

MORMON MISSIONARIES AT YOUR DOOR

It's not a matter of *if* but *when*





Currently The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has about 52,000 missionaries under 25 (30,000 older “church service missionaries” are also in the field)

WAYS TO FOOL THE MISSIONARIES

- Hide behind the TV
- Be rude
- Argue and win the debate

BETTER WAYS TO HANDLE IT

- Politely tell them you are not interested
- Invite a conversation (as you could do with any of your LDS friends or neighbors)
- Be bold but compassionate

SEVERAL THINGS TO UNDERSTAND

- Missionaries are not our enemies
- They are not much different than you
- Many LDS young people dedicate up to 2 years to go out on a mission
 - Males: age 18, for 2 years
 - Females: age 19, for 1 ½ years

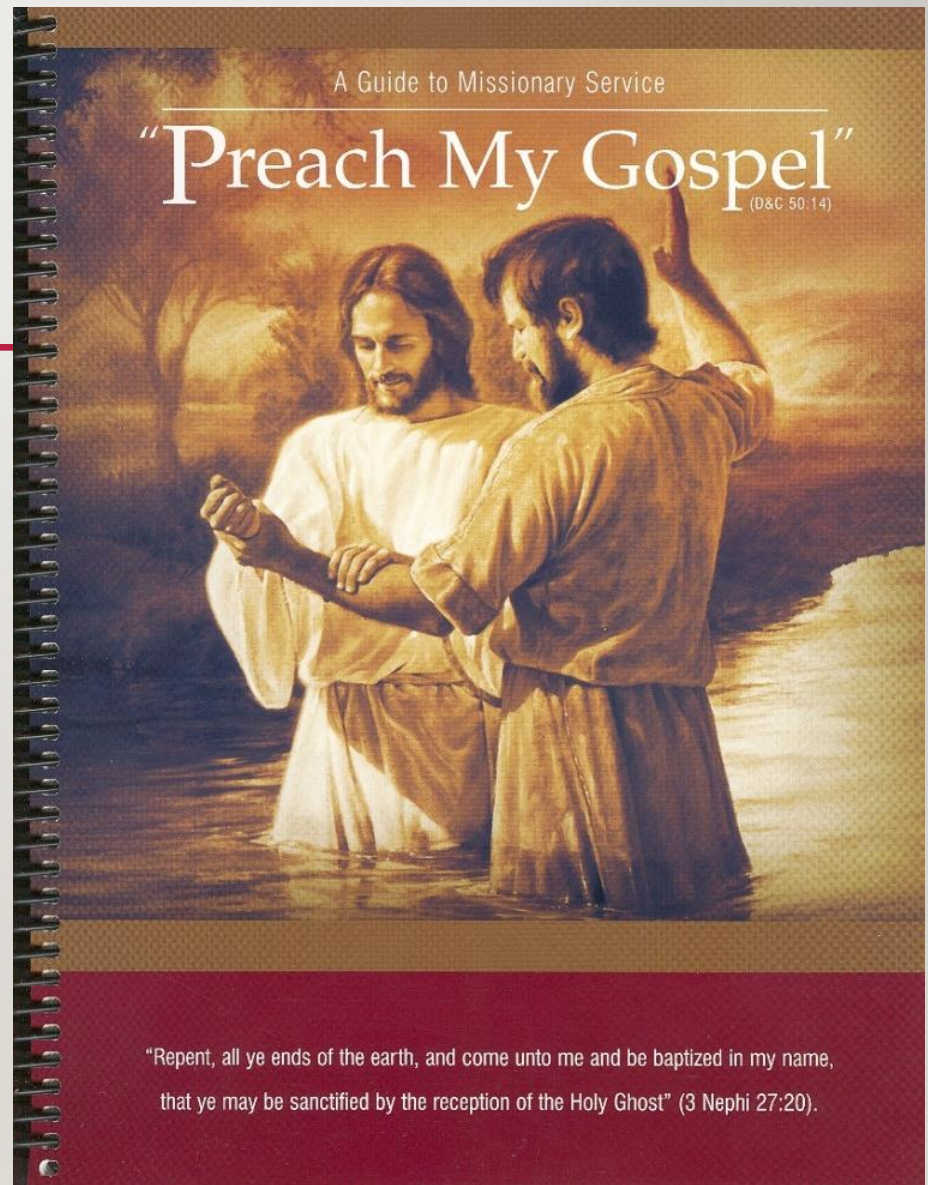
IF THERE ARE MAJOR DIFFERENCES, SHOULDN'T THESE BE DISCUSSED?

