

The Latter-Day Saints Church

Edited by Scott Shifferd Jr.

History:

- The LDS church states, “It’s hard to imagine, considering **the Church was established in 1830 with a tiny congregation of just a few members**. Despite what many think, today **only about 14 percent of its members live in Utah and over half live outside the United States**. **The Church has nearly 30,000 congregations more than 130 temples worldwide**. It prints monthly magazines in 50 languages, and has published more than 100 million copies of the Book of Mormon in over 93 languages. **With more than 50,000 missionaries in 162 countries, membership continues to grow**. We meet in local congregations called wards or branches each Sunday to worship and learn. **A bishop or branch president volunteers many hours each week leading his congregation for which he receives no pay**” (“Christ’s Church.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/church/>).
- In the US, the Handbook of Denominations reports that **the LDS church had 5,113,409 members in 11,315 congregations in 1999** (Mead, Frank S; Hill, Samuel S.; and Atwood, Craig D. *Handbook of Denominations in the United States*. 11th ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001. P.199).
- The Handbook of Denominations reports about “Latter-Day Saints” or “Mormons”, **“The early years centered on the prophet and translator of the *Book of Mormon*, Joseph Smith, Jr., who organized the movement with six charter members at Fayette, New York, in 1830. Smith grew up in the famous ‘Burned-over District’ of upstate New York, so called because of the frequency and intensity of the religious revivals there during the Second Great Awakening at the close of the seventeenth century and the early years of the eighteenth century. Smith claimed to have experienced a series of heavenly visitations beginning with the appearance of God and Jesus Christ in 1820. During these visits he was informed that all existing churches were in error and that the true gospel was yet to be restored. It would be revealed to him, and he was to reestablish the true church on earth”** (Mead, P.195).
- The LDS church states, **“This vision of Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ was the beginning of Joseph Smith's calling as a prophet of God**. He was told that none of the churches on the earth had the fullness of truth. **Over time, Joseph Smith was chosen to establish Christ's Church and restore the priesthood, or the authority to act in God's name. He was led by God to an ancient record and given the ability to translate it into English. This record is called the Book of Mormon. He continued to pray and receive revelation for the Church throughout his life**. These revelations were compiled into a book of scriptures referred to as the Doctrine and Covenants and shows that God still leads His children today. **Joseph Smith formally organized The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints on April 6, 1830”** (“A Prophet of God.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/joseph-smith/>).
- **Besides the Latter-Day Saints Church, most Mormon denominations never accepted polygamy, celestial marriage, the plurality of gods, or the baptism of the dead recognizing these doctrines and practices to be the inventions of Brigham Young** (Mead, P.198, 202).
- About the **Mountain Meadows Massacre**, the LDS church reports their side, **“One of the most tragic and disturbing events in Mormon history took place on 11 September 1857, when approximately 120 men, women and children, traveling through Utah to California were massacred by a force consisting of Mormon militia members and Southern Paiute Indians**. The Mountain Meadow Massacre, as it is known, has remained a topic of interest and controversy as Mormons and historians struggle to understand this event, and the Church's detractors seek to exploit it for polemical purposes. [...]

In 1850, Utah was established as a U.S. territory, with Brigham Young as its first governor. **Because of its territorial status, the federal government retained the right to appoint officials at various levels, in addition to actual federal offices existing within the territory. While there were, no doubt, many honest public servants among them, a number of the federal appointees to both territorial and federal positions, including some judges, turned out to be both morally venal and abusive of the prerogatives of their offices.** Scandals arose over the behavior of some of these men, who left the territory in disgrace. **Rather than accepting responsibility for their own failures, a group of them, upon returning to the East, published claims that they had been forcibly expelled, and that the Mormons were rebelling against federal authority. [...]**

Despite the efforts of Buchanan to keep the advance of the army secret, Mormon mail runners notified Brigham Young, the incumbent territorial governor, the very next month that troops were travelling to Utah. He had not been officially notified that he was to be replaced, so he viewed the news—combined with the efforts to hide the movement of the troops—as an act of war by the United States government against the Mormons.

William H. Dame was, at the time of the massacre, the commander of the Iron Military District with the militia rank of colonel. He was also serving as president of the Parowan Stake. [...] Finally, becoming aware of the true situation at the Mountain Meadows, he reluctantly authorized the use of the militia to finish the massacre in time to avoid discovery. [...]

