

DOCTRINE OF

MORMONISM

GOD

- ▶ We must always be wary of what someone means when they say "God" and the mormons are definitely no exception.
- ▶ Mormons **are** polytheistic. Do not be persuaded otherwise by missionaries or statements of scriptural adherence to the Bible.
- ▶ Let's view some of the quotes from the major prophets of Mormonism.

GOD

- ▶ “In the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people in it” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* 349)
- ▶ “God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* 345)
- ▶ “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 the Spirit.” (*Doctrine and Covenants, 130:22*)
- All points on this slide are from (KoC pg. 235-236)

GOD

- ▶ “God exist, and we had better strive to be prepared to be one with them.” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 7:238)
- ▶ As man is, God once was: as God is, man may become.” (Prophet Lorenzo Snow, quoted in Milton R. Hunter, *The Gospel Through the Ages*, 105-106)
- ▶ “Each of these Gods, including Jesus Christ and His Father, being in possession of not merely an organized spirit, but a glorious immortal body of flesh and bones.” (Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology*, ed. 1978, 23)
- ▶ “And then the Lord said: Let us go down. and they went down at the beginning, and they, that is the Gods, organized and formed the heavens and the earth.” (Abraham 4:1)

- All points on this slide are from (KoC pg. 236)

GOD

- ▶ “Remember that God, our heavenly Father, was perhaps once a child and mortal like we ourselves, and rose step by step in the scale of progress, in the school of advancement; has moved forward and overcome, until He has arrived at the point where He now is.” (Apostle Orson Hyde, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:123)
 - ▶ “Mormon prophets have continuously taught the sublime truth that God the Eternal Father was once a mortal man who passed through a school of earth life similar to that through which we are now passing. He became God— an exalted being— through obedience to the same eternal Gospel truths that we are given opportunity today to obey.” (Hunter, op. cit., 104)
- All points on this slide are from (KoC pg. 236)

GOD

- ▶ “Christ was the God, the Father of all things....Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son.” (Mosiah 7:27 and Ether 3:14 *Book of Mormon*).
- ▶ “When our father Adam came into the garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize the world. He is MICHAEL, the Archangel, the ANCIENT OF DAYS! about whom holy men have written and spoken—HE is our FATHER and our GOD, and the only God with whom we have to do.” (Brigham Young, in the *Journal of Discourses*, 1:50)
- All points on this slide are from (KoC pg. 236)
- The last quote by Brigham is not accepted by Mormons I have spoken with...They just deny that doctrine. Read last paragraph of KoC pg. 236

GOD

- ▶ I want you all to know God, to be familiar with him.... What sort of being was God in the beginning? First, God himself, who sits enthroned in yonder heavens, is a man like unto one of yourselves... if you were to see him today, you would see him in all the person, image and very form as a man....I am going to tell 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 simple and first principles of the gospel, to know for a certainty the character of God, that we may converse with him as one man with another and that God himself; the Father of us all dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ himself did... what did Jesus say? (mark it elder Rigdon) Jesus said, as the Father hath power in himself, even so hath the Son power; to do what? Why what the Father did, that answer is obvious.... to learn how to be Gods yourselves; to be kings and priest of God, the same as all Gods have done before you—namely, by going from 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, *Journal of Discourses*, 6:3-4) (DoC pg 237)

GOD

- ▶ “We affirm that to deny the materiality of God's person is to deny God; for a thing without parts has no whole, and an immaterial body cannot exist. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints proclaims against the incomprehensible God, devoid of "body, parts, and passions," as a thing impossible of existence, and asserts its belief in and allegiance to the true and living God of scripture and revelation.”-*The Articles of Faith, by James E. Talmage*

GOD

- ▶ Apostle Orson Pratt, writing in a Mormon periodical, *The Seer*, declared, "In the Heaven where our spirits were born, there are many Gods, each one of whom has his own wife or wives, which were given to him previous to his redemption, while yet in his mortal state." (37)- DoC pg. 240

HOLY SPIRIT

- ▶ The term Holy Ghost and its common synonyms, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, or simply Spirit, Comforter, and the Spirit of Truth occur in the Scriptures with plainly different meanings, referring in some cases to the person of God the Holy Ghost, and in other instances to the power and authority of this great personage, or the agency through which He ministers....the Holy Ghost undoubtedly possesses personal powers and affections; these attributes exist in Him in perfection. Thus, He teaches and guides, testifies of the Father and the Son, reprove for sin, speaks, commands, and commissions....These are not figurative expressions but plain statements of the attributes and characteristics of the Holy Ghost. (Talmage, *The Article of Faith*, 115)

HOWEVER...

