

SUNDAY LESSONS
 This Month's Topic:
**The Apostasy and
 the Restoration**

TRUE OR FALSE?

Sometimes knowing truth from error is difficult, but our Heavenly Father has given us powerful gifts to help us distinguish between God's truths and Satan's lies.

By David A. Edwards

Church Magazines

If you've ever taken a test with true-or-false questions, you know it's sometimes hard to spot a falsehood. Likewise, in the big questions of faith, belief, and everyday living, while it is extremely important to be able to tell the difference between what's true and what isn't, it's not always easy.

However, we need not fear like unprepared test takers. Our Heavenly Father has blessed us with many gifts to help us recognize His truths and the adversary's lies.

Different Kinds of Falsehoods

First, to illustrate a point, here's a little true-or-false quiz for you:



1

The moon is green.

TRUE FALSE

Neil Armstrong, the Apollo 12 astronaut who was the first person to walk on the moon, said that the event was a "giant leap for mankind."

2

TRUE FALSE



3

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) program couldn't go to Mars in 1969, so they had to go to the moon.

TRUE

FALSE



Solar winds, radiation, cosmic rays, and other obstacles would have made the manned moon landings impossible, plus the photographs looked altered and the eyewitness accounts disagreed on some details, so the U.S. government must have staged the whole thing.

TRUE

FALSE

4

Modern Lies

When it comes to the things that influence your thoughts, beliefs, choices, and behaviors—the things that have potentially eternal consequences—it pays to look out for different kinds of falsehoods, since Satan, “the father of lies” (2 Nephi 9:9), will use any method he can to deceive us. Here are some examples of how he’s doing it today, as well as examples of how we can respond with the truth.

The answer to each question is *False*, and these questions represent some basic types of falsehoods you will likely encounter.

Question 1 is a *simple untruth*, a blatant error. Question 2 is a *partial truth*, which is tricky, since it pairs one or more truths with a falsehood (it was Apollo 11, not Apollo 12—gotcha!). Question 3 contains a *false dichotomy*, or a situation where only two options are presented that aren't really the only options (NASA could have chosen not to go anywhere, for instance). Question 4 is a “*logical*” *argument*, which piles on reasonable-sounding but often faulty evidence in order to lead to a specific mistaken conclusion.

Simple Untruth

False Idea:

Pornography is normal and doesn't hurt anyone.

Where It Leads (Big Lie):

Go ahead and view pornography.

The Truth:

Pornography distorts our view of sexuality, can be addictive, deeply harms us spiritually, and can destroy relationships.

Partial Truth

False Idea:

Each person is unique and can live as he or she chooses, so how you feel about and express yourself are the most important things in your life.

Where It Leads (Big Lie):

You shouldn't let God or the Church tell you how to live, so go ahead and do what you want if it makes you feel good.

The Truth:

Each of us is a unique child of Heavenly Father, who wants us to become our best selves and to become like Him. Obedience to His commandments helps us gain ultimate joy.

How to Know the Truth

So where does a more complete view of the truth come from? How are we able to see through the falsehoods? Here are some of the powerful gifts Heavenly Father has given us to distinguish truth from error.

- **The Light of Christ.** “The Light of Christ . . . prompts all rational individuals throughout the earth to distinguish truth from error, right from wrong. It activates your conscience.”¹
- **The Holy Ghost.** “The Spirit of truth . . . will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).
- **Scriptures.** “God uses scripture to unmask erroneous thinking, false traditions, and sin with its devastating effects.”² The Book of Mormon is especially important in this regard, for it “exposes the enemies of Christ. It confounds false doctrines and lays down contention. (See 2 Ne. 3:12.)”³
- **Modern prophets.** “[A prophet’s] responsibility is to make known God’s will and true character to mankind. . . . A prophet denounces sin and foretells its consequences.”⁴
- **Education.** “A saint . . . seeks learning by study, and also by faith. Education . . . enables one to discern truth from error, particularly through studying the scriptures. (See D&C 88:118.)”⁵

False Dichotomy (Only Two Options)

False Idea:

The Church preaches against certain lifestyles; therefore, it is intolerant and hates people—it is not accepting and loving.

Where It Leads (Big Lie):

Since the Church is intolerant and hateful, it deserves to be criticized, ridiculed, and condemned, so you should stop associating with it.

The Truth:

Not accepting someone else’s lifestyle does not equal hatred and intolerance. We can show compassion, respect, and kindness to everyone—including people whose lifestyles run contrary to God’s laws—while staying true to God and His commandments.

“Logical” Argument

False Idea:

Some things in the Book of Mormon are refuted by current scientific evidence, and the accounts of how it was translated are inconsistent, so Joseph Smith must have made it all up or copied it from somewhere.

Where It Leads (Big Lie):

The Book of Mormon is not true and Joseph Smith was not a prophet, so stop associating with the Church.

The Truth:

Science affirms many things in the Book of Mormon, and the “evidence” against it is flawed. But the most important evidence for it is the witness of the Spirit telling you it is true and that Joseph Smith was a true prophet. (For more on the Book of Mormon translation, visit [lds.org/go/translateNE4](https://www.lds.org/go/translateNE4).)

Though it may not always be easy to answer *True* or *False* when facing all the different ideas out there, the gifts Heavenly Father has given you can help you pass the test. **NE**

NOTES

1. Richard G. Scott, “Peace of Conscience and Peace of Mind,” *Ensign*, Nov. 2004, 15.
2. D. Todd Christofferson, “The Blessing of Scripture,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 33–34.
3. Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994), “The Book of Mormon Is the Word of God,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 64.
4. Guide to the Scriptures, “Prophet,” [scriptures.lds.org](https://www.lds.org).
5. Russell M. Nelson, “Thus Shall My Church Be Called,” *Ensign*, May 1990, 16.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

THINGS TO PONDER FOR SUNDAY

- How has Heavenly Father helped you recognize the truth?
- How can you combat error?
- How can you encourage others to find out the truth?

THINGS YOU MIGHT DO

- In church, share how you came to believe that the restored gospel is true.
- On social media or at [lds.org/go/truthNE4](https://www.lds.org/go/truthNE4), share a truth and how you know it.