

Question #1: Are You Listening to the Right People?

Both Christians and Mormons alike agree that we come from God and that we are not simply a cosmic accident. There's also agreement that God has made Himself known through His Son, apostles and prophets.

But it is here that we must explore whether the God of Mormonism is the true God of Scripture, if the Mormon Jesus is the true Jesus of Scripture, whether the apostles and prophets of Mormonism can be trusted like those of the Scriptures.

Explore...

“Is the God of Mormonism the True God of Scripture?”

There are at least two things the Mormon Church teaches about God that differ greatly from that of the Scriptures. These teachings include...

1. That God was once a man like you and I and has a humanlike body.
2. There are a plurality of gods that existed before the God of the Bible.

Let's explore together where those teachings came from, whether they are consistent with what God has revealed about Himself, and how to have a fruitful conversation leading to the truth of who God really is as revealed in His Word. Let's start by asking and answering two questions about the Mormon teaching of God...

1. Was God Once a Man Like You and I and Does He Have a Humanlike Body?

Mormons teach that God the Father was once a mortal man just like us (Doctrine and Covenants 130). They say He continually progressed to become a god – and that the rest of us can become gods like Him by adopting and faithfully adhering to Mormonism. The Mormon Journal of Discourses says, “God himself was once as we are now and is an exalted man.” It also says that “God our Heavenly Father was perhaps once a child and mortal like we are and rose step by step in the scale of progress, in the school of advancement; He has moved forward and overcome until He has arrived at the point where He is now.” (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:123)

In support of this view the Mormon Church uses the following passages...

Genesis 1:26-27

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

The Mormon Teaching:

Since man was born with a body of flesh and bones, Mormons claim **Genesis 1:26-27** supports their view that God the Father has a physical body. They teach that since man has a body of flesh and bone, and since we are created in the image of God, God must have a body of flesh and bone.

The Biblical Teaching:

In letting Scripture interpret Scripture it becomes clear that man is not created in the physical image of God but in the spiritual aspect bearing His resemblance in areas such as love, creativity, and will. Jesus Himself said in **John 4:24** that God the Father is spirit.

Ask...

- Would you please read **John 4:24**? What did Jesus say about God the Father here?
- In **Luke 24:39** Jesus said a spirit does not have flesh and bones. Doesn't that mean that the Mormon Church was mistaken in teaching that God has a body of flesh and bones?
- Can you see why **Genesis 1:26-27** cannot be speaking of a physical image?
- Would you please read **Hosea 11:9** and **Numbers 23:19**?
- Don't these verses make clear that there is a massive distinction between God and man?
- Did you know that even the Book of Mormon says that God is not a man in Alma 22:10 and Alma 31:15?
- Did you know that the Bible says that God the Father is invisible? (**1 Timothy 1:17, Colossians 1:15, and John 1:18**)

Exodus 33:11

11 And the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormons reason that since Moses saw the Lord face to face, then God must, in fact, have a real face. And if He has a real face, then He must have a whole physical body as well.

(LeGrand Richards, *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder*, p.16)

The Biblical Teaching:

“Face to face” is simply a Hebrew way of indicating “personally”, “directly”, or “intimately.” Moses was in the direct presence of God and interacted with Him on a personal and intimate basis. There are other metaphorical examples used of God in the Bible such as **Psalm 91:4** that says, “He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler.”

Ask...

- Does the fact that **Psalm 91:4** says God has feathers and wings mean He literally has feathers and wings?
- Can you also see how the term “face” is used figuratively to refer to intimacy, especially since Jesus already taught that the Father is spirit (**John 4:24**) and the Apostle Paul taught that He is invisible (**Colossians 1:15**)?
- Did you know that Mormon Apostle Joseph Fielding Smith said that all revelatory appearances to Old Testament persons like Moses were appearances of Jehovah (Jesus) and not Elohim (the Father) and that Mormon expositors teach that in **Exodus 33** Moses is dealing with Jehovah, and not Elohim?
- Isn't it faulty, then, for you to cite a passage dealing with Jehovah (Jesus) in order to prove a point about Elohim (the Father)?
- Did you know that Joseph Smith himself said that a person can only see God if he held the Mormon priesthood?

