glory as doth those who sit enthroned in everlasting power...” [Joseph Smith, *Times and Seasons*, Vol. V. no. 15, p. 614]

Man, potential to become like Heavenly Father: <http://scriptures.lds.org/gsm/manmen>

[D & C 132:37]” Abraham received ^a[concubines](#), and they bore him children; and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, because they were given unto him, and he abode in my law; as Isaac also and ^b[Jacob](#) did none other things than that which they were commanded; and because they did none other things than that which they were commanded, they have entered into their ^c[exaltation](#), according to the promises, and sit upon thrones, and are not angels but are gods.”

Answer:

Isaiah 46:9

Isaiah 44:7

Genesis 3:5

Isaiah 43:10-11

Should we pray for the burning in the bosom to confirm the testimony of the LDS?

“We invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, to ponder in their hearts the message it contains, and then to ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ if the book is true. Those who pursue this course and ask in faith will gain a testimony of its truth and divinity by the power of the Holy Ghost. (See [Moroni 10: 3-5](#).)”

Those who gain this divine witness from the Holy Spirit will also come to know by the same power that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, that Joseph Smith is his revelator and prophet in these last days, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the Lord’s kingdom once again established on the earth, preparatory to the second coming of the Messiah.”—Introduction to the Book of Mormon

“Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how ^amerciful the Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ^bponder it in your ^chearts. ⁴ And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ^aask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not ^btrue; and if ye shall ask with a ^csincere heart, with ^dreal intent, having ^efaith in Christ, he will ^fmanifest the ^gtruth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may ^aknow the ^btruth of all things” —Moroni 10:3-5

Answer:

Deuteronomy 18:20-22—test of a prophet

Deuteronomy 13:1-5—test of a prophet

**Acts 17:11—We should be like the Bereans and confirm teaching by comparing it to Scripture
Times and Seasons Vol 3 no. 1 p. 580**

“But there are some that say, show us a sign and we will believe. We answer; that Christ, and the apostles, never worked miracles to gratify the curiosity of any man. When Satan tempted Jesus, saying, make bread out of stones, he said get behind me Satan, &c. A set of wicked priests afterwards sought a sign of him; but he said, "a wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and none shall be given unto it," &c.-This is the only rule that is laid down in the scriptures, by which we can judge of the character of sign-seekers”—[E. Snow and B. Winchester]

Mormon Founder Joseph Smith Prophecies

This prophecy was spoken by Joseph Smith in 1835, and recorded by Oliver Cowdery: President Smith then stated that the meeting had been called, because God had commanded it; and it was made known to him by vision and by the Holy Spirit. . . . it was the will of God that they should be ordained to the ministry and go forth to prune the vineyard for the last time, for the coming of the Lord, which was nigh — even fifty six years should wind up the scene. (*History of the Church*, Vol. 2, pg. 182).

The fifty-six years were passed by 1891.

There is only One God

And Amulek said unto him: Yea, if it be according to the ^a[Spirit](#) of the Lord, which is in me; for I shall say nothing which is contrary to the Spirit of the Lord. And Zeezrom said unto him: Behold, here are six onties of silver, and all these will I ^b[give](#) thee if thou wilt deny the existence of a Supreme Being.

Now Amulek said: O thou ^a[child](#) of hell, why ^b[tempt](#) ye me? Knowest thou that the righteous yieldeth to no such temptations?

Believest thou that there is no God? I say unto you, Nay, thou knowest that there is a God, but thou lovest that ^a[lucre](#) more than him.

And now thou hast lied before God unto me. Thou saidst unto me—Behold these six onties, which are of great worth, I will give unto thee—when thou hadst it in thy heart to retain them from me; and it was only thy desire that I should deny the true and living God, that thou mightest have cause to destroy me. And now behold, for this great evil thou shalt have thy reward.

And Zeezrom said unto him: Thou sayest there is a true and living God?

And Amulek said: Yea, there is a true and living God.

Now Zeezrom said: Is there more than one God?

And he answered, No.

Now Zeezrom said unto him again: How knowest thou these things?

And he said: An ^a[angel](#) hath made them known unto me. [Alma 11:22-31]

The Trinity is One God

”And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the ^away; and there is ^bnone other way nor ^cname given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the ^ddoctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the ^eFather, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is ^fone God, without end. Amen.”[II Nephi 31:21]

Who is Jesus?

Was Jesus created?

God the Son: The God known as Jehovah is the Son, Jesus Christ (Isa. 12: 2; 43: 11; 49: 26; 1 Cor. 10: 1-4; 1 Tim. 1: 1; Rev. 1: 8; 2 Ne. 22: 2). Jesus works under the direction of the Father and is in complete harmony with him. All mankind are his brothers and sisters, for he is the eldest of the spirit children of Elohim. Some scripture references refer to him by the word God. For example, the scripture says that “God created the heaven and the earth” (Gen. 1: 1), but it was actually Jesus who was the Creator under the direction of God the Father (John 1: 1-3, 10, 14; Heb. 1: 1-2). <http://scriptures.lds.org/query?words=Was+Elohim+created%3F&search.x=24&search.y=6>

Answer: Jesus is God and Creator [see “Proving Deity of Christ from the Scriptures”]. God the Father is God.

