

Lutherans and Other Denominations

Non-Christian Cults

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Mormons

Joseph Smith Jr. (1805-1844)

He convincingly demonstrated that it is possible to deceive some people with the most absurd religious claims.

- 1820 - Vision 1 (14 years old)
Vision of God and Christ
- 1823 - Vision 2 (17 years old)
Visited in a vision by angel Moroni
- 1827 - Vision 3 (21 years old)
Moroni showed location to Smith
Book written on golden plates in "Reformed Egyptian" hieroglyphics
Able to translate plates using mysterious spectacles
Moroni took tablets back when Smith finished
- 1829 - Vision 4 (23 years old)
Smith and Cowdery ordained by John the Baptist through visions
- 1829 - Vision 5 (23 years old)
Visited by Peter, James & John

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

- April 6, 1830 - *Church of Christ* founded by 5 in Fayetteville, NY farmhouse
Smith received revelations to solve doctrinal and organizational problems
- 1831 - Headquarters moved to Kirtland, Ohio
- 1832 - Settled in Independence, Missouri
- 1838 - Fled to Far West, Missouri
- 1839 - Moved across river and settled Nauvoo, Illinois, Smith was mayor
- 1844 - Smith arrested for rioting, polygamy, treason
Brigham Young took over Smith's position
Reorganized LDS (now Community of Christ)
- 1847 - Young led group to Salt Lake, Utah
- 1930 - FLDS (Fundamentalist LDS) split when LDS stopped polygamy and excommunicated members
2008 - 462 children taken by Texas CPS (Child Protective Services) from YFZ Ranch in El Dorado, Tx
Around 4.5 million in US, 8MM world-wide

Book of Mormon

- Tells story of God's western people
- Part 1 - Jared's descendants
Ether recorded story on gold plates
- Part 2 - Lehi's descendants
Descendants of son Nephi were pious
Descendants of son Laman were wicked and nudists
War between races resulted in Nephite extinction around 385 AD

Mormon, a Nephite prophet, wrote down history - Son Moroni copied onto gold plates and buried
Probable source - *Manuscript Found* by Solomon Spalding (Presby minister)
Sidney Rigdon - Baptist minister turned Disciple
Contains many references to Disciples of Christ theology
Uses phraseology of KJV, Refers to controversies & events of 1800s

Lutherans and Other Denominations

Non-Christian Cults

Page 2

Other Doctrinal Sources

Bible

Must be translated correctly

Pearl of Great Price

Book of Moses

Book of Abraham

Doctrines and Covenants

God will continue to reveal many things to church leaders

God

Man's soul is the literal offspring of God

"As man is, God once was; as God is, man may be."

Man becomes more god-like but never equals God

Brigham Young claimed that Adam is our God

May be any number of gods, all with physical bodies

Father and Son have perfect physical bodies

Holy Spirit doesn't have a body

Elohim

Jehovah

Christ came to bring laws and ordinances of the Gospel

Pay for sins by obeying laws of the church

End of the World

Body and spirit are separated temporarily at death

Exact number of spirits to become human

Christ will rule 1000 years while Satan is bound

Jerusalem in East, Zion in West (Independence, Missouri)

Gospel will be preached to the faithful (1 Peter 3:18-20)

Satan will be released for a final tempting

Men will go to their respective glories

Heaven

There is no hell - everyone goes to heaven

Telestial Glory - Lowest Level

Committed gross sins, Rejected true gospel

Terrestrial Glory - Middle Level

Didn't accept gospel on earth, did after death

Celestial Glory - Highest Level

Accepted true gospel on earth, Obeyed church commands

Miscellaneous

Must be baptized in temple by immersion to achieve celestial glory

Opens celestial glory if gospel is accepted after death

Must be married for eternity to enter celestial glory

Woman can be "sealed" to dead man

Widow men can remarry, Women cannot remarry

Earthly polygamy eliminated by church in 1890

Must tithe and Spend 2 years as a missionary

Forbid alcohol, caffeine (tea, coffee, Cokes), tobacco

Class materials are available at www.biblestoriesforadults.com/denominations

Lutherans and Other Denominations

Non-Christian Cults

Page 3

Unitarians

Unitarian Universalist Association

1961 - Merger of American Unitarian Association and Universalist Church of America
American Unitarian Association - Founded 1825

