

World Religions, Cults, and Aberrant Beliefs

Lesson 6 – Mormonism

Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School

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Review

Remember, the standard evangelical definition of a Christian cult is any group that deviates from Biblical Christianity in fundamental doctrines of the faith: the source of authority, the nature of God including the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, the nature of man, and the means of salvation. In many cases, cults use the same words as true Christians, but radically redefine them.

History of Mormonism

Mormonism, officially called The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (LDS), was founded by Joseph Smith in the early 1800s. Smith was born in 1805 in Vermont. His father was a treasure hunter and money counterfeiter. Smith grew up poorly educated and superstitious. At age 11, his family moved to Palmyra, New York.

In 1820, when Smith was 15, there was much interest in religion in Palmyra and Smith was torn as to what denomination he should join. After reading James 1:5, he prayed about what church he should join and was supposedly visited by god the father and god the son. He was told by Jesus, he should join none of them for they were "all wrong" and all the Christian church's doctrines "were an abomination" (Joseph Smith – Pearl of Great Price).

This first vision was supposedly followed by several visits from an angel named Moroni. In 1827, Moroni supposedly allowed Smith to retrieve a set of golden plates which had been buried in a hill near Smith's home in Palmyra, New York. Between 1827-1830, Smith, with the help of friends, translated the golden plates into the LDS scripture, the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon was published in 1830 and became the first of many scriptures for the Mormon Church.

Smith organized the church on April 6, 1830, with six original members. Over the next ten years the church headquarters moved to Kirtland, Ohio; Independence, Missouri; and Far West, Missouri – finally landing in Nauvoo, Illinois between 1839-1844. In Nauvoo, Smith was jailed for encouraging the destruction of a local newspaper and was eventually murdered by a mob in Carthage, Illinois on June 27, 1844. After Smith's murder, several LDS leaders stepped forward to take control of the Church. The majority of the Mormons followed Brigham Young to the Salt Lake Valley.

The Mormon church is organized so that one prophet leads the church. Beneath the prophet in authority is the Council of the Twelve Apostles. A third group of men are called the First and Second Councils of the Seventy. All of these men together are called the General Authorities. Local churches are called *Wards* or *Stake Centers* and meet for worship in what the Mormons call "meetinghouses." The *Temples* are not for worship, but are used for ceremonies for the living and the dead. Less than ten percent of all LDS members are allowed to enter these structures. Temples are required for Mormon marriages and for proxy baptisms of ancestors.

Mormonism in a Nutshell

from the Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry at <http://www.carm.org/lds/nutshell.htm>

Mormonism teaches that god used to be a man on another world and that he became a god by following the laws and ordinances of his god on his home world. He brought his wife to this world, a woman he had married on the other world. She is, essentially, a goddess.

In his present god-state, he rules our world. He has a body of flesh and bones. Since god and his wife are both exalted persons, they each possess physical bodies. In their exalted states as deities, they produce spirit children that grow and mature in the spiritual realm. The first spirit born was Jesus. Afterwards Lucifer was born along with the rest of us. So, Mormonism teaches that we all pre-existed in the spirit realm having been produced from the union of god and his goddess wife. Therefore, we all existed in spirit form before coming down and entering the bodies of human babies that are being born on earth. During this 'compression' into the infant state, the memories of their pre-existence is 'veiled.'

God the father, who is called Elohim, was concerned for the future salvation of the people on earth. In the heavenly realm, the father had a plan for the salvation of the world. Jesus endorsed the father's plan. Lucifer did not. Lucifer became jealous and rebelled. In his rebellion he convinced a large portion of the spirits existing in heaven to side with him and oppose god. God being more powerful than they, cursed these rebellious spirits to become demons. They can never be born in human bodies.