- Did you know that Joseph Smith was not yet ordained into the priesthood at the time he claimed to have seen God in 1820? How do you explain this?

In regard to God the Father progressing to his status of God after first being a mortal man we need to examine the following passages and answer the following questions...

- Please read **Malachi 3:6**. What does God say about Himself?
- Please read **Psalm 102:26-27**. What does it say about God?
- Did you know that even the Book of Mormon says God is unchangeable in Moroni 8:18?

Does the Father Have a Body Just Like the Son?

John 14:9

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormons teach that because Jesus said he and the Father are alike this must mean that the Father has a physical body just like Jesus. James E. Talmage said, "Even in bodily appearance the Father and the Son are alike." (James E. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith*, p. 41)

The Biblical Teaching:

Mormons are reading something into the text that just isn't there. In context, this verse clearly tells us that Jesus' mission, His words, and His works centered on the Father and in this way Jesus was the ultimate revelation of the Father.

Ask...

- Please read **John 14:10-11**.
- If the Father has a physical body how is it possible for the Father to dwell within Jesus?

Hebrews 1:3

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormons teach here that the Father and the Son are in form and stature perfect men. They also teach that Jesus couldn't have sat down at the right hand of the Father unless the Father had a body of flesh and bones.

The Biblical Teaching:

The term "person" in the Scriptures refer not to a physical body but to personality, will, and/or character. The phrase "express image" was used among the ancients to speak of an engraving tool or stamp – often in reference to the minting of coins. Christ is "the exact representation of God's real being, and all the essential characteristics of God are brought into clear focus in Him" (Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons, p. 237). The term "right hand", in the Jewish mind, referred to a place of honor.

Ask...

- Please read **Colossians 1:15**.
- Is it possible to make a literal image of something that is invisible?
- Read in its proper context, doesn't it seem like "image" is referring to Christ's deity and not to any alleged physical body? (Ibid., p. 238)

John 1:18

18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

The Mormon Teaching:

This passage poses a major problem for the Mormon Church so Joseph Smith retranslated it to read, "No man hath seen God at any time, except he hath borne record of the Son; for except it is through him no man can be saved."

The Biblical Teaching:

There's zero manuscript evidence for such a translation of this text.

Ask...

- Can we take Joseph Smith's rendering of **John 1:18** seriously when there's no evidence for it in the Greek manuscripts?

Recap of God the Father Not Having a Humanlike Body:

- God is a spirit (**John 4:24**), and a spirit does not have flesh and bones (**Luke 24:39**).
- The Bible says that God is not a man (**Hosea 11:9**).
- The Book of Mormon denies that God is a glorified man (Alma 22:10, 31:15; Mormon 9:9-11; Moroni 7:22, 8:18)
- God the Father is invisible (**Colossians 1:15**).
- Anthropomorphisms (figures of speech) – such as “face” and “hands” – are often used of God in Scripture.
- God is unchangeable and does not “progress” to exaltation. **Malachi 3:6** quotes the words of God this way, “I am the Lord, I change not.”
- Even the Book of Mormon says God does not change: “I know that God is... neither a changeable being; but he is unchangeable from all eternity to all eternity” (Moroni 8:18).

Now that we have established that the Mormon teaching on God having a physical body is false we must now explore whether God the Father has a Father God, who has a Father God, and so on into eternity.

2. Are There a Plurality of Gods That Exist Today and Have Existed into Eternity Past?

Mormonism teaches that the Persons of the Trinity are not three persons in one being, but that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three separate and distinct gods. The founder of Mormonism, Joseph Smith, clearly taught that not only are there three distinct gods that we are supposed to worship, there are also a plurality of other gods that have exalted themselves to the status of God.

In one message Smith said this:

“I will preach on the plurality of Gods... I wish to declare I have always and in all congregations when I preached on the subject of the Deity, it has been on the plurality of Gods... We have three Gods, anyhow, and they are plural; who can contradict it?”

