

What do you know?

History of the faith

- Joseph Smith (b. 1805), treasure hunter, disillusioned with Christianity
- 1819 God and Jesus appear to him, restored religion
- 1823- Moroni (angel) appears and tells Smith about the gold plates
- 1827 –plates discovered, *Book of Mormon* translated, reformed Egyptian
 - Translated in 1820s into King James English
 - Jaredites came to Central America after the tower of Babel (2250 BC) where they eventually completely wiped each other out
 - Second migration about 600 BC by Lehi and his family to S. America
 - Lehi's brother Laman rebelled against God and was cursed with , dark skin (Lamanites, whose descendants are American Indians)
 - Mormon was a prophet who wrote the book and Moroni was his son
 - Descendants of Nephi, son who did not rebel, moved to Central and North America and built a great civilization. AD 34 Jesus appeared and made further revelations including reproaching Sermon on Mt.
 - In 385 the Lamanites and Nephites were wiped out in a great battle, the only survivor was Moroni, son of Mormon.
- 1830- LDS are formed & John the Baptist gives priesthood to Smith
- God reinstated his church, which was apostate since the apostles died
- Grew the group to 6,000 in NY, then moved to Ohio, then MO, then IL
- 1844-Smith was arrested and killed by a mob, along with his brother
- Brigham Young took over and moved to Salt Lake City, UT. He had 27 wives and 56 children.

Currently

- 14 million members, headquartered in UT, Kingdom Halls & Temples
- Worth more than 5 billion in 1991
- Own the Marriot chain of hotels, Brigham Young University
- Many famous Mormons, including: Stephenie Meyer, Glen Beck, Mitt Romney, Katherine Heigl, The Osmonds, Andy Reid, Steve Young

- CEO's either present or former of: Black & Decker, Marriott, Utah Jazz, JetBlue Airways, KFC, Sears, & American Express

Common Terms (you have to define these with Mormons)

- Jesus is the Son of God the Father
- Jesus died for our sins
- The Bible is God's Word

Main Beliefs/Practices

1. Scripture

- 4 main books- KJV Bible, Book of Mormon, Doctrine & Covenants, Pearl of Great Price
- Scripture is inspired only as it is interpreted correctly, their translation
- No real belief in inerrancy
- Continuing revelation from current prophets and elders

2. God

- Was once like us, but ascended to be the Father of this world, still physical
 - "God himself was once as we are now and is an exalted man" D&C
- Two of his spirit-sons by Mary were Jesus and Satan
- Jesus came twice, once in Jerusalem and once in South America
 - Jesus married 2 Marys & Martha in Cana of Galilee
- All Mormon men have the possibility of attaining Godhood
- -They are polytheists, but believe there is only one God over our world
 - "The heads of the gods appointed one God for us"

Not the same as our belief in God: The Book of Mormon refers in several passages to God, Christ, and the Holy Ghost as "one God," but Latter-day Saints understand this to mean they are one in mind, purpose, will, and intention. Their unity is the same unity of which Christ spoke in his high-priestly prayer following the Last Supper: that his disciples may "be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" ([John 17:21](#)). Hence, Latter-day Saints rarely use the term *Trinity*, but prefer the title *Godhead* to refer to the three divine beings who govern our universe in perfect oneness."

3. Priesthood/Church

- Two priesthoods, most of the males are in the Aaronic, while the highest ranking members are the Melchizedekian
- Theirs is the only true church. All other Christians are apostate
- There are many meeting places, but official Mormon business has to happen within a Mormon temple (about 150 of them in the US)

4. Responsibilities

- Personal- take care of your body (no toxins), no sex outside of marriage, attend church, marry a Mormon, tithe,
- Missionary Service—go away from home for two years, usually after high school, and spread the Mormon gospel and seeking converts. Mostly expected of the men
- Celestial marriage—must take place in a temple and is a pre-requisite for deification. Married for ever to create spirit children for another world

5. Salvation/Afterlife

- Salvation comes mainly through good works, church, obedience
- Men are working to become gods by being good Mormons
- Women, marry a Mormon man for deification
- Baptism for the dead can give eternal life to our dearly departed, so Mormons are masters of their genealogy to save their ancestors
- After death, you go to 1 of four places
 1. Lake of Fire- for the devil and demons
 2. Telestial Kingdom- Unbelievers
 3. Terrestrial Kingdom- Religious non-Mormons
 4. Celestial Kingdom- Good Mormons → 3 Levels

Sharing Your Faith

- Be willing to talk. But be aware that they will use biblical and Christian language in ways that completely contradict the Bible and Christianity
- Mormon missionaries will ask you to be open and pray. Ask if they are willing to do the same?
- Talk about your definition of God, Jesus, Sin, and Salvation
 - What exactly has Jesus accomplished? How is one saved?
 - Jesus is God the Son, not one of His physical sons (John 1)
 - Romans 3:23- all have sinned

- Eph. 2:8-9 salvation by grace alone → No assurance of salvation
- -Use the Bible, and don't be afraid to say you don't know, but see if they can answer your questions
 - Book of Mormon has been disproved by archaeologists, anthropologists, and Bible Scholars
- If you don't control the conversation, they will.