- ▶ It has been said, therefore, that God is everywhere present; but this does not mean that the actual person of any one member of the Godhead can be *physically* present in more than one place at a time....Admitting the personality of God, we are compelled to accept the fact of His materiality; indeed, an "immaterial" being, under which meaningless name some have sought to designate the condition of God, cannot exist, for the very expression is a contradiction in terms. If God possesses a form, that form is of necessity of denote proportions and therefore of limited extension in space. It is impossible for Him to occupy at one time more than one space of such limits....(Ibid., 42-43) DoC pg. 242

HOLY SPIRIT

- ▶ God grants the gift of the Holy Ghost unto the obedient; and the bestowal of this gift follows faith, repentance, and baptism by water....The apostles of old promised the ministration of the Holy Ghost unto those only who had received baptism by water for the remission of sins. (*The Articles of Faith*, 163) (Talmage) DoC pg. 243

CREATION

- ▶ “Your life did not begin at birth, nor will it end at death. You are made up of a spirit body (sometimes called the soul) and a physical body. Your Heavenly Father created your spirit, and you lived with Him as a spirit before you were born on earth. You knew and loved Him, and He knew and loved you. This period is called pre-earth life.”
- ▶ “Throughout your pre-earth life, you were taught the principles and commandments that would lead to happiness. You grew in intelligence and learned to love the truth. You were taught about the plan of salvation. During this pre-earth life, Jesus Christ was chosen as the Savior; you learned that through Him you would be able to overcome the effects of your wrong choices.”

- All points on this slide are from (*The Plan of Salvation* pg. 2)

CREATION

- ▶ "13. And Aaron did expound unto him the scriptures from the creation of Adam, laying the fall of man before him, and their carnal state and also the plan of redemption, which was prepared from the foundation of the world, through Christ, for all whosoever would believe on his name." -Alma 22:13
- ▶ In your pre-earth life, you learned that only by choosing to follow God's plan could you receive lasting peace and satisfaction in this life and for eternity. because He loves you, your Heavenly Father gave you agency (free will), or the power to make choices. He let you choose whether you would follow His plan and the Lord Jesus Christ." (*The Plan of Salvation* pg. 5)

CREATION

- ▶ “Satan, one of God’s spirit children, rebelled against our Heavenly Father and did not accept His plan. He wanted to force us all to do his will. Sadly, many of our Heavenly Father’s children chose to follow Satan. Satan and his followers were sent away from God’s presence and were not allowed to be born on earth. They continue to exist as spirits. They are miserable, and they want you to be miserable. They tempt you and all God’s children to do things that bring unhappiness and that are not pleasing to God.”
- ▶ “Although your memory of it is withheld, before you came to this earth you lived in the presence of God, your Eternal Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ. you shouted for joy when given the privilege of coming to this earth to receive a body and to follow God’s plan for your happiness.”

● (All points on this slide are from *The Plan of Salvation* pg. 5)

CREATION

- ▶ “In the pre-earth life, you chose to have faith in Jesus Christ and to follow God’s plan. Because of your choices, you were born on earth. only by making these same choices can you find peace in this life and be able to return to live with your Heavenly Father after this life is over.” (*The Plan of Salvation* pg. 6)
- ▶ So it seems, according to LDS, we placed our faith in Jesus *before* we came to earth.

THE FALL

- ▶ “22. And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. (2 Nephi 2:22-25)
- ▶ It seems, according to this passage, that the *Book of Mormon* teaches that without knowing evil, one cannot know good, and without knowing misery, one cannot know joy.

VIRGIN BIRTH

- ▶ When the virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. he was *not* begotten by the Holy Ghost. And who was the Father? He is the first of the human family; and when he took a tabernacle [body], it was begotten by his Father in heaven, after the same manner as the tabernacles of Cain, Abel, and the rest of the sons and daughters of Adam and Eve; from the fruits of the earth, the first earthly tabernacles were originated by the Father and so in succession....Jesus, our elder brother, was begotten in the flesh by the same character that was in the garden of Eden, and who is our Father in Heaven. (*Journal of Discourses*, 1:50-51) (Brigham Young) DoC pg. 245

VIRGIN BIRTH

- ▶ “When the time came that His firstborn, the Savior, should come into the world and take a tabernacle, the Father came Himself and favored that spirit with a tabernacle instead of letting any other man do it. The Savior was begotten by the Father of His spirit, by the same Being who is the Father of our spirits, and that is all the organic difference between Jesus Christ and you and me. And a difference there is between our Father and us consists in that He has gained His exaltation, and has obtained eternal lives. The principle of eternal lives is an eternal existence, eternal duration, eternal exaltation. Endless are His kingdoms, endless His thrones and His dominions, and endless are His posterity; they never will cease to multiply from this time henceforth and forever.” (Brigham Young *Journal of Discourses*, 4:218)

VIRGIN BIRTH

- ▶ “While brother Joseph was referring to the providences of God, I was led to reflect that there is no act, no principle, no power belonging to the Deity that is not purely philosophical. The birth of the Savior was as natural as are the births of our children; it was the result of natural action. He partook of flesh and blood—was begotten of his Father, as we were of our fathers.” (Brigham Young *Journal of Discourses*, 8:115)
- ▶ Brigham Young seems to think that god (Adam, for Young) had physical relations with Mary and produced Jesus.

THE GREAT APOSTASY

- ▶ “Following the death of Jesus Christ, wicked people persecuted and killed many Church members. Other Church members drifted from the principles taught by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. The Apostles were killed, and priesthood authority—including the keys to direct and receive revelation for the Church—was taken from the earth.”
- ▶ “Because the Church was no longer led by priesthood authority, error crept into Church teachings. Good people and much truth remained, but the gospel as established by Jesus Christ was lost. This period is called the Great Apostasy.”

