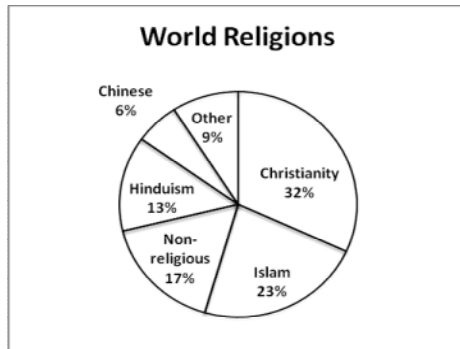


World Religions - Mormons

Overview

We continue are Apologetic look at other religions – Mormons. We make our brief comparison to Catholicism in the categories which follow – keeping in mind that we must show compassion to peoples of other faiths especially when discussing their beliefs with them.



Founding & Spiritual Leaders: This church is also known as the **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**. The founder of the church was Joseph Smith, born in 1805. In 1823 Smith had a vision of buried gold plates from an angel named Moroni. These gold plates contained the promised truths and thus began to translate the plates to the Book of Mormon and the church was founded in 1830. When the translation was complete the angel returned to pick up the plates. Smith was a prophet to the Mormon's and has had several successors in previous years.

Beliefs of God: Mormons concept of the Trinity (although using the term) of God – is as being three distinct persons – using Trinity to infer three separate gods or personages.

Eucharist/Lord's Supper: Holy Communion is not per Catholic beliefs and their teachings mix up the Last Supper with the miracle of fishes and loaves. In the celebration water is substituted for wine – as alcohol is forbidden.

Apostolic succession: Mormon's claim that a great apostasy occurred after the death of the last Apostle of Jesus. They further believe that this continued until the advent of Martin Luther

and other Protestants – including that proclaimed by Joseph Smith – which saved Christianity in 1830. The group is closed to the general public – as confirmed by the Mormon web site.

Creed and Doctrines: They have no Creed in the sense of Catholics but proclaim 13 Articles of faith and use a publication called **Doctrines and Covenants** which contains the key teachings of the Mormon Church.

Afterlife: Mormons reject original sin – saying that man is punished for his own sins not that of Adam. Since Christians believe that Baptism erases Original sin it is not clear what baptism means to a Mormon – which they perform even after death. Their doctrine on the afterlife is that salvation is universal but that “*exaltation*” is the highest of eternal opportunities and earned by obedience to Mormon ordinances.

Deposit of Faith: The gold plates were translated by Smith into what is called the *Book of Mormon* in addition to the *Pearl of Great Price*. They do not use the Holy Bible as we do – but supplement the King James Version bible as being valid - along with in the *Book of Mormon*.

What distinguishes Catholics from this faith: While Mormon teachings are faith centered - almost everything is different as can be seen from the above. Mormonism is a closed group and only Mormons can enter the sanctuary of their church. Mormons believe that their church continues to have new prophets who communicate new revelation and doctrines. All Orthodox Catholics believe that revelation ended with the death of Jesus – which means there can be no more new doctrines or scriptures.

Source: *Religions of America* by Leo Rosten and www.mormon.org.