

Mormonism 09

by Gordon Fraser

Mormonism is not a Christian sect, and their concept of salvation is different from Christianity.

Duration: 36:39

Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-4, 1 Corinthians 1:17, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, 1 Peter 3:21

Topics: "Personal Testimony", "Salvation After Death"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares his personal testimony of accepting Jesus as his Savior and becoming a new creature in Christ. He talks about the change in his life and how his friends reacted to his newfound faith. The speaker then discusses the concept of being marked by Jesus and the significance of belonging to Him. He also addresses the belief in the opportunity for salvation after death and contrasts it with the biblical teaching of judgment after death. The sermon concludes with the speaker emphasizing the role of Jesus as our Redeemer and advocate with the Father.

Transcript

Gordon Fraser, October 9th, 1981, Forrest Grove Channel. On this final night of our series, I want to emphasize certain things that are valuable for Christian people in dealing with Mormons, particularly in the matter of salvation. As you meet Mormon people, the first thing they will insist on is that they are Christians, that they are a Christian sect.

I never allow them to get away with that. I tell them that I'm a Christian, and they say, well, we are Christians, too. And of course, at that point, we come into quite a discussion.

But you will find this, and this is one thing that I'm trying to get over to people, do not allow anyone to think that this Mormonism is a Christian sect. They are not a Christian sect. In fact, they are a pagan sect.

Now, they use the language of orthodoxy, that is, they use the actual terminology. They say, oh, yes, we believe in being saved, we believe in Jesus Christ, we believe in God, we believe, in fact, their statement, their first statement in their doctrinal statement is, we believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in his Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. That's their first item of doctrine.

Well, immediately, we raise the question, what do you mean by God, what do you mean by the Fatherhood of God, whom do you mean by Jesus Christ, and what do you mean by the Holy Spirit? We discover that everything that they believe concerning the persons of the Godhead is false. God, our

Heavenly Father, is an exalted man of flesh and bones, who was once a man on an earth like this, and who, by achieving and learning and advancing, has become God. Remember, I read the portion, How God Became God, from Milton Hunter, that God became God by the process of learning and achieving.

Well, this obviously is false. When they say the Heavenly Father, they mean that he, the Heavenly Father, has a heavenly wife, because how could you be a father if you don't have a wife? So God, the Eternal Father, has a wife, or wives, and they, in turn, are producing spirit children who eventually will become human beings, the whole process of salvation with them, or progression, as they call it. Very much like the old game of Monopoly, you keep going around and you hope to get out in the right place.

Well, these spirit children of the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother become humans whenever there is a human birth on the earth. If one of these spirits is drawn from that stockpile and becomes the spirit of this new child that is born, then as this human progresses through life and achieves or obeys the commandments and so forth, fulfills all the requirements, then, if he has done it perfectly, he rises to Godhood. That's how gods are made, and there are many gods.

They are polytheistic people. Their chief god they call Elohim, but he is only one of several. There's Elohim and there's Jehovah, and they consider Michael as a god.

Of course, Michael, according to our little booklet here, becomes Adam, who comes to this earth with one of his wives, Eve, and produces spirit children. Well, we are all spirit children, then, of Adam. We explain this to you.

But this is their process of salvation. It is a complete ritual of worth and achievement, with many places where incautious individuals would fall by the wayside and not achieve it the first time around. Well, this is their concept, that in the resurrection everyone will have a chance to hear the gospel again and hopefully will receive it.

Of course, you come to this argument, and the verse that we have, it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment. And sometimes they'll listen to this and their eyebrows will raise, and they say, just once, that's all. No other chance for salvation.

Now, these are little pointers that you have to be aware of as you're dealing with these people. They do not mean what we mean when we speak of God the Father, when we speak of Jesus Christ, whom they make to be the spirit brother of Satan. Together in this previous world, Satan did not achieve what he should have, therefore he didn't get a body.

Jesus got a body. The Holy Spirit is an influence, or a sort of a quantitative element that is imparted by the laying on of the hands of the elders. Now, this shows you how false their presentation is, even in their doctrinal statement that, of course, is geared to the listening public.

Read that statement. I know my daughter one time was listening on the radio, and they quoted that. She said, Well, they're Trinitarians.

