

Full Time Mission Message #23

Elder / Sister xxxxxxxx,

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE?

As missionaries we sadly find that some of the members of the church lose their testimony and decide to leave the church. It then becomes the responsibility and challenge for missionaries to try to teach them anew and bring the light of the Gospel back into their lives. Here are some things to consider if you find yourself as a full time missionary trying to reconvert someone or keep someone from leaving the church.

The question here is, if you leave the LDS church then what will become of your core beliefs? Many members when they leave the church feel like they can still take the best parts of the church with them. They most of the time do not feel they are leaving the church they are just going to quit attending church. Many say they believe in the Book of Mormon but not Joseph Smith. That is not possible. If Joseph Smith was not a prophet then the Book of Mormon cannot be true either. Others still feel that they will be married in the next life even though they are leaving the church. That again of course is not reasonable. If you are not faithful to your temple covenants they are voided. Another thing that many members who leave the church have not thought about is that they are giving up the Gift of The Holy Ghost. But they for some reason feel that God will still give them the same impressions as before. If that is true then why do we need to receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands? I have seen that over and over when people leave the church then they lose the Gift of the Holy Ghost and soon the spirit of the Gospel that they once had dies within them like a candle going out. One must also realize that leaving the church makes your privilege to use that power of the Priesthood null and void. So the next time one of the family members gets sick who is going to give them a blessing? If you leave the church you can no longer pay tithing. We are promised that if we pay our tithing the windows of heaven will be opened to us. If we do not pay our tithing those windows will surely close. Otherwise why would the Lord make that promise to the faithful? Many say they will pay their tithing to some other church or give it to charity. That is not what the Lord's promise entailed.

Another thing that is puzzling is how they don't seem to realize that their core spiritual beliefs will be changing. Doctrine they have always believed will now be null and void and the new beliefs of the Christian Churches of our day will become their core doctrinal beliefs. If they start attending another church, they will be expected to now believe and accept all of the standard Christian teachings listed below? In April 2004 General Conference, Elder Holland said, "When you pick one end of a stick you pick up the other end too". You can't have your cake and eat it too. If you leave the church then you can't take Joseph Smith's teachings found in the LDS church with you to some other church. Will you leave them behind and accept these standard Christian church teachings.

These standard Christian teachings listed below are from my conversations with Christian ministers in the past and also taken in part from:

<http://christianity.about.com/od/christiandoctrines/a/basicdoctrines.htm>

1. Christianity as a religion encompasses a wide range of denominations and faith groups, and each subscribes to its own set of doctrinal positions. All are a part of Christ's true church.
2. **God is three in one or a Trinity.**
3. **God is a spirit and does not have a physical body of flesh and bones.**
4. God the Father is the first Person of the Trinity, which also includes his Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. They are all one being.
5. Christ was God the Father as a man on the earth.
6. In the next life there is no marriage or family life. You will live alone.
7. We will all be married to Jesus in the next life.
8. **Salvation is a free gift of God requiring nothing from us.**
9. If you confess Jesus then you are saved and will go to heaven even if you continue to sin.
10. Only people who are saved go to heaven to live with Jesus.
11. Even if you were born in a time or place where you never had the opportunity to hear of Christ, if you are not saved you will still go to hell.
12. If you are saved then you can commit any sin and still go to heaven.
13. You don't have to live the commandments to go to heaven.
14. You don't need to pay tithing unless you want to.
15. There is no requirement or even expectation to take your family to church any further, especially once you are saved.
16. There is no revelation in our day and time.
17. The Bible is the only scripture on the earth.
18. There are no Prophets or Apostles in our day and age.
19. There are no miracles performed by God's servants like in the New Testament times.
20. The Book of Mormon was written by Joseph Smith not early American prophets.
21. You can become a minister by getting a degree from a school not by the laying on of hands by someone holding the priesthood from God.
22. There is no need to search our out our ancestors because there is nothing we can do to help them in the next life.
23. We have no obligation to share the gospel with other people.
24. **There is only one heaven and hell not 3 degrees of glory.**
25. Your patriarchal blessing and temple marriage are null and void and you cannot wear your garments or have that protection the offer to you.
26. You no longer hold the priesthood and cannot give priesthood blessings.
27. There is no eternal progression; you will not have children or posterity in next life.
28. This isn't just a decision about you. If you leave the church all of your children and grandchildren will grow up as non-members, not likely following any of the teachings of the church but rather following the standards of the world, including the Word of Wisdom, Sabbath day observance, tithing, LDS moral standards, some of them may not even be Christians.

That is just something to think about as you teach less active members who have chosen to leave the church. Most people do not leave the church all at once. They leave a little at a time like a slow leak in a tire. But gradually all the spiritual faith and testimony leave and they are left to be on their own.

Brother and Sister Vail

[Back To Index Page](#)