



HIGHER GROUND
CALVARY CHAPEL

SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

Damned Deceptions:

Class 05

The Crucifixion & Resurrection

I've mentioned before that God had three obligations under His contract – the Bible

The Incarnation

The Crucifixion

The Resurrection

These three legal obligations are the very things that the Cults attack

The Incarnation: Was Jesus God born into the human race?

The Crucifixion: Did Jesus really die for our sin?

The Resurrection: Did Jesus come back to life in the body He died in?

In our session before last, we explored the Incarnation

We established why Jesus had to be God now in human form

We went into the details of the Virgin Birth

And we reviewed the teachings of the Cults on this topic

Today, we are going to combine the other two legal obligations

We will look at the Crucifixion

We will examine the Resurrection

These two legal obligations on the part of God are closely connected

Next week, we are going to be discussing the end result of God's three legal obligations:

Salvation

I am going to point out that when we discuss the crucifixion, there are going to be several points where the Crucifixion and the Plan of Salvation overlap
It is going to be hard to discuss one without touching on the other

I am going to start with the Crucifixion, and I wanted to discuss the Latter Day Church's position on the Crucifixion
When I began to do the research, I ran into a serious problem

For all intents and purposes, the things that the Mormon Fathers were saying, sounded just like the things Christians say.

Joseph Smith: the Savior is identified as having been "crucified for the sins of the world"
(Doctrine & Covenants 53:2)

President Brigham Young taught that salvation was only "through the name and ministry of Jesus Christ, and the atonement he made on Mount Calvary."
Brigham Young, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26 vols. (Liverpool: F. D. Richards, 1855–86), 9:365 (August 31, 1862)

President John Taylor said that Christ "was crucified and put to death to atone for the sins of the world."
John Taylor, in *Journal of Discourses*, 25:177 (May 18, 1884)

President Wilford Woodruff stated, “The Lord Jesus was crucified on Mount Calvary for the sins of the world.”

Wilford Woodruff, in *Journal of Discourses*, 15:7 (April 6, 1872)

President Lorenzo Snow taught that Christ “sacrificed his life on Mount Calvary for the salvation of the human family.”

Lorenzo Snow, *Millennial Star* 56 (July 16, 1894): 450

In 1918, President Joseph F. Smith wrote “that redemption had been wrought through the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross” (Doctrine & Covenants 138:35)

President Heber J. Grant testified that Christ “came to this earth with a divine mission to die upon the cross as the Redeemer of mankind, atoning for the sins of the world.”

Heber J. Grant, in 111th *Annual Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: LDS Church 1941), 6

Every President of the Church has testified that Jesus Christ was crucified for the sins of the world. At the start of the 21st century, the united First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve proclaimed that Christ was “sentenced to die on Calvary’s cross...

...He gave His life to atone for the sins of all mankind.”
“The Living Christ: The Testimony of the Apostles,” *Ensign* 30 (January 2000): 2

From the Book of Mormon:

In vision, Nephi saw Christ “lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world” (1 Nephi 11:33)

Samuel the Lamanite stated that Christ “surely must die, that salvation may come” (Helaman 14:15)

Doctrine and Covenants says that “Jesus was crucified . . . for the sins of the world, yea, for the remission of sins” (Doctrine & Covenants 21:9)

The Pearl of Great Price speaks of Christ being “lifted up on the cross” for the redemption of the world (Moses 7:55)

“In his own accounts of his Atonement contained in scripture, Jesus Christ also emphasizes his Crucifixion

Christ made his Crucifixion central to his appearance to those in the New World...

...After he descended from heaven, he told the people, “Come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I . . . have been slain for the sins of the world”

(3 Nephi 11:14).

He defined his gospel in part by saying, “My Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross,” indicating that the Crucifixion is a central part of his gospel

(3 Nephi 27:13)

I just want to note that I went to these passages, and they do speak of Jesus dying on the cross

But they do not speak of WHY Christ died on the cross

Or how this provided salvation to the world

Nor do they define “salvation”

On the surface, it looks like we are teaching and believing the same thing

Let me let you in on a little secret...

