

EVANGELISM TRAINING: Responding to Mormonism

Introduction

The Need

Matthew 28:19-20

- Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Romans 10:14-15

- How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? ¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

John 4:35

- Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, then comes the harvest’? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.

Statistics

Globally

- Worldwide — _____ Mormons
 - 32,046 congregations (*wards and branches*)
 - 3,695 stakes (*collection of 5-12 wards*)
 - 204 operating temples (*with 172 more planned*)
 - 451 missions (*areas organized for missionary work*)
 - 78,596 full-time missionaries (*many are those on their 18-24 month mission*)
 - [2025 Statistical Report of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#)

Domestically

- United States — _____ Mormons
 - 38% of the Mormon population is in the United States
 - 2% of U.S. adults describe themselves as Mormons
 - 5% in the Northeast
 - 7% in the Midwest
 - 19% in the South
 - 69% in the West
 - [Pew Research Center. 2025. “2023-24 U.S. Religious Landscape Study Interactive Database.” doi: 10.58094/3zs9-jc14.](#)

Locally

- California — _____ Mormons
- Orange County — 73,000 Mormons (*2.3% of county’s population*)
 - LDS is the 4th largest individual religious body in Orange County (*only trailing Catholic, non-denominational, and SBC churches*)
 - Roughly a 50% increase in membership since 2000
 - 1 out of every 44 people was counted as an LDS adherent in the 2020 census
 - [Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies, 2020 U.S. Religion Census, accessed through ARDA.](#)

The Purpose

2 Corinthians 5:20

- Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Romans 1:16

- For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

1 Peter 3:15

- but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

Jude 3

- Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

THE GOAL:

- #1 — To Understand Key Mormon Doctrine from Primary Sources
- #2 — To Respond to Misunderstood + Misused Verses Used to Support False Teaching
- #3 — To Clearly Articulate Biblical Truth on Essential Topics

Things to Say to a Mormon on 5 Topics

- 1. _____ — How Do We Get to Be With God?
- 2. _____ — Who is God and Who are We?
- 3. _____ — Where Do We Find Divine Revelation?
- 4. _____ — What is the True Church?
- 5. _____ — What Comes Next?

What this Training is Not:

- Not... Saying all Mormons Believe Each Point
 - Is the mainline belief as found in Mormon teaching
 - *(there are doctrinal Mormons, spiritual Mormons, and social Mormons)*
- Not...About Ridiculing Mormons and Just Proving Them Wrong
 - It's about presenting the good news of the gospel and biblical christianity
 - *(Throughout this training, we may use 'Mormon' and 'LDS' for clarity, while recognizing that the Church currently prefers the term 'Latter-day Saint.)*

Helpful Resources

- **Primary** — The 10 Most Important Things You Can Say to a Mormon by Ron Rhodes
- **Simpler** — Witness to Mormons in Love by Daniel Thompson
- **Doctrinal** — The Kingdom of the Cults by Walter Martin
- **Evangelistic** — Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons by Mark Cares

EVANGELISM TRAINING: Responding to Mormonism P.1

5 Things to Say to a Mormon — Adapted from Ron Rhodes

1. _____

Defining Terms (*Same Words, Different Definitions*)