Isaac C. Haight was a major over the Second Battalion in the Iron County militia and president of the Cedar City stake. Haight was the mastermind behind the massacre. After being denied permission to use the militia, Haight recruited John D. Lee and others to incite the Indians to attack the train. **Efforts to bring Haight and others to justice after the massacre proved to be fruitless.**

John H. Higbee was a major over the Third Battalion in the Iron County militia and town marshal of Cedar City. **His ecclesiastical position was first counselor in the stake presidency of Isaac C. Haight. After a failed attempt to arrest rowdy members of the train for criminal offenses, he conspired with Haight to punish the wagon train. When Dame permitted, Higbee led troops to the Meadows carrying orders to completely destroy the wagon train. [...]**

Thus it was that on September 11, a flag of truce was carried to the Baker-Fancher party by William Bateman. He was met outside the camp by one of the emigrants, a Mr. Hamilton, and an arrangement was made for John D. Lee to speak to the emigrants. Lee described to them a plan to get them through the hostile Indians. **The plan involved the emigrants giving up their arms, loading the wounded into wagons, and then being followed by the women and the older children, with the men bring up the rear of the company in single-file order.** In return for compliance with these terms, the white men would give the emigrants safe conduct back to Cedar City where they would be protected until they could continue their journey to California.

The emigrants agreed, the wagons were brought forward and loaded with the wounded and the weapons, and the procession started toward Cedar City. Within a short distance, one armed white man was positioned near each of the Baker-Fancher party adults, ostensibly for protection. **When all was in place, a pre-determined signal was given and each of the armed white men turned, shot, and killed each of the unarmed Baker-Fancher party members. Within three to five minutes the entire massacre of men, women, and older children was complete.** The only members of the original party remaining were those children judged to be under eight years old, numbering about 17 persons.

Although the particular item of evidence is new, [...] for example, in her book *Wife No. 19, Ann Eliza Webb Dee Young Denning accused Brigham Young of ordering the massacre so that he could appropriate the property of the victims* (“Mountain Meadows Massacre.” *LDS*. 16 May 2012. <fairmorgmon.org>).

God, Christ, and the Spirit:

- The LDS church states, **“We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost”** (“13 Articles of Faith.” *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/articles-of-faith>).
- Of the LDS scriptures, Doctrine and Covenants 130:22 states, **“The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit. Were it not so the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.”**
- About the **Holy Spirit** or “Holy Ghost”, the LDS church states, **“The Holy Ghost is a member of the Godhead, along with God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost is one in purpose with the Father and the Son, but is a separate being”** (“What Do Mormons Believe about the Holy Ghost?” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/faq>).
- The LDS report that, **“The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that the Holy Ghost is a spirit man, a spirit son of God the Father. [...]**

The Holy Ghost is such an uplifting power and source of necessary gospel knowledge that to have his constant companionship and influence is the greatest gift a person can receive in mortality (“Holy Ghost.” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 16 May 2012. <eom.byu.edu/index.php/Holy_Ghost>).

- The LDS church neglect to mention in their Articles of Faith that they also confess, **“Latter-day Saints infer the existence of a Heavenly Mother through scripture and modern revelation. Because LDS theology rejects the doctrine of creation out of nothing (creatio ex nihilo) as a post-Biblical addition to Christian belief, and because they see God as embodied in human form while rejecting creedal [Trinitarianism](#), having a female counterpart to Our Heavenly Father seems logical and almost inevitable. This is especially true given the LDS embrace of the doctrine of [theosis](#), or human deification. Thus, the Heavenly Mother shares parenthood with the Father, and shares His attributes of perfection, holiness, and glory”** (“Heavenly Mother.” *FAIR*. 16 May 2012 <en.fairmormon.org/Heavenly_Mother>).
- The LDS church states, **“The Bible contains language indicating human beings can put on the divine nature and be called ‘gods’** (see John 10:33, 34; Ps. 82:6, Deut. 10:17, etc.). They are instructed to become one with Jesus just as he is one with his Father. **The key point to realize is that any existence of other beings with godly attributes has no effect on who Latter-day Saints worship.** According to Jeff Lindsay, a popular LDS online apologist: **‘We worship God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ - not glorious angels or Abraham or Moses or John the Baptist, no matter how great they may be in the kingdom of heaven as sons of God who have become “like Christ” (1 John 3:2). The only reasonable definition of polytheism requires that plural gods be worshiped - but the beings that Christ calls “gods” are not who we worship at all.** In terms of worship, we are properly called monotheists.’ [*JeffLindsay.com*] **Additionally, there is abundant evidence of deification being taught by various commonly accepted Christians. If belief in theosis makes one a polytheist, many Christians would have to be so labeled - including such figures as C. S. Lewis and John Calvin.** Clearly, this is not the way in which the term ‘polytheist’ is normally used, but critics of the Church are often willing to be inconsistent if the Church can be made to look alien or ‘unchristian.’” (“Polytheism.” *FAIR*. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).
- One of the Mormon writings entitled, “History of the Church” (HC) was commanded to be written by the “revelation of God” in their scripture, Doctrine & Covenants 47. While preaching on Sunday May 26, 1844, Joseph Smith stated, **“I have more to boast of than ever any man had. I am the only man that has ever been able to keep a whole church together since the days of Adam. A large majority of the whole have stood by me. Neither Paul, John, Peter, nor Jesus ever did it. I boast that no man**

