

Also read [p.s. #9](#), “Mormon Missionary Surge”

## WHAT MORMON MISSIONARIES TEACH

For ten years the Mormon church’s full-time missionary force (now more than 80,000 strong) has used a 228-page guide, *Preach My Gospel*, to structure five “lessons.” Many other Mormons also use the guide in their outreach to family and friends.

Although the church suggests that users of the guide tailor the number and sequence of presentations for each unique encounter, the lessons contain what the church considers the essentials of its message.

An abbreviated introduction to the lessons:

### Lesson 1. “The Message of the Restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ”

**Bottom line:** A full understanding of the gospel disappeared shortly after Christ’s apostles died. About 1500 years later long-lost truths were restored when resurrected prophets and apostles of old—Peter, James, and John, for example—and Christ Himself—visited America. All restored truths and authority are now embodied in the Mormon church, established in the early nineteenth century. A few details from Lesson 1:

- God is a “perfected” being of flesh and bone.
- God fathered in heaven the spirits of all mortals.
- Mortals may “return” to heaven if they remain “pure and clean” and obey commandments.
- God has always used prophets to reveal His “plan of happiness” for mortals—from Adam to the present. “A living prophet directs the Church today.”
- Prophets “learn the gospel of Jesus Christ by revelation,” and teach others how to return to heaven.
- The first Mormon prophet, Joseph Smith—likened to “Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and other prophets”—learned during a visit by the Father and Son in 1820, that existing churches “were all wrong” and “all their creeds were an abomination.” By 1830 he had published the *Book of Mormon* (subtitled today as *Another Testament of Jesus Christ*) and founded the Mormon church, thus restoring to earth the gospel, a single, correct church organization, and the powers and authority of the priesthood.

• Anyone who prays earnestly and reads the *Book of Mormon* can know all of this is true, because such prayer is answered by “powerful, but...usually gentle and quiet” feelings and thoughts, and a desire to know more about the Restoration.

**Comment:** Note that the *first* point the Mormon church wants people to know is not the gospel itself, but the *restoration* of a unique Mormon “gospel” and

its corollary doctrine called the “Great Apostasy”—the 1500 years when all of Christianity held corrupted doctrines and “people relied on human wisdom [instead of ongoing revelation and priesthood authority] to interpret the scriptures and the principles and ordinances of the gospel.” “False ideas were taught as truth.” The gospel was lost.

The next three lessons reveal what Mormon prophets say they learned by revelation: Details about life before Creation, the purpose of mortal life, and what is required of people to “retain a remission of their sins and stay on the pathway to eternal life”

**Lesson 2. “The Plan of Salvation”**

**Lesson 3. “The Gospel of Jesus Christ”**

**Lesson 4. “The Commandments”**

More to come about these three lessons in [p.s. #11](#).

**Lesson 5. “Laws and Ordinances”** is primarily for those who convert to Mormonism. Some principles also may be mentioned in earlier lessons, such as:

- Obey Mormon prophets.
- Honor the Mormon priesthood.
- Demonstrate to church authorities “worthiness” to participate in temple rituals, including marriage, to improve your chance for eternal life.
- Promote the Mormon church to nonmembers, and serve other members as directed by leaders.
- Research your family history, and perform sacred temple rites on behalf of deceased kin.

As Mormons talk about their religion it may seem to be largely in sync with biblical Christian faith. It’s not. And that’s why we cite and recommend official, current Mormon church sources.

You don’t have to accept zealous (but often careless) critics on the Web or elsewhere. You don’t have to accept what often-ill-informed Mormons may say. And you don’t have to take our word for it.

You can see the religion’s errors in this paper: e.g.: A perfected God of flesh and bone. Life in heaven before mortality. Salvation for the dead. And more!

### SEE FOR YOURSELF

- Download the entire *Preach My Gospel* manual at <https://www.lds.org/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service?lang=eng>.
- Also you can download the three unique books of Mormon scripture (called “triple combination”) at <https://www.lds.org/scriptures/formats>.