

Examining Popular Doctrines

MORMONISM

Priesthood Mormon Teaching

The Mormon Church believes in a special priesthood

- Doctrine and Covenants 107 - Sometime after they become Christians, *males* who meet special qualifications can become priests by being specially ordained. Some become high priests. Only special priests have the authority to baptize. Formerly black people could not serve in the priesthood, but that doctrine was changed in relatively recent times

Priesthood Mormon Teaching

The church teaches that there are two orders of priests, Aaronic and Melchizedek

- Each of these priesthoods contain many men (Doctrine and Covenants 107:1). Smith was granted both priesthoods - Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith, 2:69-72. The priesthood had to be restored to Smith so men could receive authority to baptize and so restore the church
- Since they believe that Smith had to have authority to restore the priesthood in order to restore the church, it follows that the Mormon doctrine of priesthood is fundamental to their claim to be the true church. If the Mormon teaching about priesthood is in error, the whole foundation of their church and their doctrinal system falls

Priesthood Bible Teaching

The New Testament teaches that all Christians are priests

- The Old Testament had a special priesthood, but in the New Testament all Christians are priests
 - 1 Peter 2:5,9 - You are a holy priesthood. Who does this refer to?

Those who:

- Are elect according to Jesus' blood – 1 Pet 1:1-2
- Have faith unto salvation and will receive the inheritance of heaven – 1 Pet 1:3-5, 9
- Are obedient children of the Father -1 Pet 1:14-17
- Are redeemed by Jesus' blood – 1 Pet 1:18-21
- Are born again, having purified their souls by obeying the truth – 1 Pet 1:22-25

Those Who:

- Make up God's spiritual house – 1 Pet 2:5
- Which is the church – 1 Tim 3:15
- Believe in Christ – 1 Tim 2:7
- Are called from darkness to light to be God's special people – 1 Pet 2:9-10

Priesthood Bible Teaching

The New Testament teaches that all Christians are priests

- Rev 1:5-6, 5:9-10 – Those who are washed from their sins in Jesus' blood and redeemed by His blood have been made priests
- Rom 12:1; Heb 13:15 – All Christians offer sacrifices to God
- The New Testament teaches that all Christians are priests. Where does it teach the concept of a special priesthood that includes some Christians but not all Christians?

Priesthood Bible Teaching

The Aaronic priesthood consisted only of descendants of Aaron, but ceased when Jesus died

- Only fleshly descendants of Aaron could be priests after the order of Aaron
- Numbers 3:10; 16:39,40; 2 Chron. 26:16-18 - Any others who tried to serve as priests should be put to death
- Hebrews 7:11-14 - Even Jesus could not serve as priest according to the law of Moses, because He was of the tribe of Judah. He could serve as priest only after the law changed

Priesthood Bible Teaching

The Aaronic priesthood consisted only of descendants of Aaron, but ceased when Jesus died

- Joseph Smith himself later said in Doctrine and Covenants 107:13-16 that a man cannot be a *bishop* in the priesthood of Aaron unless he be a "literal descendant of Aaron."
- Are all Mormon Aaronic priests' descendants of Aaron of the tribe of Levi? Mormons claim Joseph Smith was of the tribe of Joseph, so how could he have the Aaronic priesthood? If the Aaronic priesthood *is* still in existence, then Mormon priests are not of the proper ancestry and therefore would deserve death!