These quotes came from a Latter Day Saints article:

The Teachings of Church Leaders Regarding the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ: 1852–2018

Author John Hilton III Author Emily K. Hyde Author McKenna Grace Trussel

I pulled up this article as part of my research on what the Latter Day Church teaches on the Crucifixion

Their statement was:

“From the beginnings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ has been at the heart of its theology.”

When I finished my study I discovered what the basis of this belief in the Crucifixion was really all about how many times certain words were used by the Church Leaders

The authors had performed a digital word search for the following words: Crucify, Crucifixion, Cross, Golgotha Die, Death, Sacrifice, Lifted Up

“Within our [search], 332 speakers referenced the death of Christ a total of 3,377 times between 1852 and 2018...”

“...The three speakers who referenced the Crucifixion most frequently were
Elder Orson Pratt (124)
Elder Charles W. Penrose (93)
President Thomas S. Monson (90)”

“This chart shows that the overall discussion of the Crucifixion has generally increased over time; the 1960s had the most references and the 1890s the least. However, some decades had more words spoken in general conference than others.”

[T]here were 1,728,512 words spoken in general conference in the 1960s versus 1,337,854 words spoken in the 1980s.

“To account for this variance in words spoken per decade, we created a second chart normalizing the occurrences of words such as “crucifixion” (and the other words described in our methodology) to the total number of words spoken in each decade.”

“When normalized by the number of words spoken, the 1980s mentioned Christ’s Crucifixion more than the 1960s. While the 1890s is still the decade with the fewest references, it is significantly less of an outlier...”

“...Despite these differences, the charts are remarkably similar. Both show a general increase in the overall discussion of Christ’s Crucifixion with similar trends over time.”

This is their entire proof – the number of times each word was used

There is no analysis of HOW these words were used

There is no context to understand what they MEANT as they spoke these words

All we know is that these words were spoken a certain number of times

This is not a convincing argument

We know from just a general review of lessons that the Latter Day Saints are quick to quote from the Bible

Many passages in their documents were taken directly out of the Bible

But it is not enough to mimic words
You must know what these words mean

Speaking words without knowing what they mean is nothing more than mimicking

Which means it is nothing more than noise

The Leaders of the Latter Day Saints use the terminology
But remember that they are wolves in sheep's clothing

When I studied under the Late Dr. Walter Martin, one of his lessons stressed the importance of defining the terms and what the words mean to the Cults

They say the same words, but they mean something completely different

The article stressed that there was a major on-going debate among the members of the Latter Day Church as to when Jesus actually obtained salvation

There was one side that held that it was the agony that Jesus felt in the Garden of Gethsemane that obtained our salvation

The other side said it was His agony on the cross that obtained salvation

The Bible does not teach that it was Jesus' agony that bought our salvation

It teaches that it was His death – the shedding of His blood that brought forgiveness of sins

Hebrews 9:22:

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood [there] is no remission.”

It is clear that the Mormon Leaders do not understand what Jesus was doing on the cross or how it worked.

They are doing nothing more than repeating what they had heard Christians say

“The savior of Mormonism, however, is an entirely different person, as their official publications clearly reveal.

The Mormon “*savior*” is not the second person of the Christian Trinity...

“...since, as we have previously seen, Mormons reject the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, and he is not even a careful replica of the New Testament Redeemer. ”

Kingdom of the Cults – Walter Martin, Bethany Fellowship Inc., 1965 page 192

“Brigham Young categorically stated that the sacrifice made upon the cross by Jesus Christ in the form of His own blood was ineffective for the cleansing of some sins. Brigham went on to teach the now suppressed but never officially repudiated doctrine of “*blood atonement*.”

