

Is Mormonism A Cult?

by Wayne Goff

Mormonism can be considered a “cult” because the Mormon Church does not follow the Bible but rather the Book of Mormon, it denies the Trinity, and has strange views regarding man’s eternal destiny -- affirming that one can become a God in the afterlife.

ROBERT JEFFRESS

Robert Jeffress is the pastor of a Dallas megachurch who endorsed two Republican candidates while calling the Mormon faith a “cult” and a “false religion.”

The actual name of the Mormon church is “*the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*.” But their definition of “Christ” and “Christian” is far different than what true Christians believe from God’s Word.

Mormons trace their roots to 1820 when Joseph Smith claimed to have been visited by angels and was called to **restore(?)** the true church. That revelation became the *Book of Mormon*. It says that Jews came to America around 600 B.C. and were the forebears of the American Indians. It teaches that Jesus came to America after His resurrection from the dead and preached to their descendants.

Furthermore, Mormonism teaches that in eternity *faithful Mormon families* enjoy the greatest rewards, though now some claim that other followers of Jesus will have some reward in heaven.

Mormons also believe that God is a glorified man. They reject the doctrine of the Trinity.

THEIR LIVING CREED

Unlike true Christians who understand that the Gospel was once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3) by the end of the first century A.D., Mormons believe that Divine revelation is ongoing and continuous. They claim that Twelve Apostles in Salt Lake City, Utah are the natural heirs of the New Testament apostles. These “*apostles*” govern the church and have authority to interpret scriptures based on new revelations. So what may be **true(?)** today in the Mormon faith may not have been true of their faith in the past.

For example, in the early 1970’s the Mormons rejected the New Testament as “*corrupt*.” They professed that the *Book of Mormon* was the true revelation for North America. Of course, a comparison of the two shows a *vast difference* between the two, with the *Book of Mormon* failing miserably as an inspired document! However, today the Mormon church accepts the New Testament as a valid, inspired revelation from God **along with** the *Book of Mormon*. So their doctrine has changed in that regard.

Likewise, in 1978, Mormon apostles supposedly received a revelation that admitted men of African descent into full membership. Prior to that, such were refused.

THE MEANING OF “CULT”

Some of the confusion today regarding the word “*cult*” comes from the variety of meanings placed upon it in our language. When we say “*cult*” in America, many people think of Jim Jones & Guyana, or David Koresh & the Waco compound. Thus, the term carries a cynical, deadly meaning.

However, “*cult*” as it applies to Mormonism has more the definition of “*a misplaced or excessive admiration for a particular person or thing*” [Oxford American Dictionaries]. That particular *person or thing* in their case refers to their acceptance of Joseph Smith as a latter-day prophet, and the Book of Mormon as a latter-day revelation. One cannot be a true “*Christian*” in the biblical sense and accept either one of those declarations. One cannot believe in a “*living creed*” and be a true Christian.

The problem with discussing this matter with others who claim to be “*Christians*” is that some of them are guilty of the same things! Catholics venerate the pope as *God on earth*, and the Catholic Church claims to be the creator and maintainer of Divine revelation. The religious world accepts this as “*orthodox*” while rejecting Mormonism with similar claims! So as you study this matter and use the term “*cult*” be sure you and your audience understands your meaning of the word.