

## Catholic Response to the LDS Missionaries



Steve Clifford

<mailto:stevec@transporter.com>

<http://www.transporter.com>

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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



### 4. Eternal Progression

- Each one of us lived with God the Father and our “Heavenly Mother” (a wife of God the Father) in the eons before we were conceived by our earthly parents
- When we finally took on a physical body, we were given the opportunity to accept the Mormon plan, live obediently and finally progress to godhood ourselves
- Only temple-worthy Mormons can become gods

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## The Missionary Discussions



### 4. Eternal Progression (Cont.)

- Non-Mormons and those who fall short of the ideal do not return to God the Father
- Genealogy and proxy-work for the dead are necessary if they, too, are to be saved
- Families can thus be “for ever”
- Chastity and obedience to such rules as the “Word of Wisdom” are also necessary for eventual godhood

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## The Catholic Response



- Topics for Discussion
  - Plan of Salvation
  - Chastity and Sexual Morality
  - Families
  - Word of Wisdom
  - Temples
  - Genealogy and Proxy-work for the Dead
  - Three Degrees of Glory

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## LDS Plan of Salvation



- Everything is matter (even spirits)
- All matter is eternal, unmade, and indestructible
- The god of this world (Elohim) was once a man in another world
- Elohim and his celestial wives procreated billions of “spirit children”
- The first of these “spirit children” was “Jehovah”
- Lucifer was his younger spirit brother

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## LDS Plan of Salvation (Cont.)



- Council of the gods was called to determine the plan
- Christ and Lucifer responded with plans
  - Christ proposed free agency (free will to accept him and his plan)
  - Lucifer offered to save all people by depriving them of free will (no free will – no sin)
- The gods chose Christ's plan
- Enraged, Lucifer rebelled and was joined by 1/3 of the spirit children (battle in heaven)

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## LDS Plan of Salvation (Cont.)

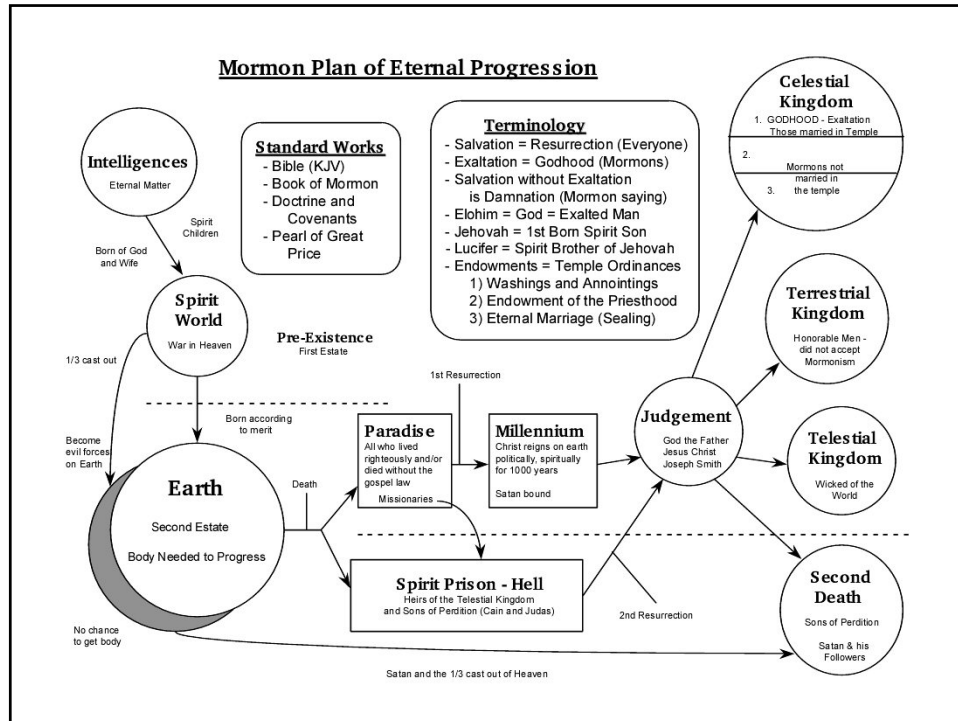


- Many fought valiantly for Christ – rewarded by being born into happy, prosperous families
- Less noble parentage for those who were least valiant or even neutral
- During earthly life, each person has the chance to accept or reject Mormon "gospel"
- At death, each human spirit enters the "spirit world"
- Most humans will eventually enjoy some type of heavenly bliss

