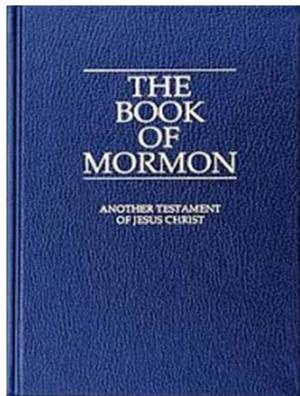


# Understanding and Sharing with Our LDS Neighbors



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# Timeline of Three Faith Traditions

" Abraham	2000 BC
" <b>Hinduism</b>	<b>1500 (extend to 3000 BC)</b>
" Exodus	1440 (1250) BC
" David	1000 BC
" Assyria Defeats Israel	722 BC
" Babylon Defeats Judah	586 BC
" Buddhism	563 BC
" Jesus	4 BC-30
" <b>Islam</b>	<b>622</b>
" <b>Latter Day Saints</b>	<b>1830</b>



## Gospel Distinctives

- “ God is One, Personal, Holy, and Judge
- “ Sin Separates, is Rebellion Against God
- “ God’s Love, Forgiveness, and Salvation
- “ Incarnation/Divinity (Immanuel = God with us.)
- “ Abundant and Eternal Life
- “ Repentance and Faith, no works-based salvation
- “ Exclusiveness of Jesus

*Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me (Isa 43:10).*

*I am the LORD [JEHOVAH], and there is no other, besides me there is no God [Elohim] (Isa 45:5).*

But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed (Gal 1:8).

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God (John 1:1).*

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23).*

*Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness (Rom 4:4-5).*

*For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them” (Gal 3:10).*

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast (Eph 2:8-9).*

*“He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5).*

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).*

*None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God (Rom 3:10-11).*

*But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Rom 5:8)*

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6).*

*And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among people by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12).*

# General Guide for Sharing the Gospel

- ” Pray
- ” Be respectful
- ” Know basic LDS beliefs
- ” Start with common ground
- ” Acknowledge the differences
- ” Share a clear gospel message
- ” Tell your story of coming to faith
- ” Stress the importance of family and fellowship
- ” Anticipate objections

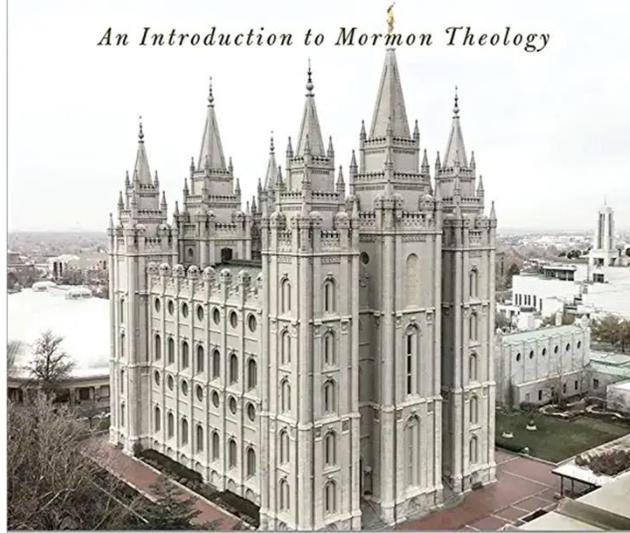
# General Guide for Sharing the Gospel

- “ Pray (Col 4:3; 1 Thes 5:17)
- “ Be respectful (1 Pet 3:15-16)
- “ Know basic LDS beliefs

TRAVIS S. KERNS

THE  
SAINTS  
OF ZION

*An Introduction to Mormon Theology*



Latter Day Saints – Size

## Global Numbers on LDS

- “ 15.5 million members worldwide
- “ Membership numbers go up every year, but wards do not reflect an equivalent increase.
- “ Ward = 500 active Mormons
- “ More Mormons outside U. S., fastest growth in Central and South America

# Latter Day Saints – Brief History

# History

- “ Founder: Joseph Smith, Jr. (1805-1844).
- “ Date: April 6, 1830, Palmyra, New York.
- “ First vision: Told not to join any church or denomination because they are all corrupt.
- “ Three years later: Moroni told him the location of golden plates, a record of the ancient inhabitants of America.

# History

- “ 1827-1829: Smith translated them into Book of Mormon.
- “ Smith and followers experienced much persecution.
- “ 1839 settled in Nauvoo, Illinois.
- “ *The Nauvoo Expositor* accused Smith of polytheism and polygamy.