ever did such a work as I. The followers of Jesus ran away from Him; the Latter-day Saints never ran away from me yet..." (History of the Church, Vol. 6, P.408-409).

- **The Mormon scripture, Doctrine and Covenants (D&C) assert the plurality of gods (121:32, 132:18-20, 37) while other of their scriptures state there is only one God who is the beginning and the end and the first and the last, and none other besides Him (Alma 11:27-39, 44; 2 Nephi 31:21; 3 Nephi 11:27; Mormon 7:7; D&C 20:28; Moses 1:6).** These latter citations also declare that God is one who consists of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Concerning **evolution and creation**, the LDS state, **"Despite the fact that the Church has no official position on evolution beyond those expressed by the First Presidency (above), some general authorities and lay members have considered evolution to be at variance with scriptural teaching"** ("Evolution: Official Stance." FAIR. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).
- The LDS president after Joseph Smith, who is Brigham Young, stated, **"In these respects we differ from the Christian world, for our religion will not clash with or contradict the facts of science in any particular...whether the Lord found the earth empty and void, whether he made it out of nothing or out of the rude elements; or whether he made it in six days or in as many millions of years, is and will remain a matter of speculation in the minds of men unless he give revelation on the subject.** If we understood the process of creation there would be no mystery about it, it would be all reasonable and plain, for there is no mystery except to the ignorant. —Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 14:166, May 14, 1871" ("Age of the Earth." FAIR. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).
- About dinosaurs, the LDS state, **"The core of the problem is that the scriptures and the revelations simply don't talk about dinosaurs**, and are inconclusive about whether there was physical death for other organisms before Adam and Eve's fall. This leaves each person to decide for themselves how the fossils we have discovered fit into the timeline of the plan of salvation" ("Dinosaurs." FAIR. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).

Scriptures: *God:* Gen. 1:1-2, Psa. 110:1, Isa. 9:6, 48:16, 61:1, Mic. 5:2, Matt. 12:46-47, 13:55-56, 28:19, Luke 3:22, John 1:1, 14, Acts 7:55, 10:38, **Rom. 8:9, 16-17**, 9:5, 15:30, 2 Cor. 3:17, 13:14, Phil. 2:5-8, Col. 1:15-20, Heb. 9:14, 1 Pet. 1:2, 3:18, **2 Pet. 1:4**, 1 John 4:2, **5:6**; *Creation:* Gen. 1:26-27, Exo. 20:11, Matt. 19:4-5, Mark 10:6-8, Luke 11:50-51, Rom. 1:20.