Kingdom of the Cults, Walter Martin, Bethany Fellowship Inc., 1965 page 192

“There is not a man or woman, who violates the covenants made with their God, that will not be required to pay the debt. The blood of Christ will never wipe that out, your own blood must atone for it...”

(*Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, 3:247; 4:219–220*)

“Young’s statement declared that what Christ’s blood could not cleanse, a man’s own blood atonement could.”

Kingdom of the Cults, Walter Martin. (Bethany Fellowship Inc., 1965 page 193

“Grace is simply the mercy, the love and the condescension God has for his children, as a result of which he has ordained the plan of salvation so that they may have power to progress and become like him...”

Bruce R. McConkie, “What the Mormons Think of Christ” (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 27 – 33

“All men are saved by grace alone without any act on their part, **meaning that they are resurrected and become immortal** because of the atoning sacrifice of Christ. . . .”

Bruce R. McConkie, “What the Mormons Think of Christ” (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 27 – 33

“Hence Nephi was led to write: ‘We labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved **after all we can do.**’ ”

Bruce R. McConkie, “What the Mormons Think of Christ” (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1973), 27 – 33

So according to Mormon doctrines, Jesus did die on the cross

But it is not clear if “salvation” was attained by suffering in the Garden, or if “salvation” came from His suffering on the cross

This suggests that “salvation” was attained from His agony

Not from His shedding His blood and dying

The Mormons use the word “salvation.”

Jesus attained salvation

But their definition of the word “salvation” refers to a universal resurrection for all mankind

“Most adults” will go to the Telestial kingdom which is composed of “the endless hosts of people of all ages who have lived after the manner of the world; who have been carnal, sensual, and devilish...

“...who have chosen the vain philosophies of the world rather than accept the testimony of Jesus; who have been liars and thieves, sorcerers and adulterers, blasphemers and murders”

(Mormon Doctrine, Bruce McConkie 1966, 778).

The second kingdom (the Terrestrial) will be inhabited by Christians who did not accept the Mormon message, Mormons who did not live up to their church’s requirements, and men of good will of other religions who rejected the revelations of the Latter-day Saints (Mormon Doctrine, Bruce McConkie, 1966, 778).

The highest or Celestial Heaven is itself divided into three levels.

Only in this highest level is godhood or the possession of a kingdom for one's self and one's family to be gained.

This particular estate has as its prerequisite the candidate's having been sealed by celestial marriage in a Mormon temple while upon the earth.

Even in the celestial kingdom, godhood is by slow progression, and in the end each who becomes a god will, with his family, rule and populate a separate planet of his own.

As noted, in the Mormon teachings, there are three Kingdoms in the afterlife.

For the Mormons, salvation is resurrection

All mankind will be resurrected into one of these three Kingdoms

They will be resurrected no matter what they do

Salvation/Resurrection is not based upon works

Resurrection for all was secured by Jesus' death on the cross

But Jesus' salvation has no influence on which Kingdom you will resurrect into

What determines which Kingdom you spend eternity in is determined by your works

The Latter Day Church is a works-oriented religion

Notice that Nephi took Ephesians 2:8 and altered it:

"For by grace are you saved through faith, not of yourself, it is the gift of God"

This is the Bible version

Now compare the Nephi version:
“For we know it is by grace that
we are saved *after all we can do*”
Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 10:24

It is not the death of Jesus on the
cross that saves them
The death of Jesus on the cross
will cause all mankind to resurrect
But His blood does not remove
sins
We must live a good life and shed
our own blood if necessary

Just as a final observation...
If the cross of Jesus is such an
important point in their doctrines,
Why are there no crosses in the
Latter Day Church?

“Crosses are never used on any
Mormon buildings. Strangely
enough, Mormon leaders have
often pointed to the Garden of
Gethsemane as the place where
Christ’s atonement took place.”
Bill McKeeves, “Why No Crosses?”
Mormon Research Ministry,
accessed January 9, 2020

We have looked at the death of
Jesus on the cross
What do the Latter Day Saints
teach about the Resurrection?