We believe in God the Eternal Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost. But they are not Trinitarian, and they actually ridicule the doctrine of the Trinity, usually in the very first contact when they get into someone's home and start speaking. The Godhead consists of several persons who, in turn, are representative of a great host of gods.

Joseph Smith even spoke of the Head God calling a council of the gods when they decided to create and populate the earth. A rather crude statement. That's just exactly the way he said it.

The Head God called a council of the gods. So when they speak of God, they're talking of someone other than the God of Christianity. When they speak of Jesus Christ, they are not speaking of the Jesus Christ of the Gospels.

Always bear that in mind. Tonight we want to talk about a number of portions that they distort to teach their doctrines. First of all, they believe in salvation by works, and that salvation is a progressive thing.

I'm going to read you two excerpts from their writings to sort of fix this in your mind, just what they think of salvation, and especially what we call salvation by grace through faith. This is from one of their teachers, John Widtsoe, in his book *Varieties of American Religion*, pages 137 and 138. He says, What is salvation? It is the condition that results when a person is in harmony with truth.

Man may ever be on the way to salvation, but in its fullness salvation is the eternal goal. The law of salvation, and of all life, is eternal progression. One must grow daily and forever in righteousness and good works.

Those who are in a state of salvation are in a constant state of progression. Those who are static or who retrograde are the lost. Even for the latter, the tender mercy of God provides a fitting place in his kingdom and the opportunity for continuous repentance.

Whoever has placed himself by obedience to divine law beyond the power of evil, to that extent is saved. How may salvation be obtained? By accepting the principles and practices of truth issuing from God and constituting the plan of salvation by the resolute use of the will to obey at any cost the requirements of the gospel, and the constant appeal and prayer to God for assistance. Can Christ do something for man which man cannot do for himself? Yes.

He is our Redeemer. He leads us along the dim path. His sacrifice will enable us to recover the bodies we lay down in the grave.

He is our Advocate with the Father. He is our Captain. Now, that's the concept by this man, Woodsbough, who was one of the prominent teachers of the period of the early part of this century.

I'm going to read you at least part of an editorial in the Salt Lake Daily newspaper, the *Deseret News*, which is owned by the Mormon Church. And, incidentally, it is one of the large papers in the Mountain State. The company, or the church, rather, owns the *Deseret News*.

It also has 51 percent stock in the Los Angeles Times and owns the paper mills from which the paper comes. I'll give you an idea of the ramifications of their work. This is from the *Deseret News*, January 16, 1952.

It's a few years old, but they still believe this way. Satan is the arch-deceiver. His doctrine appears under many a guise.

Always he attempts to lead people astray by holding before them false notions which on the surface seem much to be desired. One of the most appealing methods of reaching mankind is to make them believe that they can get something for nothing. Nearly everyone has enough selfishness to try and get all he can at

the lowest price.

Satan plays upon that trait. He does so in our economic life, and he does it in religion. Get something for nothing, or for as little as you can.

This identical philosophy is carried over into certain types of religion. Again, it is to get something for nothing. Some teach that a person may have full salvation by whispering a few magic words.

Just confess a belief in the Savior. That is all. If you thus confess, you get full salvation, and nothing can keep you from it.

No works are necessary, for you are saved by grace alone. So the teaching goes. I don't think I need to read the rest of this long editorial, but it continues in that same vein, that Satan is the one that proposed the idea of getting salvation just by believing.

That's their philosophy. So much for that. How do they get saved? What are the processes of salvation? Well, they go through a series.

Repentance. Belief in Jesus. And when they mean this, they say, the statement that they use, We believe that Jesus is the Christ.

That's all they have to profess, which is not a Christian profession. The demons believe that Jesus is the Christ. But they will not acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord.

You see, that's the completion of that verse. Every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Now, they paraphrase that in their writings.

Every tongue shall confess, and every knee shall bow. Every tongue shall confess that Jesus is the Christ. They got on that little bypass.

And this, they confess, is the Christian testimony. Then, of course, baptism. Then the laying on of the hands of the elder who baptizes for the admission or the presentation of the Holy Ghost to that person.

Well, this is their formula. And, of course, the important thing is baptism. They use, almost exclusively in presenting this, the portion in the 2nd chapter of Acts, Acts 2.38, Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

And they take that as the formula for salvation. Because here, Peter is telling these folks, he says, what shall we do? Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, for the remission of your sins. Now, to follow that up, the Apostle Paul also had this spoken to him in Acts 22.16, And now, why tarryest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

You say, well, that's pretty plain. That's how we wash away our sins. And they say, that's salvation.