- (All points on this slide are from *The Restoration* pg. 8)

THE GREAT APOSTASY

- ▶ “This apostasy resulted in the formation of many churches with conflicting teachings. During this time, many men and women sought the truth, but they were unable to find it. Many good people believed in God and Jesus Christ and tried to understand and teach truth, but they did not have the full gospel or priesthood authority. As a result, each generation inherited a state of apostasy as people were influenced by what previous generations passed on, including changes to Christ’s gospel.”
- ▶ “Some inspired people, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, recognized that practices and doctrines had been changed or lost. They tried to reform the churches to which they belonged. Without priesthood authority, however, Christ’s gospel could not be returned to its original form. A **restoration** was needed.”
- (All points on this slide are from *The Restoration* pg. 8[Highlight original])

THE GREAT APOSTASY

- ▶ **“Restoration-** Making something as it was; reestablishing it; bringing it back anew. After truth and authority had been lost from the earth, the gospel was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Restoration differs from reformation in that to *reform* means to modify an existing organization or practice in an effort to return it to its original state, while to *restore* means to reestablish or renew the original organization or practice in its entirety.” (*The Restoration* pg. 19 [Highlight original])
- ▶ “God knew there would be an apostasy. Through an Old Testament prophet, He said: ‘Behold, the days come... that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: “And [people] shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.’ Amos 8:11-12” (*The Restoration* pg. 9)

THE RESTORATION

- ▶ “Just as Jesus Christ led His Apostles through the revelation after His Resurrection, He continues to direct the Church today through living prophets and apostles. The President of The Church of Latter-day Saints is the chosen prophet of God today. He, his counselors, and the Twelve Apostles hold the priesthood authority held by all the prophets and apostles of previous times. These men are prophets, seers, and revelators.” *(The Restoration pg. 12)*

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ **Salvation**- Deliverance from sin and death. Salvation is made possible by the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, everyone will be able to overcome the effects of death. We can also be saved from the effects of our sins through faith in Jesus Christ. This faith is manifested in a life of repentance and obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel and service to Christ. (*The Gospel of Jesus Christ* pg. 19 [Highlight original])
- ▶ What are these laws and ordinances of the Gospel?

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “You can live the gospel of Jesus Christ by:
 1. Developing faith in Jesus Christ.
 2. Repenting.
 3. Being baptized *and* receiving the Holy Ghost.
 4. Enduring to the end.” (The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 3 [Highlight original])

- ▶ Notice that you *live* the Gospel. Did you catch that? The Gospel is not “good news”, but something that you must *live* or do.

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “According to His plan, our Heavenly Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to show us how to live meaningful and happy lives and experience eternal joy after this life. Through the **grace** and mercy of Jesus Christ you can become clean from sin and enjoy peace of conscience. You can become worthy to live in our Heavenly Father’s presence after this life.” *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 3 [Highlight original])*
- ▶ **Grace**- Divine help and strength given through the mercy and love of Jesus Christ. Through His grace, made possible by His Atonement, all mankind will be resurrected. Through His grace, those who continually repent and live according to His gospel will feel an enduring closeness to their Heavenly Father in this life and live in his presence after this life. *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 19 [Highlight original])*

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “To receive His help and strength, you need to exercise faith in him, repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, and choose to follow His teachings for the rest of your life.” - (*The Plan of Salvation* pg. 10)
- ▶ “For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do. And, notwithstanding we believe in Christ, we keep the law of Moses, and look forward with steadfastness unto Christ, until the law shall be fulfilled. For, for this end was the law given; wherefore the law hath become dead unto us, and we are made alive in Christ because of our faith; yet we keep the law because of the commandments.” 2 Nephi 25:23 *The Book of Mormon*

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “To receive this peace and strength, you must learn and follow the principles and ordinances of the gospel. A principle is a truth that can be applied in life; an **ordinance** is a sacred, formal act performed by the authority of the priesthood and is often a means of entering into a **covenant** with our Heavenly Father.” *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 3 [Highlight original])*
- ▶ **Ordinance**- A sacred, formal act performed by the authority of the priesthood. Examples include baptism, receiving the Holy Ghost, and the sacrament. Ordinances are often a means of entering into covenants with God. *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 19 [Highlight original])*
- ▶ **Covenant**- An agreement between God and His children. God gives the conditions for the covenant, and we agree to obey Him. God promises certain blessings for our obedience. *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 18 [Highlight original])*

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.”- Moroni 10:32 *The Book of Mormon*
- ▶ It seems clear that the LDS church teaches a works-based salvation, which depends upon the meritorious works of men and women + the “grace” of the mormon god. “Grace”, seems to be something you only receive once you fulfill ordinances, yet, on the other hand, it seems you need this “grace” to fulfill these requirements.