(Joseph Fielding Smith, ed, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Book Company, 1977, p.370)

It is critical to recognize that in Mormon theology, just as Jesus has a Father, so the Father has a Father, and the Father of Jesus' Father has a Father. This endless succession of Fathers goes on and on, up the hierarchy of exalted beings in the universe. Not only are there numerous Father-gods, there is also a “Heavenly Mother.” In *A Study of the Articles of Faith*, James E. Talmage says, “We are expressly told that God is the Father of our Spirits, and to apprehend the literalness of this solemn truth we must know that a Mother of Spirits is an existent personality.”

Genesis 1:26-27

26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

The Mormon Teaching:

Joseph Smith taught that since the word *Elohim*, the Hebrew word for God, has a plural ending it must mean that there is a plurality of Gods. Smith taught that “in the beginning, the head of the Gods called a council of the Gods; and they came together and concocted a plan to create the world and people it.” (Joseph Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, 6:5; Smith, ed., *Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 349)

The Biblical Teaching:

Christian scholars believe the plural form, *Elohim*, is actually a “plural of majesty” – pointing to the majesty, dignity, and greatness of God. Biblical grammarians tell us that the use of plural pronouns such as ‘us’ and ‘our’ corresponds grammatically with the plural form of the Hebrew word *Elohim*. One demands the other.

Ask...

- Would you please allow me to read **Genesis 1:26-27**?
- Did you notice the phrases “our image” and “our likeness” in verse 26 are explained in verse 27 as “the image of God” and “in his own image”?
- Do you think its possible that Hebrew scholars are correct to call the plural form of *Elohim* a “plural of majesty”?
- Did you know that even the Book of Mormon itself states there is only one God?
- Would you please read Alma 11:26-31, Alma 11:44, and Mormon 7:7?

Psalm 82:1,6; John 10:34

¹ *God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. ⁶ I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.*

³⁴ *Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?*

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormons teach that **Psalm 82** supports the doctrine of the plurality of gods. If the psalmist said it and it was confirmed by Jesus then it must be a true doctrine.

The Biblical Teaching:

Looking at the context of **Psalm 82**, it is clear that the Lord, through Asaph, is speaking in irony in this verse. He is ultimately saying that they are called gods, but they will die like men. When Jesus quoted this Psalm in **John 10:34** He was saying that He really is God in reality compared to these men who are called “gods” but will die like all other men.

Consider the following questions from author Ron Rhodes...

Ask...

- Did you notice that Jesus spoke in the present tense in **John 10:34** – “Ye are gods”?
- Do you believe you are a god at the present moment?
- So, Jesus couldn’t have intended to communicate that His listeners were actually gods at the moment, right?
- Doesn’t it make more sense to look at the context in **Psalm 82**, where we discover that the unjust judges were called “gods” only in irony and judgment?
- Isn’t it clear from the context that what the Israelite judges were called in irony and judgment, Jesus is in reality?
- Would you now please read **Isaiah 43:10-11; 44:6,8; 45:5-6,14,18,21-22; 46:9**?
- How do you reconcile these verses with the Mormon claim that God has a Father, who has a Father, and so on? Did God forget that there were gods before Him?
- Would you please read Isaiah **43:10** again?
- Since there were no gods before Him, doesn’t this mean that our Father had no Father-gods or Grandfather-gods before Him?
- Since no gods will come after Him, doesn’t this mean that none of His children will become gods?

Matthew 3:16-17

⁶ And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: ¹⁷ And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormon apostle James E. Talmage taught this passage clearly shows that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit cannot be “one person” as Trinitarians believe.

The Biblical Teaching:

Trinitarians do not believe in a “one person” God, they believe in one God existing eternally in three persons. This is based off three lines of biblical evidence: (1) evidence there is only one

true God; (2) evidence that there are three persons who are recognized as God; and (3) evidence for three-in-oneness within the Godhead.

Evidence for One God: Deuteronomy 32:39; 2 Samuel 7:22; Psalm 86:10; Isaiah 44:6,9 1 Corinthians 8:4; James 2:19; John 5:44; 17:3; Romans 3:29-30; 16:27; Galatians 3:20; Ephesians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2:5; 1 John 5:20-21; Jude 25

Evidence for Three Persons Who Are Called God:

- Peter refers to the “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father” (**1 Peter 1:2**).
- When Jesus appeared to Thomas after His resurrection, Thomas exclaimed, “My Lord and my God” (**John 20:28**). As well the Father said of the Son, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (**Hebrews 1:8**).
- In **Acts 5:3-4**, we are told that lying to the Holy Spirit is the same as lying to God.

