**Lightning Apologetics**

**Mormonism – Final Part.**

When you start looking at some standard theological works of Mormonism you run across a work called *Doctrines of Salvation.* In that work you will read this: “By fullness of the gospel is meant all the ordinances and principles that pertain to the exaltation of the celestial kingdom” (vol 1, p. 160). That’s an official Mormon statement on the subject. But there’s a problem.

If the *Book of Mormon* contains all the ordinances and principles that pertain to the Gospel, why don’t Mormonism’s esoteric doctrines show up in it? The doctrine that God is nothing more than an “exalted man with a body of flesh and bones” appears nowhere in the *Book of Mormon.* Nor does the doctrine of Jesus Christ being the “spirit brother” of Lucifer. Nor do the doctrines that men can become gods and that God the Father has a god above him, who has a god above him, *ad infinitum.* These heterodox teachings, and many others like them , appear nowhere in the *Book of Mormon.* I’ll give one main example. The most pointed refutation of the Mormon doctrine that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are actually three separate gods is found in Alma 11:28-31 (Book of Mormon), “Now Zeerom said: ‘Is there more than one God?’ and [Amulek] answered, ‘No.” And Zeerom said unto him again, ‘How knowest thou these things?’ And he said: ‘An angel has made them known unto me.’”

The *Book of Mormon* falls on three main counts. First, it utterly lacks historical or archaeological support, and there is an overwhelming body of empirical evidence that refutes it. Second, the *Book of Mormon,* contains none of the key Mormon doctrines. This is important to note because the Latter-Day Saints make such a raucous about it containing the “fullness of the everlasting gospel.” (It would be more accurate to say it contains almost none of their “everlasting gospel” at all). Third, the *Book of Mormon* abounds in textual errors, factual errors, and outright plagiarisms from other works. Need a couple of examples? Ok.

We read that Jesus “shall be born of Mary at Jerusalem, which is in the land of our forefathers” (Alma 7:10). But Jesus was born in Bethlehem, not Jerusalem (cf. Matt. 2:1). If you mention this to a Mormon missionary, he might say Jerusalem and Bethlehem are only a few miles apart and that Alma could have been referring to the general area around Jerusalem. But Bethany is even close to Jerusalem than is Bethlehem, yet the Gospels make frequent reference to Bethany as a separate town.

Another problem: Scientists have demonstrated that honeybees were first brought the New World by Spanish explorers in the fifteenth century, but in the *Book of Mormon,* in Ether 2:3, claims they were introduced around 2000 B.C. The problem was that Joseph Smith wasn’t a naturalist; he didn’t know anything about bees or where they might be found. He saw bees in America and threw them in the *Book of Mormon* as a little local color. He didn’t realize he’d get stung by them.

Finally, let’s talk about polygamy and abortion. Mormons try to attract new members by projecting an image of wholesome family life in their circles. This is an illusion ---- Mormon Utah has higher than average rates for suicide, divorce, and other domestic problems than the rest of the country. And if Mormonism’s public image of large happy families and marriage bring anything to mind, it is polygamy. Although polygamy was permitted to Mormons, few practiced it. But enough did so to make polygamy the characteristic that most caught the attention of other Americans. Mormonism, you should understand, is one of those religions that are peculiarly American. Much more can be said on this topic but we move on.

Didn’t you assume Mormons were pro-life? That’s certainly the image their church attempts to broadcast, and most Mormons, in fact, mistakenly believe their church opposes abortion and regards it as an objective evil. Nope. The Mormon church accepts abortion for a number of reasons. *The Church Handbook Instructions,* states that abortion may be performed when a pregnancy results from rape or incest, or a competent physician says that the “fetus” has severe defects that will not allow the “baby” to survive beyond birth. In any case, the people responsible must first consult with their church leader and receive God’s approval in prayer (156).

This same handbook – the official policies of the Mormon church to be followed by all local church leaders throughout the world – also claims: “It is a fact that a child has life before birth. However, there is no direct revelation on when the spirit enters the body.” Don’t expect dogmatic or ethical consistency. Rather, look for expediency and conformity with “the times.” I could go on and on about Mormonism, but I think you can see the point from all these articles. Mormon missionaries are sincere when they approach you about their Faith. However, we have to be careful because we want more than just to win an argument, we have to win the soul. If you plan on discussing your faith, be patient and do it out of wanting to share the Truth of our Catholic Faith with love. God bless you.