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “It is simply this—“If you do not keep the commandments of God, you will have no life of the Son of God in you.”...It is the same in this, as it is in the ordinance of baptism for the remission of sins. Has water, in itself, any virtue to wash away sin? Certainly not; but the Lord says, “If the sinner will repent of his sins, and go down into the waters of baptism, and there be buried in the likeness of being put into the earth and buried, and again be delivered from the water, in the likeness of being born—if in the sincerity of his heart he will do this, his sins shall be washed away.” Will the water of itself wash them away? No; but keeping the commandments of God will cleanse away the stain of sin.” -Young (*Journal of Discourses 2:4*)

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “Some of our old traditions teach us that a man guilty of atrocious and murderous acts may savingly repent when on the scaffold; and upon his execution you will hear the expression—“Bless God! He has gone to heaven, to be crowned, in glory, through the all-redeeming merits of Christ the Lord.” This is all nonsense. Such a character never will see heaven. Some will pray, “O that I had passed through the veil on the night of my conversion!” This proves the false ideas and vain notions entertained by the Christian world. They have no good sense pertaining to God and godliness. This is a world in which we are to prove ourselves. The lifetime of man is a day of trial, wherein we may prove to God, in our darkness, in our weakness, and where the enemy reigns, that we are our Father's friends, and that we receive light from him and are worthy to be leaders of our children—to become lords of lords, and kings of kings—to have perfect dominion over that portion of our families that will be crowned in the celestial kingdom with glory, immortality, and eternal lives.” -Young (*Journal of Discourses* 8:61)

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “Faith in Jesus Christ and repentance prepare you for baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ taught that everyone must be baptized of water and of the Spirit (the Holy Ghost) for the remission, or forgiveness, of sins. Through baptism by one who holds priesthood authority and through receiving the Holy Ghost, you will be spiritually reborn.”
- ▶ “When you are baptized, you receive a remission of your sins (see Acts 2:38). You make a covenant, or promise, with God: you promise to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, to follow Him, and to keep His commandments. If you do your part, your Heavenly Father promises to forgive your sins. When you are baptized by proper authority, your sins are washed away.”

● (All points on this slide are from *The Gospel of Jesus Christ* pg. 8)

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “When baptism washes you of your sins, the Holy Ghost sanctifies, or purifies, you. If you remain faithful to your baptismal covenants, you can have the Holy Ghost with you always.”
- ▶ “Your ability to enjoy this divine gift depends on your obedience to God’s commandments. The Holy Ghost cannot remain with those who do not live according to God’s teachings. They lose the privilege of His guidance and inspiration. Always strive to be worthy of the companionship and direction of the Holy Ghost.”
- (All points on this slide are from *The Gospel of Jesus Christ* pg. 8)

SOTERIOLOGY

- ▶ “You receive the Holy Ghost after baptism. In an ordinance called **confirmation**, one or more authorized priesthood holders lay their hands on your head. They confirm you a member of the Church and bless you to receive the Holy Ghost. This ordinance normally takes place in a church service soon after baptism. When you are baptized and confirmed, you become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.” *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 3 [Highlight original])*
- ▶ **Confirmation**- The way a person receives the Holy Ghost. In this ordinance, which usually takes place in sacrament meeting soon after baptism, the person is confirmed, or made, a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. *(The Gospel of Jesus Christ pg. 18 [Highlight original])*

EXALTATION AND ESCHATOLOGY



EXALTATION AND ESCHATOLOGY

- ▶ In Mormon theology, there are three heavens: the Telestial, the Terrestrial, and the Celestial. McConkie states that “most adults” will go to the Telestial kingdom and that it is composed of “the endless hosts of people of all ages who have lived after the manner of the world; who have been carnal, sensual, and devilish; who have chose the vain philosophies of the world rather than accept the testimony of Jesus; who have been lairs and thieves, sorcerers and adulteries, blasphemers and murders” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, 778). -(KoC pg. 257)

EXALTATION AND ESCHATOLOGY

- ▶ “The second kingdom (the terrestrial) will be inhabited by Christians who did not accept the Mormon message, Mormons who did not live up to their church’s requirements, and men of good will of other religions who rejected the revelations of the Latter-day Saints (*Mormon Doctrine*, 1966, 784). The highest, or celestial, heaven is itself divided into three levels. Only in this highest level is godhood or the possession of a kingdom for one’s self and and one’s family to be gained. This particular estate has as its prerequisite the candidate’s having been sealed by celestial marriage in a Mormon temple while upon the earth. Even in the celestial kingdom godhood is by slow progression, and in the end each who becomes a god will, with this family, rule and populate a separate planet of his own.” -(KoC pg. 257)

EXALTATION AND ESCHATOLOGY

- ▶ “One of the great gifts of God to all who come to earth is the resurrection, which is made possible by the Atonement of Jesus Christ. When Jesus died on the cross, His spirit went to the spirit world. Three days later, His spirit was reunited with His glorified, perfected body that could no longer die. This reunited of body and spirit is called *resurrection*. Everyone who is born on earth will be resurrected. After you are resurrected, you will go before god to be judged according to your works and the desires of your heart.” (*The Plan of Salvation* pg. 12)
- ▶ Mormonism ultimately teaches Universalism, which means that, ultimately, everyone will go to Heaven. With the only reserve, of those who did not “accept Heavenly Fathers plan in the pre-earth life”. (*The Plan of Salvation* pg. 5)

CULMINATION

- ▶ If one pursues carefully the books of Abraham and Moses as contained in *The Pearl of Great Price* (allegedly “translated” by Smith), as well as sections of Ether in *The Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *Discourses of Brigham Young*, the entire Mormon dogma of the preexistence of the soul, the polygamous nature of the gods, the brotherhood of Jesus and Lucifer, and the hierarchy of heaven (telestial, terrestrial, and celestial—corresponding to the basement, fiftieth floor, and observation tower of the Empire State Building, respectively), and the doctrines of universal salvation, millennium, resurrection, judgement, and final punishment, will unfold in a panorama climaxing in a polygamous paradise of eternal duration. Such is the Mormon doctrine of God, or more properly, of the gods, which rivals anything page mythology ever produced. -(KoC pg. 241)

