

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 1 of 13

This is the eighth and final message in our series titled *Christianity vs. Mormonism*. In the first seven messages of this series, our focus has been on asking essential questions about Mormonism, finding the answers to those questions in the writings of Mormonism's so-called prophets, and of course comparing the teachings of Mormonism with the authentic Word of God.

What We Have Learned

We have seen that Mormonism bases its authority on the commandments and doctrines of men, and not on Scripture alone. We have also seen that the gods of Mormonism (gods with a small G, and gods in the plural) are not the one true and living God of the Bible. These beings are in fact pagan substitutes for the God of the Bible.

In fact, we have seen that the one word that most accurately describes Mormonism is *paganism*. So much that is to be found in Mormon teaching is a continuation of the long line of false beliefs that we find from the most ancient paganisms of Old Testament times all the way up through the pagan religions of the present day.

We have also seen that Mormonism's doctrine of salvation is entirely contrary to Scripture. Mormonism denies the blood atonement of Jesus Christ for sinners. Mormonism teaches that each individual must atone for his own sins. Mormonism teaches that people will continue to pay for their sins even after the resurrection of the dead. Mormonism teaches that Mormon men can become gods by their own works, and rule their own planets.

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 2 of 13

Now of course none of this is true, because none of this is taught in the authentic Word of God. Scripture demonstrates that the Mormon religion is absolutely false, absolutely pagan, and that it leads souls to a lost eternity in Hell.

How Should You Witness to a Mormon?

Having now established all of this, we move today to one final question. And this is not a question about Mormonism, but a question about us as Christians. It is a question that we must now address to ourselves. It is a question that we must answer, as we have answered all the other questions, based on the exclusive authority of the Bible.

The question is this: How should we as Bible believing Christians witness to Mormons? How shall we do that? How should you deal with Mormon missionaries when they come to the door of your home? How should you deal with members of the Mormon church you will encounter in your workplace or in your neighborhood?

Now these are not remote or theoretical questions. The number of people who are being baptized into the Mormon religion has been growing exponentially. Mormonism is growing not only in the United States where it originated, but in many other nations of the world. Just to cite one example, in the years since the fall of the Soviet Union, Mormonism has made great inroads in the former Soviet republics and in the former Soviet satellite nations of Eastern Europe.

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 3 of 13

I believe I mentioned in an earlier message that many years ago, when I was still working in the business world, before the Lord called me to full-time ministry, I was in close contact with many Mormons in the company for which I worked. At one point the manager to whom I directly reported was a Mormon. A number of my colleagues and coworkers in the organization were Mormons. And some of the people who reported directly to me in the organization were Mormons.

So Mormonism is not something that you are merely going to encounter in the state of Utah in the United States, or perhaps at other locations around the world where Mormon temples have been built. Mormonism is everywhere. And so the question we are considering today is indeed a vital question. How should we as Bible believing Christians witness to Mormons?

Four Factors That Bear On the Question

Let me submit to you that there are four factors that we need to consider in answering that question. All of these factors relate to the authority of the Word of God, and all of these factors have their foundation in the truth of God's Word. But before we consider each of those four factors, let me give you a general answer, an overall answer, to the question, "How should a Bible believing Christian witness to a Mormon?"

The answer is that you should witness to a Mormon in the same way that you would witness to any other unbeliever. You should witness to a Mormon in essentially the same way that you would witness to a Roman Catholic. You should

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 4 of 13

witness to a Mormon in the same way that you would witness to a member of a liberal church who is relying upon his baptism and his good works for eternal life. You should witness to a Mormon in the same way that you would witness to an unbelieving Jew. You should witness to a Mormon in the same way that you would witness to a Hindu, or a Buddhist, or a Muslim.

Why is this true? Well, this brings us to the four factors that I mentioned a moment ago. Let me state those four factors at this point, and then we will come back and consider each one of them individually.

Factor number one is the abiding truth that all human beings apart from Jesus Christ are in the same lost condition. The condition of the Mormon apart from Jesus Christ is essentially the same as the condition of any other lost sinner.

Factor number two is the truth that just as man has not changed, God has not changed. He is still the same holy God He has always been, and His righteous requirements are the same as they have always been. A Mormon is under the same condemnation before the same holy God because of his unbelief.

Factor number three is the truth that the Gospel has not changed. A Mormon needs to hear and to respond to the preaching of the same Gospel as every other lost sinner.

Factor number four is the absolute necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit in order for a person to be saved. That work of regeneration is the same for a Mormon as it is for any other unbeliever. And as we shall see, this factor especially bears upon

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 5 of 13

the way in which we should approach our Gospel witness to members of the Mormon church.

And so now, let us go back and consider each of these four factors in detail.

Man Has Not Changed

Factor number one that bears upon our witness to a Mormon is the truth that unsaved man is essentially the same – regardless of whether he is a Mormon, a member of a liberal church, a member of some Eastern or Middle Eastern religion, or a member of some other cult such as the Jehovah's Witnesses or Seventh Day Adventism or Scientology. Unsaved man is essentially the same even if he professes to be an atheist.

