

## Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries



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Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries

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## The Missionary Discussions



1. The Plan of Our Heavenly Father
- 2. *The Gospel of Jesus Christ***
3. The Restoration
4. Eternal Progression
5. Living a Christ-like Life
6. Membership in the Kingdom

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ

- Jesus Christ overcame physical death by his resurrection
- Therefore, all people will be resurrected
- To be saved from sin, we must use our free agency (free will), accept Christ and follow the Mormon faith
- Faith in Christ means serving him; repentance is total and permanent commitment to the Mormon gospel

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 2. The Gospel of Jesus Christ (Cont.)

- The outward expression of this is Mormon baptism
- With this "ordinance" we receive the companionship of the Holy Ghost
- By obeying God's commandments as taught by the Mormon church, and by enduring to the end, we can be saved

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## The Catholic Response



- Topics for Discussion
  - Jesus Christ
  - Atonement
  - Baptism/Laying on of Hands
  - Repentance (Reconciliation)
  - Ordinance (Sacrament)
  - The Holy Ghost
  - Salvation

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## LDS Jesus Christ



- Jesus Christ is a subordinate, lesser god than the Father (the Holy Ghost is lower still)
- Jesus Christ is the only-begotten Son of the Father (in the flesh)
- God the Father (an immortal Personage) begot Jesus in the flesh through copulation with the Virgin Mary
- There are limitations on Christ's atonement
- Jesus Christ fathered children with his plural wives

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## The Real Jesus Christ



- Jesus Christ is True God and True Man - the second person of the Blessed Trinity
- Jesus is the eternal Son of God
  - He was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered crucifixion and death, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, and will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
- Jesus accomplished perfectly the divine mission of priest, prophet, and King
  - Signified by his anointing as Messiah (Christ)

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## LDS Atonement



- “General” salvation
  - Because of Christ’s atonement all people will be raised from the dead, regardless of their earthly merits
- “Individual” salvation
  - Given to those whose earthly lives merit it
  - Earned salvation consisting of several degrees or levels
- Future sins bring back the guilt and penalty of earlier, repented ones
- Atonement of Christ is insufficient for some sins (such as murder and certain apostates)

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## Problems with LDS Atonement



- Limited and conditional
- “Blood atonement” taught by Brigham Young - denied by LDS theologians today
- Eternal life can be earned only by diligent adherence to Mormon rules
- Outside literal membership in the Mormon church, there is no salvation
- The atonement of Jesus Christ was in the Garden of Gethsemane (his suffering there was greater than on the cross)

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## Catholic Atonement



- Our salvation flows from God’s initiative of love for us, because “he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10)
- “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself” (2 Cor. 5:19)
- Christ came “to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mt. 20:28), that is, he “loved [his own] to the end” (Jn 13:1), so that they might be “ransomed from the futile ways inherited from [their] fathers” (1 Pet 1:18)

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## Catholic Atonement (Cont.)



- By his loving obedience to the Father, “unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8), Jesus fulfills the atoning mission (cf. Isa 53:10) of the suffering Servant, who will “make many righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities” (Isa 53:11; cf Rom 5:19)
- For more information see the Catechism of the Catholic Church, 571-630

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## LDS Baptism



- First Principles and Ordinances of the Gospel:
  - Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ
  - Repentance
  - Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins
  - Laying on of Hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost
- Only the Mormon baptism is valid; without it, you have no chance for eternal life
- Baptism at the age of reason (8 years old)
- Baptism may be repeated (if excommunicated)

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## LDS Baptism (Cont.)



- No Original Sin (the “fall” was forward or upward)
  - “We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression”
  - “Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Nephi 2:25)
- No Infant Baptism (it is an evil abomination)
  - Mormons deny that we are born deprived of sanctifying grace
  - “It is solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children” (Moroni 8:9)

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## LDS Baptism (Cont.)