PRACTICES OF

MORMONISM

PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ **Priesthood**- The authority and power of God. God gives this power to man to act in His name. The Aaronic Priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith by John the Baptist, who baptized Jesus. The Melchizedek Priesthood was restored by Peter, James, and John, three of Jesus's Twelve Apostles.
- ▶ **Aaronic Priesthood**- The lesser priesthood. This priesthood includes the authority to baptize and is named for Aaron in the Old Testament of the Bible.
- ▶ **Melchizedek Priesthood**- The higher or greater priesthood. It is named for Melchizedek in the Old Testament of the Bible, who was a righteous high priest and king.

- (All points on this slide are from *The Restoration* pg. 18-19)

PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ “The word *priesthood* has two meanings. First, priesthood is the power and authority of God. It has always existed and will continue to exist without end (see [Alma 13:7–8](#); [D&C 84:17–18](#)). Through the priesthood, God created and governs the heavens and the earth. Through this power, He exalts His obedient children, bringing to pass “the immortality and eternal life of man” ([Moses 1:39](#); see also [D&C 84:35–38](#)).”
- ▶ “Second, in mortality, priesthood is the power and authority that God gives to man to act in all things necessary for the salvation of God’s children. The blessings of the priesthood are available to all who receive the gospel. (“[Priesthood Authority](#)” *Handbook 2, Administering the Church*)”
- ▶ <https://www.lds.org/topics/priesthood?lang=eng>

PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ “First, an understanding of these terms may be helpful. The priesthood, or priesthood authority, has been defined as “the power and authority of God”⁴ and “the consummate power on this earth.” Priesthood keys are defined for our understanding as well: “Priesthood keys are the authority God has given to priesthood leaders to direct, control, and govern the use of His priesthood on earth.” Priesthood keys control the exercise of priesthood authority. Ordinances that create a record in the Church require keys and cannot be done without authorization. Elder Dallin H. Oaks taught that “ultimately, all keys of the priesthood are held by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose priesthood it is. He is the one who determines what keys are delegated to mortals and how those keys will be used.” Now, for you young men and young women, I have considered three ways that you can “find the keys,” or use priesthood keys and authority to bless your life and the lives of others.”

- ▶ <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2016/04/where-are-the-keys-and-authority-of-the-priesthood?lang=eng>

PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ “Unlike those in many other churches, Latter-day Saints extended priesthood ordination broadly to laymen, as directed by revelation. Over time, an extensive structure of priesthood offices and quorums was established. From the beginning, this structure was governed by revelation under the direction of priesthood leaders holding “keys.”⁵ The keys of the Melchizedek priesthood, given through divine messengers to Joseph Smith and later passed to others, bestowed the “right of presidency,” the right “to administer in spiritual things,” and the “right to officiate in all the offices in the church.”
- ▶ <https://www.lds.org/topics/joseph-smiths-teachings-about-priesthood-temple-and-women?lang=eng>

PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ “Latter-day Saints’ understanding of the nature of priesthood and keys grew as a result of revelations received by Joseph Smith. An 1832 revelation taught that the greater, or Melchizedek, priesthood held “the key of the knowledge of God,” and that in the ordinances of the priesthood, “the power of godliness is manifest.” Joseph Smith was charged, like Moses, “to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God.”⁷ In 1836, angelic messengers committed priesthood keys to Joseph Smith that would enable church members to receive temple ordinances.⁸ In an 1841 revelation, the Lord commanded the Saints to build a temple in Nauvoo, Illinois, where He would reveal to His people “all things pertaining to this house, and the priesthood thereof.”⁹ The culminating ordinances of the priesthood were to be found in the temple and would help prepare men and women to enter into God’s presence.”

- ▶ <https://www.lds.org/topics/joseph-smiths-teachings-about-priesthood-temple-and-women?lang=eng>

PRIESTHOOD

- ▶ “When a man and a woman are sealed in the temple, they enter together, by covenant, into an order of the priesthood.⁵³ If they are faithful to their covenants, they receive “honor, immortality, and eternal life,” “exaltation and glory in all things,” and “a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.”⁵⁴ Some do not have the opportunity to marry in this life, and many experience broken family relationships. Because God is just, every child of God will have the opportunity, either in this life or in the next, to accept the gospel and receive all promised blessings (including eternal marriage), conditioned upon faithfulness.”

- ▶ <https://www.lds.org/topics/joseph-smiths-teachings-about-priesthood-temple-and-women?lang=eng>

TEMPLE

- ▶ “Our churches are dedicated public places of worship where Mormons and visitors can meet to pray, study scripture, partake of the sacrament, and continue to learn their responsibilities as children of God. The temple is literally, as it has been throughout history, the "house of the Lord" (see [1 Kings 6:1, 37](#)). The primary purpose of the temple is to provide a dedicated place where sacred ordinances needed for eternal life can be performed. Because of its sacred nature, attendance in the temple is limited to Mormons who obey God's commandments and therefore are worthy to enter.”