Priesthood Bible Teaching

The Aaronic priesthood ceased when Jesus died and the law was changed

- Hebrews 8:3; 5:1 - The work of priests was to offer animal sacrifices. 7:27; 10:11
- Hebrews 10:1-14 - Animal sacrifices ceased when Jesus died, because they are no longer needed.
- Hebrews 7:12 - In order for Jesus to serve as priest, the whole law was changed.
- Many other Scriptures show that, when Jesus died, the whole Old Testament law was removed, including the Aaronic priesthood. So there is no such thing as an Aaronic priesthood with God's approval today.
 - Hebrews 8:6-13; 9:1-4; 2 Corinthians 3:6-11; Galatians 3:24,25; 5:1-6; Romans 7:1-7; Ephesians 2:11-16; Colossians 2:13-17

Priesthood Bible Teaching

The only priest we have after the order of Melchizedek is Jesus our High Priest

- Hebrews 5:1-6 - Jesus was ordained High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, by a special promise addressed to Him as God's begotten Son (v5)
- Hebrews 7:20-25 - Old Testament priests had successors, because they died. Jesus continues as our priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, having an unchanging priesthood. Hence, He has no successors
- We need no priest but Jesus between God and us (1 Tim. 2:5). He is our only High Priest, and all Christians are priests below Him. To claim some other high priest today is to exalt men to the position the Bible says belongs only to Jesus
- The Mormon claim to be the true church rests on their claim to have authority in their priesthood. However, we have shown that their priesthood clearly violates the Scriptures. Therefore, the Mormon Church is not the true church

Apostles Mormon Teaching

Mormonism teaches there must be 12 apostles living on earth in the church

- Ephesians 2:20 - The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. Mormons say this means apostles and prophets must be living on earth in order for the true church to exist (Article of Faith #6)
- Mormons claim that any church which does not have apostles living on earth cannot be the true church. In order to restore the church in the 1800's, Joseph Smith had to appoint 12 apostles. When any apostle dies, the Mormon Church replaces him

Apostles Mormon Teaching

Mormonism also teaches there are four men, having the power of apostles, who will never die but always live and preach on earth till Jesus returns

- Doctrine and Covenants 7:1-3 says John the apostle was given power to live (not die), tarry, prophesy, and bring souls to Jesus till Jesus comes in glory
- The Book of Mormon in 3 Nephi 28 says Jesus chose 12 "disciples" in America exactly like the 12 apostles in the Bible. They could teach by inspiration, baptize, give the Holy Spirit, etc
- Of these 12 American disciples, three were given power like John to "never taste of death" (vv 6,7). They would never die but would live in the flesh till Jesus comes again (vv 7,8,38,40,25). Jails, fire, and wild animals could not hold or harm them (vv 19-22). They would bring the souls of men to Jesus while the earth shall stand (v9)

Apostles Bible Teaching

True apostles must be eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ

- Acts 1:21,22 - The only time that the Bible records a successor was chosen to an apostle, he had to be an eyewitness of Christ's resurrection.
- 1 Corinthians 15:8 - Paul also witnessed Jesus, but he was exceptional ("last of all ... born out of due time") in that He witnessed Jesus after He had ascended
- Mormon apostles do not generally claim to be eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ. If they did, they would all be like Paul

Apostles Bible Teaching

True apostles must do the signs of an apostle

- 2 Corinthians 12:11,12 - Apostles proved that God had sent them by means of the signs of an apostle, which are "signs, wonders, and mighty deeds." The primary purpose of miracles has always been to confirm who God is and who His messengers are
 - Mark 16:20; John 5:36; 20:30,31; Acts 2:22; 14:3; Hebrews 2:3,4; 1 Kings 18:36-39; Exodus 4:1-9; 7:3-5; 14:30,31
- Mormon apostles do not do miracles to prove their qualifications (it is claimed that some have this ability, but they do not do them voluntarily and publicly to prove their apostleship as New Testament apostles did)
- If a church must have apostles living on earth in order to be Jesus' true church, then the Mormon Church is not Jesus' true church, since its apostles do not have the qualifications of true apostles

Apostles Bible Teaching

The Bible does not say the church must have apostles living on earth

- Ephesians 2:20 - The work of the apostles pertained to the *foundation* of the church, but Jesus is the chief cornerstone. Must Jesus be living on earth in order for the church to exist? Obviously not, so why must we have apostles and prophets living on earth in order for the church to exist? We no more need apostles living on earth today than we need Jesus living on earth today
- Luke 16:29-31 - We "have" apostles and prophets in the church today like the Jews in Jesus' day "had" Moses and the prophets. We have the written word, which is the result of the work they did