Christ's Words and the Scriptures:

- The LDS church states, "[8] We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; **we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.**
[9] **We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God**" ("13 Articles of Faith." *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/articles-of-faith>).
- The LDS church reports, **"The Book of Mormon is the word of God, like the Bible.** It is Holy Scripture, with form and content similar to that of the Bible. **Both books contain God's guidance as revealed to prophets as well as religious histories of different civilizations.** While the Bible is written by and about the people in the land of Israel and surrounding areas, and takes place from the creation of the world until shortly after the death of Jesus Christ, **the Book of Mormon contains the history and God's dealings with the people who lived in the Americas between approximately 600 BC and 400 AD. The prophets in the Book of Mormon recorded God's dealings with His people, which were compiled by a prophet named Mormon onto gold plates.**

Before these faithful Christians perished, their record was safely hidden away. **Joseph Smith obtained these ancient records in 1827, and with the gift and power of God, Joseph was able to translate the ancient writings into what we have today.** The Book of Mormon, along with the Bible, testifies that Jesus Christ is our divine Redeemer and that by living according to His gospel we can

find peace in this life and eternal happiness in the life to come” (“The Book of Mormon.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/book-of-mormon/>).

- The LDS church states, **“Joseph Smith was the first prophet called in the current dispensation, or generation, of the Church, and there has been a prophet on the earth ever since. The man called to speak for God and lead His church today is named Thomas S. Monson”** (“Follow the Prophet.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/commandments/>).
- One of part of the LDS scriptures is “Doctrine & Covenants” (D&C) in which asserts that God will always be with Joseph Smith Jr. and the keys will not be taken from him (112:15). D&C 132:46 teaches that Joseph Smith has the authority to set doctrine and that what he binds is eternal. **D&C 132:59 presents that Joseph Smith will not sin in everything that he does in the name of God.**
- In HC, Joseph Smith Jr. stated, **“God made Aaron to be the mouth piece for the children of Israel, and He will make me be god to you in his stead, and the Elders to be mouth for me; and if you don’t like it, you must lump it”** (History of the Church, Vol. 6. P.319-320).
- Regarding **the Bible**, the Book of Mormon states in 1 Nephi 13:26-29, “And after they [the gospel of the book] go forth by the [hand](#) of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, from the Jews [unto](#) the Gentiles, thou seest the formation of that [great](#) and abominable [church](#), which is most abominable above all other churches; for behold, **they have [taken](#) away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are [plain](#) and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away. (27) And all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord**, that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. (28) **Wherefore, thou seest that after the book hath gone forth through the hands of the great and abominable church, that there are many plain and [precious](#) things taken away from the book, which is the book of the Lamb of God. (29) And after these plain and precious things were [taken](#) away it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles; and after it goeth forth unto all the nations of the Gentiles, yea, even across the many waters which thou hast seen with the Gentiles which have gone forth out of captivity, thou seest—because of the many plain and precious things which have been taken out of the book, which were plain unto the understanding of the children of men, according to the plainness which is in the Lamb of God—because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceedingly great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them”** (Smith, Joseph Jr. “Book of Mormon.” Salt Lake City: Intellectual Reserve, Inc., 1981.).
- On September 2, 1883, LDS Apostle George Q. Cannon stated, **“I believe myself that Mahomed, whom the Christians deride and call a false prophet and stigmatize with a great many epithets – I believe that he was man raised up by the Almighty, and inspired to a certain extent by Him to effect the reforms which he did in his land, and in the nations surrounding...I believe many men were inspired who lived after him and before him, who, nevertheless, did not have the Holy Priesthood, but were led by the Spirit of God to strive for a better condition of affairs and to live a purer and higher life than those by whom they were surrounded were living. But while this was the case, it was the Spirit of God that did it”** (Journal of Discourses, 18:371).

Scriptures: Luke 1:1-3, 1 Cor. 1:1-2, 10, 12:13, 2 Cor. 1:1, **Gal. 1:8-9**, Eph. 2:20, 3:3-5, Col. 4:16, 2 Thess. 2:15, 2 Tim. 3:16-17 (cf. 1 Tim. 5:18), 2 Pet. 1:16-21, 3:15-16, 1 John 1:1-4.

Way of Salvation:

- The LDS church confesses, “[2] **We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression.**
[3] **We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.**

[4] We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: **first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost**" ("13 Articles of Faith." *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/articles-of-faith>).

- Concerning **baptism**, the LDS church professes, "**One of the purposes of baptism is to symbolically wash away our sins, but even Jesus Christ, who lived a perfect life, was baptized. Jesus was baptized because it is a commandment and he wanted to provide a perfect example of obedience to Heavenly Father's divine guidance**" (mormon.org/commandments/).
- Regarding **baptism of the death**, the LDS church reports, "**We learn in the New Testament that baptisms for the dead were done during the Apostle Paul's time** (see [1 Corinthians 15:29](#)). This practice has been restored with the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. **The Prophet Joseph Smith first taught about the ordinance of baptism for the dead during a funeral sermon in August 1840.** He read much of 1 Corinthians 15, including verse 29, and announced that the Lord would permit Church members to be baptized in behalf of their friends and relatives who had departed this life. [...]