TEMPLE

- ▶ “The temple is a peaceful, sacred place, set apart from the cares and turmoil of the world. All areas of the temple are beautifully and carefully maintained to preserve a spirit of reverence. Because it is the Lord’s house, and because of the sacred work performed there, in the temple we can feel the Spirit abundantly and feel close to the Lord. There we can receive personal revelation and spiritual strength to help us overcome our trials. This is part of the reason we are encouraged to attend the temple regularly.”

- <https://www.lds.org/church/temples/frequently-asked-questions?lang=eng>

TEMPLE

- ▶ “From the days of the Old Testament, the Lord has commanded His people to build temples-sacred structures where He could teach, guide, and bless them. For example, the Lord told the Israelites to build a portable tabernacle that would be their temple while they traveled in the wilderness (see [Exodus 26-27; 40:35](#)). Additional Old Testament references to temples are found in [2 Chronicles 5:1-14; 7:1-2](#) (Temple of Solomon) and [Ezra 3:1-13; 6:3](#) (Temple of Zerubbabel).”
- ▶ “When Jesus Christ was on the earth, the only existing temple was known as the Temple of Herod. Jesus was often found in this temple (see, for example, [Luke 2:40-49; Matthew 21:10-14](#)).”
- (All points on this slide are from <https://www.lds.org/church/temples/why-we-build-temples?lang=eng>)

TEMPLE

- ▶ “After the rejection and deaths of Jesus's Apostles, there were no temples on the earth for many centuries. When the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored in the early 1800s, the Lord again commanded His people to build temples (see [D&C 88:119](#); see also [section 95](#)). The earliest temples of the restored Church were built in Ohio, Illinois, and eventually in Utah. Today, the Church has 140 operating temples around the world. Regardless of the place or time period, temples are the most sacred place on earth—a place where earth and heaven meet and where we feel close to our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.”

- (All points on this slide are from <https://www.lds.org/church/temples/why-we-build-temples?lang=eng>)

TEMPLE

- ▶ “In the temple we are taught, we make covenants, and we are promised blessings. We receive ordinances that enable us to live in the presence of God.”
- ▶ “One ordinance we receive in the temple is the endowment. The word endowment means “gift” or “bestowal.” As part of this ordinance, we are taught about the purpose of life, the mission and Atonement of Jesus Christ, and Heavenly Father’s plan for His children. We gain a glimpse of what it will be like to live in His presence as we feel the peaceful atmosphere of the temple.”

TEMPLE (SEALING)

- ▶ “Another temple ordinance is the sealing ordinance, in which husbands and wives are sealed to each other and children are sealed to their parents in eternal families. This means that if we are faithful to our covenants, our family relationships will continue for eternity.”
- ▶ “In addition to receiving these ordinances for ourselves, we can receive them for our deceased ancestors. In this way, people who died without receiving essential ordinances such as baptism and confirmation, the endowment, and sealing have the opportunity to accept these ordinances.”

TEMPLE (DRESS)

- ▶ “Wear modest Sunday dress when you attend the temple. Avoid extremes in dress and grooming, just as you would in a sacrament meeting. You show reverence and respect for the Lord and His house and invite the Spirit by being clean and presentable.”
- ▶ “In the temple there are private dressing rooms where you change out of your Sunday clothing and put on white clothing. This change of clothing serves as a reminder that you are temporarily leaving the world behind and entering a holy place. White clothing symbolizes purity, and the fact that all are dressed alike in the temple creates a sense of unity and equality.”

TEMPLE (ENDOWMENT)

- ▶ “Most likely you will receive your endowment shortly before you serve a full-time mission or before you are married in the temple. Single members in their late teens or early twenties who have not received a mission call and are not engaged to be married in the temple are generally not recommended to receive their own endowment.”
 - ▶ “New members wait at least one year after their baptism and confirmation before receiving their endowment.”
- <https://www.lds.org/church/temples/frequently-asked-questions?lang=eng>

ENDOWMENT

- ▶ “The Mormon Endowment includes four basic aspects. One is a preparatory ordinance of ceremonial washing and anointing, and dressing in sacred temple garments or so-called “Mormon underwear,” plus temple robes, always white as a symbol of purity and equality between everyone in attendance. Another aspect is a course of instruction that features the creation of the world, some of the experiences of Adam and Eve, and the plan of salvation or redemption available to every human thanks to the sacrifice of Christ. Covenants constitute yet another aspect of the Endowment: Mormons solemnly promise the Lord to be obedient, giving of self, chaste, and loyal to the restored Church of Christ and its cause; in return, God is enabled to fulfill promised blessings of joy, protection, progress, and eventual return to His glorious presence. Finally, temple visitors can actually feel a degree of divine presence even now, for Mormon temples are specially dedicated as places of holiness, of light, of peace and revelation and understanding.” - <http://www.ldschurchtemples.com/mormon/endowment/>
- ▶ The above source is not an official source of LDS doctrine or practice.

TEMPLE (TALKING)

- ▶ “You can talk about what the interior of the temple looks like, and you can freely share the feelings you have in the temple. However, temple covenants and ordinances, including the words used, are too sacred to be discussed in detail outside the temple. By avoiding discussion of these sacred things outside the temple, we protect them from mocking, ridicule, or disrespect. Do not be casual when talking about your experiences in the temple.”

