

Why Can't Evangelical Christians Simply Accept Mormons???

An Evangelical minister—a friend of mine—once told me, “It’s hard to witness to someone whose lawn looks better than your own!” He was thinking of his Latter-day Saint friends and neighbors.

Obviously my friend was expressing his admiration and respect for the Mormons in his neighborhood. He recognized that Mormons and Evangelicals have much in common: A sincere zeal for God, love of family, and patriotism. Most Mormons share the small-town conservative values that Evangelicals treasure. I know that my friend appreciates much of Mormon culture, as I do.

So, why can't we all just get along?

Why do we seem, so often, to be at loggerheads?

There are several answers to those questions, but—bottom line—both Mormons and Christians hold tightly to doctrinal positions that are often clearly different. The differences are not social or political, they are *theological*.

Well, so what? Can't we get along in spite of our theological differences? The answer to that is a resounding *Yes!* Of course we can. We can be friends, we can support the same social agenda, we can share the burdens of citizenship, we can work together for better schools, better communities, and better understanding.

And speaking of better understanding, that brings me to the purpose of the packet I have sent you. In it you will find my opinions about our theological differences. Let me say straight out that I think the differences are important. Very important. I would not want you to misun-

derstand me about that.

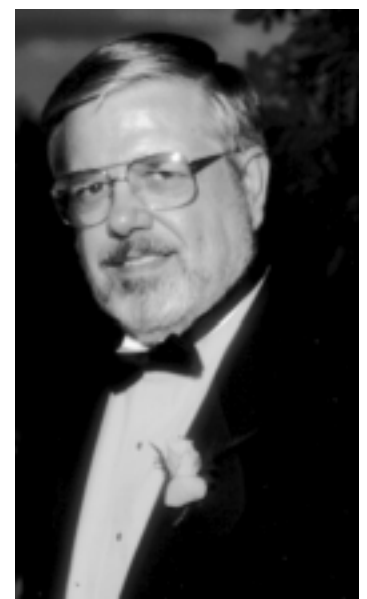
I do recognize, however, that most Latter-day Saints are convinced that the doctrines of Mormonism are God-given. If that is true, they reason, why would they be concerned about what others believe?

One thing is certain, some of the teachings of Mormonism are markedly different than the teachings of other Christians: Teachings about the number and nature of God, about Jesus Christ, about salvation, about baptism, about priesthood. It is not enough to say “We are all Christians.” Obviously if that were the end of the discussion, there would be no need to send Mormon missionaries out to visit Baptists, Methodists, and Pentecostals.

Latter-day Saints disagree with Evangelicals even about the very nature of Jesus Christ. The *Church News* reported on President Hinckley, addressing a group of Latter-day Saints in France:

In bearing testimony of Jesus Christ, President Hinckley spoke of those outside the Church who say Latter-day Saints “do not believe in the traditional Christ. No I don't. The traditional Christ of whom they speak is not the Christ of whom I speak.” (The Church news, June 20, 1998)

At any rate, I am glad to send you the enclosed information. I hope you find it informative, even if you disagree with everything I say. I assure you my motive is only to share with you from a heart of love for you. I wish you the very best from God Almighty. I pray He will continue to reveal Himself to you.



Rev. James R. Spencer

If you have interest in reading more of Rev. Spencer's thoughts on the subjects discussed in this letter, mail the enclosed card for a FREE copy of his book, *Beyond Mormonism: An Elder's Story*. More than 250,000 copies of Rev. Spencer's books are in print.