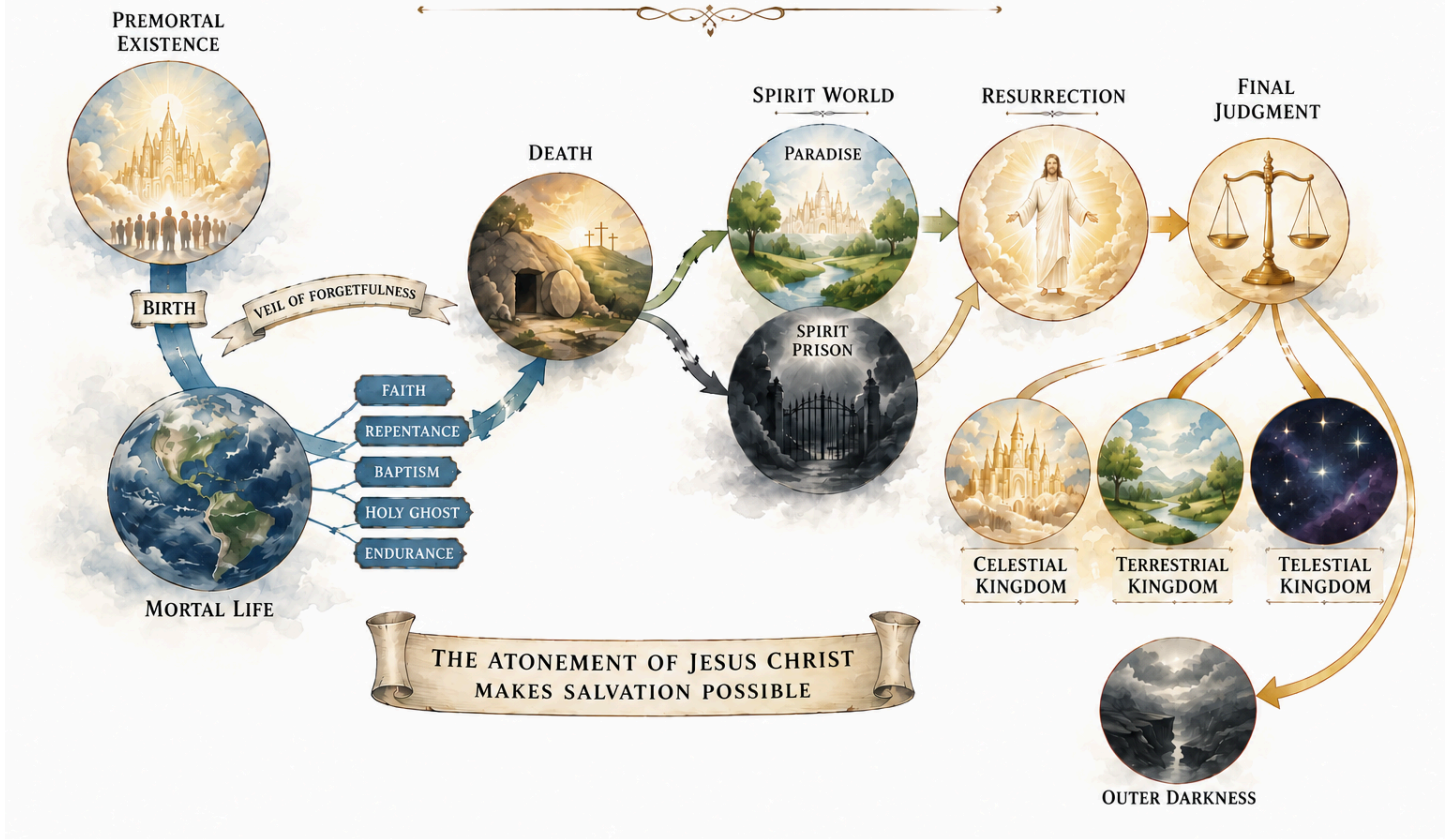
Term	Mormon Meaning	Christian Meaning
Salvation	<i>General salvation</i> = universal resurrection through Christ; <i>Individual salvation</i> = exaltation	Deliverance from the guilt, penalty, and power of sin through Christ
Grace	God's enabling power through Christ that makes salvation possible and strengthens us as we do our part	God's unmerited favor toward sinners; the sole basis of our acceptance before God
Gospel	The whole plan: faith, repentance, ordinances, covenants, endurance	The good news that Christ died for our sins and rose again
Atonement	Christ's suffering death, and resurrection makes exaltation possible (emphasis on Gethsemane)	Christ's sacrificial death for sin accomplishes reconciliation with God
Eternal Life	Exaltation — becoming glorified as gods in the highest degree of the celestial kingdom	Knowing God and being with him forever as his redeemed people
Heaven	Three kingdoms of glory: celestial, terrestrial, and telestial	Eternal life in the presence of God
Hell	Spirit prison (temporary for most); outer darkness (very few)	Eternal separation from God

Mormon Position —

POGP Moses 1:39 — For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

- Immortality = living forever with a resurrected body (universal)
 - Resurrection / General salvation
- Eternal Life = becoming like God and living eternally in his presence (conditional)
 - Exaltation / Individual salvation
 - “Salvation” is used in multiple senses
 - **This distinction is the key to the whole conversation**