In His book Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons Ron Rhodes makes the following keen observations regarding each of the three persons of the Trinity possessing the attributes of deity:

- All three persons possess the attribute of *omnipresence* (everywhere present): the Father (**Matthew 19:26**), the Son (**Matthew 28:18**), and the Holy Spirit (**Psalms 139:7**).
- All three have the attribute of *omniscience* (all knowing): the Father (**Romans 11:33**), the Son (**Matthew 9:4**), and the Holy Spirit (**1 Corinthians 2:10**).
- All three have the attribute of *omnipotence* (all powerful): the Father (**Jeremiah 32:27**), the Son (**Matthew 28:18**), and the Holy Spirit (**Romans 15:19**).
- *Holiness* is ascribed to each of the three Persons: the Father (**Revelation 15:4**), the Son (**Acts 3:14**), and the Holy Spirit (**John 16:7-14**).
- *Eternality* is ascribed to all three Persons: the Father (**Psalms 90:2**), the Son (**Micah 5:2; John 1:2; Revelation 1:8,17**), and the Holy Spirit (**Hebrews 9:14**).
- Each of the three Persons is individually described as the *truth*: the Father (**John 7:28**), the Son (**Revelation 3:7**), and the Holy Spirit (**1 John 5:6**).

- As well, each of the three is called *Lord* (**Romans 10:12; Luke 2:11; 2 Corinthians 3:17**), everlasting (**Romans 16:26; Revelation 22:13; Hebrews 9:14**), and *almighty* (**Genesis 17:1; Revelation 1:8; Romans 15:19**).

Acts 7:55-56

⁵⁵ But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, ⁵⁶ And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

The Mormon Teaching:

The Mormon Church teaches that since Stephen saw two distinct personages then there must be at least two distinct gods.

The Biblical Teaching:

First it must be pointed out that the text does not say that Stephen saw the physical, material body of God the Father. What it says is that Stephen saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at His right hand.

Ask...

- Where does it say that Stephen saw the physical material body of God the Father in **Acts 7:55-56**?
- If **John 1:18** is correct when it clearly says that no man has seen God the Father at any time how could the Mormon Church teach that Stephen saw the Father?
- If **Colossians 1:15** teaches that God the Father is invisible how is it that Stephen saw Him with a physical body as the Mormon Church teaches?

1 Corinthians 8:5

⁵ *For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)*

The Mormon Teaching:

Joseph Smith said, "Paul says there are Gods many and Lords many. I want to set it forth in a plain and simple manner." (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 370, 372)

The Biblical Teaching:

When looking at the surrounding context of **1 Corinthians 8** we discover Paul is clearly monotheistic. In other words, he certainly didn't believe in or teach a plurality of gods as the Mormon Church does.

Ask...

- Would you please read **1 Corinthians 8:4-6**?
- When read in context does this passage support the doctrine of many gods or one God?
- Can you see that there is a big difference between being God and being called a god as **1 Corinthians** clearly points out?

Paul, as a Hebrew of Hebrews was monotheistic to the core and believed in only one God! God Himself emphatically stated that He is the One and Only God. What He spoke through the prophet Isaiah is proof enough! (See **Isaiah 43:10; 44:6; 44:8; 45:5; 46:9**)

God is one but is triune as we see in the nature of Christ's deity. Let's see if the Jesus of the Latter-day Saint Church is the same Jesus as that of Scripture.

Explore...

“Is the Jesus of Mormonism the Real Jesus of Scripture?”

