

DOES MORMONISM *ATTACK* CHRISTIANITY?

by Michael R. Ash

While the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) claims that Jesus Christ stands at the head of their church, many anti-Mormons have vocally challenged their claim to Christianity. Anti-Mormon publications are found in the thousands. There are anti-Mormon books, pamphlets, radio programs, web sites, and even movies. Protestors are found at temple open houses, conferences, and pageants. Anti-Mormon seminars are sponsored in Protestant chapels and members are instructed in the evils of Mormonism while LDS marriage customs and dress practice are criticized. Latter-day Saints have even been denied the opportunity to assist other Christian organizations in volunteer work.

Although the LDS Church has not returned fire in like-manner, some anti-Mormons have claimed that they are not attacking Mormonism, but are instead defending themselves against Mormonism for launching the first attack—against “Christianity.” The following examples show that such a claim is common among the anti-Mormon community.

The fact is, proving Mormonism to be a false doctrine is not an attack but a defense of the Christian faith. Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism made the first attack by claiming that all Christian denominations are an abomination in God’s sight.¹

Mormonism is actively anti-Christian; from its inception the LDS church has deliberately, openly, and officially attacked Christianity.²

First, it was Joseph Smith who attacked the Christian churches, the “professors of Christianity” first. We did not attack you first. I was simply responding to that attack.³

We should note that history reveals that Mormon founder Joseph Smith launched his attack on Christianity long before there were any “Anti-Mormonism” ministries.⁴

To support this premise these critics generally quote the 1838 account of Joseph’s Smith first vision, in which Jesus responded to Joseph’s prayer inquiring which church to join.

I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong; and the Personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.”⁵

This paper attempts to examine four related issues:

1. Did Jesus—according to Joseph Smith’s first vision—claim that Christianity was worthless and Christians were corrupt? Does Mormonism teach that other Churches are without value?
2. Did the Latter-day Saints strike the first blow? Were the first anti-Mormons simply defending themselves against the attacking Mormons?
3. Is the LDS claim to Christianity a *recent* invention of Latter-day Saints? Did early Latter-day Saints deny that Mormons are Christian, or did they intentionally attempt to distinguish themselves as non-Christian?
4. Why would Latter-day Saints use harsh terminology when referring to other Christian denominations?



DID JESUS—ACCORDING TO JOSEPH SMITH’S FIRST VISION—CLAIM THAT CHRISTIANITY WAS WORTHLESS AND CHRISTIANS WERE CORRUPT? DOES MORMONISM TEACH THAT OTHER CHURCHES ARE WITHOUT VALUE?

All their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; that: “they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.”⁶

One anti-Mormon has written: “Do the LDS teach that all other churches’ beliefs/creeds are an abomination to God? Answer: Yes!”⁷ By lumping “beliefs” and “creeds” together, this critic mixes truth with untruth. While some critics might interpret the words of Joseph’s vision as a strong condemnation of other branches of Christianity, the primary rebuke is against the extra-biblical creeds that were formed long after the New Testament era. In Joseph’s vision, Christ calls these creeds an “abomination” which can also mean “defiled” or “polluted.”⁸ These creeds were often formulated by argument and debate and frequently insert concepts that are not found in the Bible.⁹ Gary Gillum also notes:

Truth and the things of God are comprehended by study, faith, reason, science, experience, personal revelation, and revelation received through the prophets of God. Creeds, on the other hand, tend to delimit this process.¹⁰

Joseph Smith later expounded upon his reservations with the creeds of traditional Christianity.

I cannot believe in any of the creeds of the different denominations, because they all have some things in them I cannot subscribe to, though all of them have some truth; I want to come up into the presence of God, and learn all things; but the creeds set up stakes, and say, “Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further;” which I cannot subscribe to.¹¹

In Joseph’s vision Jesus was calling the creeds—not 1820 Christians or churches—“an abomination.” Those who professed such creeds were “corrupt” which also means to “lose purity.”¹² In other words traditional Christianity had truths mixed with error. While Thomas Jefferson, like many other “enlightened” Americans discounted modern-day miracles,¹³ he—like many of his

contemporaries—also felt that the churches of his day were far removed from the Christianity of the New Testament.