THE PLAN OF SALVATION



- A. Through the _____, every person will be resurrected from physical death, regardless of belief or obedience
 - **BOM: Alma 11:44-45** — Now, this restoration shall come to all...both the wicked and the righteous....and shall be brought and be arraigned before the bar of Christ...to be judged according to their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil...I say unto you that this mortal body is raised to an immortal body...that they can die no more; their spirits uniting with their bodies, never to be divided; thus the whole becoming spiritual and immortal, that they can no more see corruption.
 - Every person receives immortality (living forever with body and spirit united)
 - **Mormon 9:13** — the death of Christ bringeth to pass the resurrection...all men shall be awakened by the power of God...redeemed and loosed from this eternal band of death, which death is a temporal death.
 - This is a universal and unconditional “salvation”, which is a free gift to everyone
 - **Salvation from Physical Death.** All people eventually die. But through the Atonement and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, all people will be resurrected—saved from physical death. Paul testified, “As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:22). In this sense, everyone is saved, regardless of choices made during this life. This is a free gift from the Savior to all human beings. (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/salvation?lang=eng#title30>)

- B. After resurrection, every person will be judged _____
_____ and receive an eternal reward
 - **Alma 41:3-4** — And it is requisite with the justice of God that men should be judged according to their works; and if their works were good in this life, and the desires of their hearts were good, that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good. 4 And if their works are evil they shall be restored unto them for evil. Therefore, all things shall be restored to their proper order, every thing to its natural frame—mortality raised to immortality, corruption to incorruption—raised to endless happiness to inherit the kingdom of God, or to endless misery to inherit the kingdom of the devil, the one on one hand, the other on the other
 - **D&C 88:22-24** — 22 For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory. 23 And he who cannot abide the law of a terrestrial kingdom cannot abide a terrestrial glory. 24 And he who cannot abide the law of a telestial kingdom cannot abide a telestial glory; therefore he is not meet for a kingdom of glory. Therefore he must abide a kingdom which is not a kingdom of glory.
 - The kingdom of glory / eternal destination a person receives (celestial, terrestrial, or telestial kingdom) corresponds to their obedience and faithfulness to God and his laws
 - **D&C 76:111** — For they shall be judged according to their works, and every man shall receive according to his own works, his own dominion, in the mansions which are prepared;
 - Nearly everyone will inherit one of the three kingdoms of glory (celestial, terrestrial, or telestial kingdom) according to their response to Christ and their faithfulness
 - **D&C 76:112** — And they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end.
 - One can receive a kingdom of glory and not be with God or Christ
 - At the time of the Resurrection, we will “be judged according to [our] works. ... We shall be brought to stand before God, knowing even as we know now, and have a bright recollection of all our guilt.” The eternal glory we receive will depend on our faithfulness. Although all people will be resurrected, only those who have come unto Christ and partaken of the fulness of His gospel will inherit exaltation in the celestial kingdom. (<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/resurrection?lang=eng#title1>)

- C. _____ is the highest state of salvation in the celestial kingdom conditional upon faith in Christ, repentance, receiving the required ordinances and covenants, keeping God's commandments, and enduring faithfully to the end
 - Saving Ordinances: Baptism, Confirmation (Gift of the Holy Spirit), Melchizedek Priesthood Ordination (for men), Temple Endowment, Eternal Marriage Sealing
 - *Children who die before age eight do not require these ordinances to enter the celestial kingdom*
 - *Those who die before having adequate opportunity to receive the gospel can do so in spirit world, and accept ordinances done by living members on their behalf*
 - **Articles of Faith 1:3-4** — 3 We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel. 4 We believe that the first principles and ordinances of the Gospel are: first, Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, Repentance; third, Baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, Laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.
 - The gospel requires faith, repentance, water baptism, and confirmation
 - **D&C 14:7** — And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God.
 - Keeping the commandments until the end is necessary for eternal life
 - **D&C 84:19-22** — And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. 20 Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. 21 And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; 22 For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.
 - Without the priesthood and its ordinances, no one can access God's presence
 - **D&C 131:1-4** — In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees; 2 And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage]; 3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it. 4 He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.
 - Eternal marriage sealing is necessary for the highest celestial glory
 - **D&C 132:20** — Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them.
 - Exaltation ultimately includes living eternally in God's presence, becoming "gods", and continuing eternally as families
 - **Exaltation.** Exaltation, or eternal life, is the highest state of happiness and glory in the celestial kingdom. Exaltation is a conditional gift. President Russell M. Nelson taught, "Those qualifying conditions include faith in the Lord, repentance, baptism, receiving the Holy Ghost, and remaining faithful to the ordinances and covenants of the temple". Exaltation means living with God forever in eternal families. It is to know God and Jesus Christ, to become like Them, and to experience the life They enjoy.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/preach-my-gospel-2023/04-chapter-3/09-chapter-3-lesson-2?lang=eng>
 - The path to exaltation does not provide assurance

