

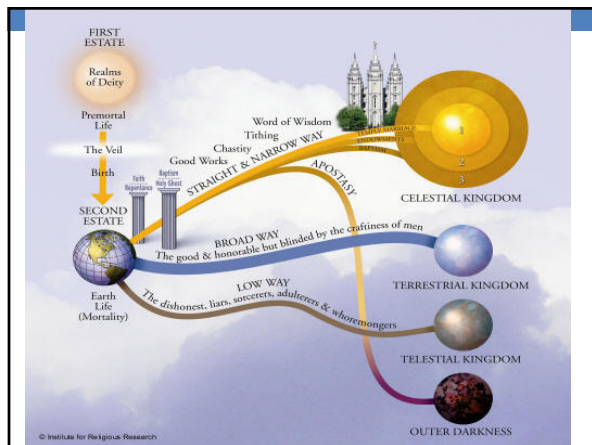
MORMON VS. CHRISTIAN VIEW OF LIFE AFTER DEATH

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Mormon view of Life after Death

- If God is an exalted man, and Mormon men are progressing towards becoming gods, as the Mormon Church believes-- what sort of God can one expect to meet after death?
- If all humanity is granted eternal life by the sufferings of Christ, regardless of whether or not they know Him or trust Him or attempt to live as His disciple, which the Mormons also believe, what kind of judgment, if any, will people face after they die?
- As you'll see it is very different than the Christian view
- Look at an overview of the Mormon "Plan of Happiness"
- "Your life didn't begin at birth and it won't end at death. Before you came to earth, your spirit lived with Heavenly Father who created you." www.Mormon.org



Where do they get idea of 3 heavens?

- Note: many of the quotes today taken from: Mormon Research Ministry Site: <http://www.mrm.org>
- LDS claim that I Cor. 15:40-42a teaches three degrees of glory or three heavens.
- There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead.
- However, the context in I Cor. 15:35-54 is not about heavens, but about the difference between our earthly mortal body and our new immortal body given us at the resurrection.
- Celestial and terrestrial bodies are mentioned in v. 40, but any dictionary will show that celestial means "heavenly" and terrestrial means "earthly."
- The word "telestial" is not found in I Cor. 15 because it was a concept of Joseph Smith's and can only be found in Mormon teachings. The glory of the sun, moon, and stars in v. 41 is used by LDS to support their concept of three heavens, but the context refers to "bodies," not heavens!
- If this verse is about different "heavens," then there must be innumerable "glories" or heavens, for it goes on to say that "one star differeth from another star in glory." And on and on

What About the 3rd heaven?

- LDS also use II Cor. 12:2 where Paul mentioned "the third heaven."
- Anyone familiar with Hebrew thought (and Paul was a Hebrew) knows that they believed in the same three heavens as Christians do today.
- The first heaven was the atmospheric heaven of clouds, birds, planes, and so on. Second was the heaven of stars and planets. And the third heaven was where God dwelt! Paul said in II Cor. 12:2 that a man was caught up to the third heaven where God is, and v. 4 calls that place "paradise."
- **The Bible no where teaches that there are three heavens where people live eternally.**

After death a holding place before judgment

- Mormonism teaches that when mortals die, their spirits go to a spirit prison which has two compartments.
- Good LDS people go to "paradise" (M.D. pp. 554-555).
- All others go to the other area which is often called "spirit prison" (M.D. pp. 754-755).
- Good LDS missionary spirits come from paradise to the spirit prison to preach the true LDS gospel. Most of the imprisoned spirits will accept the LDS message, but their personal salvation is not completed until proxy baptism, marriage and so on are done for them in an LDS temple on earth.
- Finally, after the millennium and final judgment, they will go to the degree of glory or heaven they have earned through obedience to the law (A. of F. pp. 147-148)

What determines your eternal destiny?

- Tenth President Joseph Fielding Smith warned that the temporary mortality we are now experiencing is "the most vital period in our eternal existence" because it "would either give to those who received it the blessing of eternal life, which is the greatest gift of God, and thus qualify them for godhood as sons and daughters of our Eternal Father, or, if they rebelled and refused to comply with the laws and ordinances which were provided for their salvation, it would deny them the great gift and they would be assigned, after the resurrection, to some inferior sphere **according to their works**" (Doctrines of Salvation 1:69).

How can a Mormon know if they will go to heaven (or which one)?

