

ANSWERS

to Common

QUESTIONS

DO YOU EVER FEEL UNPREPARED WHEN PEOPLE ASK YOU QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CHURCH? HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW YOU MIGHT ANSWER A FEW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

Why do you have other scriptures? Isn't the Bible enough?

The Bible gives us much, and other scriptures give us even more. God has revealed His word in the Bible. We believe He has also revealed His word in other scriptures. This doesn't mean we think any less of the Bible, though. In fact, the other scriptures help us know that the Bible is true by giving us additional witnesses of it. All scriptures are proof that Heavenly Father loves His children and gives them what they need to follow His plan. Additional scriptures help clarify some things that otherwise might be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Mormon men have lots of wives, right?

No. In the 19th century, some men in the Church had more than one wife because God told the Prophet Joseph Smith to introduce this practice. Some men in the Old Testament were also commanded to do so (for instance, Abraham, Jacob, and David). This is something God has commanded for His own purposes in the past, but it was always a highly restricted and controlled practice. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints stopped practicing plural marriage in 1890, and anyone practicing or advocating it today cannot belong to the Church.

Why are Mormons against gay people?

We're not *against* anyone, and we don't hate anyone. As Christians, we are taught to show compassion and kindness to all people, whether or not we agree with their beliefs, lifestyle, or behavior. To disagree is not to hate or demean. We believe that nobody should be the target of hateful

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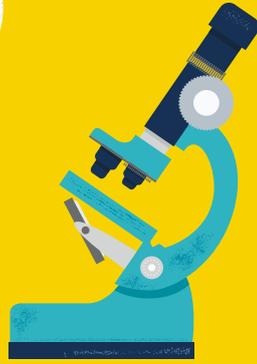
acts and words or be discriminated against in employment or housing, for instance. At the same time, we believe that sexual relations (whether heterosexual or homosexual) outside of marriage is sin and that God has ordained marriage to be only between a man and a woman. These beliefs are consistent with what Heavenly Father has revealed about the central role of the family (father, mother, and children) in His plan of salvation. This is the core and essence of eternity. This is what endures. Of course, people are free to choose how they live their lives, but that doesn't change God's plan, His commandments, or the blessings of keeping them. For more on this topic, visit mormonsandgays.org.

Are you really Christians or more like a cult?

We are Christians. We believe in Jesus Christ. When people say that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are not Christians, it's often based on a certain faulty logic: in their minds, since they're Christians and some of our teachings are so different from theirs,

Mormons can't possibly be Christians. For instance, they object to our belief that Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are separate beings. Other groups might even say we're a cult, but that's often just meant to label us and scare other people away. What really matters is this: we believe in Jesus Christ; He is our Lord and Savior who suffered, died, and rose again to overcome sin and death for us; and we follow His example and teachings. These are the common, core beliefs of all Christians, so yes, we are Christians.

Do you blindly obey?



Doesn't scientific evidence prove that the Book of Mormon couldn't possibly be true?

Why does it matter what church you belong to? Doesn't God love everyone?

God does love everyone. In fact, Heavenly Father loves everyone so much that He sent His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die so that we could have our sins forgiven, be resurrected, and live with Them in heaven. Jesus Christ has taught us what we need to do in order to be happy in this life and receive eternal life in the hereafter, including repenting and being baptized. He also established a Church in ancient times to administer these teachings and ordinances. Unfortunately, because people rejected the truth, that Church was lost from the earth for a long time, and various new churches arose. But in time, Jesus Christ restored His original Church through the Prophet Joseph Smith. It is the only Church with true authority to perform sacred

ordinances such as baptism. Because God loves everyone, He wants everyone to have the opportunity to learn about this Church and, through proper priesthood authority, be baptized in it and receive the covenants necessary for exaltation. That authority and those covenants are available only in His Church.

Doesn't scientific evidence prove that the Book of Mormon couldn't possibly be true?