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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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## LDS Chastity and Sexual Morality



- 13<sup>th</sup> Article of Faith (Pearl of Great Price)
  - “We believe in being honest, true, chaste, benevolent, virtuous, and in doing good to all men; indeed, we may say that we follow the admonition of Paul – We believe all things, we hope all things, we have endured many things, and hope to be able to endure all things. If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things.”
- Every person should be chaste, free of sexual sin
  - No adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bestiality, etc.
  - Those who persist in sexual sin shall not inherit the kingdom of God (mercy for the sinner who repents)

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## LDS Chastity and Sexual Morality (Cont.)



- Carefully groomed image of wholesome, happy families
- Cultivate family togetherness, strong moral values
- Mormon church presents itself as pro-family and pro-life
- Current LDS teachings permit:
  - **Abortion** (allow for exceptions)
  - **Artificial contraception** (unnatural birth control is left up to the individuals' conscience)
  - **Divorce followed by remarriage** (both civil and temple)

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## Problems with LDS Chastity and Sexual Morality



- LDS cannot claim to be pro-life while allowing for exceptions for abortions (most artificial contraceptives are abortifacients as well)
- Drinking a cup of coffee or a glass of wine will preclude participation in Temple work while obtaining an abortion or contracepting will not
- LDS teachings may shift in the future to permit Euthanasia
  - “With reference to euthanasia, no, at this point at least, we haven’t favored that.” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, San Francisco Chronicle Interview, April 13, 1997)

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## Problems with LDS Chastity and Sexual Morality (Cont.)



- LDS cannot claim to be pro-family while allowing divorce and remarriage
- “Families forever” through Temple marriages and sealings for time and eternity can be “canceled” through “celestial divorce” (see Mk. 10:10-12)
- Three-fourths of divorced Mormons remarry (see “Divorce”, Encyclopedia of Mormonism, vol. 1)
- Utah (75% Mormon) divorce rate is slightly higher than the U.S. average
  - 4.7 divorces per thousand persons per year versus 4.6 nationally (The American Almanac 1996-1997, 107)

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## LDS Families



- “Families can be forever”
  - Temple marriage (“sealing”) is for time and all eternity (as opposed to “till death do them part”)
  - Children are “sealed” to their parents, either through birth after Temple marriage or in subsequent sealing ceremony for existing children
- Temple marriage and sealings may also be performed for the dead (proxy ordinances)
- All family members must be faithful to LDS teachings in order to enter the Celestial Kingdom and thus remain together

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## Catholic Response to LDS Families are Forever



- Jesus explicitly taught that marriages do not continue into the next life
  - “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage; but those who are accounted worthy to attain to that age and to the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage, for they cannot die any more, because they are equal to angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.” (Luke 20:34-36)
- The primary function of marriage is the procreation of the human race (no longer needed in heaven)
  - All the saved rejoice forever in perfect love & communion in heaven

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## LDS Word of Wisdom



- Doctrine and Covenants Section 89
  - Use of wine, strong drinks, tobacco, and hot drinks proscribed
  - Herbs, fruits, flesh, and grain are ordained for the use of man and of animals
  - Obedience to gospel law, including the Word of Wisdom, brings temporal and spiritual blessings
- Current LDS teaching – abstain from:
  - Alcohol, tobacco, coffee, tea, harmful drugs
- The Lord promises that if we obey this law, we will enjoy greater health

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## Problems with the LDS Word of Wisdom



- Mormon sacrament has been changed from wine to water despite the clear teaching in Doctrine and Covenants Section 89
  - Verse 5 forbids the use of “wine or strong drink” except “in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him (the Father)”
  - Verse 6 states that this offering should be “wine, yea, pure wine of the grape of the vine, or your own make”
- “Tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and all sick cattle...” (D&C 89, verse 8)

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## Problems with the LDS Word of Wisdom (Cont.)



- “Hot drinks are not for the body or belly” (D&C 89, verse 7)
  - Mormons have extracted from this prohibition the notion that caffeine is the ingredient to be avoided, whether in hot or cold drinks
  - No problem drinking hot chocolate – why?
- “Flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air... should not be used, only in times of winter, or of cold, or famine” (D&C 89, verses 12-13)
  - Do Mormons abstain from eating meat and poultry except in winter or famine?