I [Jefferson] am a real Christian, that is to say a disciple of the doctrines of Jesus, very different from the preachers... of the gospel, while they draw all their characteristic dogmas from what its author never said or did.

They have compounded from the heathen mysteries a system beyond the comprehension of man of which Jesus, were he to return on earth, would not recognize one feature.... It is the speculations of crazy theologians which have made a Babel out of religion.¹⁴

The claim that 1820 Christianity embraced non-Biblical views was not unique in Joseph’s milieu¹⁵ and neither was it an attack on traditional Christian denominations. Instead, it was a commentary on the corruption of doctrines that had been introduced through centuries of apostasy. “They draw near to me with their lips,” said Christ in Joseph’s vision, “but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.” When Joseph related his vision to a Methodist minister a few days after it had happened, he was surprised by the response.

He treated my communication not only lightly, but with great contempt, saying it was all of the devil, that there were no such things as visions or revelations in these days; that all such things had ceased with the apostles, and that there would never be any more of them.¹⁶

Many nineteenth century Christians not only disbelieved in miracles (denied “the power thereof”) but believed that all supernatural effects were either fraudulent or from the Devil.¹⁷ One nineteenth-century Methodist minister and LDS critic ridiculed the Mormons for professing “to have power to work miracles such as the interpretation of languages which they have never learned, healing the sick and raising the dead...”¹⁸ Another contemporary anti-Mormon, and Reverend professor of divinity at Kemper College in Missouri, wrote in regards to Mormonism: “For the superstitious lover of the marvelous, there are miracles, ecstasies, visions, and revelations....”¹⁹

While Joseph and subsequent Latter-day Saints have taught that traditional Christianity is an apostate form of the Biblical Christianity, they have not “attacked Christianity” nor claimed that other denominations are void of Christian precepts.

It should be noted here, that the LDS Church is “Christian” (despite the claims of some of the more vehement critics) and therefore cannot be charged with “attack[ing] Christianity.” To make such a claim begs the question: Is Mormonism Christian? This is a topic for another paper, but interested readers would be advised to consult *Offenders for a Word* by Drs. Peterson and Ricks who conclusively demonstrate that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is indeed “Christian.”²⁰

To support the claim that Mormons “attack Christianity” critics generally quote from a number of LDS works (primarily the *Journal of Discourses*) that contains such statements such as the following:

Brigham Young: When the light came to me I saw that all the so-called Christian world was groveling [sic] in darkness.²¹

Brigham Young: With a regard to true theology, a more ignorant people never lived than the present so-called Christian world.²²

John Taylor: What! Are Christians ignorant? Yes, as ignorant of the things of God as the brute beast.²³

John Taylor: We talk about Christianity, but it is a perfect pack of nonsense.... Myself and hundreds of the Elders around me have seen its pomp, parade, and glory; and what is it? It is a sounding brass and a tinkling symbol; it is as corrupt as hell; and the Devil could not invent a better engine to spread his work than the Christianity of the nineteenth century.²⁴

George Q. Cannon: After the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized, there were only two churches upon the earth. They were known respectively as the Church of the Lamb of God and Babylon. The various organizations which are called churches throughout Christendom, though differing in their creeds and organizations, have one common origin. They belong to Babylon.²⁵

Bruce R. McConkie: The Roman Catholic Church specifically—singled out, set apart, described, and designated as being ‘most abominable above all other churches (I Ne. 13:5).²⁶

On the surface these quotes may seem to suggest that early Latter-day Saints did not regard themselves as “Christian.” Such a conclusion, however, would be presumptuous without considering a variety of other details to the contrary. This false assumption will be discussed shortly. For now, we’ll focus on the question: Do

Latter-day Saints believe that other Christian churches are bereft of spiritual enlightenment? Peterson and Ricks note:

What the Lord told Joseph Smith in the grove was that the churches and creeds of 1820 were defective and distorted by error. He did not say that they were entirely and utterly wrong (since they preserved much truth), nor did he say that each and every Christian church would always be wrong.... He did not say that Christianity, as such, is false.²⁷

Those critics, who wish to paint Mormons as hostile to other Christians, fail to notice the quotes from early LDS leaders that acknowledge that righteous Christians of all denominations have portions of the truth.