From liberal wing of Congregational Church

Universalist Church of America - Adopted a Declaration in 1793

Extreme Arminian - All humanity will be saved, regardless of faith

Reject deity of Christ, Salvation is from good character

No member, minister or congregation shall be required to subscribe to any particular interpretation of religion, or to any particular religious belief or creed

Christian Science

Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910)

Sickly, very emotional, hysterical fits from childhood

1862 - "Divinely healed" by Phineas P Quimby

1875 - Published *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*

Only way to understand the Bible

1879 - Established *Church of Christ, Scientist* in Boston

Main Points

God is everything.

God is Mind.

Nothing is matter.

God denies evil.

Since sickness, pain and death are evil, they don't exist.

Contrasts

Christian Science

Everything is Spirit

"Scientific" discovery

Mormon

Even God and heaven are physical

Divine revelations

Christ was only a man who understood Divine Mind

No ministers - Only Lecturers and Practitioners

Practitioners have office hours and fees like doctors

Tries to persuade patient to turn mind from negative to positive thoughts

Not faith healers

Unity School of Christianity

Charles and Myrtle Fillmore

1887 - Myrtle cured by Christian Science practitioner of what she thought was tuberculosis

Combined Christian Science, Bible, Transcendentalism, New Thought, Quaker, Theosophy, Rosicrucian, Spiritism & Hindu

Intended to be a religious educational institution instead of a church or denomination

"The true church is a state of consciousness in man"

Other non-Christian cults continue along these mindsets - Theosophy, Spiritism, New Thought, Lodges

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Lutherans and Other Denominations

Non-Christian Cults

Page 4

Jehovah Witness

Charles T. Russell (1852-1916)

Raised as a Congregationalist

Liked ideas of Adventists

1872 - Organized study group that became *The Watchtower Bible & Tract Society*

Called at times: Millennial Dawn People, International Bible Studies Association, People's Pulpit of Brooklyn, Russellites
Jehovah Witnesses since 1931

God

Only the Father is God

Christ is not God

Holy Spirit is only the power of Jehovah

Sin

God gave Satan permission to prove that man can't obey

Satan created 3 allies - Organized religion, Politics, Commercialism

Some Forbidden Items - Blood transfusions, Catholics, Christmas trees, communism, civic groups, doctrine of hell, doctrine of immortality, evolution, flag saluting, higher education, liquor, lodges, Protestants, priests, pope, public office, military service, movies, Mother's Day, religion, Sunday Schools, Trinity, tobacco, United Nations, voting, YMCA, Wall Street, women's rights

Eternal Life

Man originally had right to live forever

Christ came and won the right back by not sinning

Gave his right to the world by dying

Millennium

1914 - Russell's prediction date for Christ's return to rule

After 1914 passed, Russell claimed Christ was placed on throne in heaven

Satan is gathering forces for Battle of Armageddon, Satan's 3 allies will be destroyed

Christ will rule earth from heaven

Man will be divided into four groups

"Great Mystery Class"

144,000 JW's who traded right to life for immortality of the soul

Old Testament Believers

Jonadab Class

Second Chancers

100 years probation under most favorable conditions

Satan will be released for a final tempting, then destroyed

Bible

Quote out of context to prove a point

Allegorize the Scriptures

Bible can't be understood except through JW study

Membership

Insist they are not a church

Building - *Kingdom Hall*, Parish or Congregation - *Company*, Worship - *Instruction*

Every member is a minister

Part-time - *Publisher*, Full-time - *Pioneer*

Generally from poorer areas of society

Some don't marry, some don't have children

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