

Counterfeit Christs

A study of false saviors and false salvation

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." - John 8:24

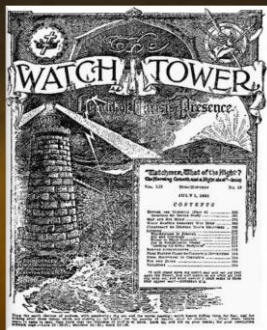
Counterfeit Christs

The Counterfeit Christ of the Cults

"Being the only begotten Son of God . . . the Word would be a prince among all other creatures. In this office he [Christ] bore another name in heaven, which name is 'Michael' . . . Other names were given to the Son in course of time." - Jehovah Witness Doctrine

What is a Cult?

A cult is a group of individuals who claim to be Christians and use Christian language / symbols, however they deny many of the core doctrines of the historic Christian faith - normally the Trinity, divinity of Jesus Christ, the sole authority of the Scriptures, and salvation by faith and grace alone.





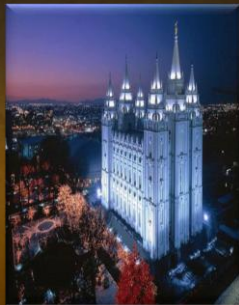
Mormonism

It has been stated that this word [mormon] was derived from the Greek word mormo. This is not the case. There was no Greek or Latin upon the plates from which I, through the grace of God, translated the Book of Mormon. Let the language of that book speak for itself. On the 523d page, of the fourth edition, it reads: And now behold we have written this record according to our knowledge in the characters which are called among us the Reformed Egyptian . . . [The] Bible in its widest sense, means good; for the Savior says according to the gospel of John, "I am the good shepherd;" and it will not be beyond the common use of terms, to say that good is among the most important in use, and though known by various names in different languages, still its meaning is the same, and is ever in opposition to bad. We say from the Saxon, good; the Dane, god; the Goth, goda; the German, gut; the Dutch, goed; the Latin, bonus; the Greek, kalos; the Hebrew, tob; and the Egyptian, mon. Hence, with the addition of more, or the contraction, mor, **we have the word MOR-MON; which means, literally, more good.**"

- Joseph Smith, *Times and Seasons*, 1843
* Disputed by some Mormon leaders as not being true

Brief Overview of Mormonism

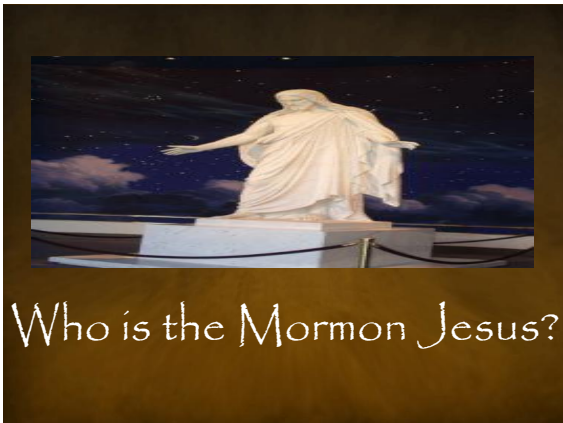
- Mormon: means "More Good"; also claimed to be the name of the prophet who compiled 1,000 years of writing that eventually became the book of Mormon
- Worldview: polytheism
- Deity: Supergod Adam
- Authority: Book of Mormon
- Founded: 1830
- Founder: Joseph Smith



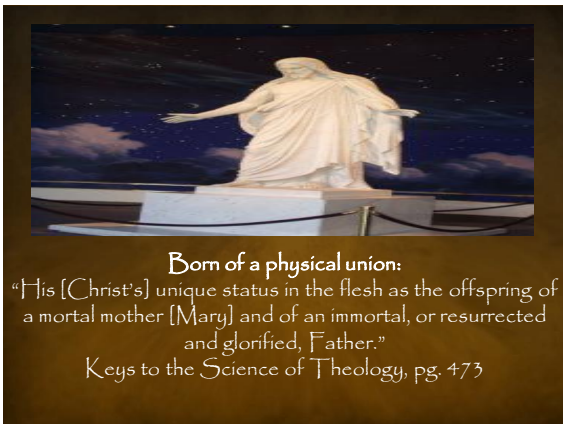
Brief Overview of Joseph Smith

- Born in Sharon, Vermont in 1805
- Became troubled by denominational differences at age 15
- In 1820, while reading James 1:5, he determined he would ask God which church to join so he went into the woods to pray and ask for wisdom
- Claims to have seen vision in the woods of the Father and the Son. Was told all churches were an abomination
- For three years, Smith did nothing and entertained himself with treasure hunting with divining rods
- Prayed again to God in 1823 and received another vision from an angel Moroni about the gold plates that would become the book of Mormon





Who is the Mormon Jesus?



