

[The Truth in Love Approach](#)

What does it mean to speak the truth in love to Mormons?

The Bible describes how speaking the truth without love is like a clanging symbol. Nobody wants to listen. At the same time, showing love means not refraining from speaking the truth. The two go hand-in-hand.

For many years, we have successfully utilized the following biblical approach in sharing God's Word with Mormons ([Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons, By Mark J. Cares](#)). Now, we are sharing this approach with thousands of Christians around the world who have a desire to share the real gospel with Mormons.

WE SPEAK IN LOVE BY...

- Recognizing the Mormon Culture
- Learning the Mormon Language
- Addressing Mormon stress points

WE SPEAK THE TRUTH BY...

- Understanding the differences between Mormonism and Christianity
- Proclaiming biblical messages of God's Wrath
- Proclaiming biblical messages of God's Grace

SPEAKING IN LOVE

Recognizing Mormon Culture

The teachings of Mormonism fit the theological definition of a cult. Walter Martin, in his classic book, *The Kingdom of the Cults*, wrote: "From a theological viewpoint, the cults contain many major deviations from historical Christianity. Yet, paradoxically they continue to insist that they are entitled to be classified as Christians" (p.18). Since there is a broad misinterpretation of that word, utilizing "cult" in our witnessing language creates more harm than good.

We believe it is more beneficial to add "ure" to cult and see Mormonism as a culture.

Not only does this avoid unnecessary misunderstandings, but it also emphasizes the true cross-cultural nature of this ministry. Like any world missionary, understanding the culture of the people you are trying to witness to is paramount to sharing God's Word. The same can be said for witnessing to Mormons.

The culture of the Mormon Church has several unique characteristics. Mormons heavily promote family and go to great lengths to portray a wholesome and reverent image. They strictly observe the Sabbath day and reserve Monday evenings as family night. Drinking alcohol or coffee is strictly forbidden. They are also very proud of their pioneer heritage and work hard to preserve it. There are just a few examples of the many nuances and expectations associated with being a faithful Mormon.

Another important aspect of Mormon culture is its emphasis on LDS temples. It is here where sacred ordinances are carried out and works are performed on behalf of the dead. Faithful Mormons wear sacred undergarments at all times to remind them of the covenants they made during the temple endowment.

If one word could adequately describe the culture of Mormonism it would be “work”.

It is no accident that Utah is called the Beehive State for they are “busy as bees”. This is not just their heritage, but a central aspect of their religious beliefs. Mormons are required to be worthy to receive any temporal or eternal blessings. Busyness is a sign within the LDS church culture that they are progressing spiritually and eternally. This includes fulfilling all their church callings, paying their tithes, being active in the community, working on their genealogy, keeping a six months supply of food, etc... For young men, it’s all about going on a mission.

Understanding and appreciating the Mormon culture will not only keep you from making insensitive comments, but will also help you witness more lovingly to them.

Learning the Mormon Language

A world missionary will not only learn the culture of a nation, but will also take time to learn their language. Mormonism has a language all its own. Learning their language will be vital in sharing God’s Word with them.

The challenge is that Mormonism utilizes many terms common to Christianity, but with a totally different definition. For example, when a Mormon is asked by a Christian, “Are you saved?” they will immediately respond “Yes! By the blood of Christ.” That is the correct answer, but it depends by what you mean by the word “saved”. For Mormons, “salvation” means bodily resurrection. It does not mean the forgiveness of sins. So, Mormons believe that Jesus “saved” them from physical death. As far as being saved from spiritual death, that is up to the Mormon. This is just one of many examples why we dub their language “Mormonese”.

Because Christians are often unaware of the unique language of Mormonism, they will typically find themselves going round and round in conversations with Mormons. This causes great frustration and even anger from both the Christian and the Mormon. Prompted by love, we take the time to carefully define key Christian terms and strive to recognize their language. See our [Dictionary of Mormonism](#), a brief reference guide to common terms of the LDS Church.

Addressing Mormon stress points

Many Christians will want to discuss with Mormons aspects of Mormonism that bothers them. This includes many of the unique LDS teachings, Joseph Smith, or Mormon history. This has led to unfruitful discussions resulting in unnecessary debates, anger, and hurt feelings. Instead, our approach focuses on addressing key issues that may prick the ears of a Mormon and arouse curiosity. We especially concentrate on the stresses associated with trying to be a faithful Mormon. Such subjects include the striving to be worthy, the assurance of being forgiven, and the weariness associated with trying to do it all.