The remaining spirits sided with god. Since they chose the better way, when it comes time for them to live on earth, they have the privilege of being born in races and locations that are relative to their condition and choice made in the spirit realm.¹

In the Mormon plan of salvation there needed to be a savior: Jesus. But Jesus was a spirit in heaven. For him to be born on earth, Brigham Young the second prophet of the Mormon church said that instead of letting any other man do it, god the father did it with Mary. He said that the birth of our savior was as natural as the birth of our parents. Essentially, what this means is that Brigham Young taught that god the father came down and had relations with Mary, his spirit daughter, to produce the body of Jesus. Though many Mormons will not entertain such incestuous thoughts about god and Mary, this is what Brigham Young taught and as far as we know, this has not been denied by the Mormon church.

Nevertheless, Jesus was born, got married, and had children.² He died on the cross and paid for sins -- but not on the cross only. According to Mormonism, the atonement of Christ was not only on the cross. It began in the Garden of Gethsemane *before* he went to the cross.

In Mormonism, men and women have the potential of becoming gods. President Lorenzo Snow said, "As god once was, man is. As god is, man may become." In order to reach this exalted state of godhood, a person must first become a good Mormon, pay a full ten percent tithe to the Mormon church, follow various laws and ordinances of the church, and be found worthy. At this point, they receive a temple recommend whereupon, the Mormon is allowed to enter their sacred temples in order to go through a set of secret rituals: baptism for the dead, celestial marriage, and various oaths of secrecy and commitment. Additionally, four secret handshakes are taught so the believing Mormon, upon entering the third level of Mormon heaven, can shake hands with god in a certain pattern. This celestial ritual is for the purpose of permitting entrance into the highest level of heaven.³ For those who achieve this highest of heavens, exaltation to godhood awaits them. Then, he or she, will be permitted to have his or her own planet and be the god of his own world and the Mormon system will be expanded to other planets.

¹ Page 616 of Mormon Doctrine by Bruce R. McConkie

² Jediah M. Grant, second Counselor to Brigham Young said so in Journal of Discourses, vol. 1, pp. 345-346.

Apostle Orson Hyde stated it in, vol. 2: 210, 328; vol. 4:259-260; vol. 13:309; Millennial Star, Vol. 15, p. 825; The Seer, page 172, 158, -- Note: These references are not official Mormon scripture and there is disagreement in acceptance of this teaching among Mormons.

³ What's Going on in There? An Exposing of the Secret Mormon Temple Rituals, by Bob Witte & Gordon H. Fraser. Gordon Fraser, Publisher.

Source of Authority

Mormons accept four books as scripture. Mormons believe that the canon of Scripture was not closed when the Bible was completed. They believe that the Bible is the word of God, but deny that it has been translated correctly and believe that it has been corrupted since the days of the apostles. In addition to the Bible, Mormons believe that The Book of Mormon, Doctrines and Covenants, and The Pearl of Great Price all contain god's revelation. Whenever a Mormon belief contradicts the Bible, Mormons say that particular part of the Bible is translated incorrectly, and that the correct doctrine is in one of the Mormon scriptures. Thereby, the Bible is rejected as the infallible Word of God.

8. We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.

9. 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.

8th and 9th Article of Faith of the Mormon Church

The *Book of Mormon* tells the story of a supposed migration of Israelites in 600 BC to the American continent, but does not contain explicit Mormon doctrine. These Israelites subsequently lapsed into apostasy although their story was preserved on golden plates written in Reformed Egyptian. Joseph Smith supposedly translated the plates by the "gift and power of God" (*Doctrine and Covenants* 135:3). However, Reformed Egyptian does not exist as a language. The golden plates were returned to the angel Moroni after they were transcribed and Moroni returned them to heaven. There were no reliable witnesses who saw the tablets.

There have been over 2000 corrections made to the Book of Mormon since the original publication. This is strange since Smith claimed that the translation was divinely given. In addition, Smith provided several prophecies that did not come true showing himself to be a false prophet according to Deut 18:21-22 and Jer 28:9.