Mormons state that they believe in Jesus just as orthodox Christians do and are therefore Christians. Mormon apologist Gilbert W. Scharffs wrote that “Latter-day Saints are Christians because they emphatically believe in Jesus Christ, use His name in their official church title, and believe in the Bible and the Book of Mormon, which testify repeatedly to the reality of Christ and the truth of His teachings... Mormons are Christians. Christians are those who accept Christ as their Savior.” (Gilbert W. Scharffs, *The Truth About “The God Makers”*, Salt Lake City, UT: Publishers Press, 1986, pp. 6-20)

But do Mormons believe in the Jesus of the Bible? According to official Mormon teaching, Jesus Christ was “begotten” as the first spirit-child of the Father (Elohim) and one of his unnamed wives. Jesus, as a spirit-son, then progressed in the spirit world until He became a God. Christ, “by obedience and devotion to the truth... attained that pinnacle of intelligence which ranked Him as a God.” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, Salt Lake City, UT: Bookcraft, 1966, p.129)

What this really means in terms of Mormon theology is that Jesus is no more special than we are, he’s just the firstborn of the Father’s children. Again, we must ask, “Does this coincide with or contradict the Jesus we read of in the Scriptures?”

Let’s begin to explore whether Jesus was physically begotten by the Father and whether He existed as a spirit-child of the Father before taking on a human existence.

Was Jesus a Mormon God Before He Took On Human Existence?

In Mormonism it is taught that a person cannot progress to godhood without passing through mortality and acquiring a physical body. In fact, Abraham 3:25 from the Book of Mormon says that taking on a physical body is a prerequisite to eternal progression. According to Mormon theology, however, Jesus became a God before assuming a physical body.

Ask...

- According to Abraham 3:25, isn't taking on a physical body and being tested on earth a prerequisite to eternal progression?
- Doesn't Mormonism teach that Jesus became a God before His physical earthly birth?
- How do you explain Jesus being a god before He was born physically and tested on earth?

The answer then, is that it isn't possible for Jesus to have been a Mormon God before his human existence according to Mormon theology itself. We must also ask whether there is any validity to the teaching that Jesus was procreated.

Was Jesus Procreated or The Almighty Creator of All Things?

Mormon doctrine teaches that Jesus was procreated through sexual relations between God the Father and one of His spirit wives. Mormon apostle Bruce McConkie says, "Christ was begotten by an Immortal Father in the same way that mortal men are begotten by mortal fathers." (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 546-547) To support this doctrine a number of verses are used that we will explore here.

Psalm 2:7

7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormons interpret "begotten" in the sense of procreation. They think that **Psalm 2:7** is evidence that Jesus Christ was born as a spirit, the offspring of heavenly parents.

The Biblical Teaching:

The best way to find out what **Psalm 2:7** means is to let Scripture tell us what it means.

Ask...

- Would you please read **Acts 13:33-34**?
- Isn't it clear that **Psalm 2:7** refers not to the Father's procreation of Jesus but rather the Father's resurrection of Jesus from the dead?
- Would you please read **John 1:1**?

- Did you know that the verb “was” is in the imperfect tense in the Greek indicating continuous existence, without beginning or end?
- Wouldn’t this mean that Jesus is eternal with no beginning, and therefore couldn’t have been physically procreated?

Matthew 1:18,20 – Was Jesus Begotten By the Father?

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

The Mormon Teaching:

Brigham Young said, “When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten him in his own likeness. He was not begotten by the Holy Ghost.” (Journal of Discourses, 1:50-51)

The Biblical Teaching:

Matthew 1:20 clearly teaches that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, there is no way around this.

Ask...

- Would you please read from **Matthew 1:18-20**?
- How do you reconcile this with the statement in *Journal of Discourses* that Jesus “was not begotten by the Holy Ghost”?

Luke 1:34-35 – Was Jesus “Fathered” by the Father?

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

The Mormon Teaching:

Again, Mormons say that Jesus was begotten by the Father, not the Holy Ghost.

The Biblical Teaching:

Scripture clearly states that Mary was overshadowed by the Holy Spirit and that is how Christ was conceived in her.

Ask...

- Would you please read **Luke 1:34-35**?
- How do you reconcile this verse with the statement in *Journal of Discourses* that Jesus was not begotten by the Holy Ghost?

Was Jesus the Spirit Brother of Lucifer?

The Mormon church teaches that Heavenly Father begat two sons who were brothers, they being Jesus and Lucifer. The Bible refutes that heresy very clearly in **Colossians 1:16** alone. The little phrase “all things” in that verse means Christ created the whole universe of things.