- <https://www.lds.org/church/temples/frequently-asked-questions?lang=eng>

WORD OF WISDOM

- ▶ “The things we do and don't consume are some of the most visible markers of our faith, and they come from our belief that our bodies are precious gifts from God. We believe He has given us guidance about how best to take care of them. He revealed a law of health, called the Word of Wisdom, to Joseph Smith in 1833. The Word of Wisdom prohibits the drinking of alcohol, coffee and tea, and the use of tobacco. It also implies that we not use illegal drugs or abuse prescription drugs.”

FASTING

- ▶ “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sets aside the first Sunday of every month as a time when members are asked to fast. We are encouraged to make a fast offering on these days, which is a monetary donation (at least equal to the value of the two meals) that goes to help the poor who need food or shelter. In this way the law of fasting reminds us not only that God is our Father in Heaven who will answer whenever we call, but also that the people around us are our brothers and sisters, and that “when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” ([Mosiah 2:17](#)).”

FOLLOW THE PROPHET

- ▶ “God has called prophets throughout history. In the Bible we read about prophets like Adam, Abraham, Moses, Paul and many others. We believe that God has also called prophets to lead us today. Joseph Smith was the first prophet called in the current dispensation, or generation, of the Church, and there has been a prophet on the earth ever since. The man called to speak for God and lead His church today is named Thomas S. Monson.”

FOLLOW THE PROPHET

TODAYS MORMON PROPHET:

Thomas S. Monson



General Authorities and General Officers of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

THE FIRST PRESIDENCY



Henry B. Eyring
First Counselor



Thomas S. Monson
President



Dieter F. Uchtdorf
Second Counselor

THE QUORUM OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES



Russell M. Nelson



Dallin H. Oaks



M. Russell Ballard



Robert D. Hales



Jeffrey R. Holland



David A. Bednar



Quentin L. Cook



D. Todd Christofferson



Neil L. Andersen



Ronald A. Rasband



Gary E. Stevenson



Dale G. Renlund

THE PRESIDENCY OF THE SEVENTY



L. Whitney Clayton



Donald L. Hallstrom



Richard J. Maynes



Craig C. Christensen



Ulisses Soares



Lynn G. Robbins



Gerrit W. Gong

PRACTICES

GENERAL AUTHORITY SEVENTIES

(in alphabetical order)



THE PRESIDING BISHOPRIC



GENERAL OFFICERS

SUNDAY SCHOOL



YOUNG WOMEN



RELIEF SOCIETY



PRIMARY



YOUNG MEN



MISSIONARIES

- ▶ “That Mormons do missionary work is one of the Church's most recognized characteristics. Right now, tens of thousands of missionaries are walking, driving or riding their bikes around the world, handing out copies of the Book of Mormon and sharing the gospel with the people they meet. Why do these people, most of them under the age of 25, volunteer to leave their homes at their own expense and dedicate a period of their lives to preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ?”

- <https://www.mormon.org/values/missionary-work>

MISSIONARIES

- ▶ “The Lord said, “proclaim my gospel from land to land, and from city to city... bear testimony in every place, unto every people” ([Doctrine and Covenants 66:5,7](#)). We take that commandment to heart and look for opportunities to share the blessings we've received from living the gospel with everyone we can. Jesus taught, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” ([John 3:5](#)). Knowing that certain ordinances like baptism are necessary for us to return to live with our Heavenly Father, we feel an urgent need to share this blessing with everyone we can.”

MISSIONARIES

- ▶ “Most of the Church's missionaries are around twenty years old, though many members also volunteer to serve after they've retired. All prospective missionaries turn in applications to Church headquarters and they receive a call to a specific mission around the world. They spend a few weeks in a training center where some of them learn a new language and all of them rigorously study and practice teaching the gospel. Then they set off to their assigned locations and begin their service. Missionaries' lives are completely dedicated to sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. They pay their own way and put off school, dating and work for two years in order to focus entirely on doing the Lord's work.”

MISSIONARIES

- ▶ “84,000 missionaries are currently serving in 405 missions around the world. They proselytize in every country where the government and political climate allow it. Many missionaries grow to love the areas in which they serve so much that they find it harder to come home after their missions are over than it was for them to leave in the first place. They return home as informed ambassadors of the nations and cultures where they served.”

- <https://www.mormon.org/values/missionary-work>

FAMILY

- ▶ “Rather, we are driven by our doctrine that teaches that marriage and families can continue beyond this life. But this can only happen when families are sealed together in one of the Lord’s holy temples around the world and united for all eternity.”
- ▶ “That’s fine for all of us today who have the chance to be sealed in a temple, but what about our ancestors who die without the opportunity to receive ordinances like baptism, or the blessings of being an eternal family? Does it make sense that God would simply say, “Too bad, tough luck?” Of course it doesn’t. When Christ organized His Church anciently, it included vicarious work for the dead and the practice of performing ordinances for deceased relatives “Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” (1 [Corinthians 15:29](#)). Christ’s restoration of his original Church to the earth through the Prophet Joseph Smith included the ancient practice of performing these ordinances for our deceased relatives in holy temples. The gospel of Jesus Christ includes the same blessings today in holy temples.”

FAMILY

- ▶ “Genealogical or family history research is the essential forerunner of temple work for our deceased ancestors. We do it to obtain names and other genealogical information so these temple ordinances can be performed for our kindred dead. Our ancestors then are taught the gospel in the spirit world and have the choice to accept or reject the work performed for them. Mother Teresa once said that “loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.” The thought that this poverty of loneliness—this being unwanted and separated from loved ones—could extend beyond this life is truly sad and something temple work can prevent.”

