

Are Mormons Christians?

Comparing Mormon (or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) Beliefs with Christian Beliefs

Introduction

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is sometimes abbreviated as LDS. But most people call it the Mormon Church. It was started in 1830 by an American named Joseph Smith with the headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah. In the year 2000 there were 11 million Mormons in 162 countries with 5.1 million Mormons found in all 50 states of the US.

Most Mormons would say they are Christians because they have beliefs about God and Jesus Christ. Generally, Mormons are good citizens, are motivated to help others and behave in a high moral manner. So they are seen as “good” people but are they Christian?

The Mormons send out many young people as missionaries. These young missionaries often wear white shirts and ties and ride bicycles. They may be nice to talk to, but we all need to be aware of the difference between Mormon beliefs and Christian beliefs.

Beliefs about the Bible

Mormons believe that Joseph Smith was visited by angels from heaven who told him to start the true church. Smith believed that he was told that the current Christian church was wrong. The King James Bible is accepted as one of four books of Mormon scripture but according to Smith, the Bible has many errors and was not translated correctly. In his writings, Joseph Smith made hundreds of what he thought were corrections to the Bible.

In 1823 Joseph Smith said he was visited by the angel Moroni who led him to gold plates containing the “full” Gospel. Smith said these plates were written in “reformed Egyptian hieroglyphics” which Smith was miraculously able to translate. Among other things, Smith reported the plates said that the Bible was missing some important parts. The writings that Smith said he made from the translation of these gold plates became the Book of Mormon, named after the father of the angel Moroni.

Mormons believe that the president or prophet of the Mormon church is the only spokesperson for God. Joseph Smith was the first prophet. Over the years, the writings of these presidents and prophets is also seen as the word of god.

These beliefs are very different from Christian beliefs. The Christian Bible was formed by ancient church leaders reviewing sacred writings in a series of meetings. Since the year 393 the Bible has remained unchanged. At that time, it was determined that the 39 books in the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament were the divinely inspired word of God. So, for the past 1700 years, Christians have accepted the Bible as the inspired and accurate Word of God and that there is no other book that can be used as the foundation of Christian belief. (See 2 Timothy 3:15 – 17 and 2 Peter 1:19 – 21.) The Bible also tells us that the word of the Lord will last forever. (See 1 Peter 1: 23 – 25.) Because the Word of the Lord will last forever, there is no

need to change the Bible. In fact, Deuteronomy 4:2 teaches us that it is wrong to change the Bible.

Beliefs about God

Mormons believe that God started out as a man just like all of us here on earth. But according to Mormon thinking, over time God kept the requirements of the Mormon faith and eventually rose to become a god and inherit his own universe. Even though he is God, he still has a body of flesh and bones. Mormons think there are an infinite number of gods all of whom started out as regular people, but now, each with their own worlds. According to Mormon beliefs, we can also become a god with our own universe if we obey the teachings of the Mormon church.

In addition, Mormons believe that the Heavenly Father, the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ are each separate and distinct gods. They also believe that the Heavenly father produces spiritual children in heaven that become humans on earth. So, all humans as well as Jesus and Satan are God's heavenly children.

Again, Christian beliefs are very different from Mormon beliefs. For example, John 4:24 teaches us that God is spirit and not a person of flesh and bones. Christians also believe that God has always existed and was always God. He does not change. People were created by God and if they accept Christ as Savior then they become like children of God. But Christians do not believe that people will ever become gods themselves. See 1 John 1: 12-13.

Christians believe that God is all powerful and created the earth, the universe and everything that exists. Christians believe that God knows all and can be everywhere at the same time. This would not be possible if God is confined to a human body.

Beliefs about Jesus

Mormons believe all people on earth first started as spiritual children, born from a heavenly father and mother. In Mormon thinking, Jesus is our elder brother because he was the first born of these spiritual children. Jesus is also the only person on earth to have been born by relations between a heavenly father and an earthly mother, Mary according to Mormon thinking. Mormons also believe that Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection provides eternal life for everyone. However, people that obey the teachings of the Mormon church will earn a higher place in heaven with the most obedient becoming gods themselves.

Christians again, have a very different view of Jesus Christ. John 1: 1 - 18 tells us that Jesus always existed and was with God and was God. It was Jesus who created all the earth. Christians believe that Jesus is part of the Holy Trinity that includes God the Father, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. All three are one and the same God.

On earth, Christians believe that the virgin Mary conceived through a miracle of God and Jesus gave up his position in Heaven to come and live on earth. Christians believe that Christ defeated death when he died on the cross and was raised from the dead. People are sinners and cannot be with a pure and Holy God (Romans 3:23). But those that believe that Jesus was God's son and

that his death paid for their sins receive forgiveness for their sins and are seen as the children of God (John 1:12, John 14:6). So only those that believe in Christ as savior can go to heaven.

Conclusion

Many people coming to America from other countries think that the USA is a Christian country. But there are many different beliefs in America. This paper lists just a few of the many Mormon beliefs that are very different from Christian beliefs. If your faith is important to you, then you should know what you believe and how it is different from the beliefs of a person you might meet. A Mormon might tell you they are a Christian but I hope you can see that their beliefs in God, the Bible and Jesus are very different than Christian beliefs. In Matthew 24:11 Jesus himself said that "Many false prophets will arise and will mislead many". Study the Bible, pray and go to church so you will not be misled.