Apparently, there was a heresy flourishing in Colossae (the city in which the Colossian Christians lived) that involved the worship of angels. In the process of worshipping angels, Christ had been degraded. So, to correct this grave error, Paul emphasizes in **Colossians 1:16** that Christ is the one who created all things – including all the angels, and therefore is supreme and is alone worthy of worship.

We know from Scripture that Lucifer is a created angelic being, a cherub (**Ezekiel 28:13-19**; **Isaiah 14:12-15**). Since Lucifer was an angel, and since Christ created all the angels it is clear that Jesus and Lucifer are not brothers and that are from two entirely different classes – the Creator and the created.

Was Jesus “a god” or “God Almighty”?

The Mormon Church teaches that Jehovah (Jesus) and Elohim (The Father) are two distinct Gods, with Elohim (The Father) being the greater and Jehovah (Jesus) being lesser. Is this what the Scriptures teach?

Exodus 6:3 – Is Jesus “Jehovah” and the Father “Elohim”?

3 And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them.

The Mormon Teaching:

The Mormon Church teaches that references to Jehovah in the Bible are actually references to Jesus Christ in His premortal state. Is there Scriptural support for this claim?

The Biblical Teaching:

Scripture actually teaches that Elohim and Jehovah are one in the same.

Ask...

- Would you please read **Genesis 27:20, Exodus 3:6-7, Deuteronomy 6:4, Isaiah 9:6 and Jeremiah 32:18**?
- Did you know that the Hebrew word for “LORD” in these verses is *Jehovah*, and the Hebrew word for “God” is *Elohim*?
- Doesn’t that indicate that Jehovah and Elohim are one in the same God?
- Would you please read from **Isaiah 40:3**?
- Did you know that the Hebrew word for “LORD” in this verse is *Jehovah*, and the Hebrew word for “God” is *Elohim*?
- Did you know that according to **John 1:23**, this entire verse refers to the future ministry of Jesus Christ?
- Would you please read **Isaiah 9:6**?
- Did you know that the Hebrew word for “mighty God” in this verse is Elohim?
- Doesn’t that mean that this verse teaches that Jesus is Elohim? How do you reconcile that with the Mormon teaching that Jesus is a lesser god as well as a created being?

To further show that Jesus is God Almighty and not just a lesser god, consider the following...

Jesus Christ Was Worshipped As God

Christ was worshiped (Greek: *proskuneo*) as God many times in Scripture and He always accepted such worship as perfectly appropriate. (Note that *proskuneo* is the exact same word used to talk about worshipping the Father in the New Testament.)

Jesus accepted worship from Thomas (**John 20:28**); all the angels are told to worship Jesus (**Hebrews 1:6**); wise men worshiped Jesus (**Matthew 2:11**); a leper worshiped Him (**Matthew 8:2**); a ruler bowed before Him in worship (**John 9:38**); a woman worshiped Him (**Matthew 15:25**); Mary Magdalene worshiped Him (**Matthew 28:9**); and the disciples worshiped Him (**Matthew 28:17**). In each of these verses the word *proskuneo* is used and in each of these verses Jesus accepted the worship. (Ron Rhodes, *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons*, p. 273)

Ask...

- In reading **Revelation 4:10** and **5:11-14** we see that Jesus receives the exact same worship as the Father. What does this tell you about Jesus' true identity?

To bring further evidence that Jesus is God Almighty we must recognize that He was not only worshipped but also prayed to.

Can We Pray to Jesus Christ As God Almighty?

Mormons say that Jesus Christ is Jehovah in the Old Testament and that Elohim is the Father. This as well as New Testament passages poses a problem for Mormon theology.

Ask...

- Did you know that there are many verses in the Old Testament that instruct people to pray directly to Jehovah? (**Deuteronomy 4:7**; **2 Chronicles 7:14**; **Psalms 5:2**; **Psalms 32:6**; **Jeremiah 29:7,12**.)
- If we should not pray to Jesus then how do you explain **Acts 7:59** and **Romans 10:12**, where prayer to Jesus is spoken of approvingly?