WARD, STAKE, BRANCH

- ▶ “Our local congregations are called wards (or branches for smaller congregations). They are organized geographically and members attend a ward or branch near their home. Because in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints all the teaching materials are consistent throughout the wards and branches, a person will be studying the same lessons no matter where in the world they attend church. The spiritual leader of each ward is called the bishop (or the branch president for branches). He is a member of the congregation who has been asked to serve as a volunteer in this position. A group of wards forms a stake, and the leader of a stake is a stake president. “Stake” is not a term found in the New Testament, but is taken from Old Testament tent imagery in which the “tent,” or church, is held up by supporting stakes (see [Isaiah 54:2](#)).”

WARD, STAKE, BRANCH

- ▶ “A ward or a branch is a community in which members develop friendships and help each other. Members try to follow the teachings of an ancient prophet who taught that when we are baptized, we are “willing to bear one another’s burdens, that they may be light” and “willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort” (Book of Mormon, **Mosiah 18:8-9**). Through service, members lift one another’s burdens and express their love.”

- <https://www.mormon.org/faq/topic/church/question/ward-stake-branch>

POLYGAMY

- ▶ “Beginning in 1862, the U.S. government passed laws against the practice of plural marriage. After the U.S. Supreme Court found the anti-polygamy laws to be constitutional in 1879, federal officials began prosecuting polygamous husbands and wives during the 1880s. Believing these laws to be unjust, Latter-day Saints engaged in civil disobedience by continuing to practice plural marriage and by attempting to avoid arrest by moving to the homes of friends or family or by hiding under assumed names. When convicted, they paid fines and submitted to jail time.”

POLYGAMY

- ▶ “One of the anti-polygamy laws permitted the U.S. government to seize Church property. Federal officers soon threatened to take Latter-day Saint temples. The work of salvation for both the living and the dead was now in jeopardy. In September 1890, Church President Wilford Woodruff felt inspired to issue the Manifesto. “Inasmuch as laws have been enacted by Congress forbidding plural marriages,” President Woodruff explained, “I hereby declare my intention to submit to those laws, and to use my influence with the members of the Church over which I preside to have them do likewise.”
- ▶ “The full implications of the document were not apparent at first. The Lord’s way is to speak “line upon line; here a little, there a little.” Like the beginning of plural marriage in the Church, the end of the practice was gradual and incremental, a process filled with difficulties and uncertainties.”

POLYGAMY

- ▶ “The Manifesto declared President Woodruff’s intention to submit to the laws of the United States, and new plural marriages within that jurisdiction largely came to an end. But a small number of plural marriages continued to be performed in Mexico and Canada, under the sanction of some Church leaders. As a rule, these marriages were not promoted by Church leaders and were difficult to get approved. Either one or both of the spouses who entered into these unions typically had to agree to remain in Canada or Mexico. On an exceptional basis, a smaller number of plural marriages were performed within the United States between the years 1890 and 1904.”
- ▶ “The Church’s role in these marriages became a subject of intense public debate after Reed Smoot, an Apostle, was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1903. At the April 1904 general conference, Church President Joseph F. Smith issued a forceful statement, known as the Second Manifesto, making new plural marriages punishable by excommunication. Since President Smith’s day, Church Presidents have repeatedly emphasized that the Church and its members are no longer authorized to enter into plural marriage and have underscored the sincerity of their words by urging local leaders to bring noncompliant members before Church disciplinary councils.”

RACE

- ▶ “Despite this modern reality, for much of its history—from the mid-1800s until 1978—the Church did not ordain men of black African descent to its **priesthood** or allow black men or women to participate in temple endowment or sealing ordinances.”
- ▶ “In 1852, President **Brigham Young** publicly announced that men of black African descent could no longer be ordained to the priesthood, though thereafter blacks continued to join the Church through **baptism** and receiving **the gift of the Holy Ghost**. Following the death of Brigham Young, subsequent Church presidents restricted blacks from receiving the temple endowment or being married in **the temple**. Over time, Church leaders and members advanced many theories to explain the priesthood and temple restrictions. None of these explanations is accepted today as the official doctrine of the Church.”

RACE

- ▶ “Church leaders pondered promises made by prophets such as Brigham Young that black members would one day receive priesthood and temple blessings. In June 1978, after “spending many hours in the Upper Room of the [Salt Lake] Temple supplicating the Lord for divine guidance,” Church President **Spencer W. Kimball**, his counselors in the **First Presidency**, and members of the **Quorum of the Twelve Apostles** received a revelation. “He has heard our prayers, and by revelation has confirmed that the long-promised day has come,” the First Presidency announced on June 8. The First Presidency stated that they were “aware of the promises made by the prophets and presidents of the Church who have preceded us” that “all of our brethren who are worthy may receive the priesthood.”²¹ The revelation rescinded the restriction on priesthood ordination. It also extended the blessings of the temple to all worthy Latter-day Saints, men and women. The First Presidency statement regarding the revelation was canonized in the Doctrine and Covenants as **Official Declaration 2.**”

● <https://www.lds.org/topics/race-and-the-priesthood?lang=eng>