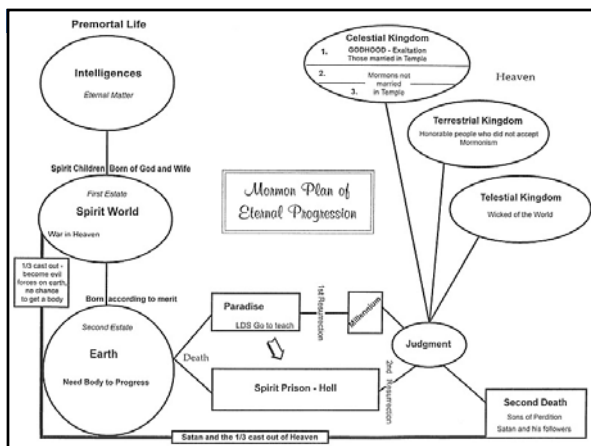
- In a talk given in general conference in 2001, Mormon Apostle Richard G. Scott noted:
 - "Time and time again at funerals, statements are made that the deceased will inherit all blessings of celestial glory when that individual has in no way qualified by obtaining the necessary ordinances and by keeping the required covenants. That won't happen. **Such blessings can only be earned by meeting the Lord's requirements. His mercy does not overcome the requirements of His law. They must be met**" (*Ensign* (Conference Edition), May 2001, p.9).

During Earthly time – Rewards earned based on works

- "The purpose of this earth-life, so far as man is concerned, is that he may, through all the vicissitudes of mortality, **prove himself worthy of advancement to the fullness of exaltation**, or, through rejection and transgression of divine law, receive a reward of punishment and denial of blessings **according to his works**. Whether he receives exaltation or condemnation, we are positively informed **that it will be a reward based upon individual merit**" ^{Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Progress of Man*}. **"We must work for our own exaltation.** I cannot imagine anything that is so vastly important as to work for and obtain one's own individual exaltation and glory. That undoubtedly is one great purpose for which we came into the world. When we lived in the other life we had no doubt some understanding with reference to our duties in this life when we were permitted to come to this our second estate. And very likely we put ourselves under certain obligations that we would discharge certain duties devolving upon us when we came here into our second estate. And we had rendered ourselves worthy to come upon this earth for the purpose of securing those blessings that could only be obtained by observing the laws pertaining to our present estate" (*The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*).
- As stated by Henry H. Moyle, a former member of the LDS First Presidency: **"Our Church is founded upon the premise that spiritual growth and exaltation must be earned by the efforts of the individual"** (Henry D. Moyle, *Improvement Era*, December 1937, p.787).

The universalist aspect of the Mormon Church

- That everyone will experience "salvation by grace," is also a part of Mormonism, but in Mormon thought this is relegated to what they call immortality, or the gift of being resurrected from the dead. According to tenth LDS President Joseph Fielding Smith:
 - "Immortality is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ, to all men; by which they come forth in the resurrection to die no more, whether they have obeyed him or rebelled against him. This great gift is theirs; even the wicked receive it through the grace of Jesus Christ, and shall have the privilege of living forever, but they will have to pay the price of their sins in torment with the devil before they are redeemed" (*The Way to Perfection*, p.329).



The Christian view

- We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone
 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Eph. 2:8-10
- No second chances
 - And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment. Hebrews 9:27
- A good summary by John Piper: <http://www.soundofgrace.com/piper80/083180m.htm>

Eternal life or God's wrath and fury - these are the two alternatives.
 In 2 Thessalonians 1:9 Paul speaks of those who do not obey the gospel and says, "They will pay the penalty of eternal destruction." Jesus concludes the parable of the great final judgment in Matthew 25:46 with the words, "These will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life."

Hell is the most appalling reality we can imagine. No horror of suffering in history can be compared to what John calls the "lake of fire" and where Jesus said "their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:48). To go through life distrustful and disobeying the infinite God, is an infinite sin and will be punished with eternal torment.

But if hell is infinitely horrible to imagine, eternal life in the presence of Jesus is infinitely beautiful to contemplate. The happiness that the saints will have in the age to come will be more satisfying than all the moments of joy experienced by all men in all history. Has there ever been a moment when you thought you would burst because you were so happy? Multiply that a thousand times and let it increase continually for an eternity, and you may get some notion of what eternal life with Christ will mean.