## History

- “Smith ordered the destruction of the paper and press.
- “Following the destruction, Smith and his brother were arrested and jailed.
- “June 27, 1844: Mob rushed the jail and murdered Smith and his brother.

# History

- “Brigham Young, one of Smith’s Twelve Apostles, led thousands of Mormons to Salt Lake City, Utah.
- “The group prospered and experienced great growth.

# General Beliefs of LDS

# General Beliefs

”Scripture

”God

”Jesus

”Salvation

## Scripture

“Bible (KJV)

“Book of Mormon

“Doctrine and Covenants

“Pearl of Great Price

“Continuing Revelation (unwritten), from top 15  
leaders

God

“Proper name: Elohim

“He was not always a god

“Has skin and bones

“Grew up on Kolob

## God

- “Had parents, was a good Mormon, married, had children.
- “After death he inherited his own “sphere of existence” (i.e., planet earth).
- “He planned everything from there.
- “He is not the ultimate god of the cosmos.

## God

“There was a god over Elohim’s planet, with a god over that god’s planet, etc.

“Brigham Young stated that Elohim was about 6’2” and about 235 lbs.

# Jesus

- “Christ is the firstborn spirit child of Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother.
- “Lucifer was the second born spirit child.
- “Inhabitants of earth are the spirit children of Heavenly Father and Mother (the less valiant ones were marked with dark skin).

## Jesus

“Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother named their firstborn “Jehovah.”

“At first Jehovah was not Jesus the Christ, but just the spirit child.

“There is a time in eternity past when Jesus did not exist.

# Jesus

“Elohim told the plan of salvation and Jehovah agreed to be the savior needed to provide salvation.

“Lucifer said that he wanted to be the savior.

“Elohim wanted Jehovah. This led to a battle with Lucifer.

## Jesus

- “Elohim defeated Lucifer, along with 1/3 of the heavenly spirit children were changed into Satan and demons.
- “Jehovah becomes Jesus the Messiah (after battle).
- “From Jesus’s birth until Ascension, Mormons and Christians hold to very similar beliefs about Jesus.

## Jesus

“Gordon Hinkley at the General Conference was asked if Mormons worship the same Jesus as evangelicals and he said absolutely not.

“*Gospel Principles* (adult Sunday school manual)

“*Preach My Gospel* (LDS missionary manual)

“*I Love Mormons* (David Rowe)

## Salvation

- “People of earth have the same opportunity to become a god = exaltation
- “Faith in LDS Jesus
- “Believe Joseph Smith was a prophet
- “Baptism into LDS Church

## Salvation

- “Obey all that God has commanded
- “Participate in secret temple ceremonies
- “After Death: Paradise or Spirit Prison
- “Missionaries from Paradise sent to Spirit Prison

## Salvation

- “Everyone will be released from Spirit Prison for the resurrection
- “Everyone will go to one of three kingdoms:

## Salvation

- “Celestial Kingdom (become like unto God, traditionally: become divine and receive a planet)
- “Terrestrial Kingdom (honorable people, deceived, those not valiant enough for Celestial)
- “Telestial Kingdom (for “liars, sorcerers, adulterers, whoremongers,” but of indescribable glory)

## Salvation

“Different Mormons have different answers to what is “grace” or “works.”

“They will generally say they are saved by grace and works.

“Jesus’ atonement allows everyone to be resurrected in the afterlife.

## Salvation

“Jesus’ atonement did not save or secure salvation but secured the opportunity for salvation, if one obeys LDS teachings.

“Like opening a door to a house. Where you go in the house is up to you.

Sharing the Gospel

# General Guide for Sharing the Gospel

- “ Pray
- “ Be respectful
- “ Know basic LDS beliefs
- “ Listen well, everyone is different
- “ Start with common ground (**Acts 17:22-23**)

## Common Ground as a Place to Start

“Bible (KJV)

“Use of similar terms

“Agreement with stories in the New Testament

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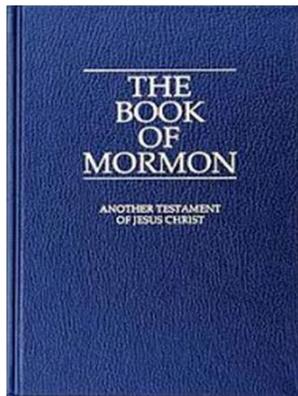
## Anticipate Objections

“Joseph Smith as a prophet

“LDS Church is the only true Church

“Bible is God’s Word – if interpreted according to LDS views

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