Born of a physical union:

“His [Christ’s] unique status in the flesh as the offspring of a mortal mother [Mary] and of an immortal, or resurrected and glorified, Father.”

Keys to the Science of Theology, pg. 473



One of many other gods:

“Each of these gods, including Jesus Christ and his Father, being in possession of not merely an organized spirit, but a glorious immortal body of flesh and bones...”

Keys to the Science of Theology, pg. 44



Sacrifice Insufficient:

“There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, your own blood must atone for it; and the judgments of the Almighty will come, sooner or later, and every man and woman will have to atone for their covenants . . . I could refer you to plenty of instances where men have been righteously slain, in order to atone for their sins”

Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol. III, pg 247.; Vol. IV pp 219-220.



Sacrifice Insufficient:

“One of the most fallacious doctrines originated by Satan and propounded by man is that man is saved alone by the grace of God; that belief in Jesus Christ alone is all that is needed for salvation.”

Spencer Kimball, Book of Mormon Student Manual, 36.

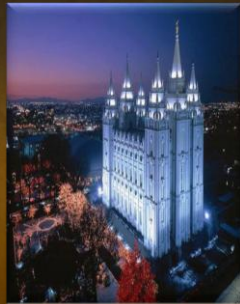


More evidence that the Mormon Jesus is a counterfeit

- Was previously a spirit-child of the Father and one of his unnamed wives. Because many others were born to the same 'family', Jesus is referred to as 'our eldest brother'
- Progressed through obedience and became a god.
- Prior to incarnation, was the god of the Old Testament
- Spirit brother of Lucifer (Chap. 4, Book of Moses in The Pearl of Great Price)
- Married Mary and Martha and had children (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4 pp. 259-260).

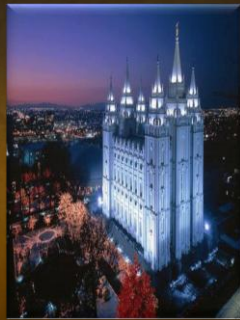
Salvation in Mormonism

- Adam's sin was a noble act that allowed humans to become mortal (meaning, capable of bearing children), which is the first step toward godhood
- Jesus death on the cross means that all will be resurrected; the point of the cross was to provide resurrected bodies to all
- Jesus' death did not do away with the need for works



Salvation in Mormonism

- Jesus' death provides 'general' salvation (resurrection) but 'individual' salvation is up to the person
- Each person must work and prove themselves worthy of exaltation to godhood, a process known as eternal progression
- Three celestial kingdoms, with the top being reserved for those who become gods



OCTOBER 31, 2007

THE WATCHTOWER

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Jehovah's Witnesses

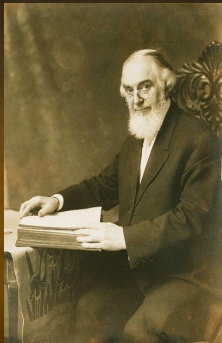
Brief Overview of Jehovah's Witnesses

- Named for their belief in God's true name
- Worldview: Monotheism [stated], but says Jesus is a little god
- Deity: Jehovah
- Authority: New World Translation of the Scriptures
- Founded: 1870
- Founder: Charles Taze Russell



Brief Overview of Charles Russell

- Born in 1852, Pittsburgh
- Abandoned the Presbyterian church and became a skeptic
- Became enamored with the Adventists, who influenced a number of his doctrines
- Wrote *Studies in the Scriptures*; claimed no one can understand the Bible without it
- Predicted Jesus would return in 1914; when that didn't happen, he claimed Jesus came back invisibly and is reigning



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What Influence Does Jesus Have on Your Life?

Who is the Jehovah's Witnesses Jesus?