Now, you will be faced with this constantly. And there's something here that I'm afraid many people do not understand. The matter of sin.

Christ died for our sins, and in the salvation message, we accept the Lord Jesus Christ, and our sins are taken care of. The penalty of sin is taken care of at the cross. Now, what is taken care of then when we're

baptized? What is remission of sins? It is deliverance not from the penalty of sin, but from the stigma of sin.

Now, what was the circumstance here? You find the same thing with Paul's statement of how this message came to him, and what was said in the 2nd chapter of Acts. And I think nowhere else do we have the same emphasis. What is the emphasis? Simply this.

Here on the day of Pentecost were 3,000 Jews who a few weeks before had been in the crowd that cried, away with them, we will not have this man rule over us. And they drove him to Calvary. This was a public sin.

And all of these men were known as those who had committed this public sin of crucifying the Lord Jesus after an illegal trial and so forth. The whole thing was well known to the whole Jewish world at the time. Now, these 3,000 Jews who on the day of Pentecost heard the gospel, and it says they were pricked in their heart.

Actually, the word pricked is not a satisfactory word. They were torn up in their hearts. They were utterly convicted of the sins that they had committed.

And you may say that at that point where they acknowledged that they had sinned, that their conversion may have occurred at that moment. It doesn't say. It certainly doesn't say that after they were baptized, they were saved.

But here they were, they came up to this point. There was a critical point with them. Now they were going to go back into the Jewish world.

They were marked as those who had crucified the Savior. And many of them could have drifted right back into the synagogue and into the Sanhedrin and so forth, and said nothing about it. And nothing would have been thought of them, of their being there on the day of Pentecost.

But now, Peter says, now that this is your public sin, you repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, publicly, for the sending away of that sin. Remission means the sending away, or for the deliverance from the stigma of that sin. From that point on, as they confessed to Jesus Christ as their Savior, they were stigmatized by the mark of Jesus Christ.

Now, this was a public confession of the fact that they had publicly sinned when they crucified the Savior. Now, that's the stigma that was attached to them. Paul had this same problem.

He had accepted the Lord as his Savior on the Damascus Road. Ananias had ministered to him and opened up his eyes, and he had been told that he was going to be the one who would suffer many things for the namesake of the Lord Jesus, but he was still Saul of Tarsus. And even when he went to the first company of believers, they were afraid to receive him because they knew who he was.

Now, he's told this, arise and be baptized and wash away your sin. In other words, remove yourself from that stigma. Now, you belong to Jesus Christ, and you're a marked man.

Now, that's the significance, I believe, of these two portions. Now, a very practical illustration of it. I remember as a young man, I was working in a bank.

A bunch of young fellas around. We had our bad habits. This was before I was saved.

And every day at noon, we would go down in the basement to a hidden place, and we would roll the ivories for pennies. Which, of course, the folks upstairs would have really put us out if they'd known us. Well, anyway, they passed by my desk, and they'd slap me on the back, and I'd peel off and go with them.

We'd go down and have our half hour of fun down there rolling the ivories. Then one day, on a Sunday afternoon, I got down on my knees and I accepted the Lord as my Savior, and I became a new creature in Christ Jesus. The next day, I thought, I suffered all through the morning.

I thought, oh, how is this going to work out? They'll expect me to go with them, as usual. What will I do? Well, they came by, slapped me on the back. Sorry, fellas, I got saved yesterday.

I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior now. They snorted, and away they went. They didn't want me with them anymore.

What happened? When I confessed Jesus Christ as my Savior, the stigma of that sin removed from me, and I wasn't bothered with it anymore. I was delivered. That was salvation.

I was saved from the stigma of sin, of that particular sin. Later, I was baptized, but I wasn't saved as a result of my baptism. It was a public testimony, which we all know that this is the testimony of the one who comes to know the Lord as his Savior.

Another illustration. A young Indian chap who was in our school realized that he had never been baptized. He mentioned it to the dean, and the dean said, Well, we could arrange for you down at the chapel or at one of the churches to be baptized.

He says, No, I don't want that. He says, I want to be baptized up on the reservation. That's where I did my sinning.