NO GOD WAS FORMED AFTER ANY OTHER “GOD” ISAIAH 43:10-11

Jesus said “I am the first and I am the last” Rev. 1:17-18; 22:13 and Isaiah 48:12-13

See Isaiah 44:6. This shows that Father, Son and Spirit are one.

See also Times and Seasons vol 3 No. 1 p. 578

AN ADDRESS TO THE CITIZENS OF SALEM (MASS) AND VICINITY,

BY E. SNOW AND B. WINCHESTER.

Elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Concluded.

We believe in God the Father, who is the great Jehovah and head of all things, and that Christ is the Son of God, co-eternal with the Father; yet he is our Savior, Redeemer, King, and Great Prototype;-was offered as a sacrifice to make an atonement for sin-rose from the dead with the same flesh and bones, not blood, and ascended to heaven, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

Did we exist with God before we came to earth?

Are our spirits eternal, and NOT created by God? Are they co-equal to God, being uncreated?

Moses 3:5-7

And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew. For I, the Lord God, ^acreated all things, of which I have spoken, ^bspiritually, before they were ^cnaturally upon the face of the earth. For I, the Lord God, had not caused it to rain upon the face of the earth. And I, the Lord God, had ^dcreated all the children of men; and not yet a man to till the ^eground; for in ^fheaven ^gcreated I them; and there was not yet flesh upon the earth, neither in the water, neither in the air;

But I, the Lord God, spake, and there went up a ^amist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

And I, the Lord God, formed man from the ^adust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the ^bbreath of life; and ^cman became a living ^dsoul, the ^efirst flesh upon the earth, the first man also; nevertheless, all things were before created; but **spiritually** were they created and made according to my word.

Moses 6:51 And he called upon our **father** Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I ^amade the world, and ^bmen ^cbefore they were in the flesh.

But:!

<http://www.centerplace.org/history/ts/v5n15.htm>

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The mind of man is as immortal as God himself. I know that my testimony is true, hence when I talk to these mourners; what have they lost, they are only separated from their bodies for a short season; their spirits existed co-equal with God, and they now exist in a place where they converse together, the same as we do on earth. Is it logic to say that a spirit is immortal, and yet have a beginning? Because if a spirit have a beginning it will have an end; good logic. I want to reason more on the spirit of man, for I am dwelling on the body of man, on the subject of the dead. I take my ring from my finger and liken it unto the mind of man, the immortal spirit, because it has no beginning. Suppose you cut it in two; but as the Lord lives there would be an end.-All the fools, learned and wise men, from the beginning of creation, who say that man had a beginning, proves that he must have an end and then the doctrine of annihilation would be true. But if I am right I might with boldness proclaim from the house tops, that God never did have power to create the spirit of man at all.

Answer: Isaiah 57:16—God DID create man’s spirit

Answer:

Job 38:1-4/all chapter 38

Are little children without sin? Are those who do not “know” the law saved?

*A young person, one who has not yet reached puberty. Fathers and **mothers** are to train their children to obey **God’s** will. Children are without sin until they reach the age of accountability (Moro. 8: 22; D&C 68: 27). <http://scriptures.lds.org/query?words=mother+God&search.x=30&search.y=4>*

[Moroni 8:22]For behold that all little children are ^aalive in Christ, and also all they that are without the ^blaw. For the power of ^credemption cometh on all them that have ^dno law; wherefore, he that is

not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing—

[D & C 68: 27] And their children shall be ^abaptized for the ^bremission of their sins when ^ceight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands.

Answer:

Psalm 51:5

Romans 3:23

Romans 2:14-15; 1:19-20

Polygamy...Did David and Solomon sin by having many wives?

D&C says they did NOT sin. The Book of Mormon says they DID sin.

[D&C 132:38-39] David also received ^amany wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me.

“^aDavid’s wives and concubines were ^bgiven unto him of me, by the hand of Nathan, my servant, and others of the prophets who had the ^ckeys of this power; and in none of these things did he ^dsin against me save in the case of ^eUriah and his wife; and, therefore he hath ^ffallen from his exaltation, and received his portion; and he shall not inherit them out of the world, for I ^ggave them unto another, saith the Lord.”

[Jacob 2:24-28] “Behold, David and ^aSolomon truly had many ^bwives and concubines, which thing was ^cabominable before me, saith the Lord.

Wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a ^arighteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph.

Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old.

Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any ^aman among you have save it be ^bone ^cwife; and concubines he shall have none;

For I, the Lord God, delight in the ^achastity of women. And ^bwhoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts”