**Lightning Apologetics**

**Part IV – Mormonism**

*Why the Mormon hope is not the Christian hope?*

1. It is the hope of the male Mormon to progress to the point where he will be a god like God the Father and be ruling over his own planet. This is “exaltation,” and depends upon the Mormon “Plan of Eternal Progression.”
2. The hope of Mormon females depends upon their being married, in a temple ceremony, to a Mormon male who achieves exaltation.
3. Mormon women married to non-Mormons (“Gentiles”) can arrange for a “temple sealing” (marriage by proxy) to a Mormon male after their death. This is to assure that in eternity they are considered to have been married to and produced their children from a Mormon husband so that they and their children can be exalted.
4. Mormon males expect to produce offspring in heaven with their mates(s), offspring who will subsequently be sent to populate their planet and achieve their own exaltation to godhood and so on and so on…

*Christian Answer:*

1. The God of the Bible is the Creator and God of all the universe, of all worlds, not just our planet. He made man for Himself and in His image to be in communion with God and enter into the love of the Holy Trinity.
2. When man fell into sin and marred the image of God in his own being, the Second Person of the Trinity became incarnate – taking human nature to Himself.
3. He then did what He could not do in the form of God: He died to save us from sin and death, so that we could come back into communion with God and share the love of the Holy Trinity. Our hope is to be with God, not to be God (Gn:1-3; Phil 2:5-11)

**When Talking to a Mormon**

Remember that the Mormon is trained to hide the difference between his beliefs and yours and to present himself as a Christian. However, his belief that he is a Christian is sincere, and his efforts to hide the distinctive of the Mormon religion are pursued in his desire to get you to accept Mormon teachings.

Do not allow glib, surface responses to go unchallenged; press the Mormon to define the Christian-sounding words he is using.

Define your own terms also. Draw the contrast for the Mormon. Calmly and clearly insist that what you and he believe about the nature of God, the identity of Jesus, the nature of man, salvation and eternal life are different. To pretend otherwise is dishonest. Appeal to his honesty and sense of fairness. You might say, “Look, we are not going to get anywhere unless we are honest with each other. Without making any statement about which one of us is right, can’t we just acknowledge that we do not worship the same God.” “Nor do we have the same hope for the future?”

Help the Mormon to consider the logical and philosophical problems with the Plan of Eternal Progression: If God had a Father and He had a Father and so on – then who was the first God? Mormons say it’s an “infinite progression.” But since there is no way to cross an infinite distance or pass an infinite amount of time, there would be no way to get to “now” and to “us” from an infinite past. Time has to have had a beginning and it did. It began with the creation “of all things seen and unseen” by God. Mormons say that God is omnipotent (almighty, all-powerful), yet they say there are many gods. There cannot be more than one omnipotent being, so the Mormon conception of God is shrunken and distorted.

A big selling point of the Mormon hope for the future is the idea that families will be together eternally. But if Mormons become Gods of planets and then their children become Gods of other planets – how do the children and parents get together? Can a God leave his planet unattended while he goes to a celestial family reunuion? This Mormon selling point would be diminished if we Catholics were more vocal about our hope for the “new heavens and new earth” in which we know one another in all the relationships of our present lives, only in glory (2 Pt 3:13; Rv 21:1)

Welcome the participation of Mormons in causes which we share for the common good: strengthening family life, fighting pornography and abortion, fostering the virtue of patriotism etc. We honor each Mormon as a person who desires what is genuinely good for himself, his family and society – AND most importantly, when we share the truths of the Catholic faith with him.