Jehovah's Witnesses Official Web Site

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Bible: New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures
John 1:1-5:1

1 In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word (was a god). 2 This one was in [the] beginning with God. 3 All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence.

What has come into existence 4 by means of him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light is shining in the darkness, but the darkness has not overpowered it.

Not God:
"... The true Scriptures speak of God's Son, the Word, as 'a god.' He is a 'mighty god,' but not the Almighty God, who is Jehovah - Isaiah 9:6."
The Truth Shall Make You Free, pg. 47.

THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEROVAH'S KINGDOM

What Influence Does Jesus Have on Your Life?

Is/was the angel Michael

"Being the only begotten Son of God, ... The Word would be a prince among all other creatures. In this office he bore another name in heaven, which name is 'Michael'. ... Other names were given to the Son in course of time"

The Truth Shall Make You Free, pg. 49.

THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEREMIAH'S KINGDOM

What Influence Does Jesus Have on Your Life?

Was not resurrected in a glorified body
 "This firstborn from the dead was raised from the grave, not a human creature, but a spirit"
Let God Be True, pg. 276.

Salvation in the Watchtower

- Jehovah's Witnesses practice a works-based salvation.
- "to get one's name written in that Book of Life will depend upon one's works." – The Watchtower, April 1947, pg. 204.
- Christ's death only wiped away the sin of Adam; it just provides a person with a chance at salvation.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE CHURCH

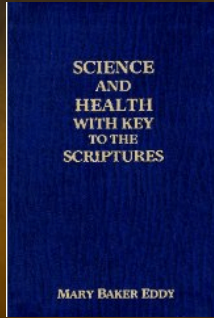
THE VALDOSTA EPISCOPAL CONGREGATION, ORGANIZED CA. 1874, HELD SERVICES IN THE COURTHOUSE UNTIL THIS BUILDING, ORIGINALLY A FRAME STRUCTURE, WAS CONSTRUCTED IN 1885. (STUCCO WAS ADDED IN 1910.) THE FIRST SERVICE WAS HELD HERE ON FEB. 21, 1886, AND THE CHURCH WAS CONSECRATED DEC. 1887. THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE SOCIETY ACQUIRED THE PROPERTY ON JUNE 3, 1952, AFTER CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH HAD MOVED INTO A NEW EDIFICE ON NORTH PATTERSON STREET IN 1949.

THE VALDOSTA TOWN COMMITTEE, 1993

More Counterfeit Christs from the Cults

Jesus of Christian Science

- Jesus was a mere human who demonstrated the divine Christ
- God's wrath being poured out on Jesus is a manmade theory
- No crucifixion because death is an illusion
- The blood of Jesus did not and could not cleanse anyone from sin
- People must use Jesus' metaphysical principles to save themselves



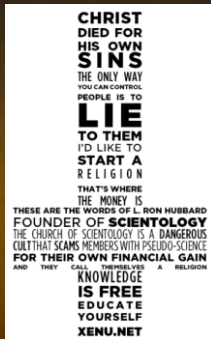
Jesus of the New Age Movement

- Jesus and the Christ are to be distinguished from one another
- Edgar Cayce says that Jesus became the Christ in his thirteenth reincarnation
- No need for Jesus to atone for sin as there is no real sin; Jesus died to balance the earth's karma
- Salvation is enlightenment accomplished by each person



Jesus of Scientology

- Jesus does not provide salvation; salvation is attained by clearing oneself of engrams (bad events in past lives) through 'auditing' to become 'clear'
- Spiritual awareness is found through auditing
- Jesus is considered "just a shade above clear"
- Death on the cross was meaningless; Jesus' teachings are considered worthwhile

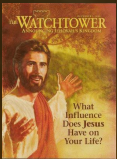


Jesus of Free Masonry

- Because masonry is pluralistic, some may believe Jesus is the Son of God, but others think He is simply a great teacher
- Overall, masonry rejects the idea Jesus is the only way to God
- Whenever the Bible is quoted in the Masonic Lodge ritual, the name of Jesus is removed and/or replaced with something else

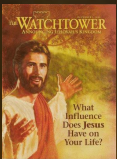


The Cults' Counterfeit Christ



What do they have in common?