Apostles Bible Teaching

The Bible does not say the church must have apostles living on earth

- Apostles and prophets were needed at the beginning of the church, but no Scripture says they need to continue living on earth in order for the church to exist. On the contrary, Scripture teaches that apostles must be eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ. So no one today qualifies. The work of apostles was to reveal and confirm God's word. This work was completed in the first century and is no longer needed (John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 13:8-11; Jude 3; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; John 20:30,31; James 1:25)
- Jesus' church today has no living apostles, because it needs no living apostles

Apostles Bible Teaching

But what if there are four apostle/disciples living on earth who never die?

- *Why didn't the true church exist before Smith "restored" it?*
 - Mormonism claims that the church was completely removed from the earth because of apostasy. In his first revelation from God, Smith is supposed to have asked God "which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join." He was told "join none of them, for they are all wrong" - Pearl of Great Price, Joseph Smith 2:18,19. Smith was eventually led to "restore" the LDS church

Apostles Bible Teaching

Why didn't the true church exist before Smith "restored" it?

- But if four apostle/disciples were on earth bringing souls to Christ while the world stands, where were all the souls they converted? Surely the four themselves would have been in the church on earth. So how can it be that the church was completely removed from the earth? Why didn't the church exist before Smith "restored" it? It cannot be said that no one in Smith's day was receptive to the truth, for hundreds accepted his message when he preached it. Why hadn't they already received the message of the four apostle/disciples?

Apostles Bible Teaching

Why did God have to give Smith revelations in order to restore the church?

- We are told that, in order to restore the truth, the priesthood, and the church, Smith had revelations and messages from the Father and Son, Moroni, John the Baptist, etc. Why go through all this, if four apostle/disciples were already on earth?
- These four men were supposed to have the truth and priesthood authority to baptize, etc., till Jesus returns. Why not just send these men to Smith? In fact, why was Smith needed at all, since these four men were clearly more experienced and qualified than Smith to teach, baptize, etc.?

Apostles Bible Teaching

Why does the Mormon Church ordain a successor for the apostle John? And does it replace the missing American disciples?

- The Mormon Church says it must have 12 apostles living on earth, so they replace them as they die. The fact these men die proves that the apostle John is not among them, since he cannot die. But if John is still alive, that makes 13 apostles on the earth, rather than 12
- Further, the Book of Mormon in 4 Nephi 1:14 says the original twelve *American* disciples died and were replaced by other men, *except* for the three who were to tarry on earth. Does the Mormon Church today choose replacements for the American disciples as they die, like the Book of Mormon says, and like they replace the 12 New Testament apostles? If so, do they replace only nine of the 12, like the Book of Mormon says, since there are still three living on earth?

Apostles Bible Teaching

*Why does the Mormon Church ordain a successor for the apostle John?
And does it replace the missing American disciples?*

- Furthermore, if the three American disciples were *not* to be replaced because they continued to live, then the same should be true of John the apostle. No successors should be chosen for him, since he is living on earth. But the fact is that all twelve Mormon apostles are men who *die* and are replaced. Hence, the Mormon Church is replacing John! And either they are not replacing the missing nine American disciples at all, or else they are replacing the three who should not be replaced!
- Anyway you count, the Mormon Church has either too many apostles or too few. They are not following the Bible or the Book of Mormon! They are replacing men they should not be, and they are failing to replace men they should be!

Apostles Bible Teaching

*Why does the Mormon Church ordain a successor for the apostle John?
And does it replace the missing American disciples?*

- If the church must follow the teaching of God about apostles in order to be the true church, then the Mormon Church cannot be the true church. They are not following either the Bible or the Book of Mormon regarding apostles!
- Note: In John 21:21-23 Jesus clarified that He was **not** saying John would live till Jesus returned. He was only telling Peter this was none of his business