

Our Trek through LDS's Holy Grounds

I can't remember exactly how we heard about it – possibly through my mother? – but our family had the opportunity to be the part of the few who would procrastinate their way, on the second to last day, to a visitor's open house for the unveiling of the Indianapolis Mormon Temple. This isn't just the regular worship house that anybody can attend, no, they open up this tiny window of opportunity for non-Mormons to actually walk through this temple where they perform elaborate ceremonies not observed in their regular church houses – things like: baptizing for the dead, special Mormon built-to-last-forever-even-in-eternity weddings and to provide a special few a place to meet with the divine in such a concentrated form that they consider it God's literal holy place on earth.

Once this window is closed, you're not getting into the temple unless you've flashed your LDS I.D., so, we went for it.

You begin at the church house where they articulate the entire touring plan along with all the rules for the journey. Once they've made themselves clear, you hop up with your tour group from the pew, exiting to your right to follow your smiling and name-tagged Mormon who leads you behind the room divider, down the (curiously Caucasian) Jesus painting-bedecked halls and into the video room. Obviously the decision to invite unbelievers into the temple wasn't an arbitrary decision. No, knowing the LDS's m.o. this would have to be an evangelism tactic. The 10-minute video they played for us flushed away all doubt. The methods of appeal employed were nearly all emotionally driven. People spoke of their happiness in their families. In fact, that was the recurring theme: family. There was never any appeal to God. It was almost always to the assurance we can have about spending eternity with our families. And when their "apostle" began to speak on behalf of the Mormons – can you guess what he was selling? That's right. Family. Now, don't get me wrong. I love family (especially mine) just as much as the next guy, but don't teach something found no where in God's word. God's goal was never to secure your particular family for eternity but to create one entirely new family of his own made up of blood-bought, Jesus-loving people from all tribes, tongues and nations.

Once that was over, it was a quick hop across the parking lot to the line on the south side of the temple where they employed a line of Mormons who volunteered to sit, lean over, grab your foot and place white booties over your shoes. (I was wearing sandals that day.) Once we actually passed through the east entrance, it was easy to perceive the necessity of white booties. The carpet was immaculate. The stained-glass windows portraying various symbols of the state – peonies, tulip poplars and male cardinals. Not only did they want to you know you were in Indiana but it was clear they wanted to, in some way, produce the artificial experience of the divine. Thus chandeliers; original paintings of each scene in Jesus's life – still wet; a baptistery of 12 bulls burdened by a bronze cauldron, after Solomon's likeness; and the woodwork, don't even get me started. Honestly, it all seemed very...Jewish. They are creating a modernized version of Judaism, as it were.

As I left, I couldn't help but repetitively play the mental film of Jesus turning over the money changer's tables, or warning of Jerusalem's destruction, or his promise that he would destroy the earthly temple and replace it with his own resurrected body as a dwelling place for God. In so, so many ways – Mormonism goes against not only the letter but the very spirit of genuine New Testament Christianity.

Here's what I want to ask: Are Mormons Christians? No. And the reasoning is pretty simple – they walk outside most of the essential doctrines of Christianity, e.g., Jesus is divine, God is one, Jesus resurrected in his physical body, they've even got the gospel all wrong.

I want to leave you with a small sample of what they teach, and then I encourage you to learn more about them yourself. The following is borrowed Matt Slick the author of "Is Mormonism Christian?" an article he wrote for the Christian Apologetics & Research Ministry website (I encourage you to find and read the rest):

"Mormonism teaches that God the Father has a body of flesh and bones (D. & C. 130:22) and that Jesus is a creation who was begotten in heaven as one of God's spirit children (See the book, *Jesus the Christ*, by James Talmage, p. 8). This is in strict contrast to the Biblical teaching that He is God in flesh ([John 1:1, 14](#)), eternal ([John 1:1, 2, 15](#)), uncreated, yet born on earth ([Col. 1:15](#)), and the creator of all ([John 1:3, Col. 1:16-17](#)). Jesus cannot be both created and not created at the same time. Though Mormonism teaches that Jesus is God in flesh, it teaches that He is "a" god in flesh, one of three gods that comprise the office of the [Trinity](#) (*Articles of Faith*, by Talmage, pp. 35-40). These three gods are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This is in direct contradiction of the Biblical doctrine that there is only one God ([Isaiah 43:10, 44:6, 8, 45:5](#))."