²¹You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' ²²**When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.** Deut 18:21-22

⁹The prophet who prophesies of peace, **when the word of the prophet comes to pass, then that prophet will be known as one whom the LORD has truly sent.**" Jer 28:9

Doctrines and Covenants contains the revelations of the Mormon prophets – 138 in number along with two "declarations." Here, most of Mormon doctrine can be found including the priesthood, baptism for the dead, godhood, and polygamy.

The Pearl of Great Price contains Smith's religious history, Smith's Articles of Faith, the Book of Abraham, and the Book of Moses.

Biblical Response

The Bible is the only source of authority. The Bible, composed of the 39 OT books and the 27 NT books, constitutes God's only written revelation to mankind. It is the inspired, verbal (extending to the very words), plenary (including all of the words), infallible (trustworthy), inerrant in the original manuscripts Word of God. The Bible is the sole authority for faith and practice (Matt 5:18; 22:31-32; Gal 3:16; 2 Tim 3:15-17; Heb 4:12; 2 Pet 1:20-21). In addition, there has been no other written revelation given by God.

The Bible is a historically reliable document. There are three tests applied to determine historical reliability of the Bible.

- 1) Bibliographic Test – examines if the documents we have today are the same as those penned by the authors. This test considers the quantity of existing manuscripts and the time between the earliest copies and the originals.
- 2) Internal (or eyewitness) Test – considers the credibility of the authors and the truthfulness of what was written.
- 3) External Test – considers historical events, geography, archaeology, and cultural consistencies.

The Bible was written over 1500 years by 40 different authors in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek) and yet there are no contradictions.

One of the most significant evidences for the divine origin of the Bible is prophecy. There are ~2500 prophecies in the Bible with ~2000 already having been fulfilled. (For examples see various works including those of Josh McDowell.) It is statistically impossible for the Bible's detailed prophecies to have been fulfilled through chance, guessing, or intent.

Concerning written revelation from God after the Bible: the Scriptures themselves explicitly warn against adding to or taking away from what God has given.

²"You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you. Deut 4:2

³²"Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it. Deut 12:32

⁵Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. ⁶Do not add to His words Or He will reprove you, and you will be proved a liar. Prov 30:5-6

¹⁸I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; ¹⁹and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book. Rev 22:18-19

Nature of God

Essentially, Mormonism is a man-exalting, God-humanizing religion. Mormonism teaches that god the father is a resurrected, "exalted" human being named Elohim who at one time was not a god. Rather, he was once a mortal man on another planet who, through obedience to the precepts of his god, eventually attained exaltation, or godhood, himself. The Mormon god, is located in time and space, has a body of flesh and bone and thus is neither spirit nor omnipresent. Mormonism teaches that god increases in knowledge and, consequently, god does not have absolute and total knowledge. Mormonism also teaches that the god over this world is one in an infinite lineage of gods. In the Mormon universe, god is not responsible for creating or sustaining matter, energy, natural laws, human personhood, moral principles, nor the process of salvation (or exaltation). In fact, instead of the universe being subject to him (which is the biblical view), the Mormon god is subject to the universe.

"This is the way our Heavenly Father became God. Joseph Smith taught: 'It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God. . . . He was once a man like us; . . . God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth... (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 345-46).'" Gospel Principles – Chapter 47 Exaltation

"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." D&C 130:22

“Because we are made in his image (see Moses 6:9), we know that God has a body that looks like ours. His eternal spirit is housed in a tangible body of flesh and bones (see D&C 130:22).” Gospel Principles – Chapter 1 Our Father in Heaven.

All that the Bible says about the true God, the Mormon god is not.