Speaking in love with Mormons means providing a welcome answer when addressing their stresses

rather than focusing on our problems with Mormonism. We have found this approach to be very effective in planting the seeds of God's Word.

SPEAKING THE TRUTH MEANS...

Understanding the differences between Mormonism and Christianity

There are many major doctrinal differences between Mormonism and Christianity. But those differences are not always apparent because Mormonism sounds so Christian. When analyzing the teachings of Mormonism, it's not hard to conclude that it is man-centered. This is in striking contrast to the teachings of Biblical Christianity which is Christ-centered. To sum up the two contrasting beliefs:

Christianity: God gives us salvation that is based on Jesus' perfection for us.

Mormonism: God gives us a plan of salvation that demands perfection from us.

Speaking the truth to a Mormon means focusing our messages exclusively on the essential truths of the Bible, namely the message of sin (God's wrath) and salvation (God's grace).

Proclaiming God's Wrath

"Through the law we come conscious of sin" (Romans 3:20).

One of the primary reasons God gave us the law or His commandments is to reveal our sins.

"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly father is perfect." (Matthew 5:48)

The standard for those who follow God's commands is to be perfect.

*"For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."
(James 2:10)*

By one sin, we are less than perfect. God desires that all people see how sinful they are so that they despair of trying to save themselves.

"The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23)

The consequence of not being perfect is spiritual death — an eternal separation from God.

The stakes are high. Jesus reserves strong judgment for those who strive to appear to be religious and who base their eternal destiny on their good works. The consequences will be both surprising for the offender and horrible beyond imagination.

Out of concern for the eternal souls of Mormons, we need to use the message of God's wrath at sin to crush their reliance on what they do.

We need to share with them the damning verdict of everlasting punishment in hell for all who think they have to earn eternal life. And we must do so not out of anger, but with great concern and sensitivity.

This is especially true for Mormons since they believe that almost everybody will go to heaven. The reality of hell (outer darkness) is difficult for any Mormon to grasp. They simply do not know.

Before sharing the gospel, it's imperative that we share the message of God's wrath on sin and its eternal consequences.

We understand that this message is difficult and unsettling. But we can't shy away from it. The message of God's wrath on sin sets the stage for the sharing the wonderful news of God's forgiveness through Christ. Mormons need to know the extreme danger they have placed themselves in before they will listen intently to the good news that Jesus has done it all.

Proclaiming God's Grace

Once Mormons have comprehended the dire consequences of their sin, we can offer them the sweet words of God's forgiveness through Christ. Only the power of the Holy Spirit working through God's Word will cause anybody to accept that good news.

By focusing our conversations squarely on Jesus as our substitute — not our example — we plant the seeds of God's Word. When we share the Good News that Jesus is our Savior- not our debtor - we allow God's Word to do its work. Finally, we can joyfully share the confidence and assurance we have in knowing that we are already perfect and worthy in God's sight (Hebrews 10:10-18).

Conclusion

Speaking the truth in love to Mormons is one of the greatest ways to exercise our faith. It's an adventure that can't help but grow our own faith. While sharing God's Word, it's helpful to keep in mind that we must prayerfully strive to *maintain the right attitude and practice perseverance*.

A Mormon's coming to faith is often a difficult and lengthy journey. God usually uses a number of different people as guides on their journey to help point them to Christ. Even when it appears that you are not making any progress, don't give up! When frustration and impatience mount up, be diligent in treating them with love and respect. Continue to sprinkle the seeds of God's Word and trusting in its' power to convert. Pray regularly for them. The Holy Spirit often works on a much different timetable than we would like.

Who knows? Perhaps God has chosen to use you to plant the seeds of God's Word at the right time in a Mormon's faith journey. We can take heart that perhaps someday in heaven, a soul will come and thank you. You were somebody that God used to bring them out of Mormonism and into saving faith.

Could there be no greater joy?

For more encouragement on sharing God's Word with Mormons, be refreshed and renewed by visiting our [blog posts](#).