

Polygamy Is Not Enough

Bugging Mormons about polygamy probably won't work.
Some background—and some suggestions.

Generally Mormons know about polygamy, a quirk in their church history, but they believe that, for reasons unknown to them, the practice was God's will for some early members and leaders. Most Mormons are satisfied that their church currently prohibits polygamy.

Some may think polygamy is practiced among their Gods, and possibly, by deceased members. After mortality, resurrection, and judgment, those judged worthy enough may achieve godhood ("eternal life" or "exaltation") and live in "forever families," possibly with a "plurality of wives." Members, especially women, who die while worthy but single, are promised spouses and children in eternity.

When they think about their "forever families," Mormons may have in mind some advanced form of their own mortal nuclear and extended families.

Mormon scripture calls polygamy "a principle." In a confusing passage of Mormon-unique scripture written a dozen years after Joseph Smith secretly began collecting wives, "the Lord thy God" adjured Smith's first wife to "receive all those that have been given unto" her husband; if she didn't "she shall be destroyed."

Mormons defend Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and other avid polygamous leaders of yore, because, they think, the men were submitting to God's revealed will for them at that time, difficult, as some said, though it was.

Some followers of Joseph Smith still practice polygamy, some openly, others secretly, faithful, they think, to the true Christian religion restored to earth through Smith. These "fundamentalists" are not members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints headquartered in Salt Lake City, although their groups may have similar names and are sometimes called Mormons.

Suggestions. •Christians should be aware of the polygamous past of Mormonism and its documentation in unique Mormon scriptures. More importantly, they should understand that, its past and scriptures notwithstanding, the modern Mormon church prohibits the practice or promotion of polygamy by its members. •Unless the church's history clearly troubles a Mormon, pick a better subject, a Mormon doctrine that's current, easily documented, and antithetic to Christian faith: e.g.: Mormon polytheism ([their plural Gods](#)), not polygamy (their plural wives of the past). •The objective is not to prove that Mormons are wrong, but expose them to the Good News: eternal life by grace through faith.

Mormon leaders tend to minimize the history of polygamy and the church's inexplicable scriptures, then cite the current prohibition. Material being published by the church today avoids but doesn't deny polygamy; it simply makes little or no mention of the many wives, (some quite young and others married to other men) of its early prophets; new Mormons, especially, may have no accurate understanding of their church history — and may not give a hoot, anyway.

MORMON SCRIPTURE

"...if any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent,...he cannot commit adultery for they are given unto him; for he cannot commit adultery with that that belongeth unto him and to no one else. And if he have ten virgins...."

—published in 1843