There is not a lot of discussion or
teaching in the Latter Day Church
on the Resurrection
This is because they do not see
anything unique about His
resurrection
They just note that He resurrected
before they do

“Every man who is eventually made perfect, raised from the dead, and filled or quickened with a fullness of celestial glory, will become like them (the Father and the Son) in every respect, physically and in intellect, attributes and powers.”

“Key to the Science of Theology,”
Parley P. Pratt (1855) page 32

So what about the Jehovah’s Witnesses and the Crucifixion?

“The atonement is a ransom paid to Jehovah God by Christ Jesus and is applicable to all who accept it in righteousness...”

Sounds pretty Biblical, doesn’t it?

“...In brief, the death of Jesus removed the effects of Adam’s sin on his offspring and laid the foundation of the New World of Righteousness.

Jehovah of the Watchtower,
Martin & Klann (1963) page 30

“That which is redeemed or bought back is what was lost, namely perfect human life...”

“Let God Be True,” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society 1946, 114)

When dealing with the Jehovah’s Witnesses, we need to address their concept of the soul, death, Heaven and Hell.

They do not believe that the soul is immortal.

“The fact that the human soul is mortal can be amply proven by a careful study of Scripture. An immortal soul could not die...”

“...But God’s word at Ezekiel 18:4 says, ‘Behold all souls are mine...the soul that sins, it shall die.’”

“Let God Be True,” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society 1946, 61)

“Thus we see that the claim that man has an immortal soul, and therefore differs from the beast is not Scriptural.”

“Let God Be True,” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society 1946, 59 - 60)

“It is clearly seen that even the man Christ Jesus was mortal. He did not have an immortal soul. Jesus, the human soul, died.”

“Let God Be True,” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society 1946, 63)

So what happens to the soul at the point of death?

Because the soul is not immortal, the Jehovah’s Witnesses believe that the soul ceases to be

They call it “annihilation”

It remains annihilated until the Kingdom Age

Their idea concerning Hell is that it does not exist.

As such the unqualified remain annihilated forever

They believe that Hell does not exist because it is too terrible to consider anyone doing this

“It is so plain that the Bible Hell is the tomb, the grave, that even an honest little child can understand it, but not the religious theologians.”

“Let God Be True,” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society 1946, 72 - 73)

“Imperfect man does not torture even a mad dog, but kills it; and yet clergymen attribute to God, who is love, the Wicked Crime of Torturing human creatures merely because they had the misfortune of being born sinners.”

“Let God Be True,” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society 1946, 79)

So their solution to sin and Hell is to remove it from their theology
All they focus on is the original sin of Adam which we inherit
The actions of Jesus on the cross is to pay for that, and only that.

“To sacrifice something means to give it up...Hence Jesus...could not have that body back.”

“What Has Religion Done To Mankind?” (Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, 1951, 259)

The Watchtower Society holds that all that Jesus did on the cross was to offer a perfect human body of his own to replace the perfect human body Adam lost when he sinned

There was nothing beyond this when it came to the crucifixion
When it came to the Resurrection, they teach that Jesus could not reclaim his body and was resurrected as a spirit

“Almighty God raised his son Jesus Christ from the dead as an immortal spirit person...”

“What Has Religion Done For Mankind?” (Watchtower Track & Bible Society, 1951, 259)

The Jehovah's Witnesses are opposed to the cross and claim that it is a pagan symbol

When someone joins their church, they must destroy any cross they have.

They cannot just give it away or throw it away

What does the Bible have to say about this?

I Corinthians 1:18:

“For the preaching of the cross is to those who perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God.”

The Jehovah's Witnesses are the ones who are perishing

Their faith will not save them

Therefore, the cross is foolish to them and they want nothing to do with it

However, as believers, the cross represents the very power of God
It was on the cross that the power of sin was broken

It is on the cross that we were bought with a price

It was on the cross that Satan went down in defeat

Is it any wonder that Satan wants nothing to do with the cross
And that he has removed it from his false religions?