- Does everyone go to heaven?
 - The Bible seems to teach that only believers get to go to heaven
- Should we care about what others believe?
 - If people are wrong in their beliefs, shouldn't we at least try to address the issue?

FIND A WAY TO INITIATE A CONVERSATION

- Ask questions
 - What is your home town? Tell me about yourself
 - How long have you been a missionary?
 - What made you decide to become LDS?
 - In your view, what do you think is the biggest difference between your faith and mine as an Evangelical Christian?

THE MISSIONARY'S OBJECTIVES ARE OUTLINED IN THE 2004 *PREACH MY GOSPEL* MANUAL



WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE AND GOAL?

“As people come to accept the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and receive the ordinances of baptism and confirmation by priesthood authority, they can be assured that they ‘are not cast off forever’ (Book of Mormon, Title Page).”

REPRESENTING JESUS

“You are called to represent Jesus Christ in helping people become clean from their sins. You do this by inviting them to come unto Jesus Christ and become converted to His restored gospel. To come to the Savior they must have faith in Him unto repentance—making the necessary changes to bring their life into agreement with His teachings.”

3 MAJOR AREAS OF DISCUSSION

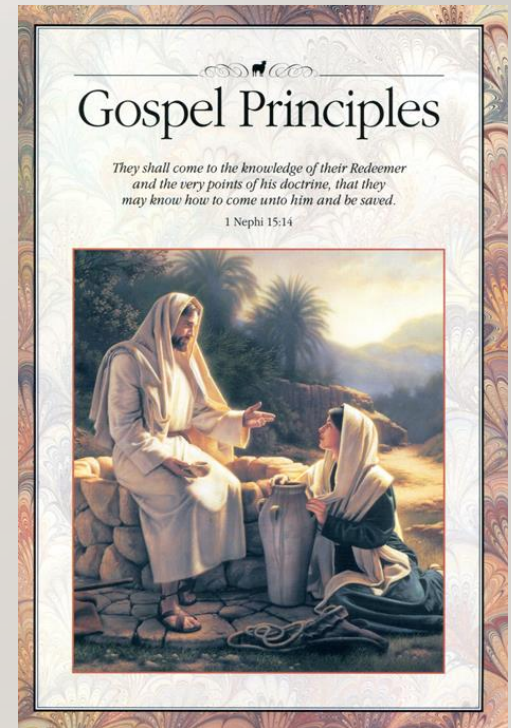
- Convince investigators that there was a “complete apostasy” of the Christian Church
- Convince investigators that Joseph Smith was a prophet sent by God
- Convince investigators that the Book of Mormon is a work from God

I. CONVINCING INVESTIGATORS THAT THERE WAS A “GREAT APOSTASY”

“Investigators must be told that a universal apostasy occurred following the death of Jesus and His Apostles. If there had been no apostasy, there would have been no need of a Restoration... As guided by the Spirit, teach investigators about the Great Apostasy at a level of detail appropriate to their needs and circumstance. Your purpose is to help them understand the need for the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

THE GREAT APOSTASY

“One by one, the Apostles were killed or otherwise taken from the earth. Because of wickedness and apostasy, the apostolic authority and priesthood keys were also taken from the earth. The organization that Jesus Christ had established no longer existed, and confusion resulted.