Conclusion:

The Mormon Church clearly does not teach or believe in the Jesus of the Bible and the apostle Paul warns of those who preach “another Jesus” (**2 Corinthians 11:4**). Believing in a counterfeit Jesus who preaches a counterfeit gospel leads to a counterfeit salvation. The Jesus of Mormonism does not save; to place one’s trust in him is to be doomed for all of eternity.

This now leads us into an exploration of where our information on God the Father, God the Son, and other vitally important doctrines come from. Can we trust the directions we are being given by the books, apostles, prophets, and teachers of the Latter-day Saint Church?

Explore...

“Are Mormon Prophets True Prophets of God Like Those of Scripture?”

Both Mormons and Christians agree that the church and its prophets and apostles must be ordained by God and proclaim that which is consistent with His Word.

But we must ask, “Where does the evidence point in regards to whether the Mormon church and its prophets and apostles are from God?”

Mormon Leaders: True Prophets of God?

Mormons claim that God has always used chosen prophets through whom He reveals His instructions, laws, ordinances, and gospel. Since the days of Adam, there have been prophets on the earth who had a testimony of Jesus Christ and were ordained to lead the church in righteousness. When sin became too rampant, Mormons say, the everlasting covenants given through the prophets were taken away or lost, only to leave the people of the earth to grope in spiritual darkness without any revelation from the Lord.

The mantle of “Prophet, Seer, and Revelator” thus fell on Joseph Smith (and continues to apply to his successors in the office of church president). And through the restoration of the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods, all church ordinances could again be performed with the

authority that is according to the will and commandments of God. (*Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 13:1218)

It is obvious that Mormonism “must stand or fall on the story of Joseph Smith. He was either a true prophet of God – divinely called, properly appointed and commissioned – or he was one of the biggest frauds this world has ever seen. There is no middle ground.” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 1:188)

Premise:

In what follows we will examine some of the Scriptures cited by the Mormon Church in their attempt to validate Joseph Smith and other Mormon leaders as prophets of God that carry the authority to speak on His behalf.

Amos 3:7

7 Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

The Mormon Teaching:

Mormons teach that this verse says that without a prophet, who holds the authority of priesthood, God will not communicate His will for the church, and the world will remain in spiritual darkness. Each Mormon president is viewed as God’s mouthpiece or prophet on earth. (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 606)

The Biblical Teaching:

The context of this passage is on God’s judgment of His people because of their disobedience. Simply going back to **Amos 3:1** shows that God was judging His people for ignoring the warnings of the prophets He had sent to speak on His behalf.

Studying the history of this passage makes it abundantly clear that God often gave revelation through His prophets before any judgments or major changes took place. But what **Amos 3:7** doesn’t say is that there would be a need for a prophet to be on the earth speaking on God’s behalf for all time.

One other thing to note is that in the Old Testament times the biblical test for a true prophet of God was always 100% accuracy. Anything less than 100% accuracy brought death by stoning (**Deuteronomy 13:1-8**).

Ask...

- Did you know that according to **Deuteronomy 13:1-8** the test for one being a true prophet was 100% accuracy?
- Did you know that anything else less than 100% accuracy brought death by stoning?
- Did you know that Joseph Smith once prophesied that the U.S. government would be overthrown in the 1800's? Or that the New Jerusalem would be built in Missouri in his generation?
- Did you know that Brigham Young once prophesied that the Civil War would fail to end black slavery? Or that the sun and moon were both inhabited?

Joseph Smith's prophecy about the U.S. government can be found in History of the Church 5:394 and his prophecy about the New Jerusalem being built in Missouri can be found in Doctrine and Covenants 84:3-5. Regarding Brigham Young's prophecy about the Civil War one can simply look at Journal of Discourses 10:250 and regarding his prophecy about the moon and sun being inhabited in the Journal of Discourses 13:271 (July 24, 1870).

1 Corinthians 12:28

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

The Mormon Teaching:

Citing this verse Mormon leader Bruce McConkie proclaimed, "Where there are no apostles and prophets there is no divine Church, but where these officers are found, there is the church of Christ in all its glory, beauty, and perfection." (Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, pp. 606-607)

The Biblical Teaching:

When we let Scripture interpret Scripture it becomes clear that the church was built on the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets (**Ephesians 2:20**). Once a foundation is laid, it is then that the foundation is built upon. That's why we don't have apostles and prophets today, there is no need for another foundation.