Both with the Latter Day Church and the Jehovah's Witnesses

The Jehovah's Witnesses insist that it was not a cross that Jesus died on.

They refer to it as a Torture Stake or a Torture Stick

Does this make a difference?

The issue of a cross versus a torture stake is a peripheral issue, and it should not be that big of a deal
As such I would normally recommend you do not even debate the point
But if we look at the Law of Moses, it might be a big deal after all

The altar was constructed to have four horns upon it
There is one horn at each corner of the altar
These horns were part of the ceremony

Exodus 29:12:

“And you shall take of the blood of the bullock, and put it upon the horns of the altar with your finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar.”

We have noted that in order for Jesus to be our legal Redeemer, He had to fulfill the requirements of the Law of Moses
This would include the Law regarding the sacrifice

On the Day of Atonement, the High Priest was required to change his clothes before performing the sacrifice
His garments were given to him for “grace and beauty”

Exodus 28:2:

“And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother for glory and for beauty.”

Leviticus 16:4:

“[The High Priest] shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen miter shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.”

The High Priest must put off glory and beauty, and dress in linen [righteousness]

Revelation 19:8:

“And to [the Church] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”

The High Priest removes the glory and beauty and appears in righteousness to perform the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement
Jesus set aside His glory and beauty when He left Heaven
He hung on the cross in only His righteousness

The blood of the sacrifice must be poured out at the place the offering is made

Jesus' side was pierced as He hung on the cross

Blood and water was poured out at the base of the cross, just as it was required by the Law of Moses

So what about the blood on the horns of the altar

The anointing of the blood on the horns of the altar sanctified the altar and gave it the power to atone for sins

The blood is required to be placed upon the horns of the altar in the following passages:

Exodus 29:12, Leviticus 4:7, Leviticus 4:18, Leviticus 4:25, Leviticus 4:30, Leviticus 4:34, Leviticus 8:15, Leviticus 9:9, Leviticus 16:18

Obviously, there is a reason you anoint the horns of the altar with the blood of the altar

Leviticus 8:15:

“And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.”

Anointing the horns of the altar purifies the altar prior to offering the sacrifice

Also keep in mind the promise God made to Moses...

Exodus 6:6:

“Wherefore say unto the Children of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rid you of their bondage, and **I will redeem you with a stretched out arm**, and with great judgments.”

If Jesus were nailed to a torture stick, then His arms would have been stretched up, not out

God promised to redeem with arms stretched out, not up

The torture stick does not fulfill God’s promise to Moses

Question: Where are the four horns of the altar on a torture stick?

Answer: there are not four horns on a stick

There is a top of the stick, and the bottom of the stick

That is two, not four

When Jesus was stretched out upon the cross, the blood from His right hand stained the right side of the cross

The blood from the left hand stained the left side of the cross

The blood from His feet stained the base of the cross

Jesus had His brow and head torn
by the crown of thorns

The blood from this wound
stained the top of the cross

All four points of the cross were
stained [anointed] with the blood
of the sacrifice

It purified His altar so the sacrifice
could be offered

This action purifies the “altar”

And it empowers the altar to
receive the sacrifice for God

I believe it does make a difference
under the Law of Moses whether
Jesus died upon a stake or a
cross

So, with regards to the
Resurrection, the Jehovah’s
Witness Theology teaches that
Jesus resurrected as a spirit – not
in the body He died in. And they
teach that during the three days
Jesus was in the tomb, He was
annihilated – He ceased to exist.

If He could not resurrect the body
that held the sin, then how can we
ever know if His sacrifice worked?
We can’t.