B.H. Roberts: Let it be understood, we are not brought necessarily into antagonism with the various sects of Christianity as such. So far as they have retained fragments of Christian truth — and each of them has some measure of truth—that far they are acceptable unto the Lord; and it would be poor policy for us to contend against them without discrimination. Wherever we find truth, whether it exists in complete form or only in fragments, we recognize that truth as part of that sacred whole of which the Church of Jesus Christ is the custodian.... All that makes for truth, for righteousness, is of God; it constitutes the kingdom of righteousness—the empire of Jehovah; and, in a certain sense at least, constitutes the Church of Christ. With the latter—the kingdom of righteousness—we have no warfare. On the contrary both the spirit of the Lord’s commandments to his servants and the dictates of right reason would suggest that we seek to enlarge this kingdom of righteousness both by recognizing such truths as it possesses and seeking the friendship and co-operation of the righteous men and women who constitute its membership.²⁸

Brigham Young: I may say that many [members of Christendom] had revelations from God, but they had not the keys, and rights, and knowledge, and system of the religion of God. John Wesley was a good man, and so were thousands of others. Will they be saved? They are saved. You know what my doctrine is with regard to this matter. Every man will be judged according to the deeds done in the body.²⁹

Brigham Young: Every son and daughter of Adam who live according to the best light and knowledge they have, when the go into the spiri-

tual world, are happy in proportion to their faithfulness. For instance, take a view of some of our late reformers; take the best specimen of reformers that we have, who are all the time full of glory and happiness and full of praise to the Lord—who meet together oft and sing and pray and preach and shout and give thanks to the Lord Almighty; and in a great many instances and in a great degree they enjoy much of a good spirit, which is the Spirit of the Lord, or the Light of Christ, which lighteth the world.

...What! they enjoy the Spirit of the Lord? Yes, every man and woman, according to their faith and the knowledge they have in their possession. They enjoy the goodness of their Father in heaven. Do they receive the Spirit of the Lord? They do, and enjoy the light of it, and walk in it, and rejoice in it.

What will be their state hereafter? Every faithful Methodist that has lived up to and faithfully fulfilled the requirements of his religion, according to the best light he had, doing good to all and evil to none, injuring no person upon the earth, honouring his God as far he knew, will have as great a heaven as he ever anticipated in the flesh, and far greater. Every Presbyterian, and every Quaker, and every Baptist, and every Roman Catholic member,—every reformer, of whatever class or grade, that lives according to the best light they have, and never have had an opportunity of receiving a greater light than the one in their possession, will have and enjoy all they live for.

I am telling you the truth as it is, and you may write it down if you please, and call it revelation if you will. But it has been revealed before I revealed it here today. This is the situation of Christendom after death.³⁰

John Taylor: Although I was going to say I am not a Universalist, but I am, and I am also a Presbyterian, and a Roman Catholic, and a Methodist, in short, I believe in every true principle that is imbibed by any person or sect, and reject the false. If there is any truth in heaven, earth, or hell, I want to embrace it, I care not what shape it comes in to me, who brings it, or who believes in it, whether it is popular or unpopular. Truth, eternal truth, I wish to float in and enjoy.³¹

Lorenzo Snow: We see the providence of God in all things; we see them in raising up different communities and establishments in the

world for the general and universal benefit of mankind. We see the providence of God in raising up a Luther and a John Wesley; we see the providence of God in all the Christian organizations and communities...³²

While Lorenzo Snow also acknowledged that there is a difference between “the possession of the Holy Ghost” and the “possession of the Spirit of God” he recognized that the “Spirit of God” can be possessed by all the “honest hearted, those who are living according to the best light they have.”

All Christian Churches have it, those who seek truth and righteousness. The Baptists, if they are honest, have it; so have the Presbyterians and the Methodists; so also have all Christian and heathen nations. ...We can trace the providence of the Almighty in raising up certain individuals to establish religious organizations, and we see in these things the workings of the Spirit of God for the general interest of the human family. We look upon George Washington, the father of our country, as an inspired instrument of the Almighty; we can see the all-inspiring Spirit operating upon him. ...We can see not only what the Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, Shakers, Presbyterians, and Campbellites see,—the hand of the Lord working with them, but we can see the hand of the Almighty establishing a kingdom spoken of in ages long past by Daniel the Prophet...³³

Latter-day Saints believe that there was an apostasy—that Biblical Christianity had become corrupted due to outside influences—yet recognize that righteous people everywhere receive blessings and inspiration from the Lord. As current LDS Prophet and President Gordon B. Hinckley said,

There are some of other faiths who do not regard us as Christians. That is not important. How we regard ourselves is what is important. We acknowledge without hesitation that there are differences between us. Were this not so there would have been no need for a restoration of the gospel....