Because all who have lived on the earth have not had the opportunity to be baptized by proper authority during life on earth, baptisms may be performed by proxy, meaning a living person may be baptized in behalf of a deceased person. Baptisms for the dead are performed by Church members in temples throughout the world" ("Why Do Mormons Perform Baptisms of the Dead?" *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/faq/>).

- About **the baptism and the Holy Ghost**, the LDS report, "Joseph Smith taught that the influence of the Holy Ghost, **which is the convincing power of God of the truth of the gospel**, can be received before baptism, but **the gift, or constant companionship, of the Holy Ghost, which comes by the laying-on of hands, is obtained only after baptism** (*TPJS*, p. 199). 'You might as well baptize a bag of sand as a man,' he said, 'if not done in view of the remission of sins and getting of the Holy Ghost. **Baptism by water is but half a baptism, and is good for nothing without the other half-that is, the baptism of the Holy Ghost**' (*TPJS*, p. 314). Thus, a person is expected to receive the witness of the Holy Ghost to the truthfulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, of scripture, and of the words of the living prophets before baptism; **the full outpouring of the Spirit does not come, however, until the person has complied with the command to be baptized**" ("Holy Ghost." *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 16 May 2012. <eom.byu.edu/index.php/Holy_Ghost>).

Scriptures: Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:16, John 6:53-56, 16:7-13, **Acts 2:38**, 3:19, 8:38, 22:16, Rom. 6:3-7, Gal. 5:4, Col. 2:11-12, 1 Tim. 2:4, Heb. 6:4-6, 1 Pet. 3:21, 2 Pet. 1:10, 3:9, 1 John 1:5-2:6.

The Church & Church Government:

- The Handbook of Denominations reports, "Latter-day Saints recognize two priesthoods: (1) the higher priesthood of Melchizedek, which **holds power of presidency and authority over offices of the church and whose officers include apostles, patriarchs, high priests, seventies, and elders**, and (2) the lesser priesthood of Aaron, which guides the temporal affairs of the church through its **bishops, priests, teachers, and deacons**.

The presiding council of the church is the First Presidency, made up of three high priests-the president and two counselors. Its authority is final in both spiritual and temporal affairs. **The president of the church is 'the mouthpiece of God'; through him come the laws of the church by direct revelation.**

Next to the presidency stands the Council of the Twelve Apostles, chosen by revelation to supervise, under the direction of the First Presidency, the whole work of the church. The church is divided into areas, regions, and stakes (geographical divisions) composed of a number of wards

(local churches of parishes). **Members of two quorums of seventy preside over the areas, under the direction of the Twelve. High priests, assisted by elders, are in charge of the stakes and wards**" (Mead. P.200-201; cf. <mormonnewsroom.org/leadership-and-organization>).

- The Handbook of Denominations states, "Some 37,000 young Mormons currently serve as full-time missionaries throughout the world without compensation; they devote eighteen months to two years to spreading the teaching of their church at home and abroad. Only about 100 persons in full-time leadership positions receive a salary or living allowance" (Mead, P.201).
- The LDS state, "**Some members of the Church are unaware that at least some General Authorities do receive a modest living stipend.** While it is true that some Church leaders receive a living allowance while they serve in a given position, it cannot be said that the Church has a *professional* ministry in the traditional sense.

Some positions in the Church, namely a call to serve in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles or the First Quorum of the Seventy, are 'for life' positions, meaning that the man chosen to fill the position serves until the end of his life. In such cases, if required, they are also given a modest living allowance. While many members of the Church are unaware of these allowances, that they exist and that they are comparatively modest" ("General Authorities Living Stipend." *FAIR*. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).