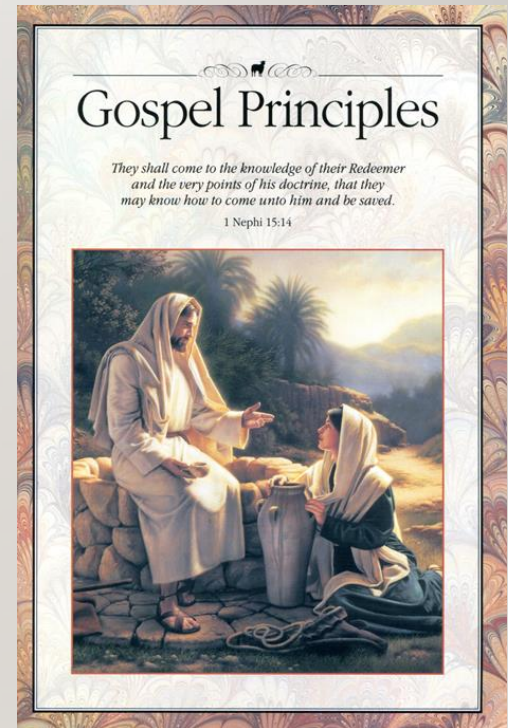


Gospel Principles, 2009, p. 92

See “Should Mormons Be Considered Christians? Only if they deny the Great Apostasy First” by visiting mrm.org/deny-great-apostasy

THE GREAT APOSTASY

More and more error crept into Church doctrine, and soon the dissolution of the Church was complete. The period of time when the true Church no longer existed on earth is called the Great Apostasy. Soon pagan beliefs dominated the thinking of those called Christians... It was the Church of Jesus Christ no longer; it was a church of men.”



Gospel Principles, 2009, p.92

See “Should Mormons Be Considered Christians? Only if they deny the Great Apostasy First” by visiting mrm.org/deny-great-apostasy

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD WAS LOST

“The knowledge of God and His physical separateness from His Son and the Holy Ghost was lost after the death of Christ and His Apostles. Confusion and false doctrines about the Godhead were fashioned out of the Nicene Creed and Constantinople councils...I know that heaven-sent revelations have replaced the gross errors of man-made doctrines concerning the Godhead.”

Seventy Gary J. Coleman, “Mom, Are We Christians?”
Ensign (Conference Edition), May 2007, pp. 92, 93

#2 JOSEPH SMITH WAS A PROPHET SENT BY GOD



2. CONVINCING INVESTIGATORS THAT JOSEPH SMITH WAS A PROPHET SENT BY GOD

- First Vision: God the Father and Jesus appear to Smith in the Sacred Grove in 1820 when Smith was only 14.
- “The Savior told Joseph not to join any of the churches, for they ‘were all wrong’ and ‘all their creeds were an abomination.’” (p. 37)
- “A living prophet directs the Church today. This prophet...and the Present Apostles trace their authority to Jesus Christ in an unbroken chain of ordinances through Joseph Smith.” (p. 37)

JOSEPH SMITH-HISTORY 1:19-20A

- “I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.”
- 20 “He again forbade me to join with any of them; and many other things did he say unto me, which I cannot write at this time.”

JOSEPH SMITH'S VIEW OF GOD

“We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see. These are incomprehensible ideas to some, but they are simple. It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did, and I will show it from the Bible.”

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 345-346.

See also *Gospel Principles*, 1997, p. 305.