He wanted to go before those folks who knew him as a sinner and be baptized. Why? Because then the stigma of that sin would be removed. Now, this is something that the Mormons do not understand.

They say, This is salvation. I say, No, this is deliverance from the stigma of sin. You were saved at Calvary.

The blood of Christ was applied to you. You became a new preacher in Christ Jesus. Now you confess it, and the sins that were attached to you before are now remitted.

That is the remission of sins. Remission of sins is not salvation. Remission of sins is a definite step in the confession of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.

So we have this thought. Now, going over to Acts 10.43, the conversion of the Gentiles at the house of Cornelius. You remember the sequence of events.

We won't go into detail, because you all remember. Peter went to the house of Cornelius because this man had been praying to God, and God had heard his prayers and told him to send for Peter. Peter came and preached the gospel to them.

A new thing to them. Incidentally, there is a note here in regard to the Gentile names of God. Cornelius was one who worshiped the Most High God.

To him, Deo would be the name for God, not Jehovah. He was a Roman. They worshiped the Most High God.

So that's the significance of the Gentile names of God. All right. When Peter preached the gospel to him and to the company of his soldiers who were there, they believed and were saved and rejoiced in it, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost.

It says they spoke with tongues. Then, after that was all over, then they were baptized. They had received the Holy Ghost, they had received salvation, they had the evidences of salvation, then they asked to be baptized.

But notice the sequence here. Peter says in the 43rd verse, "...to him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins." Who were these folks? They were Romans. They were members of the Roman Legion.

And they were not to be baptized to receive the remission of sins, but as they believed, they received the remission of sins. This is a totally different situation, and yet it's a group of people, 100 people in this case, being saved en masse, as it were, by the preaching of the word, whereas at Pentecost there were 3,000 souls that were saved. Why didn't Peter say, now be baptized for the remission of your sins? Their sins were remitted when they believed.

They had turned from paganism to Jesus Christ. At the day of Pentecost, this was people within the religious framework of the day rejecting one and accepting the other. This was something that had local intellectual implications as well as religious implications.

Here you have a group of men who were pagans accepting Jesus Christ. Now, why did they speak in tongues? This is one that always bothers folks. Why did they speak in tongues? I hope, I'm encouraged after being here, to get back and get somebody to publish my little book that's entitled They Do Not Speak With Other Tongues, from the viewpoint of a linguist rather than a theologian.

All right, what was going on? Why did these people speak in other tongues? This was a multilingual continent. These were of the Roman legion. They spoke Latin.

They were from the north of Italy. They were from Spain. They were from all of these areas from which they drew the Roman legion of soldiers.

They spoke different languages. At Pentecost, there were people there from 16 different areas, and they heard the word of God in those languages spoken by the apostles. What's the significance of this? These people were speakers.

Their first language was their own home language in all of these 16 areas. When they came there to the day of Pentecost, they heard the wonderful works of God in their own languages, which was significant. That's the significance of the tongues on the day of Pentecost.

Now, these people, in a sense, were similar, because they came from several of the western countries. Now, they spoke in languages, in other tongues, in other languages, which simply means this. The word of God was imparted to them by each other.

There they communicated in languages that the others did not understand. Now, that's the significance of tongues wherever we find it. That's just by the way, incidentally.

The point I'm making here is this. When they believed, their sins were remitted. They were baptized later as a testimony.

Now, I don't want to spend any more time on that particular phase of the subject, except to say this. Paul made this statement in 1 Corinthians 1.17. I didn't come to baptize, but to preach the gospel, which is certainly a text that proves to us that baptism and preaching the gospel are two different things. Mormons will preach the gospel of baptism for salvation.

That isn't the gospel, Paul said. I came to preach the gospel. I didn't come to baptize.

And he tells how he baptized some, but that wasn't his principal work. So, that is a verse that you can use sometimes when you're dealing with these people. 1 Peter 3.21 is one that they will bring up, be prepared for these verses that they will bring up constantly.

Incidentally, they make a great deal of this problem that is something of a problem about the Lord preaching to the spirits in prison. Actually, it was the Holy Spirit that spoke to the spirits in prison. But, 3.21, the like figure who are unto even baptism doth now save us, and leave out the brackets for a moment, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What's he talking about? Salvation from sin? No, deliverance and maintaining of a good conscience. We are saved by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but an answer of a good conscience towards God.