- No Infant Baptism (Cont.)
  - “He that supposeth that little children need baptism is in the fall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; for he hath neither faith, hope, nor charity; wherefore, should he be cut off while in the thought, he must go down to hell” (Moroni 8:14)
- Baptism by Immersion Only
  - Must be administered by a valid priesthood holder
  - Mormons deny baptism by pouring
  - Usually done in a tank in a local Mormon meeting house

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## Problems with LDS Baptism



- Denial that humanity has been stained by Original Sin (Rom. 5:12,18-19, 1 Cor 15:21-22)
- Denial of infant baptism (Mk. 10:14, Lk 18:15, Col 2:11-12, Acts 16:15,33, 1 Cor 1:16, Early Church Fathers, Council of Carthage in 252 AD)
- Baptism by immersion only (Acts 16:32-33, Acts 2:41, Didache 7:1-3)

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## Problems with LDS Baptism (Cont.)



- The Holy See has ruled that LDS Baptisms are invalid (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith "dubium" response dated June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2001)
  - LDS "godhead" versus Catholic Christian understanding of the Holy Trinity
  - "The Mormon baptism, which would have its origins not in Christ but at the start of creation, is not a Christian baptism" (L'Osservatore Romano news article, July 18<sup>th</sup>, 2001)

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## Catholic Christian Baptism



- Sacraments of Christian Initiation
  - Baptism (the faithful are born anew)
  - Confirmation (the faithful are strengthened by the Holy Spirit)
  - Holy Eucharist (the food of eternal life)
- 3 Types of Baptism
  - Baptism of Water (ordinary means)
  - Baptism of Desire (perfect contrition and implicit intention of fulfilling God's will for man's salvation)
  - Baptism of Blood (Martyrdom for the Catholic Faith or some virtue)

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## Catholic Christian Baptism (Cont.)



- Baptism imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual sign which cannot be repeated
- Bishop, priest, or deacon may baptize (ordinary ministers)
- In case of necessity, anyone, even a non-Christian, can baptize (with the required intention)
- Form – Trinitarian baptismal formula (Mt. 28:19)
- Matter – Water (triple immersion or pouring three times over the candidate's head)

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## Catholic Christian Baptism (Cont.)



- The one being baptized is:
  - Cleansed of original sin (infant and adult)
  - Cleansed of particular sin (after the age of reason)
  - Incorporated into Christ and made a member of His Body the Church
  - Infused with sanctifying grace
  - Receives the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity
  - Receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit
  - Allows him to receive the other Sacraments effectively

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## LDS Repentance



- Five Steps of Repentance
  - Sorrow for sin
  - Abandonment of sin
  - Confession of sin
  - Restitution for sin
  - Doing the will of the Lord

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## LDS Repentance



- We must feel sincere sorrow that we have sinned
- We must ask God to forgive us
- We must do all that we can to correct any harm we have done
- We should experience a “change of heart”
  - Lose all desire for the sin
  - Turn away from sin
  - Sin no more
- Continue the process of repentance whenever we fall short of the perfect example of Jesus

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## LDS Repentance (Cont.)



- Confession of sin is a necessary part of repentance
  - Confession of sins is to be made to the appropriate persons
  - Secret (private) sins should be confessed to God who hears in secret
  - Acts that affect your standing in the Mormon church are to be confessed to the bishop

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## LDS Repentance (Cont.)



- “Temple Recommend” requires bishop to ask certain questions as a form of confession
  - Do you believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost?
  - Do you have a firm testimony of the Mormon gospel?
  - Do you support (sustain) the president and other church authorities?
  - Have you lived chastely and honestly?
  - Have you affiliated with anyone opposed to the Mormon church?

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## LDS Repentance (Cont.)



- “Temple Recommend” requirements (Cont.)
  - Do you attend all required meetings and perform all duties you are called to?
  - Do you obey the rules, laws and commandments of the Mormon church?
  - Do you pay a full 10% tithe?
  - Do you keep the Word of Wisdom?
  - Do you behave honorably with family and others?
  - Do you consider yourself worthy to enter the temple and participate in its ordinances?