- Concerning **blacks in the priesthood**, the Director for African American Relations for the LDS, Marvin Perkins reports, "**But for many years during the history of the Church, the priesthood was withheld from many worthy men because of their lineage. Then, in June of 1978, a remarkable and wonderful thing occurred. The president of the Church, the prophet of the Lord at the time, Spencer W. Kimball, announced a revelation under which every worthy man could, under proper circumstances, receive the eternal priesthood with authority to act in the name of God**" ("Blacks and the Priesthood." *FAIR*. 16 May 2012. <fairlds.org>).
- About **women**, the LDS report, "All women are daughters of a loving Heavenly Father. Women and men are equal in the sight of God. The Bible says, 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28). **In the family, a wife and a husband form an equal partnership in leading and raising a family.**

From the beginning of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints women have played an integral role in the work of the Church. While worthy men hold the priesthood, **worthy women serve as leaders, counselors, missionaries, teachers, and in many other responsibilities— they routinely preach from the pulpit and lead congregational prayers in worship services.** They serve both in the Church and in their local communities and contribute to the world as leaders in a variety of professions. Their vital and unique contribution to raising children is considered an important responsibility and a special privilege of equal importance to priesthood responsibilities" ("Do Mormon Women Lead in the Church?" *Mormonism 101*. 16 May 2012. <mormonnewsroom.org>).

Scriptures: Acts 14:26, 20:28, Eph. 1:22, 4:11-12, Phil. 1:1, Col. 1:18, 2:19, 1 Tim. 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

Worship and Assembly:

- The LDS church states, "But **Sunday, or the Sabbath**, is a time to worship God and to give us a rest from our day-to-day obligations. After creating the earth in six days, God set the seventh aside as a day of rest and remembrance. On Sunday we can spend time with friends and family, visit the sick or lonely, spend extra time studying the scriptures and go to Church. At Church we sing, pray, and discuss the gospel with the other members of the congregation and we also take the sacrament in remembrance of the Savior. **At Church Mormons participate in the sacrament by eating bread and drinking water that was prepared to symbolize the body and blood of Jesus Christ.** We can take

that time to meditate on how Jesus Christ can help us and think about how we can better keep the covenants we have made with Him” (“Keep the Sabbath Day Holy.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/commandments/>).

- The LDS state, **“Our primary family worship service is called sacrament meeting.** It’s held in our chapels on Sunday and lasts approximately one hour. You’re welcome to come alone or bring your family; children are present in virtually all our congregations.
We sing hymns (hymn books are provided). Church members say opening and closing prayers. **We partake of the sacrament (communion), which consists of prepared bread and water, blessed and passed to members of the congregation by priesthood holders. And we listen to two or more speakers who are usually members of the congregation.** You might be surprised that we don’t have just one pastor or preacher. **We do have an unpaid bishop who presides over each congregation (called a ward)”** (“Worship with Us.” *LDS*. 16 May 2012. <mormon.org/worship/>).
- Regarding **church music**, the LDS state, **“Our hymns have been chosen because they have been proven effective to invite the Spirit of the Lord.** A daughter who plays the violin described that reality. ‘I love to play classical music,’ she said, ‘but when I play our hymns, I can just feel the Spirit of the Lord in my practice room.’

Soloists should remember that music in our worship services is not for demonstration but for worship. Vocal or instrumental numbers should be chosen to facilitate worship, not to provide performance opportunity for artists, no matter how accomplished.

Our sacred music prepares us to be taught the truths of the gospel. **This is why we are selective in the kinds of music and the kinds of instruments we use in our worship services. This is why we encourage our choirs to use the hymnbook as their basic resource”** (Oaks, Dallin. “Worship through Music.” *LDS*. 16 May 2012. <lds.org>).

- The LDS’s Encyclopedia states, **“Although some American Christian churches historically have held conflicting views on music, a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith in July 1830 ([D&C 25](#)) likened ‘the song of the righteous’ to prayer, confirming the propriety of vocal music for worship.** With this foundation, the Prophet formed a Church ‘singing department’ in 1835 to teach note reading and vocal technique. In Nauvoo, and later in Utah, musical standards rose as several well-trained British musicians were converted to the Church and immigrated to the United States. **These converts helped establish the propriety of instrumental music for worship, a matter not addressed in the 1830 revelation. Although congregational and choral singing clearly prevailed in the Church, instrumental music soon came to accompany it.** Wind, brass, and string bands also proliferated in LDS culture, accompanying the military, recreational, and civic exercises of the Saints” (“Music.” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 16 May 2012. <eom.byu.edu/index.php/Music>).