We can respect other religions, and must do so. We must recognize the great good they accomplish. We must teach our children to be tolerant and friendly toward those not of our faith. We can and do work with those of other religions in the defense of those values which have made our civilization great and our society distinctive...

But in all of this there is no doctrinal compromise. There need not be and must not be on our part. But there is a degree of fellowship as we labor together.³⁴

Even the uniquely LDS Book of Mormon explains:

Wherefore, all things which are good cometh of God, and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin and to do that which is evil continually. But behold, that which is of God, inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore, everything which inviteth and enticeth to do good and to love God and to serve Him is inspired of God. (Moroni 7:12-13.)

DID THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS STRIKE THE FIRST BLOW? WERE THE FIRST ANTI-MORMONS SIMPLY DEFENDING THEMSELVES AGAINST THE ATTACKING MORMONS?

Any effort to demonstrate that Mormon doctrine is unbiblical is not an attack, but merely a case of defending the Christian faith. You see, it was Joseph Smith, the founder of the Latter-day Saint movement, who made the first assault...³⁵

Mormons frequently ask Christians, “Why are you attacking us?” In fact, Christians are only responding to Mormon attacks. It was Mormonism who first began the trouble and attacked Christianity, and this has yet to cease. Will Mormons not allow for Christians what they reserve for themselves, the defense of their own faith? ...So—who really started it all?³⁶

As noted earlier, this claim is based on the 1838 version of Joseph Smith’s 1820 First Vision wherein Christ called the Christian creeds “abomination[s].” The problem is that the 1838 dictated account wasn’t published until 1842, just two years before Joseph’s death. Evidence suggests that Joseph’s vision was, at the time, considered a “private experience.” “Neither Smith nor Mormon missionaries made much mention of the vision in the early days of Mormonism.”³⁷ Joseph didn’t record his 1820 vision until 1832 and the first time any details of the vision were published was in 1835. “The story of Joseph’s first vision,” notes Givens, “may have taken years to make the transition from personal conversation narrative to publicly proclaimed portent of the new gospel dispensation.”³⁸ Historian Richard L. Bushman notes that according to the evidence, Joseph

shared few details about his vision to others—even family members.³⁹ Given the fact that the details of the First Vision were not widely known in the early days of Mormonism, it’s curious that Joseph was persecuted for the very *rumor* that he claimed to have conversed with deity.

From early on, there were some who sought Joseph’s life. His mother recalls an occasion when Joseph was fired upon by a sniper who missed the boy and struck a nearby cow instead.⁴⁰ Disciple of Christ founder, Alexander Campbell, wrote and published the first anti-Mormon pamphlet in 1831—four years before Joseph’s First Vision was published. Campbell, a Christian minister, attacks the Book of Mormon but never makes mention of Joseph’s First Vision or that he is writing a “defense” against a Mormon assault on Christianity.

In 1834, still a year before an initial version of Joseph’s vision was published, E.D. Howe published the first anti-Mormon book, *Mormonism Unveiled* (sic). Like Campbell, Howe focused primarily on the Book of Mormon. And while Howe’s book contained the supposed quotes and recollections of Joseph’s neighbors, these reports were written to discredit Joseph’s character—not one of them mentions the First Vision, nor that Joseph supposedly attacked “Christianity” first. While I haven’t done an exhaustive search of pre-1835 anti-Mormon publications, I have yet to find any early anti-Mormon writings (1835 or even later) that charges Joseph with attacking “Christianity.” Perhaps such a claim is the invention of modern critics who wish to rationalize or minimize their attack on the LDS faith.

IS THE LDS CLAIM TO CHRISTIANITY A RECENT INVENTION OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS? DID EARLY LATTER-DAY SAINTS DENY THAT MORMONS ARE CHRISTIAN, OR DID THEY INTENTIONALLY ATTEMPT TO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES AS NON-CHRISTIAN?