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## Problems with LDS Repentance



- Individual is responsible to discern their own sins and confess as appropriate
- No way to get feedback
- No way to be sure if confession was sincere
- No mechanism to develop a well-formed conscience
- No assurance of God's forgiveness through His designated authority

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## Catholic Confession Penance/Reconciliation



- Three conditions for forgiveness:
  - Contrition (perfect and imperfect)
    - Sorrow (inward, supernatural, and universal) for our sins because we have offended God
  - Confession
    - To make known and to accuse ourselves (humbly, truthfully, and briefly) of our sins to a priest approved by the Bishop
  - Satisfaction
    - Doing the penance given us by the priest

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## Catholic Confession



- How to prepare for Confession:
  - Pray for the grace to make a good confession
  - Carefully examine our conscience
  - Take time and care to make a good act of contrition
  - Resolve by the help of God to renounce our sins and to begin a new life for the future
- Frequent Confession to a priest

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## Confession to a Priest



- Jesus claimed the authority to forgive sins (Mark 2:7, Luke 7:49, Matt. 9:2-8)
- Jesus passed this authority on to His Apostles (John 20:21-23, Matt. 18:18)
- He breathed on them (John 20:22, see also Genesis 2:7)
- We are to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:18-20)
- Prayer of presbyters (priests) forgives sin (James 5:13-15)
- Confess your sins to one another (James 5:16)

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## LDS Ordinances



- Rites or ceremonies essential to salvation and exaltation in the celestial kingdom
  - Baptism by immersion only
  - Celestial marriage (for time and eternity)
  - Temple endowments and sealings
  - The sacrament (symbolic partaking of bread and water)

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## Problems with LDS Ordinances



- Baptism by immersion is not always possible
- No marriage in heaven (Luke 20:34-36)
- No biblical basis for temple endowments and sealings (they originated from Freemasonry)
- The blessings over the sacrament have no reference to Jesus' words, "This is my body... this is my blood" (D&C 20:77,79)
- Indifference to the actual "substance" of the sacrament – it may be anything (D&C 27:2)

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## Catholic Sacraments



- Baptism
- Confirmation
- Communion (Holy Eucharist)
- Confession/Penance/Reconciliation
- Anointing of the Sick (Extreme Unction, Last Rites)
- Ordination (Holy Orders)
- Matrimony

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## LDS Holy Ghost



- Spirit in the form of a man with size and dimensions – no physical body
- Third god subordinate to the Father and Jesus
- Created, as was Jesus, at some point in the distant past
- Like the other gods, the Holy Ghost is limited and changeable
- He cannot be all-present, since his “spirit body” allows him to be in only one place at one time

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## LDS Holy Ghost (Cont.)



- Through the Holy Ghost we can know the truth about spiritual things (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; James 1:5-6)
- Read the Book of Mormon (Moroni 10:3-5).
- If you will read, ponder, and pray sincerely about the Book of Mormon, the Holy Ghost will manifest to you that it is true
- Appealing to the Holy Ghost trumps science, reason, and facts
- Holy Ghost gets the credit for ongoing revelation