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## LDS Temples



- 116 Temples in operation worldwide at the end of 2003
- Temples are holy sanctuaries for sacred rites and ceremonies pertaining to the living and the dead
- Temple rituals (aka ordinances or endowments)
  - Baptism for the dead (proxy)
  - Washings and anointings
  - Endowment of the priesthood
  - Eternal marriage (sealing ceremony for children already born and proven worthy)

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## LDS Temples (Cont.)



- Church members must be clean and faithful to receive and benefit from the blessings of the temple
  - Must have a “temple recommend” to attend
  - Only about twenty percent of the world’s Mormons are considered “temple worthy”
- The temple marriage sealing ordinance is essential for exaltation in the celestial kingdom
  - It is a prerequisite to exaltation in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom

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## Problems with LDS Temples



- Members attend mainly to further their own or a dead person's chances for eventual godhood
- They attend to learn secret and "sacred" information
  - Excludes all those not deemed "temple worthy"
  - Based on rituals of Freemasonry
- No evidence of these temple ceremonies in either the Christian scripture or the Book of Mormon
- Ceremonies and wordings have been changed over the years to be more "politically correct"

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## LDS Genealogy and Proxy-work



- Mormons are expected to redeem the dead
  - Those who die outside the LDS church will be given the opportunity to hear the "true gospel" while they are in "spirit prison"
  - Should they accept it, they must be "baptized" into the Mormon church and receive all its other ordinances by proxy
- Genealogical research helps to identify those dead souls in need of proxy temple work
  - Each member is expected to know or trace his family tree back at least four generations
  - Member must submit names to temple for proxy work

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## Problems with LDS Genealogy and Proxy-work



- Avoid stupid controversies and genealogies (Titus 3:9)
- Do not occupy yourselves with myths and endless genealogies (1 Timothy 1:4)
- 1 Cor. 15:29 (“Otherwise, what do people mean by being baptized on behalf of the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized on their behalf?”) used to support LDS baptism for the dead
  - Taken out of context (see 1 Cor. 15:20-34)
  - Paul is defending the general resurrection rather than teaching baptism for the dead

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## LDS Three Degrees of Glory



- Doctrine and Covenants Section 76
  - All shall come forth in the resurrection (both the just and the unjust)
  - Sons of perdition suffer eternal damnation, all others gain some degree of salvation
  - Three degrees of glory
    - **Celestial kingdom** (ruled by God the Father)
    - **Terrestrial kingdom** (ruled by Jesus Christ)
    - **Telestial kingdom** (ruled by the Holy Ghost)

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## Problems with the LDS Three Degrees of Glory



- Mormons point to 1 Cor. 15:40-42 to support the notion of three degrees of glory
  - All of chapter 15 deals with the resurrection – Christ’s and ours
  - How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?
  - The mortal body is buried in its corruptible state but comes forth in glorious immortality
  - Just as heavenly bodies (sun, moon, and stars, or “celestial”) differ in glory from earth’s (“terrestrial”), so too does the glorified human body differ from the mortal one

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## Problems with the LDS Three Degrees of Glory (Cont.)



- Telesstial is a term made up by Joseph Smith by running the words celestial and terrestrial together
- No Christian scriptural or historical evidence to support the concept of three degrees of glory
- This scheme effectively denies the reality of an eternal hell
- Deifies man and humanizes God
- Minimizes the effects of sin and the justice of God
- Only “Sons of Perdition” will be eternally lost to outer darkness with Lucifer and his spirit followers

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## Summary



- There is only One God (3 Persons, 1 Nature)
  - Book of Mormon agrees
- Being pro-life means NO exceptions
- No divorce and remarriage (Mk. 10:10-12)
- Marriages do not continue into the next life (Lk. 20:34-36)
- No scriptural or historical evidence to support temple work (no mention in the Book of Mormon)
- Avoid endless genealogies (Titus 3:9 & 1 Tim. 1:4)
- There is only 1 heaven and 1 hell (4 last things)

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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



Steve Clifford

<mailto:stevec@transporter.com>

<http://www.transporter.com>

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