Biblical Response

There is one God (Deut. 6:4). He is Creator and Lord of everything that exists (Gen 1-3). He is infinite (1 Kings 8:27; Acts 17:28), transcendent (yet personal), eternal (Gen 21:33; Psa 90:2), unchangeable (James 1:17), omnipresent (Psa 139:7-12), sovereign (Eph 1), omniscient (Matt 11:21), and omnipotent (Rev 19:6). He eternally exists as Triune God: three persons – Father (John 6:27, Eph 4:6), Son (Col 1:16-19; Heb 1:8), Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3-4) – each equal, having the same attributes, and are equally worthy of adoration, worship, and faith.

1. God is self-existent and eternal (Ex 3:14; Psa 90:2; Rom 11:36; 1 Cor 8:6; Col 1:16-17)

²Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God. Psa 90:2

³⁶For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things To Him be the glory forever. Amen. Rom 11:36

2. God is immutable or changeless (Psa 102:24-27; Mal 3:6; Heb 13:8; James 1:17)

⁶For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. Mal 3:6

¹⁷Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. James 1:17

3. God is omniscient (Job 28:20-28, Psa 139:2-4, 17-18; 147:4-5; Jer 17:10; Rom 11:33; 1 John 1:5)

²You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. ³You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. ⁴Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. Psalm 139:2-4

⁴He counts the number of the stars; He gives names to all of them. ⁵Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite. Psalm 147:4-5

4. God is omnipotent (Gen 1:1, Jer 24:5, 32:27, Psa 139:13-16, Isa 46:8-13; Job 2:10; Matt 19:26)

²⁷"Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?" Jer 32:27

⁸Remember this, and be assured; Recall it to mind, you transgressors. ⁹Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me,

¹⁰Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, 'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';

¹¹Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man of My purpose from a far country Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it. Isa 46:8-13

The Person and Work of Jesus

Mormons believe that Jesus is a god. They also believe that Lucifer, the demons, and all mankind are all spirit brothers and sisters, born in the spirit world as spirit babies to Elohim and his goddess wives. Mormon leaders have consistently taught that god the father had sexual relations on earth with Mary (his own spirit daughter), to produce the physical body of Jesus. Early Mormon apostles also asserted that Jesus was a polygamist, and that His wives included Mary and Martha (the sisters of Lazarus) and Mary Magdalene.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, as well as on the cross, Jesus atoned for Adam's sin and guaranteed all humankind resurrection and immortality. Jesus visited the Israelites or Indians of North America after his resurrection and established the true church among them.

“Every person who was ever born on earth was our spirit brother or sister in heaven. The first spirit born to our heavenly parents was Jesus Christ (see D&C 93:21), so he is literally our elder brother (see Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 26).” Gospel Principles – Chapter 3 Jesus Christ, Our Chosen Leader And Savior

We needed a Savior to pay for our sins and teach us how to return to our Heavenly Father. Our Father said, “Whom shall I send?” (Abraham 3:27). Two of our brothers offered to help. Our oldest brother, Jesus Christ, who was then called Jehovah, said, “Here am I, send me” (Abraham 3:27)... Satan, who was called Lucifer, also came, saying, “Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor” (Moses 4:1). Gospel Principles – Chapter 2 Our Heavenly Family

Biblical Response

Jesus the Christ is the eternal, uncreated second person of the Godhead. He is eternally God. He was eternally one with the Father and incarnated supernaturally (John 1:1-12; Matt 1:18-25). He is the God-man – 100% God and 100% man. All things were created by Him and all the universe is held together by Him (Col 1:16-17).

Christ's deity is shown by

1. the names attributed to Him of God (Heb 1:8), Son of God (Matt 16:16; 26:61-64a), Lord (Matt 22:43-45), and King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev 19:16);
2. His attributes of omnipotence (Matt 28:18), omniscience (John 1:48), omnipresence (Matt 18:20), life (John 1:4), truth (John 14:6), and immutability (Heb 13:8);
3. His works of creating (John 1:3), sustaining (Col 1:17), forgiving sin (Luke 7:48), raising the dead (John 5:25), judging (John 5:27) and sending the Holy Spirit (John 15:26).
4. being worshiped by angels (Heb 1:6), men (Matt 14:33), and one day all (Phil 2:10)
5. His equality in the Trinity– with the Father (John 14:23; 10:30) and with the Father and the Spirit (Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14).