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## Christian Holy Spirit

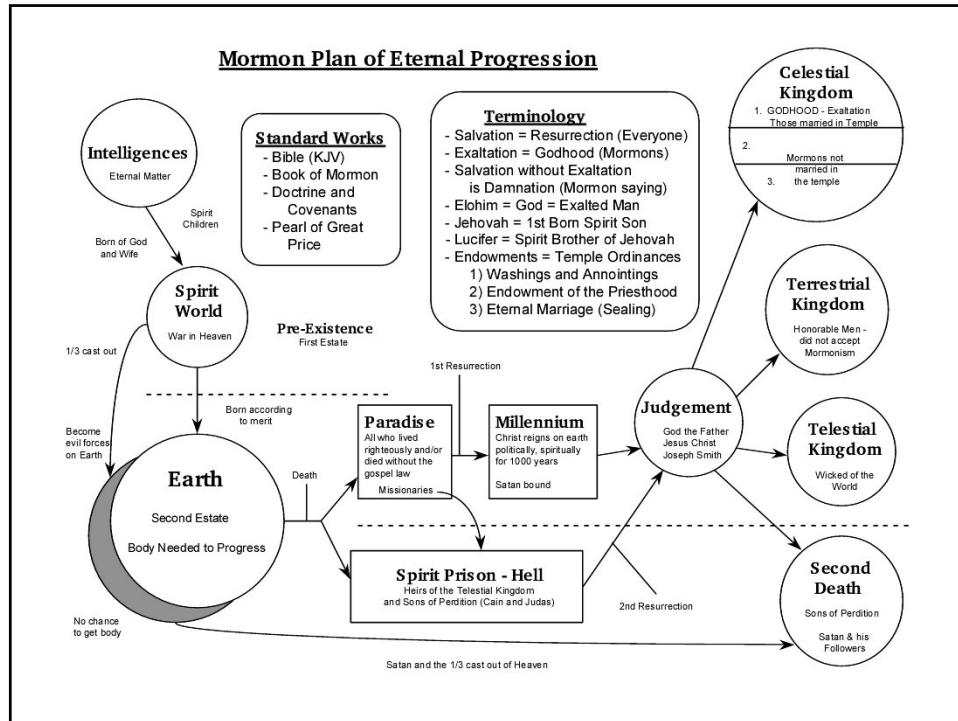


- Third Person of the Blessed Trinity
- Consubstantial with the Father and the Son, He is worshiped and glorified
- Also called the Paraclete (Advocate) and Spirit of Truth
- The Holy Spirit is at work with the Father and the Son from the beginning to the completion of the divine plan for our salvation
- No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2:11)

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## Catholic Plan of Salvation



- Where did we come from?
  - “The world was made for the glory of God.... The ultimate purpose of creation is that God who is the Creator of all things may at last become ‘all in all.’” God wanted to make His creatures share in His being, wisdom and goodness. (CCC 293-295)
  - God created heaven and earth from nothing, by His word only; that is, by a single act of His all-powerful will. (Baltimore Catechism, Question 33)

## Catholic Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- Why are we here?
  - “God enables men to be intelligent and free causes in order to complete the work of creation, to perfect its harmony for their own good and that of their neighbors.” We enter into the divine plan by our actions, prayers and sufferings. (CCC 307)
  - We were made “to know, love, and serve God in this life, and be happy with him in the next.” (Baltimore Catechism, Questions 3, 4, and 6)

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## Catholic Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- Where are we going?
  - “Those who die in God’s grace and friendship and are perfectly purified live for ever with Christ.... Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness.... In the glory of heaven the blessed continue joyfully to fulfill God’s will in relation to other men and to all creation. Already they reign with Christ; with him ‘they shall reign for ever and ever’ “. (CCC 1023, 1024, 1029)

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## Catholic Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- The Four Last Things
  - **Death** (end of our earthly life)
  - **Judgment** (by Christ)
    - Particular Judgment (each individual at the moment of death)
    - General Judgment (all men on the last day)
  - **Heaven** (Beatific Vision)
    - Directly if in a state of perfect holiness (without sin or reparation due to sin)
    - Purgatory for those who die without perfect holiness (with venial sins or reparation due to sin)
  - **Hell**
    - Eternal state to which the wicked are condemned (without God)

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## Summary



- Who do you say Jesus is? (Matthew 16:13-19)
- What must I do to be saved?
- Baptism is the “door” which gives access to the other Sacraments of the Catholic Church
- God, in His mercy, offers forgiveness of sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation to those baptized into Christ
- LDS Ordinances are not the same as Catholic Sacraments
- LDS “godhead” versus Christian Holy Trinity

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## Summary (Cont.)



- Know, love, and practice your own faith
- Use good Catholic Christian charity when speaking to the Mormon missionaries
- Be prepared to respond with your own “testimony” of the fullness of truth contained only in the Catholic Church
- No “Total Apostasy” means no need for Restoration

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## Question and Answer



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