Ironically, some anti-Mormons claim that the Saints only recently decided to appear Christian for proselytizing purposes.

Early Mormon prophets and leaders made VERY clear statements explaining that their church was NOT a Christian denomination.⁴¹

According to Michael J. Davis, Professor of Medical Physiology at Texas A&M University and a former Mormon, “The LDS church has recently

exerted great effort to portray itself as a Christian denomination,” a departure from past positioning.⁴²

In recent years, Mormon leaders... have sought to align the LDS’ public teachings and practices with those of politically correct, global ecumenicism. But it is only until recently that Mormons wanted to be called “Christians,” ...[T]he LDS church has spent millions of dollars in an intense ‘PR’ campaign aimed at moving the Mormon church into the mainstream of Christianity. The political and economic benefits of Mormons being included in the mainstream of Christianity are obvious. Further, for Mormons to be accepted as traditional Christians would greatly aid in proselytizing the members of Christian denominations into the LDS church. This is why the LDS church is trying so hard to present itself as Christian and is trying to overcome the stigma of being a cult.⁴³

But is this really accurate? As noted earlier, Latter-day Saints recognize that there are doctrinal differences between Mormons and other Christians, but did early Mormons believe that they were non-Christian? By citing selected passages from early LDS sermons, critics paint a picture of early Mormons denouncing “Christianity” as depraved. As already noted, however, this is a caricature of actual LDS theology regarding other faiths. Early Latter-day Saints sometimes referred to other Christian faiths as “so-called Christianity” or “professing Christians.” Brigham Young, for instance, referred to the “Christian brethren who do not belong to the Latter-day Church.”⁴⁴

Mormons did not (and do not) see themselves as non-Christians but rather saw many other Christians as rejecting certain Christian doctrines. “Should you ask,” Brigham Young queried, “why we differ from other Christians as they are called, it is simply because they are not Christians as the New Testament defines Christianity.”⁴⁵ “We differ from modern Christianity,” Parley P. Pratt likewise noted, “but not from the Bible.”⁴⁶ Early LDS leaders frequently referred to their faith as “Christian” or to non-LDS faiths as “other Christians.” Following are a few examples:

Heber C. Kimball: Now, brethren, do not be eye servants, do not be merely Christians and Saints while you are here, but be Saints when you are at home, in your secret closets, and in your family, &c. When you labor, be Saints and work while it is called to day you cannot do any too much.⁴⁷

Brigham Young: Parents—you who continue to live the life of true Christians, and are filled with faith, virtue, and good works, I promise you, in the name of Israel’s God, that you will have your children, and no power can rob you of them; for all will be saved, except the sons of perdition.⁴⁸

Brigham Young: Come, my brother Presbyterian; come, my brother professors of every persuasion of long standing and popular distinction in the world, who are dubbed with the word “ORTHODOX;” come, we are all good Christians; I find no fault with you—why should you find fault with me?⁴⁹

Brigham Young: Now, we as Christians desire to be saved in the kingdom of God.⁵⁰

The charge that Latter-day Saints are non-Christian was leveled at the early Saints as well as modern Mormons. Elder Henry W. Naisbitt (of nineteenth-century Mormonism) responded to this charge:

The Latter-day Saints, to the surprise of many, call themselves Christians. Notwithstanding the opposition that they have encountered; notwithstanding the prejudice with which they have had to contend; notwithstanding the ignorance that is everywhere manifest in regard to them and to their institutions, they claim to be Christians,—or followers of Christ; and in assuming this title, they accept it with all that it implies... and while their claims to Christianity, or the epithet of Christians, may be ignored, disputed, or repudiated by others, still they are abundantly able to prove that their position is correct...⁵¹

Naisbitt’s quote demonstrates—despite the claims of the critics—that the Mormon claim to Christianity is not a recent invention.

WHY WOULD LATTER-DAY SAINTS USE HARSH TERMINOLOGY WHEN REFERRING TO OTHER CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS?