All men apart from Jesus Christ are on their way to eternity in Hell. All men are in need of the same salvation. All men are cut off from God, and in rebellion against the one true and living God. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Romans chapter 5, verse 12 declares to us that "through one man [Adam] sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all have sinned."

The sin problem of the Mormon is the same as the sin problem of every other individual who has never repented of his sins and trusted, by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in the finished atoning work of Jesus Christ alone, for eternal life and deliverance from eternity in Hell.

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 6 of 13

God Has Not Changed

This brings us to a second factor that bears upon our witness to a Mormon. This is the fact that just as man has not changed, God has not changed. God is no less holy than He has ever been throughout eternity. God's absolute requirement of absolute holiness in order for an individual to have a relationship with the God of the universe has not changed. In Numbers chapter 23, verse 19 we read, "God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do?"

God has not changed. The penalty for the violation of God's righteous requirements has not changed. It is still eternal death – not only physical death, but far more importantly, spiritual death, eternal separation from God in the torments of Hell.

The Gospel Has Not Changed

This then brings us to a third factor that bears upon our witness to Mormons, and that is the fact that the Word of God tells us that just as God has not changed, and just as man has not changed, the Gospel has not changed. Furthermore, God's Word is also absolutely clear that there are not different gospels for different people.

The Necessity of Regeneration by the Holy Spirit

This then brings us to factor number four which bears upon the witness of a Bible believing Christian to a Mormon, and that is the absolute necessity of regeneration by

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 7 of 13

the Holy Spirit in order for a person to be saved. Regeneration is an absolute necessity whether you are a Mormon or a Muslim, whether you are a Scientologist or a Seventh-day Adventist, whether you are a Buddhist or an atheist.

The Deception of Decisional Regeneration

This last factor, the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit, is a truth that has been increasingly neglected in the Evangelical church over the past 200 years. One of the tragic results of that has been what we might best describe as "decisional regeneration." Decisional regeneration is the false idea that someone can simply come forward in a church service, pray a certain formula prayer, and that this act all by itself means that the individual is saved.

Another name for decisional regeneration is easy believism. The work of God the Holy Spirit is completely missing from this picture. This approach to evangelism reduces what is mistakenly called Gospel preaching to something that much more resembles a sales pitch to get someone to buy an automobile than it does the preaching of the one true Gospel.

And we know by experience that a great many of the people who respond to that kind of preaching are not responding to a work of the Holy Spirit, because after they are supposedly saved there is not any change in their thinking or in their living.

Scripture is abundantly clear that a renewed mind, a changed heart, a sanctified life, are the sure evidences of saving faith, and that the absence of those things, the

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 8 of 13

absence of a change in the individual, is a clear demonstration of the fact that regeneration has not taken place, that there is not present in that individual new life in Jesus Christ because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God.

And so just because you might be able to convince a Mormon to pray a certain prayer does not mean that that individual has experienced the new birth.

You Cannot Argue Anyone Into Heaven

But there has been another what we might call opposite result of the neglect of the Biblical truth of the necessity of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit in order for an individual to be saved. And this problem is reflected a great deal in the practice of what is wrongly called apologetics in the church today.

Much of what is called apologetics today is based on a wrong assumption. The wrong assumption is that we must answer all of an individual's objections to Biblical truth. That we must answer all of an individual's objections to the propositional truths of the Word of God. That we must, by our own arguments, break down an individual's resistance to the Gospel. That we must – to put it in the case of the Mormon – that we must refute all of the false teachings of Mormonism, that we must our own selves turn an individual's heart and mind against his deeply held Mormon beliefs, in order for that person to be saved. That we must argue a person into Heaven.

But we are foolish to think we can do that. This is not the way God works. Look at

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 9 of 13

the example of the Apostle Paul in Acts chapter nine. This man who was "breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord" according to Acts chapter nine verse one and was on his way to Damascus to further persecute the Christians, is confronted directly by the Lord Jesus Christ.

And what does our Lord say to this man Saul? What does God say to this "Hebrew of the Hebrews"? Acts chapter 9, verse five: Jesus says, "It is hard for you to kick against the goads." What this makes clear to us is the fact that there was a work of God going on within this man Saul who became the Apostle Paul. "It is hard for you to kick against the goads," Jesus says. It is hard for you to resist the work that I, God, have been doing in your heart. And that this work of God was now coming to a climactic point on the road to Damascus.

And so Saul the devout Jew, Saul the enemy of the true church of Christ, was saved from his sins on the road to Damascus – not because he had all of his objections dealt with, but because he confessed with his mouth that the authentic Jesus Christ is God in heaven, that he is Lord of all, and he said "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

And so the Lord sends Saul the new convert to a believer named Ananias in the city of Damascus. Ananias was one of the Christians who had been the object of Saul's persecution. And so he was fearful, and at first he questioned what God was doing. But God said to Ananias, Acts chapter nine verse fifteen, "he [Saul] is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name..."