The Cults' Counterfeit Christ



1. Jesus is not God and/or not divine – he is not equal with God and is often thought of as just a man
2. Jesus death is insufficient or meaningless – either Jesus death + works is necessary or his death contributes nothing of worth to the individual

The Real Jesus

Jesus is God Himself

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. . . . And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."

(John 1:1-3, 14)

The Real Jesus

Jesus Death is Fully Sufficient for Salvation

"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."

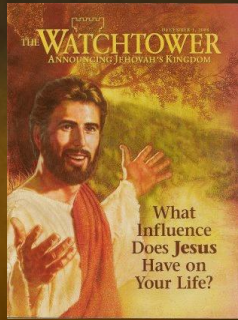
(Romans 5:6-10)

Answering Key Objections and Arguments from the Cults



Key Jehovah Witness Objections

1. Colossians 1:15 says Jesus is the "firstborn" of all creation and Revelation 3:14 says the Jesus is the "Beginning of the creation of God." This means he is a created being.
2. John 14:28 has Jesus saying, "The Father is greater than I", so He must not be God.
3. Luke 18:19 states Jesus as saying, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." If Jesus can't be good, He can't be God.



Key Jehovah Witness Objections

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation." (Col. 1:15)

"firstborn" signifies preeminence. For example, David is called the firstborn of Jesse (Psalm 89:27) even though he was not the "first born" in the family. Jesus is called the 'firstborn of the dead' (Rev. 1:5), yet others were raised from the dead before Him.

"Beginning" comes from the Greek word *arche*, which is where the word "architect" comes from. Jesus is the ruler/architect of all creation.

Key Jehovah Witness Objections

"If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I." (John 14:28)

Christ is of the same essence and nature as God, but holds a different office/role in the Trinity. Philippians 2:7 describes how Jesus laid aside His godly form and chose to become a man during His incarnation. Ontological equality and functional hierarchy are two different things. Jesus holds a lesser office than the Father, but is equal to Him in nature.

"It is also clear that since in every nature that which issues forth and has a likeness to the nature from which it issues is called a son, and since this Word issues forth in a likeness and identity to the nature from which it issues, it is suitable and appropriately called a 'Son'.
- Thomas Aquinas

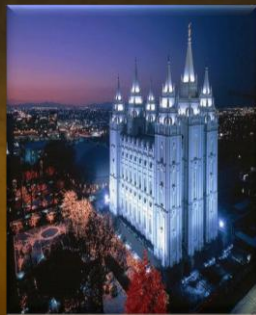
Key Jehovah Witness Objections

"And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone."
(Luke 18:19)

Jesus is in essence asking the young rich ruler to examine his words. Either Jesus is good, and therefore God, or not good and not God. Jesus Himself said that He was good when he stated in John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd". Christ is asking the man to think about what he is asking - in other words, "Are you calling me God?" The man had called Jesus Good Teacher. Jesus responded that God alone is good, that is, only God is truly righteous. Apparently the man thought Jesus had gained a measure of status with God by His good works. Jesus was implying that if He were truly good, then it would be because He is God. This, then, is actually another of Jesus' claims of deity

Key Mormon Claims about godhood

- 1. John 10:34-35 has Jesus saying that God called some men 'gods', which means that man can reach godhood
- 2. 1 Corinthians 8:5 has Paul saying there are many gods and many lords, so there must truly be many gods as Mormons claim



Key Mormon Claims

"Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I said, you are gods?'" (John 10:34)

This is taken from Psalm 82 where God is addressing unjust judges, whom God had sovereignly given the office and who held the power of wielding life and death decisions over the people. In that respect, they were a 'god'. In the same vein, God told Moses that He had made him like God to Pharaoh (Ex. 7:1) because Moses held life and death power over Pharaoh and the people of Egypt. But neither the unjust judges of Psalm 82 or Moses were a 'god' in the Mormon sense.

Key Mormon Claims

"For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords," (1 Corinthians 8:5)

In the preceding verse, Paul had just finished saying there was only one true God. The context of 1 Cor. 8 deals with false idols, which pagan people worshipped as gods. Paul calls the idols of the pagan and mystery religions 'gods' and 'lords', but they are not gods in the Mormon sense; they are simply false gods made by man, with the only spiritual entity behind them being demons (1 Cor. 10:20).

Counterfeit Christs

A study of false saviors and false salvation

"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." - John 8:24