Ask...

- What do you think **Ephesians 2:20** means when it says that God's household is built on the foundation of the prophets and the apostles?
- Once the foundation is built, does it have to be built again, and again, and again?
- Did you know that according to the Bible, an apostle had to be an eyewitness of the resurrected Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 9:1; 15:7-8**)? Doesn't this mean there can be no apostles today?

Also, consider these questions and facts from scholar Ron Rhodes in his book *Reasoning from the Scriptures with the Mormons*:

- Did you know that the words of the biblical apostles were all confirmed by miraculous works (**Acts 3:3-11; 5:15-16; 9:36-42; 20:6-12**)?
- Would you please read **2 Corinthians 12:12**? What is the "sign" of an apostle?
- Can Mormon apostles do the kinds of miracles, signs, and wonders that the biblical apostles did?
- Did you know that the biblical apostles' names (12 in all) will be engraved in the New Jerusalem, God's eternal city (**Revelation 21:14**)?
- Why aren't the Mormon apostles' names engraved – or anywhere to be found – in the New Jerusalem?
- In view of the Bible's clear teaching on apostles, is it right to claim that the Mormon church has living apostles who are on par with the biblical apostles?

Jude 3 also confirms that there is no continuing revelation by "apostles" and "prophets today."

Ask...

- Would you please read from **Jude 3**?
- Did you know that Greek scholars tell us the original text literally says this “faith” was given once for all, never needing to be given again?
- Did you know that Greek scholars say the word for “delivered” is aorist passive participle, which means the “delivering” was *completed in the past*?

Mormon Church Authority Structure:

It must be pointed out at this point that not only are there no longer functioning apostles and prophets of God on the earth but that other forms of Mormon Church governance are also not in existence. In fact, they are nowhere to be found in Scripture.

Ask...

- Would you please show me in the Bible where the primitive church had the offices of “First Presidency”, “Patriarch to the Church”, and “High Priest”, like the Mormon Church presently has?
- How can the Mormon Church claim it is restoring the original church structure and organization when such an organizational structure is nowhere to be found in the Bible?

Ephesians 4:11

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

The Mormon Teaching:

In his book *Mormon Doctrine*, Bruce McConkie writes, “Basically, church organization is the same in all ages; the same organization that existed in the primitive church prevails now.” McConkie says that the offices of apostle and prophet “will remain in the Church ‘till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the fullness of Christ (**Eph. 4:13**).”

The Biblical Teaching:

Mormons teach that without a prophet in the church today, the world remains in darkness. This cannot be true for the simple reason that the Holy Spirit is our teacher as Jesus Himself said in **John 16:13-15**. There is no need of a prophet to lead us into all truth when every Christian has personal access to the teaching and illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Ask...

- Would you please read **John 16:13-15**?
- Now would you please read from **1 John 2:27**?
- With the Holy Spirit as our teacher how can anyone say we remain in darkness without a prophet of God on the earth?
- Would you say the Holy Spirit is incapable of keeping us out of darkness?

True Today, But Not Tomorrow?

Depending on who is leading the Mormon Church as Prophet, Seer, and Revelator, that which is true today may literally not be true tomorrow.

Ask...

- Why is it that God's alleged prophet Joseph Smith went from teaching belief in only one God in the Book of Mormon to belief in many gods in Doctrine and Covenants and in the Book of Abraham?
- Why did Joseph Smith go from teaching that God is spirit in "Lectures on Faith" (lecture five) to God has a body of flesh and bones in Doctrine and Covenants 130?
- Why is it that Joseph Smith first taught that polygamy was abominable in the Book of Mormon and then justified polygamy in Doctrine and Covenants?
- Does it bother you that what may be taught as truth today in the Mormon Church may be considered abominable tomorrow in the Mormon Church?

Conclusion:

It has become clear that the Mormon Church's prophets and apostles are false and not from God. If this is the case, we must ask, "Can we trust what Mormon prophets, apostles, and teachers have handed down in their books and teachings?" Another way of putting this is, "Are we getting the right directions to our intended destination?"