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 10 of 13

Dear friend, every individual who is ever saved from his sins is a chosen vessel of God to bear witness for Christ. That is true of the Mormon convert as much as it is of the Jewish convert or the Muslim convert or the Roman Catholic convert.

But for the purposes of the question that we're considering today – How should a Bible believing Christian witness to a Mormon? – We need to consider something else about the case of the Apostle Paul which is also the case of everyone who ever believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and is saved.

The newly regenerated Saul was not saved because he had all his questions answered. He was not saved because he had all of his objections dealt with. He was not saved because he as yet understood all of the great truths that he would communicate to the church under Divine inspiration in his epistles. He was saved because he bowed the knee to Christ.

But this man who heard the voice of Christ on the road to Damascus – did he yet understand the great truth of justification by faith alone that he sets before us in Romans? Did he yet fully understand the great truth of the threefold work of the persons of the Trinity to bring about the salvation of sinners, as the Apostle Paul later gives it to us under Divine inspiration in Ephesians chapter one?

Did he as yet understand that the law of the Old Testament ordinances had been entirely done away with because Jesus Christ had come? Did he yet understand the great truth that we find Paul giving to us in Ephesians chapter two, that God had

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 11 of 13

made one body in Christ out of both Jew and Gentile, that God had broken down the wall of separation between them?

Of course not. Saul the new convert did not as yet understand all of these things. Over the years to come, Christ was going to personally teach him those things when He took Paul into Arabia for three years. But that was yet to come.

The Truth of How a Person Comes to Christ

And here is the point: It is the same for a Mormon today as it was for the man named Saul two thousand years ago. A Mormon who comes to saving faith in Jesus Christ by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is not going to have all his questions and objections answered on day one, or on day two, or in year one, or in year two.

But because God the Holy Spirit has regenerated that individual, and because God the Holy Spirit now indwells that individual, that individual, according to First Corinthians chapter two, is no longer a natural man who cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God because they are foolishness to him. He is now a spiritual man, a Spirit indwelled man, who can now begin to comprehend spiritual things.

So what is the point of all this? The point is that we need to present the same Gospel message of salvation by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in the atoning work of Christ alone apart, from any works of our own. That is what we are called to do. But the work of changing the heart of the sinner is the work of God the Holy

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 12 of 13

Spirit. We need to ask God to do that work. We need to ask God to be gracious to use our feeble witness in order to bring the souls of Mormons to the place where they will have the same new birth in Christ that we have experienced.

Now is that to say that we do not address the problems of the falsehoods of Mormonism in our witness to Mormons? No, it is not to say that at all. But that is not where our emphasis needs to be. Our emphasis needs to be on the Gospel message. Our emphasis needs to be upon a recognition that God the Holy Spirit must work in the heart of this individual with whom we are dealing.

And dear friends, I think one of the most telling, one of the most convicting things we can do is to say to a Mormon, "I'm praying for you. I'm praying the you will come to the light, that you'll be saved."

Now you will find that many people who have become baptized members of the Mormon church do not understand the teachings of that church. That is just as true for the Mormon as it often is for example for the new Roman Catholic convert or for someone who has been raised a Roman Catholic. Often they don't understand the vast extent, the depth, the breadth, of the falsehoods of their present religion.

But the way to deal with those things, in every case, with every individual, is from Scripture alone. This is something that we always need to do. We need to make Scriptural truth the issue. Not our opinions, not their opinions, but Scriptural truth.

It is the Word of God, Hebrews chapter 4 tells us, that is alive and powerful, and

Series: *Christianity vs. Mormonism*

Title: "How to Witness to a Mormon" (Acts 9:1-16, Hebrews 4:12)

Speaker: Dr. Paul M. Elliott

Original Air Date: Week of 1/6/2013

Page 13 of 13

sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner – in the original language a critic – of the thoughts and intents of the heart. God the Holy Spirit uses the Word that He has written to convict the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment.

And so, dear friends, how should a Bible believing Christian witness to a Mormon? In the same way that we should witness to any other individual who is lost in sin and in need of cleansing by the blood of Christ. Rely on God's Word. Rely on God the Holy Spirit. And see what marvelous things He will do.

About the Broadcast

The Scripture-Driven Church airs each week across the United States and around the world. Our goal is that of the Great Commission: to preach the Gospel to the world, and to equip believers to stand upon and live by the sole authority of God's Word, to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

How You Can Help Us

Above all, please pray for us. The prayers of our listeners and supporters are vital to all we do. We thank you for bringing this ministry before the throne of grace.

The broadcast is supported entirely by the gifts of God's people. If the Lord leads you to help us financially, you can:

- Call us toll-free at 888-804-9655 to give a gift by credit card
- Give a gift online at our secure website, www.teachingtheword.org
- Mail your gift to TeachingTheWord, Box 2533, Westminster, Maryland 21158

TeachingtheWord Ministries is recognized as a tax-exempt religious organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the U. S. Internal Revenue Code.

**May the Lord richly bless your personal study
of His inspired, infallible, inerrant Word.**