Most of these hyperbolic utterances (as recorded in the *Journal of Discourse*) were made after the Saints had been driven from their homes (multiple times) by mobs which were often lead by “Christian” ministers. “We, as Christians,” Brigham Young explained, “believe in God, in Christ and in his atonement, in repentance and obe-

dience, and in receiving the Spirit; but what are the facts in the case? We are persecuted, our names are cast out as evil, we have the world arrayed against us. And who are at the head of this? The Christians.”⁵²

Wilford Woodruff: The present Presidency of this Church... have laboured incessantly for years to save the children of men. And what have we received in return from the hands of the Christian world? They have driven us from our homes and firesides, and smitten and robbed us of the rights that are dear and most sacred to man, until we have at last been driven from the borders of civilization, so called, unto the wilderness...⁵³

Orson Pratt: We find that [other Christians have] ...been the great influence which has produced all the persecutions that have come upon the Latter-day Saints since the organization of this Church. How many preachers were gathered together in the western part of Missouri at the time we were driven from the State to give their advice in a pretended court martial to have some fifteen or twenty of the leaders of this people taken out and shot on the public square the next morning? There were not less than seventeen priests who advised the measure.⁵⁴

Brigham Young claimed that “our beloved brother Christians” had slain the Prophets “and butchered and otherwise caused the death of thousands of Latter-day Saints...” These Christian ministers, he noted, “have thanked God in their prayers and thanksgiving from the pulpit” for having “plundered, driven, and slain” the Latter-day Saints.⁵⁵

George A. Smith: When we commenced to preach the Gospel to the world without purse or scrip, without money or price, these ministers were generally the first to raise the hue and cry, to tar and feather, and throw rotten eggs at us; to drive us from our homes and tear down our habitations; and in every mob, from the commencement to the close of the persecutions, were to be found men professing to be ministers of the Gospel; and although the denominations to which they belonged might not be disposed to persecute, yet they disgraced them by taking part in such proceedings. It is said that the men who slew the Savior believed they did God service, and it is probable that the ministers, professors of religion and others, who, with blackened faces, surrounded Carthage jail and mur-

dered, in cold blood, the Prophet and Patriarch of the Church, Joseph and Hyrum Smith, thought they also were doing God service, although they were guilty of the most brutal and disgraceful murders ever perpetrated on the earth.⁵⁶

SUMMARY

The fact that Christianity in general had fallen into apostasy, and that Christian ministers had often been the instigators in LDS persecutions occasionally gave rise to contemptuous articulation in some early LDS talks. Latter-day Saints did not launch an attack on Christianity. As Christians themselves, LDS leaders have acknowledged that God loves all His children and that different denominations have varying degrees of the truth. Those truths help enrich and bless the lives of those who adhere to such truths. Nevertheless, LDS authorities have also noted that the fullness of the Gospel had disappeared from the earth, only to be restored in these last days.

FURTHER READING

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Givens, Terryl L. *By the Hand of Mormon: The Ancient Scripture that Launched a New World Religion*. New York City: Oxford, 2002.

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NOTES

1. <http://www.contenderministries.org/mormonism.php>
2. http://www.apologeticsresearch.org/articles/Our_Position.html
3. http://www.geocities.com/christianwitnesses/LDS_Attack.html
4. http://www.ericbarger.com/mormon_jesus.htm
5. Joseph Smith—History 1:19.
6. Ibid.
7. <http://www.freedomquestministries.org/studyguides/mormonism/14questions.htm>

8. Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).
9. See Barry R. Bickmore, *Restoring the Ancient Church: Joseph Smith and Early Christianity* (Ben Lomond, California: Foundation for Apologetic Information and Research, 1999).
10. Gary P. Gillum, "Creeds," *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, edited by Daniel H. Ludlow (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1992), 1:343.
11. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Vol. 6 (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1978), 57.
12. Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language* (1828).
13. Jefferson didn't even believe in the miracles as recorded in the Bible. See D. Michael Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View: Enlarged and Revised* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1998), 9.
14. Saul K. Padover, *Thomas Jefferson on Democracy* (New York City: New American Library, 1939), 122–123, quoted in Gilbert Scharffs, *The Truth About "The God Makers"* (Salt Lake City: Publisher's Press, 1986), 294.
15. Methodist leader Roger Williams, for instance, believed that the Church of England was "'a daughter... of the great whore of Rome.'" [Dan Vogel, *Religious Seekers and the Advent of Mormonism* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1988), 61.]
16. Joseph Smith—History 2:21.
17. Quinn, *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*, 8.
18. La Roy Sunderland, *Mormonism Exposed and Refuted* (Piercy and Reed Printers, New York, 1838), v.
19. Henry Caswall M.A., *The Prophet of the Nineteenth Century* (St. Paul's Church Yard, London, 1843), 102.
20. Daniel C. Peterson and Stephen D. Ricks, *Offenders for a Word: How Anti-Mormons Play Word Games to Attack the Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Aspen Books, 1992).
21. Brigham Young, "Nebuchadnezzar's Dream, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 26 July 1857, Vol. 5 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1857), 73.
22. Brigham Young, "Persecution – The Kingdom of God, Etc." *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 7 October 1860, Vol 8 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1861), 199.
23. John Taylor, "'The Kingdom of God or Nothing,'" *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 1 November 1857, Vol. 6 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1859), 25.
24. John Taylor, "Blessings of the Saints, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by J.V. Long 17 January 1858, Vol. 6 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1859), 167.
25. George Q. Cannon, *Gospel Truth* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1987), 324.
26. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1958), 129. For more details on the myth that Latter-day Saints believe Catholicism to be the "great and abominable church," see Michael R. Ash, "Is the 'Great and Abominable Church' the Catholic Church?" at <http://www.mormonfortress.com/ga1.html>
27. Peterson and Ricks, *Offenders for a Word*, 170–171.
28. B.H. Roberts, *Defense of the Faith and the Saints*, 2 vols. (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1907), 1:34.
29. Brigham Young, "Approval of the Proceedings, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 9 August 1857, Vol. 5 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1857), 128.
30. Brigham Young, "Extensive Character of the Gospel, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 15 August 1852, Vol. 6 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1859), 292–293. In the same sermon, Young went on to explain that righteous non-Christians would likewise inherit a degree of glory. "And will it be glory? you may inquire. Yes. Glory, glory, glory to our merciful Father in heaven; for the least glory spoken of in this Vision given to Joseph Smith, junior, and Sidney Rigdon, cannot be described: it is so great and so exquisite that it is altogether beyond mortal perception."
31. John Taylor, "Motives and Feelings of the Saints, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 12 June 1853, Vol. 1 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1854), 155.
32. Lorenzo Snow, "Progression, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by David W. Evans 14 January 1872, Vol. 14 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1872), 301–302.
33. Lorenzo Snow, "Progression, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by David W. Evans 14 January 1872, Vol. 14 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1872), 304–305.
34. Gordon B. Hinckley, "We Bear Witness of Him," *Conference Report*, April 1988.
35. <http://www.mission.org/jesuspeople/mormatak.htm>
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40. Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother, Lucy Mack Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945), 67–68.
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43. <http://www.rapidnet.com/~jbeard/bdm/Cults/mormon.htm>
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47. Heber C. Kimball, "Exhortation to Faithfulness," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 18 April 1852, Vol. 3 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1856), 21–22.
48. Brigham Young, "Re-organization of the High Council, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 8 October 1859, Vol. 7 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1860), 336.
49. Brigham Young, "Effects and Privileges of the Gospel, Etc.," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 24 July 1853, Vol. 1 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1854), 237.
50. Brigham Young, "Beneficial Effects of Polygamy," *Journal of Discourses*, reported by G.D. Watt 19 August 1866, Vol. 11 (London: Latter-Day Saint's Book Depot, 1867), 269.
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born and raised LDS, Mike is the father of three girls and the grandfather of one boy. He sells jewelry and electronics at a retail store in Ogden, Utah. Mike has

been in several Elder's Quorum presidencies and taught the Priests, Elder's Quorum, Gospel Doctrine for the Single Young Adults, and general Gospel Doctrine (my current calling). His first real encounter with anti-Mormon literature came in about 1980 after reading *The Kingdom of the Cults*. About four years later, after seeing *The God Makers*, Mike became interested in LDS apologetics. He's been an active participant in on-line LDS apologetics since 1990, and he currently owns and operates the MormonFortress.com Web site, a repository of apologetic articles refuting anti-Mormon accusations. He has authored nearly four dozen articles on his Web site and provides links to dozens of other articles authored by other LDS apologists. Mike was a presenter at FAIR conferences in 2000 and 2002, and had a review published in the *FARMS Review of Books* 13:2. Mike expects to have an article published in an upcoming *Dialogue*.

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