

Talking to a Mormon missionary
he read the following:

See last page for numbered references (1-21)
with PDF pages numbers in said references.

James 1:5-7

5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

7 For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,

Basically, he was telling me that I should just pray to know if the L.D.S Church was true. His scriptures also say:

D&C 9:8-9

8 But, behold, I say unto you, that you must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

9 But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me. ⁽¹⁾

This L.D.S text tells me to go by what I feel is right. This is also what the Mormon missionary hoped I would do is to just pray and see if I felt that it was true. Does the Bible tell me to trust in my feelings?

Prov 14:12 There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.

Prov 12:15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel.

How am I to know truth, and whose counsel should I be seeking?

I did share with him the following scripture stating that we should test things by the Bible.

1Thes 5:19-21 Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophetic utterances. But examine everything carefully hold fast to that which is good;

Acts 17:11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.

Side Note: The point I wanted to make is that we are to compare and test new teaching or revelation with the older established revelation. The Bible is the oldest and therefore should be used to test the newer that is claimed to also be scripture.

Of course, the L.D.S 8th article of faith says they believe the Bible in so far as it is translated correctly. They have no evidence that it is not translated correctly, and one might ask why not produce a better translation? It is not like we have a lack of manuscripts. Rather it seems to be a convenient loophole when scripture disagrees with them. I had a Mormon Bishop once tell me the Bible was wrong because I pointed out that Jesus said God is Spirit (John 4:24) and a Spirit does not have a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39) yet the Doctrine & Covenants says God the Father has a body of flesh and bones. (D&C 130:22 ⁽²⁾)

Back to the conversation with the missionary: The Mormon Missionary's response to me wanting to test things with the bible was to ask me; why do you believe the Bible? I started to explain evidence is why I believe the Bible. Now the Mormon Missionary response to that was; this is to rely on the wisdom of man and not God.

Later I was thinking about what the missionary said. I understand that it takes faith as well and not just evidence. The best argument in the world will not lead someone to Christ. The Holy Spirit needs to open their eyes. Does this make my argument null and void? Why does this answer bother me?

Well, I think the Bible is reasonable faith. The Book of Mormon is blind faith. The Mormon asks me to believe with no evidence at all. According to that missionary, I am not even to trust early L.D.S publications like the History of the Church, The Journal of Discourses, and The Millennial Star, etc.

I say this because I asked him if he believed that Brigham Young was a prophet. Of course, he said yes. I asked why? Since, the L.D.S Church does not believe what Brigham Young taught. Brigham himself said his sermons were as good as scripture ⁽³⁾. Brigham taught the Adam was God ⁽⁴⁾. He taught that if a white person had relations with a Negro the law of God was death on the spot ⁽⁵⁾. He taught Blood Atonement that there were some sins for which your own blood should be spilled ⁽⁶⁾. He taught that only those who became Gods or even the sons of God are those who enter into polygamy ⁽⁷⁾. The L.D.S Church today will not accept all of these things are truth, but that is what their prophet taught.

The missionary's response was anger. He wanted to know where I got that. I started to list sources of L.D.S publications. He basically told me that I could not trust those sources and left very mad.

Now what am I left with? I should pray about the Book of Mormon but not believe any early L.D.S literature?

The L.D.S Church claims to be the restored Church. I do not think that the Church needed to be restored. Jesus seemed to indicate it would last.

Matt 16:18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

The Christian Church can refer to people like Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, Papias and Polycarp who were taught by the original Apostles. I can show major Christian doctrines taught by people in the 1st century. If the Church is restored it will have to at one time exist. If the Mormon is correct, why can't they refer to any Christian writer at all in the 1st century that taught their beliefs? So, I have no evidence there at all and now I am not to trust early L.D.S publications either? Now that is Blind Faith!

Personally, I am grateful that I do not have to throw my brains out the window to accept Christianity! I am pleased that there are even such quotes as the following:

- Horace L. Hastings (Quoting Theodore Beza [1519-1605])

"When the French monarch proposed the persecution of Christians in his dominion, an old statesman and warrior said to him, '*Sire, the church of God is an anvil that has worn out many hammers.*' So, the hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this book for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil still endures. If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die and the book still lives." ⁽⁸⁾

Time Magazine, December 30, 1974: "After more than two centuries of facing the heaviest scientific guns that could be brought to bear, the bible has survived and is perhaps better for the siege even on the critics own terms. Historical fact, the scriptures seem more acceptable now than they did when the rationalists began the attack." ⁽⁹⁾

Anyway, back to the idea is it wrong to want evidence? Scripture does teach us that we should test prophets and teachings by the word of God. (The Bible) However when accepting the Bible in the first place must I do this only on blind faith? Now we need to be careful here because we are not to seek after signs. Consider the following passage:

Matt 12:38-40

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees answered Him, saying, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You."