This hasn't to do with salvation or washing away of sins. This has to do with a good conscience before God. Now, when they bring this up, they will use this phrase, baptism which doth now save us.

They aren't the only ones that do that. There are several of the denominations that will use the same thing. They'll throw this at you.

Baptism is what saves us. It says so in 1 Corinthians. It isn't talking about salvation of the soul.

It's talking about the salvation or the deliverance from a bad conscience. So, always bear that in mind when they bring this to you. Now, as to salvation, always have a store of very positive verses at your disposal when you're dealing with them.

Have this planned. If you anticipate that they're working in your part of town, you get your Bible off and get these verses firmly fixed in your mind so that when they come, you'll be able to do it. Incidentally, when the Mormons come to the door, what do you do? Do you slam the door in their face? No.

Let them in, sit down, have a cup of coffee with you. They won't drink the coffee. They'll drink milk if you give it to them.

No. Anticipate their coming, and with a smile on your face, say to them as they come up the steps, I see you are Mormon missionaries, and I know you've come to tell me something. Before you do, I want to tell you something.

Then start in with a good salvation testimony and all the verses you can lay your tongue to until you can't remember anymore. By that time, the wind will be out of their sails and they'll want to escape. Or they might want to ask you a question.

This has happened quite often. Or one of the two men may come back a few days later when he can get away from his buddy, and he'll want to ask you some questions. We've had this happen within the last year on a number of occasions, that young fellows have come back.

We have a situation over in Provo, Utah, just a block from the Brigham Young University. We have a Christian bookstore there, and a fine young man by the name of Vlachos, he's a Greek, in charge of that. They have the bookstore, and then they have a room where they can sit down.

They always have some milk to drink, if he doesn't, of course coffee on them, and cookies and so forth, and take them in there and talk to them. And we have this on at least seven campuses now here in the West. And it's a very fruitful ministry.

I had one at Laramie, Wyoming, at the University of Wyoming. And what will happen, the students will come back singly and talk to Mr. Vlachos. They know that they'll have a sympathetic hearing, and he takes them into this side room, and his clerk will take care of the book while he's working with them out of sight of the public.

Because these fellows don't like to be seen coming into some place like that and conversing with people. They're very embarrassed, because the bishop might see them. But this is the way we work it.

And in fact, it has developed so at the University of Idaho, at Moscow, Idaho, that we have a little seminary going there with 25 or 30 students every year. And it has been a very profitable work. The whole idea being, get them alone to talk to them when they show some interest.

Now, from all of our contacts, the circle of contacts that we have throughout the country, people that are, many of them ex-Mormons, many of them people that just worked with Mormons, we know of about 2,500 conversions in the last two years as a result of these several ministries. Not alone the bookstore ministry, but other ministries. But the point is, have gospel verses for them the minute they come, the minute you come in contact with them, and give them so much of it that they just can't get away from it.

And this, of course, is one of the good ones to use, Titus 3.5. Their problem is worse. Fifth verse of 3rd chapter of Titus. Not by works of righteousness which we have done.

They think they're saved by works of righteousness. That's their whole premise. Works of righteousness.

We do good works to get salvation. But Paul says it's not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration. Not by baptism by immersion, but the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

They say, be baptized, have the bishop lay his hands on you for the reception of the Holy Ghost, and you'll be going on to salvation progressively. We say no, it's not by works of righteousness, but it's by the washing of regeneration, of the new birth, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. This is always a good verse to use with them, and you know your own favorite verses of Scripture.

We're going to talk a little later, when we come back from our break, about some of the verses that are pertinent for our study. But this first section tonight, I hope you've gotten the point that you are countering these false doctrines which are based on their ignorance. Not on profound study of these texts, because they're not profound students.

They are ignorant of the context of Scripture. Bear that in mind, and as I mentioned the other night, if they ever do stop and are giving you a part of the verse to uphold their doctrine, make them turn to the Scriptures and read the entire context out loud. Make them read it to you.

Don't you read it to them, make them read it to you. It'll slow them down, but that's all to the good. Our great problem is being panicked off our equilibrium and trying to get rid of them too fast, or trying to convert them too fast.

Let them get exposed to the portions of Scripture that really cover the subject under discussion.

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