But Jesus knew that over two
thousand years after His death
and Resurrection, someone
would come along and teach that
His body did not resurrect. Jesus
made this a sign that He was of
God. John 2:18 – 21:

“Then answered the Jews and
said unto Him, ‘What sign [will
you show] us, seeing that you do
these things?’

“Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’

“Then said the Jews, ‘Forty and six years was this temple in [the] building [stage], and you will rear it up in three days?’

“But He spake of the temple of His body.”

The people asked for a sign. Jesus gave them the sign:

“After you destroy the temple of my body, I will restore it in three days.”

This means bringing the body He was in when He made this claim back to life, and His continuing to live in it.

If Jesus cannot/did not do this, then He lied.

If He lied, He was not sent by God.

If He was not sent by God; then we are still lost in our sins.

Yes, it is THAT serious.

This is why Jesus appeared to His Disciples.

He appeared to those who knew Him best.

When He came into the room, they were afraid.

They had no doubt that it was Him.

It was not someone looking like Him.

They thought it was His ghost.

Jesus submitted to testing to prove to them that He was not a ghost.

He invited them to physically examine the body He was in:

Luke 24:39

“Behold my hands and my feet,
that it is I myself: handle me, and
see; for a spirit has not flesh and
bones, as you see me have.”

In fact, Jesus submitted to
whatever test they could ask of
Him to prove, beyond any shadow
of doubt, that this was His
physical body that had been
resurrected from the death.
You cannot touch a spirit.

When Thomas missed this meeting
he demanded further proof
Jesus came back and submitted to
Thomas' tests.

Whatever it took to prove to His
Disciples that He had resurrected
from the dead in the body He had
lived and died in was offered.

But notice the teaching of the
Jehovah's Witnesses:

“...Only because Thomas would not
believe did Jesus appear in a body
LIKE that in which he had died.”

“From Paradise Lost to Paradise
Regained,” Watchtower Track and
Bible Society (1958) page 144

Wait a minute!

Did they just say that Jesus
conned His own Disciples to get
them to lie?

That's exactly what they just said.

Jesus would not lie to His
Disciples

His Disciples had to be 100%
certain so they could convince us
two thousand years later.

Each Disciple was so convinced
that each Disciple died a painful
death rather than change their
testimony

So, in summary...

The Latter Day Church accepts a cross

They teach Jesus agonized to give them salvation

This took place either in the Garden or on the cross

They do not know which

They define salvation as the resurrection of all mankind

Everyone will resurrect without doing a single thing

That is what Jesus provided with His agony

The Latter Day Church does not teach on the Resurrection because it was unimportant to them

They all will resurrect

Jesus just beat them to it

The Jehovah's Witnesses teach that Jesus died on a torture stick
They teach His death replaced the corrupted body of Adam

And so He only paid for the original sin of Adam

They teach He had to resurrect as a spirit because He traded His body for Adam's

Individual sin is something each person must avoid by being righteous themselves

The Bible teaches something completely different from this

The Bible teaches that Jesus was God become human

The Bible teaches Jesus died upon the cross to fulfill the Law of Moses

This means that each aspect of Jesus death had to correlate with each requirement under the Law of Moses

In doing this, Jesus paid for all the sins of all mankind

As John the Baptist declared:
"Behold the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world."

John 1:29

The Resurrection is just as important in the Christian teachings as the Crucifixion
Jesus assumed all sins for the entire world

He assumed all sins past, present and future

If there was even one sin left in Him after three days

That sin would have kept Him in the grave

By resurrecting in the same body He died in, Jesus proved that the power of sin was broken forever

With the power of sin broken,
The power of death is also broken
So when Jesus came back from the dead

In the same body He died it
It is proof to us that His sacrifice was acceptable to God

It is proof that it worked

All of it worked

The power of sin was broken

The power of death was broken

Sin is no longer an issue between God and us

Next week we will look at God's Plan of Salvation and compare it to the Plans of Salvation offered by the Cults
The True Plan versus the Alternative Plan

QUESTIONS