39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;

40 for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus told them that an evil and adulterous generation sought for signs. Still, he did give them one sign that we observed come true in his death and resurrection. I believe the point here is not that signs are bad; he did give them one. Rather they had already seen many signs like where he healed people on the Sabbath, but they rejected them and still asked for more

Jesus also offered his works as evidence to his claims.

John 10:36-38

36 do you say of Him, whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'?

37 "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

38 but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

The disciple Thomas struggled with doubt. Jesus said those who believed without the physical proof he asked for were blessed. Still, he gave Thomas the evidence that he personally needed.

John 20:25-31

25 The other disciples therefore were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I shall see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 And after eight days again His disciples were inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst, and said, "Peace be with you."

27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach here your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand, and put it into My side; and be not unbelieving, but believing."

28 Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!"

29 Jesus said to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed."

30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

31 but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.

Here we are told these signs that Jesus did were recorded for us so we may believe.

We also have a record of a mild rebuke for not believing the eyewitnesses.

Mark 16:14 And afterward He appeared to the eleven themselves as they were reclining at the table; and He reproached them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they had not believed those who had seen Him after He had risen.

We still have the testimony of eyewitnesses.

2 Pet 1:16-19

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty.

17 For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased"--

18 and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

19 And so we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

All the Apostles except for John died martyrs for their faith never recanting their testimony as eyewitnesses. John never recanted his testimony either, but he did not die a martyr. He died in exile on the island of Patmos. ⁽¹⁰⁾

We do not need to ask for signs and wonders. They have already been given, and we have the written testimony of eyewitnesses. Perhaps the greatest sign of all was the sign of Jonah that Jesus gave the Pharisees in Matt 12:38-40. The resurrection of Jesus can be shown to be historical fact even from evidence outside of the Bible.

With the Bible we have numerous avenues of evidence to support it. Archeology, fulfilled prophecy, scientific details, manuscript evidence verifying the accuracy of the text etc

Of course, the Mormon missionary I talked to would claim that this kind of evidence is relying on the wisdom of man. I cannot help but to wonder if he only says that because he knows I will probably apply the same test to the Book of Mormon.

According to the Encyclopedia of Mormonism:

Many scholars see no support for the Book of Mormon in the archaeological records, since no one has found any inscriptional evidence for, or material remains that can be tied directly to, any of the persons, places, or things mentioned in the book (Smithsonian Institution). ⁽¹¹⁾

Concerning prophecies Joseph smith prophesied a temple would be built and dedicated by his own hand in the Western Boundaries of Missouri ⁽¹²⁾ He also prophesied the return of Christ within 56 years. ⁽¹³⁾ Neither of these things happened. Remember it is God not man that guarantees the fulfillment of a prophecy.

Ezekiel 12:25, Habakkuk 2:2-3, and D&C1:38 ⁽¹⁴⁾

How about historical accuracy? The Book of Mormon says Jesus was born at Jerusalem. (Alma 7:10 ⁽¹⁵⁾ The Bible says Jesus was born in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2, Luke 2: 8-16)

The Book of Mormon says the river Laman emptied into the Red Sea 1 Nephi 2:8. ⁽¹⁶⁾

The Encyclopedia Britannica and the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* both state that no river empties into the Red Sea. It is fed by springs.

Now the Mormon may claim that they have eyewitness for the Book of Mormon as well. For this let's look at a couple of quotes from Mormon prophets.

The following is a quote from Ezra Taft Benson,

(*Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p.89):

"Six of the original Twelve Apostles selected by Joseph Smith were excommunicated. The Three Witnesses to the Book of Mormon left the Church. Three of Joseph Smith's counselors fell" one even helped plot his death." ⁽¹⁷⁾

Following is a quote by Brigham Young,
(*Journal of Discourses, Vol.7, page 164*):

"Some of the witnesses* of the Book of Mormon, who handled the plates and conversed with the angels of God, were afterwards left to doubt and to disbelieve that they had ever seen an angel. One of the Quorum of twelve" a young man full of faith and good works, prayed, and the vision of his mind was opened, and the angel of God came and laid the plates before him, and he saw and handled them, and saw the angel, and conversed with him as he would with one of his friends; but after all this, he was left to doubt, and plunged into apostacy, and has continued to contend against this work." (18)

In a court of law an eyewitness account is powerful evidence. Whose testimony do you think would be more credible in the court room? Should we believe the disciples of Jesus who never recanted their story and were willing to die for what they seen and heard? Or perhaps we should believe the witnesses of the Book of Mormon who left the church and those who doubted their own testimonies?

The Mormon believes in many Gods, yet God himself seems to be unaware of them.

Isa 44:8 'Do not tremble and do not be afraid; have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides me, or is there any other Rock? I know of none."