Jesus willingly died on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for sin (John 10:15; 3:16; Rom 3:24-25; 5:8; 1 Pet 2:24). The resurrection of Jesus confirmed His deity and proved that God had accepted His atoning sacrifice (John 5:26-29; 14:19; Rom 1:4; 4:25; 6:5-10). Jesus is the only mediator between God and man (1 Tim 2:5) – the only way to the Father (means of salvation) (John 14:6).

The Nature of Man

Mormonism claims that humans preexisted as spirit children in heaven, who are later given bodies to live on earth so that they may progress to godhead. Mormonism teaches that preexistent humans made choices as spirit children that determined whether or not they would come to earth. Those who were obedient, received physical bodies. Mormonism teaches that humans can become gods through obedience to Mormon teaching and obeying the Church and the Prophet.

“All men and women are . . . literally the sons and daughters of Deity. . . . Man, as a spirit, was begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father, prior to coming upon the earth in a temporal [physical] body” (Joseph F. Smith, “The Origin of Man,” Improvement Era, Nov. 1909, pp. 78, 80)

“We began to make choices as spirit children in our Heavenly Father's presence.” Gospel Principles – Chapter 4 Freedom to Choose

“When we lived as spirit children with our heavenly parents, our Heavenly Father told us about his plan for us to become more like him.” Gospel Principles – Chapter 5 The Creation

Since we could not progress further in heaven, our Heavenly Father called a Grand Council to present his plan for our progression (see Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 348, 349, 365). We learned that if we followed his plan, we would become like him. We would have a resurrected body; we would have all power in heaven and on earth; we would become heavenly parents and have spirit children just as he does (see D&C 132:19-20). Gospel Principles – Chapter 3 Jesus Christ, Our Chosen Leader And Savior.

“Thus, spirit children of our Heavenly Father began leaving his presence to come to the earth as they had been promised.” Gospel Principles – Chapter 7 The Holy Ghost

“Other important truths that the Lord restored include the following: 2. We existed in premortal life as spirit children of God.” Gospel Principles – Chapter 17 The Church of Jesus Christ Today

Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be” D&C 93:29

Life, intelligence, mind, the 'light of truth', or whatever name one gives to the center of the personality of man, is an uncreated, eternally existent, indestructible entity...In the first stage, man was an eternally existent being termed an intelligence...The next realm where man dwelt was the spirit world....eternally-existing intelligences were clothed with spirit bodies...numerous sons and daughters were begotten and born of heavenly parents into that eternal family in the spirit world" The Gospel Through the ages, pp.126-127

He revealed that one of the purposes of marriage is to provide mortal bodies for his spirit children. Gospel Principles – Chapter 36 The Family Can be Eternal

It [motherhood] is a sacred calling, a partnership with God in bringing his spirit children into the world. Gospel Principles – Chapter 37 Family Responsibilities

“Heavenly Father has given us the law of eternal marriage so we can become like him. We must live this law to be able to have spirit children.” Gospel Principles – Chapter 38 Eternal Marriage

Biblical Response

God created man in His image and likeness – sinless, with intelligence, self-consciousness, and self-determination (Gen 2:7; 15-25; 1 Cor 11:7; James 3:9). Man was created to glorify God (i.e. to display His character and goodness in our lives and therefore bring Him honor).

⁷Everyone who is called by My name, And **whom I have created for My glory**, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made." Isa 43:7

Man’s immaterial part is generated at conception (Psa 51:5; Rom 5:12; Heb 7:10) with the sin nature being transmitted through the father.