Scriptures: Matt. 6:1-18, 15:1-9, 23, **26:28-29**; John 4:21-24; Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 4:17, 11:2, 17-34; 14, 16:1-3; Eph. 5:19; Col. 2:18-23, 3:16; 1 Tm. 2:11-12, Heb. 2:12, 10:24-25, 13:15-16.

Morality:

- About **abortion**, the LDS church states, **“The Church opposes abortion and counsels its members not to submit to or perform an abortion except in the rare cases where, in the opinion of competent medical counsel, the life or good health of the mother is seriously endangered or where the pregnancy was caused by rape and produces serious emotional trauma in the mother”** (“What is the Church’s Position on Abortion?” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/faq>).
- Regarding **homosexuality**, the LDS church states, “The Church does not reject those who experience same-sex attraction. It is possible to experience same-sex attraction and be a faithful member in full fellowship. **If those feelings take the form of an intimate physical relationship, then this is considered a sin in the same manner as when heterosexual feelings take the form of an intimate**

physical relationship outside of marriage” (“Mormonism and Same-sex Attraction.” *FAIR*. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).

- Concerning **obedience to civil government**, the LDS church states, “[11] We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and **allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.**
 - [12] **We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring, and sustaining the law.**
 - [13] **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” (“13 Articles of Faith.” *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/articles-of-faith>).
- Regarding **racism**, Brigham Young stated, “**Shall I tell you the law of God in regard to the African race? If the white man who belongs to the chosen seed mixes his blood with the seed of Cain, the penalty, under the law of God, is death on the spot.** This will always be so. The nations of the earth have transgressed every law that God has given, they have changed the ordinances and broken every covenant made with the fathers, and they are like a hungry man that dreameth that he eateth, and he awaketh and behold he is empty. [...]

If the Government of the United States, in Congress assembled, had the right to pass an anti-polygamy bill, they had also the right to pass a law that slaves should not be abused as they have been; they had also a right to make a law that negroes should be used like human beings, and not worse than dumb brutes. For their abuse of that race, the whites will be cursed, unless they repent.

I am neither an abolitionist nor a pro-slavery man. If I could have been influenced by private injury to choose one side in preference to the other, **I should certainly be against the pro-slavery side of the question**, for it was pro-slavery men that pointed the bayonet at me and my brethren in Missouri, and said, ‘Damn you we will kill you.’ I have not much love for them, only in the Gospel. I would cause them to repent, if I could, and make them good men and a good community. I have no fellowship for their avarice, blindness, and ungodly actions. To be great, is to be good before the Heavens and before all good men. I will not fellowship the wicked in their sins, so help me God” (“Laws of God Relative to the African Race.” *Journal of Discourses*. Vol. 10. Great Salt Lake City: March 8, 1863. <en.fairmormon.org/Journal_of_Discourses/10/25#110>).
- Concerning **drinking and general health**, the LDS church states, “[God] revealed a law of health, called the Word of Wisdom, to Joseph Smith in 1833. **The Word of Wisdom prohibits the drinking of alcohol, coffee and tea, and the use of tobacco.** It also implies that we not use illegal drugs or abuse prescription drugs.

The Word of Wisdom also encourages us to eat plenty of the fruits and vegetables that are in season, plenty of grains and a moderate amount of meat” (“Obey the Word of Wisdom.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/commandments/>).
- About **fasting**, the LDS church reports, “**Once a month, God asks us to fast, or forego food and water for two meals.** If there are issues with health or age (such as the very young) fasting can be modified to fit individual circumstances. **But fasting without prayer, some say, is just going hungry. We pick a specific need or question we have and pray for help while we fast.**

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints sets aside the first Sunday of every month as a time when members are asked to fast. We are encouraged to make a fast offering on these days, which is a monetary donation (at least equal to the value of the two meals) that goes to help the

poor who need food or shelter” (“Observe the Law of the Fast.” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/commandments/>).

Scriptures: Matt. 15:19, Mark 7:20-23, Rom. 1:24-32, 12:9-15:13, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Gal. 5:16-6:10, Eph. 4:17-6:18, Col. 3-4:6.