God even declared there will be none in the future.

Isa 43:10 "You are My witnesses," declares the LORD, "And My servant whom I have chosen, in order that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am He. Before me there was no God formed, and there will be none after me.

The L.D.S appeal to scripture to try to show other gods

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

Even the text here calls them so called gods and the context is about food sacrificed to idols which are not gods at all. They will also turn to John 10:35 where Jesus quoted the 82nd Psalm and the context there is corrupt judges who were mere men. Ironically even the Book of Mormon says there is only one God Alma 11:21-29 (19)

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and Deuteronomy 18:18:22 tell us that a prophet should not tell us to follow after other gods and that the prophets prophecies must come true if their words are from God. This gives us a way of testing whether Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, and he fails on both counts. Are we to then pray to know if the book derived from him is the word of God? Never mind the fact that we are only left with his word or our own burning feelings after prayer.

Blind Faith and ignore the Bible which has been proven to accept a Book that has never been proven? No Thank You!

I was born and raised in the L.D.S Church myself. When the time came that I did ask questions; answers like what the Missionary and Mormon Bishop gave really helped me conclude that the Mormon Church was not true. I found that within historic Christianity answers could be found. It would surely stand any test I could give it. Mormons on the other hand had no concrete answers. They either would refuse to answer at all or tell me to just use (blind) faith.

It is true I still accept things as a Christian by faith, but it is not a blind faith and for that I am very thankful.

To all current Latter-Day Saints: My friend, you have been deceived the truth is not in the L.D.S Church. The Bible is reliable, and Christianity is alive and well. Don't just take my word for it. Do a little research the Bible will stand the test. Pray about it? Absolutely! Yet do not be afraid to examine the evidence as well! What is written here is just a tip of the iceberg.

By **Brigham Young (L.D.S Prophet)** "Take up the Bible, compare the religion of the Latter-Day Saints with it and see if it will stand the test." ⁽²⁰⁾

By **Orson Pratt (L.D.S Apostle)** "If we cannot convince you by reason nor by the word of God, that your religion is wrong, we will not persecute you...we ask you the same generosity...convince us of our errors of doctrine, if we have any, by reason, by logical arguments, or by the word of God and we will be forever grateful for the information." ⁽²¹⁾

Meant with love
Robert

References

All Bible References are from The New American Standard by the Lockman foundation
Any reference that has a PDF page number after it means that the L.D.S book or publication is in the Free Christian Library and the page number is where you will find that quote or reference in Adobe Reader. There you can read the reference in full context.

- (1) D&C 9:8-9 (PDF -L.D.S Scripture pg. 582)
- (2) D&C 130:22 (PDF- L.D.S Scripture pg. 831)
- (3) Journal of Discourses, Vol.13, pg.95 (PDF pg. 103)
- (4) Journal of Discourses Vol.1, pgs.50-51(PDF pg.58)
- Journal of Discourses, Vol.5, pgs.331-332 (PDF pg.339-340)
- Mellineal Star, Vol.15, (PDF pg. 807 & 831;) Vol.16, (PDF pg 490 & 538)
- Vol.17,(PDF pg. 203 & 328)
- (5) Journal of Discourses, Vol.10, pg.109 (PDF pg.118)
- (6) Journal of Discourses Vol.3, pg.247, (PDF pg. 255)
- Journal of Discourses Vol.4, pg.53 (PDF pg. 61)
- Journal of Discourses Vol.4, pg.219 (PDF pg.227)
- (7) Journal of Discourses, Vol. 11:" pgs. 268-269 (PDF pg. 277)
- (8) **Horace L. Hastings (Quoting Theodore Beza [1519-1605])**
- (9) *Time Magazine*, December 30, 1974:
- (10) Fox's Book Of Martyrs, 1973, pages 1-5 (PDF. pg. 1-4)
- (11) Encyclopedia of Mormonism, Volume 1: Archeology
- (12) D&C 84:1-5 " PDF pg. (PDF- L.D.S Scripture pg. 719)
- (13)(History of the Church, Vol.2, Ch.13, pg.181) (PDF pg. 957)
- (14) D&C 1:38Â (PDF- L.D.S Scripture pg. 570)
- (15) Book of Mormon, Alma 7:10 (PDF- LDS Scripture pg. 242)
- (16) Book of Mormon, 1 Nephi 2:8 Red Sea (PDF -L.D.S Scripture pg. 22)
- (17) (Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p.89):
- (18) (Journal of Discourses, Vol.7, page 164): (PDF pg. 172)
- (19) Book of Mormon Alma 11:21-29 (PDF- L.D.S Scripture pg. 253-254)
- (20) (Journal of Discourses, V16 pg. 46, 1873) (PDF pg. 54)
- (21) (The Seer, pg.15) (PDF pg. 15)