

MORMONS SAY THEY ARE CHRISTIANS, AND THEY INVITE YOU TO CHECK THEM OUT

What could be wrong with Mormonism? They will tell you that •They believe the Bible. •They believe God is the Creator. •They believe in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for sin. •They believe all have sinned, but can be saved, justified, by God's grace. •They believe in healthy, monogamous families. —Anything wrong with that?

Official Mormon church teachings (see below) may or may not be understood and accepted by individual members, but Christians should know and reject them.

The Bible

Mormons commonly use the King James Version (KJV) and yes, they believe it is the word of God—**except** where it's wrong or incomplete. Their church teaches that some Bible text was lost or deliberately distorted through the ages. Their founder, the Prophet Joseph Smith, claimed divine inspiration for correcting the Bible. His work in the 1830s, is incomplete, but is published as the Joseph Smith Translation (JST). It is often cited in the church-published KJV and is included in their scripture called The Pearl of Great Price. Among other changes he made:

- The JST **added** a dozen verses to Genesis 50 foretelling the appearance of the Mormon church (a *restoration* in the *latter days*), and naming the seer who will bring it about. [You guessed it: Joseph.]

- Many verses and whole chapters of Genesis were **changed**.

- Song of Solomon was **discarded**.

- New Testament truths were **altered** to bolster Mormon doctrines, as in the following:

Salvation by grace and faith alone

Mormons believe it is by God's grace that people are saved—**if** they do their part. In a parody of Ephesians 2:8,9, Joseph Smith wrote into Mormon scripture, "...it is by grace that we are saved, **after** all **we** can do."

Justification

In Romans 4:5 Joseph Smith **added** a word (JST)—God "justifieth **not** the ungodly." That is, God justifies Mormons, they think, who do their best to become godly. The JST warps Romans 4:16 into this: "...ye are justified of faith **and** works, through grace...."

Creation

Mormons believe Creation was the **organizing** of stuff somehow already existing. The spirits of all eventual mortals approved God's plan, and some also helped in the project, which was supervised by Jesus. Mormon scripture adds that this Creation was done by "the Gods."

Monogamy

Mormons reject polygamy—**for now**. Joseph Smith was an enthusiastic, serial polygamist. The church says that God commanded him and others to do it (however reluctant they might have said they were!), and some decades later phased out the practice.

The church's "Great Plan of Happiness" continues after death. Mormon temple rites for living and dead seal single women into "eternal families" as wives. A man who remarried after losing a wife may have both (and others) forever, and with them continue to expand his family in perpetuity.