Marriage and Divorce:

- The LDS report, **“The kind of marriage required for exaltation—eternal in duration and godlike in quality—does not contemplate divorce. In the temples of the Lord, couples are married for all eternity. But some marriages do not progress toward that ideal. Because ‘of the hardness of [our] hearts,’ the Lord does not currently enforce the consequences of the celestial standard. He permits divorced persons to marry again without the stain of immorality specified in the higher law.** Unless a divorced member has committed serious transgressions, he or she can become eligible for a temple recommend under the same worthiness standards that apply to other members” (“Jesus said that Divorce Not Allowed Except for Fornication.” *FAIR*. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).
- Regarding **celestial marriage**, the LDS church states, “Family members who accept the Atonement of Jesus Christ and follow His example can be together forever through sacred ordinances performed in God’s holy temples. **These ordinances seal a husband and wife together for all eternity and children to their parents as an eternal family**” (“Can a Husband and Wife Be Together Forever?” *LDS*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/faq>).
- Concerning **polygamy**, the LDS church states, **“In this dispensation, the Lord commanded some of the early Saints to practice plural marriage. The Prophet Joseph Smith and those closest to him, including Brigham Young and Heber C. Kimball, were challenged by this command, but they obeyed it. Church leaders regulated the practice. Those entering into it had to be authorized to do so, and the marriages had to be performed through the sealing power of the priesthood.** In 1890, President Wilford Woodruff received a revelation that the leaders of the Church should cease teaching the practice of plural marriage (Official Declaration 1)” (“Why the Church Previously Practice Plural Marriage (Polygamy)?” *LDS*. 16 May 2012. <mormon.org/faq>).
- D&C 132:46 affirms that Joseph Smith has the authority to set doctrine and that what he binds is eternal, and in this very chapter, Joseph presents that men do have a right to have a plurality of wives as long as they are given to him by God (cf. D&C 61-62). **Other LDS scriptures teach that polygamy is wrong before God** (Jacob 2:23-24, 26-28, Jacob 1:15, Ether 10:5, D&C 49:16; cf. D&C 134:7). **The Official Declaration of 1 of D&C commands by the president of the LDS church, Wilford Woodruff, that polygamy should not be practiced, encouraged, or even taught.**

Scriptures: Matt. 5:31-32, 19:9, Mark 10:5-12, Luke 16:18, **1 Cor.** 6:16-18, **7:2**, 10-15, Heb. 13:4.

The End Times & Afterlife:

- Regarding **hell**, the LDS state, **“Latter-day revelations speak of hell in at least two ways. First, it is another name for spirit prison, a temporary place in the postmortal world for those who died without a knowledge of the truth or those who were disobedient in mortality.** Second, it is the permanent location of Satan and his followers and the sons of perdition, who are not redeemed by the Atonement of Jesus Christ” (“Hell.” *LDS*. 16 May 2012. <lds.org>).
- About **heaven**, the LDS church believe, **“The saved, however, are not placed into a monolithic state called heaven. In the resurrection of the body, they are assigned to different degrees of glory commensurate with the law they have obeyed. There are three kingdoms of glory: the celestial, the terrestrial, and the telestial**” (“Degrees of Glory.” *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*. 16 May 2012. <eom.byu.edu/index.php/Degrees_of_Glory>).

- About the reign of Christ, the LDS church states, **“We believe in the literal gathering of Israel and in the restoration of the Ten Tribes; that Zion (the New Jerusalem) will be built upon the American continent; that Christ will reign personally upon the earth;** and, that the earth will be renewed and receive its paradisiacal glory” (“13 Articles of Faith.” *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints*. 15 May 2012. <mormon.org/articles-of-faith>).
- About the **“rapture”**, the LDS state, **“Modern revelation makes it clear that the saints will remain on the earth through the tribulation period until Christ's coming and those who are old or in the grave shall be changed to a resurrected state at that time.** Younger saints will grow old and be changed in an instant at one hundred years of age ([Isaiah 65:20](#); [DC 101:30-31](#)) to inherit a glorious resurrection with God and Christ” (“Rapture and LDS Theology.” *FAIR*. 16 May 2012. <fairmormon.org>).

Scriptures: Matt. 24:29-51, **25**:31-46, Mark 9:1, 13:24-37, Luke 21:25-36, John 14:1-4, 18:36, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Cor. 15:23-28, 50-53, Col. 1:13, 1 Thess. 4:13-5:11, 2 Thess. 2:1-12, Heb. 12:28, **2 Pet. 3:1-13**, Rev. 19-22:5.