JOSEPH SMITH'S VIEW OF GOD

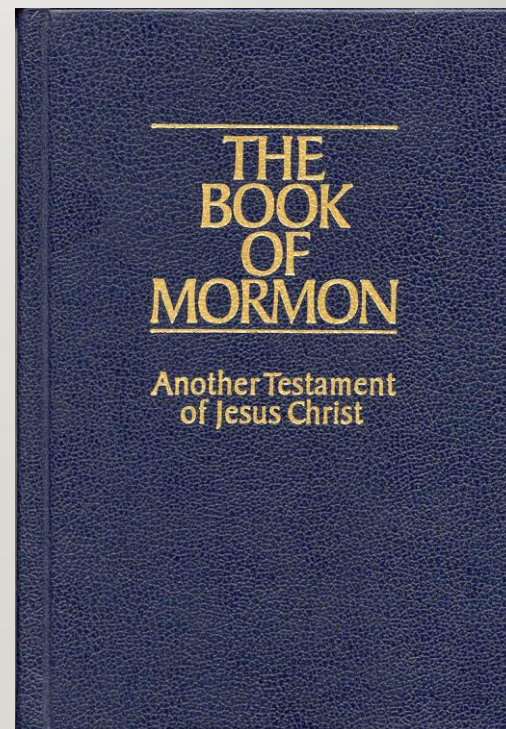
- D&C 130:22: “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so, the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.”
- “That which is without body or parts is nothing. There is no God in heaven but that God who has flesh and bones.”

THE MISSIONARIES AT YOUR DOOR REPRESENT A CHURCH THAT TEACHES THE FOLLOWING REGARDING GOD:

- God was once a man who lived on a world similar to this earth.
- God became God at a particular point in time.
- God is subservient to the God who preceded him
- God has body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's

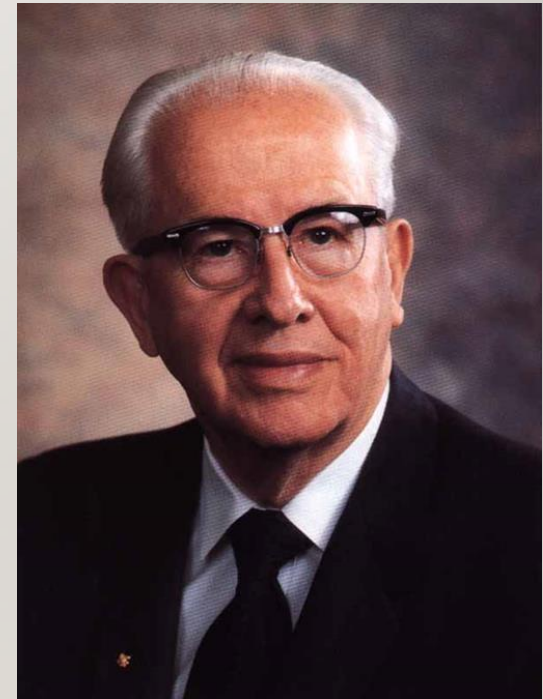
#3 CONVINCING INVESTIGATORS THAT THE BOOK OF MORMON IS A WORK FROM GOD

“...Heavenly Father brought forth an ancient volume of holy scripture comparable to the Bible... This record is the Book of Mormon.”



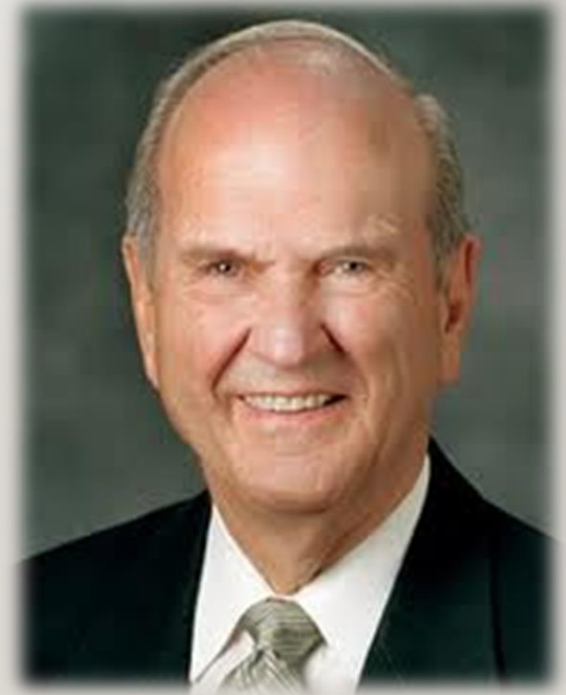
IS THE BOOK OF MORMON TRUE?