The Means of Salvation

Mormon theology teaches that the atonement of Christ was essential to our salvation and eternal life with god, but that it is not sufficient. Christ's shed blood on the cross provides for universal resurrection of all people, but does not pay for personal sins. According to Mormonism, only Christ's blood "shed" in the Garden of Gethsemane atones for personal sin. Only the most faithful Mormons have godhood or enter the celestial kingdom. In order to obtain this ultimate step, Mormons must exercise faith in the god of Mormonism, its Christ, and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; exercise repentance; and be baptized in the LDS Church. Additionally, Mormons must keep the "Word of Wisdom" by abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine; tithe to the church; attend weekly sacrament meetings; support the Mormon prophet; do temple works; and be active in their support of the church. Mormonism also teaches that one must be baptized in water to be saved, and that salvation will also be available in the next world for those "missing-out" in this one. Therefore, Mormons avidly pursue genealogy and practice baptism for the dead.

"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." Miracle of Forgiveness, Spencer W. Kimball, p. 206

A plan of salvation was needed for the people of earth so Jesus offered a plan to the Father and Satan offered a plan to the father but Jesus' plan was accepted. In effect the Devil wanted to be the Savior of all Mankind and to "deny men their agency and to dethrone god." Mormon Doctrine, page 193; Journal of Discourses, vol. 6, page 8

Jesus' sacrifice was not able to cleanse us from all our sins, (murder and repeated adultery are exceptions), Journal of Discourses, Vol. 3, p. 247, 1856

Good works are necessary for salvation, Articles of Faith, p. 92

There is no salvation without accepting Joseph Smith as a prophet of God, Doctrines of Salvation, Vol. 1, p. 188

"As these sins are the result of individual acts it is just that forgiveness for them should be conditioned on individual compliance with prescribed requirements -- 'obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.'" Articles of Faith p. 79

"This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts" LDS Bible Dictionary, p. 697

"We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do," 2 Nephi 25:23

Biblical Response

Salvation is the work of God whereby he saves individuals from the penalty, power, and one day the very presence of sin. It is completely by God and not on the basis of human merit or works (John 1:12; Eph 1:7; 2:8-10; 1 Pet 1:18-19). Forgiveness of sins (Col 2:13-14) is a free gift (Eph 2:8-9) that is given to those that repent from their sins (Heb 6:1) and exercise faith (John 3:16) in Jesus as Lord and Savior. No pre-forgiveness work is required (i.e. baptism, good deeds, obeying commandments, going to church, giving money, praying, doing penance, surrendering to an organization, etc.).

Witnessing Strategies for Mormons:

Let's remember some of our general strategies:

1. Sanctify your heart. (1 Pet 3:15)
2. Pray – this is a spiritual battle for the truth. (2 Cor 10:3-5)
3. Be ready with a good understanding of the Scriptures.
4. Do not argue. Do not attack the person. (2 Tim 2:24-26)
5. Make sure you define words.
6. Do not get off on tangents. The important points are the source of authority, the nature of God, the person and work of Jesus, the nature of man, and the means of salvation.
7. Avoid Christian jargon – it has no meaning for the unchurched.
8. Share your testimony and your assurance of eternal life through Christ.

Some Specifics:

1. Approach your Mormon friend with sensitivity. Even if he understands and accepts that Mormonism is a lie, there is intense pressure to remain a Mormon.
2. Mormons use Christian vocabulary (Jesus, gospel, atonement, god), but radically redefine their meanings. Define clearly what you mean.
3. Brigham Young said, "Take up the Bible, compare the religion of the Latter-day Saints with it and see if it will stand the test." Limit your conversations to what the Bible says and compare LDS doctrine to it.
4. Emphasize your security of salvation. For the Mormon there is no absolute security in attaining their ultimate salvation (or godhood) since it is based on works.
5. Warn the Mormon about trusting in feelings (i.e., the burning in the bosom) for a validation of Mormonism's truth claim. Without historical, objective verification, feelings are useless.