No. The scientific evidence we have cannot prove or disprove the Book of Mormon. Archaeological or genetic research in the Americas, for instance, is ongoing and often raises more questions than it answers. So to draw absolute conclusions from it about the Book of Mormon (either for it or against it) is usually a bit of a stretch—and quite risky, since new evidence often comes along that

refutes old conclusions. But more important, attacks against the Book of Mormon on scientific grounds are usually based on faulty assumptions about what the book claims to be. For instance, it does *not* claim to be a record of the ancestors of all of the native peoples across the entire Western Hemisphere, nor does it claim that the people described in it were the first or only people inhabiting the area described in it. And yet, many scientific criticisms seem to assume that the book claims exactly these things. Science is learning more and more about the ancient Americas, and that process will continue. But we shouldn't assume that any of that research will give conclusive evidence for or against the Book of Mormon. The ultimate proof of its truth comes through sincere study and prayer and by the power of the Holy Ghost.

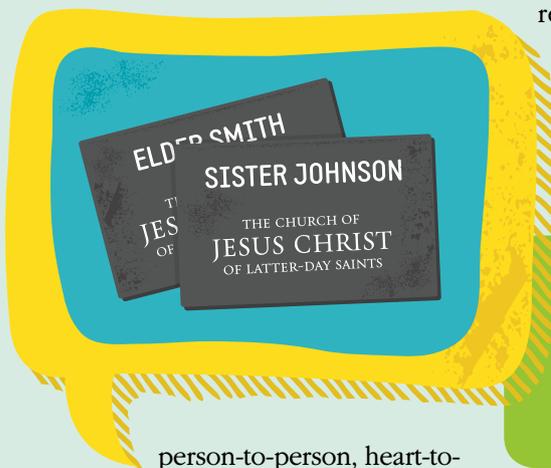
What happens in your temples, and why are you so secretive about it?

We don't think of it as *secret* so much as *sacred*. In the temple we participate in sacred ordinances and make covenants with Heavenly Father. We learn about His plan of salvation and the role of the Savior, Jesus Christ, as well as the glorious promises He makes to us if we are faithful and obedient. Also, the temple is where we are married and sealed together as families for all

eternity. There, we can also participate in these ordinances vicariously for our deceased ancestors. If you would like to learn more about our temples, see temples.lds.org.

Why does your church send out young men and women to be missionaries?

We believe we have the most important message in the world, and we want to share the happiness it's brought us with everyone. But this message isn't the kind that can simply be broadcast in the media or posted online. It is best delivered



person-to-person, heart-to-heart, spirit-to-spirit. That's why we send missionaries. The Lord calls them to preach His gospel to the world—the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ and of the Restoration of His Church. Young men and women are at just the right age to be doing this. They may be a bit unpolished sometimes, but they learn to rely on the Lord.

Why don't you believe in having sexual relationships until you're married?

God has commanded us not to. Keeping God's commandments helps us to have a safe and joyful journey through life, and sexual purity is an area where obedience brings perhaps the greatest measure of peace and joy. The power to create new life is sacred, as is the intimate expression of love between husband and wife, so the Lord has commanded us to have sexual relations only within the bonds of marriage. That is, abstain from sexual relations if you're not married, and when you are married, be completely faithful to your spouse. So much personal anguish and so many societal problems could

How can you be sure what you believe is true?

be avoided if we would all keep this commandment. Marriage is ordained of God and has a special place in His plan of happiness for His children. By reserving sexual relationships for marriage, we elevate both marriage and the sexual relationship to their proper and sacred place in our lives.

Do you all just blindly obey whatever you're told?

We do obey the prophets God has chosen—because we have faith in Him, not because we're blind followers. Blind obedience is not true obedience, anyway. The choice to obey—even when we may not fully understand a commandment—is made individually and is based on the trust, faith, and courage we develop as we draw closer to God by heeding His word to His prophets. We know that we can and should seek our own confirmation from God that what His servants have asked us to do is His will. That is our duty and our privilege.

How can you be sure what you believe is true?

Surety comes through the Holy Ghost, which gives you feelings and thoughts that will lead you to a knowledge of the truth if you seek it diligently, sincerely, and honestly and are willing to exercise faith. Only wholehearted effort will do—real study, earnest prayer, true commitment to act. If you do these things, God will reward you with an assurance of the truth. That's His promise, and we know He keeps it. **NE**

 For more answers to common questions, go to mormon.org/faq.