“... the only problem the objector has to resolve for himself is whether the Book of Mormon is true. For if the Book of Mormon is true, then Jesus is the Christ, Joseph Smith was His prophet, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true, and it is being led today by a prophet receiving revelation.”



MOST CORRECT BOOK ON EARTH?

“The Book of Mormon is the most important religious text to be revealed from God to man ‘since the writings of the New Testament were compiled nearly two millennia ago.’ Joseph Smith declared the Book of Mormon to be ‘the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion.’ It is the only book that the Lord Himself has testified to be true.”



Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, November 1999, p. 70.

MORONI 10:4-5 – A NO-WIN SITUATION

“And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”



BUT DOES PRAYER MAKE THE BOOK OF MORMON TRUE?

- Truth is that which comports with reality, not a personal feeling.
- Nowhere in the Bible are we ever commanded to pray about spiritual books.
- Or, “Have you ever prayed about the Qu’ran?”

BUT DOES PRAYER MAKE THE BOOK OF MORMON TRUE?

- Prayer was never meant to change (or ignore) facts.
- As Christians we must view everything through the lens of the Bible. Mormonism does just the opposite.

SHOULD FEELINGS GUIDE OUR WAY OF THINKING?

- What is the problem with:
 - “Follow your heart.”
 - “Do what you feel is best.”
 - “Always let your conscience be your guide.”



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- Proverbs 14:12: “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.”
- Jeremiah 17:9: “The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?”

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

- 1 Thessalonians 5:21: “Test everything.”
- 1 John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

THE BEST WAY TO SHARE YOUR FAITH?

- Before anything else...be sure you have a grasp on the Christian faith
- But it doesn't end there

5 THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

I. Approach the person in love

- Don't force yourself/your views on someone else
- Watch your voice inflection
- Don't begin with the pronoun "you"

5 THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

2. Understand the difference in language/terms

- “You are called to represent **Jesus Christ** in helping people become **clean from their sins**. You do this by **inviting them to come unto Jesus Christ** and become converted to His **restored gospel**. To come to **the Savior** they must have **faith in Him unto repentance**—making the necessary changes to **bring their life into agreement with His teachings.**”

WHAT DO THESE WORDS MEAN?

- **Jesus Christ:** Firstborn of God the Father and Heavenly Mother, not eternally God
- **Cleanse you from your sins:** Two parts, general resurrection all people receive based on obedience in the spirit world; individual exaltation, based on works (ordinances: baptism, work in the temple) and keeping the commandments (all of them)
- **Restored Gospel:** Mormonism
- **Faith in Him unto Repentance:** Keeping all the commandments

ASK, WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?

- Find out the definition in their words—never assume anything
- In fact, asking questions is the best way to go about discovering what a Latter-day Saint believes
- So ask, “You said a person must come unto the Savior. What do you mean by that?”

HERE'S A GREAT QUESTION

Have you ever heard a short version of the Gospel from an Evangelical (Born Again) Christian?

5 THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

3. Do some research

- Read, read, read—plenty of material out there
- Practice and find out what works and doesn't work
- Find your best method

5 THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

4. Don't pretend like you have every answer
- Stay on topic...don't let questions distract you from the main topic
 - Nobody is omniscient
 - It's OK to "not know"
 - Just say, "I don't know, but can I get back to you"

5 THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SUCCESSFUL EVANGELISM

- 5. MOST IMPORTANT: Bathe the whole process in prayer
 - It's not about you, it's about Him!

Q&A

MORMONISM RESEARCH MINISTRY

Visit our website at www.mrm.org

Consider our books as well...

