

## Trends

A nationwide survey found that an overwhelming majority (75%) of Americans say that many religions can lead to eternal life, compared with only 18% who regard their own religion as the "one true faith." Those with a high level of religious commitment are more likely to see their own faith as the only path to eternal life.

- via the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life

**John 14:6:** "Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.'"

## Sentence Sermons

"If false teaching goes unchallenged, it breeds confusion and draws insincere people into its fold."

—Unattributed

**I John 4:1:** "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world."

## News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Please be sure to pray for all the needy saints. *Be sure to pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for the Ferrell family in Michigan. In previous Words of Life I informed the brethren about Susan Ferrell and her illness with a brain tumor. Shawn, Susan's husband, informed me Susan had to stop chemo because her bone marrow "shut down." She was gravely ill with a very low platelet count. She is recovering from that episode and will begin another round of chemo on 3/11/16. Please continue to pray for Susan, Shawn and their three boys: Samuel, Micah, and Eli.*

*Let us keep Virginia, Lana, Trudy and Phil in our prayers as they grieve over the passing of Bill McGinnis. Check in and see if you can provide any assistance.*

*"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16)*

If you know of any in need of our prayers please let us know so we can include them in the announcements and/or put their name on the bulletin board.

Please continue to remember Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Also, remember all the faithful preachers and brethren laboring in difficult places (e.g., Philippines, India, Zimbabwe). **There are many needy saints! Can you help? Let me know.**

**Words of Life** is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

**Times of Service:** Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

# Words of Life

Westside  
church of Christ

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Mar. 6  
2016

Vol. 8,  
No. 8

## Teaching the Gospel to Mormons

Craig Thomas

In some respects teaching the gospel to a Mormon is no different than teaching it to any person. Like everyone, a Mormon must be convinced by the Bible (Rom. 10:17) of their sinful, lost condition (Rom. 3:23) and its eternal consequences (Rom. 6:23). Then they must be convinced the Bible provides the only cure for their terrible condition via God's grace as manifested in Jesus' sacrifice (Rom. 3:24-25). If this message reaches the right heart (Lk. 8:15), they will readily recognize they must repent (Acts 2:38), confess their Lord (Rom. 10:10), be baptized (Mk. 16:16), and give all diligence to grow (2 Pet. 1:5-11).

However, as we seek to teach Mormons we must realize there are major hurdles we will have to help them clear as we aid them in submitting to God's plan. I believe there are three key hurdles we must be prepared to address.

1) **Captive of a False Religion.** The most difficult hurdle for a Mormon to overcome is the fact they've been deceived into believing and practicing a false religion. Thus, it's crucial to diligently prepare yourself to refute the errors of Mormonism. There are many good sources of information in this regard (see other articles in this issue). Also, I would recommend David Pratte's *Bible Way* website ([www.bibleway.com](http://www.bibleway.com)) and Steve Rudd's *The Interactive Bible* ([www.bible.ca](http://www.bible.ca)). The errors of Mormonism are legion. Thus, I would recommend keeping the discussion narrowed to a few crystal clear departures from the Bible. For example, *The Book of Mormon* (Mosiah 18:8-30) teaches that the "church of Christ" was established in America "about B.C. 147" (*Book of Mormon* footnote) with Alma as its high priest and founder (Mosiah 23:16). I would recommend using Matt. 16:18 as a starting point in teaching Bible truth about the establishment of Christ's church.

2) **Captive to a False Religious Authority.** Mormons claim to believe the Bible, but argue it's been corrupted over the centuries. So, they believe the writings of Joseph Smith are a more accurate "latter day" revelation of God's will. Unlike the Bible (1 Jn. 4:1,6) they will appeal for others to trust the veracity of the *Book of Mormon* based on emotions rather than evidence. Thus, it's important to challenge them to defend their book against its obvious contradictions with the Bible (1 Pet. 3:15). It's also important to point out the *Book of Mormon* admits errors (3 Nephi 23:6-13; Mormon 8:12,17; 9:30-34) whereas the Bible claims to be the perfect, complete, Holy Spirit-guided revelation of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Eph. 3:1-5; 1 Cor. 2:10-13). Mormon's will often cite Bible passages in efforts to validate the *Book of Mormon* and Mormonism. But, when pressed on obvious contradictions will claim the errors are the fault of the Bible text. Stand fast! Press the point of their intellectual dishonesty in trying to correct errors in a book "*once for all delivered to the saints*" (Jude 3) and written in words "*the Holy Spirit teaches*" (1 Cor. 2:13) with a book that admits its own faults and mistakes!

3) **Captive to Strong Social Ties.** Finally be prepared for the strong ties of family and friends that will steadily and powerfully seek to shame and sway the Mormon prospect into remaining enslaved to Mormonism. A Mormon who becomes a Christian must be prepared to become a total and complete pariah to his/her Mormon family and Mormon friends (Matt. 10:34-39). Turning one's back on loved ones is difficult, but worth the cost (Matt. 16:26).

### **An Act of Kindness**

Larry Hafley

From the "Chicken Soup" series of books, my brother extracted the following story.

President Abraham Lincoln often visited hospitals to talk with wounded soldiers during the Civil War. Once, doctors pointed out a young soldier who was near death and Lincoln went over to his bedside.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" asked the President. The soldier obviously didn't recognize Lincoln, and with some effort he was able to whisper, "Would you please write a letter to my mother?"

A pen and paper were provided and the President carefully began writing down what the young man was able to say:

"My dearest mother, I was badly hurt while doing my duty. I'm afraid I'm not going to recover. Don't grieve too much for me, please. Kiss Mary and John for me. May God bless you and father."

The soldier was too weak to continue, so Lincoln signed the letter for him and added, "Written for your son by Abraham Lincoln."

The young man asked to see the note and was astonished when he discovered who had written it. "Are you really the President?" he asked.

"Yes I am," Lincoln replied quietly. Then he asked if there was anything else he could do.

"Would you please hold my hand?" the soldier asked. "It will help to see me through to the end."

In the hushed room, the tall gaunt President took the boy's hand in his and spoke warm words of encouragement until death came.

The kindness President Lincoln showed was returned unto him. When he lay dying, a young surgeon sat by Mr. Lincoln's bed side and held his hand through the night. When asked why he had held his hand, the doctor said that dying men often have brief moments of consciousness just before death, and that he wanted Lincoln to know that he was among friends.

Kindness ought to characterize children of God--"*Be ye kind one to another*" (Eph. 4:32). Kindness is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22). Let "*brotherly kindness*" abound among us with sincere affection (2 Pet. 1:5-7).

### **Needs**

There remain many brethren in need of your help. For example, faithful gospel preachers in the U.S. and foreign lands are in dire need of financial support. Brethren in Zimbabwe are still suffering through another year of drought. They and their families faithfully labor in the gospel and suffer from material deprivations due to their stand for the truth, concern for the soul's of men and love for the Lord and His Christ. Other brethren are in acute need of the basics of life (food, clothing, shelter, medical attention). If you would like to help please send me an e-mail ([craigthomas82000@gmail.com](mailto:craigthomas82000@gmail.com)) and I'll put you in contact with a needy brother. Remember 1 John 3:17: "*But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?*"