- A. Our Works Cannot _____ God Requires
 - **Romans 3:20** — For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.
 - The law exposes our sin
 - **James 2:10** — For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.
 - **Romans 3:23-24** — for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,
 - Every person falls short of God's righteous standard
 - **Galatians 3:10** — For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them."
 - God's standard isn't sufficient faithfulness, it is perfect righteousness, and none of us have it
 - **Romans 10:1-3** — Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. ²For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. ³For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.
 - Paul rebukes those trying to establish a righteousness of our own before God
 - **Romans 11:6** — ⁶But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace.
 - Grace and works are mutually exclusive as grounds for salvation
- B. Christ _____ What We Could Not
 - **2 Corinthians 5:21** — For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 - The Great Exchange: Jesus bears our sin, and in him we receive the righteousness we could never produce ourselves
 - **Colossians 2:13-14** — ¹³And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.
 - Jesus pays the full penalty for our sin on the cross
 - **Philippians 3:8-9** — Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith
 - The righteousness we could not achieve is provided for us in Jesus
 - **Hebrews 10:12-14** — But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³waiting from that time until his enemies should

be made a footstool for his feet. ¹⁴For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.

- Jesus' sacrifice is sufficient and complete

- C. Eternal Life is Received _____

- **Acts 16:31** — And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."
 - "Saved" cannot merely mean universal resurrection, since the command is to believe in order to be saved
- **John 3:16** — "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- **John 5:24** — Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.
- **John 6:47** — Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.
 - Eternal life is guaranteed the moment a person believes
- **Titus 3:5-7** — ⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** — ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- **Romans 4:4-5** — ⁴Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness
- **Galatians 2:16** — ¹⁶yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.
 - Justification comes through faith, not works

- D. Good Works Are a _____

- **Ephesians 2:8-10** — ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- **James 2:17** — ¹⁷So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.
- **Titus 2:11-14** — ¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, ¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, ¹³waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.
- **John 14:15** — ¹⁵"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."
 - We are not saved by good works, we are saved for good works

Common Objections & Responses —

#1 — “ _____ ”

- James 2:17 — So also faith by itself, **if it does not have works**, is dead.
- v.26 — For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also **faith apart from works is dead**.
 - **Response:** James 2 shows how you can tell someone has true faith
 - James 2:14 — ¹⁴What good is it, my brothers, **if someone says** he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?
 - Not saying that faith plus works merit eternal life, but that genuine faith will always result in good works (Ephesians 2:8-10)
 - Works are not the cause of salvation, they are the evidence of salvation (Romans 4:2-5)
- Revelation 20:12b — And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, **according to what they had done**.
 - **Response:** Our works are the evidence of our faith, not the basis upon which a person receives eternal life
 - v.15 — And **if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life**, he was thrown into the lake of fire.
 - Works are the fruit of salvation, not the basis for it (Romans 3:20, 4:4-5)

#2 — “ _____ ”

- Matthew 7:21 — “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven**.
 - **Response:** Jesus condemns empty profession, not teaching works merit heaven
 - vv.22 — On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’
 - The condemned appeal to their works
 - vv.23 — And then will I declare to them, ‘**I never knew you**; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’
 - The fundamental problem — no relationship with Christ (John 6:40)
- Matthew 19:17 — And he said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would **enter life, keep the commandments**.”
 - **Response:** Jesus uses this statement to show that works-based pathway to God is impossible (Matthew 5:48)
 - He uses the commandments to show his idol: wealth
 - v.21 — Jesus said to him, “**If you would be perfect**, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.”
 - Salvation must be accomplished by God
 - vv.25-26 — When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astonished, saying, “Who then can be saved?” ²⁶But Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but **with God** all things are possible.”

#3 — “_____”

- John 3:5 — Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water** and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.
 - **Response:** Jesus never identifies “water” as water baptism
 - The surrounding context repeatedly describes what Jesus is talking about as “born again” (vv. 3,7) and “born of the Spirit” (vv. 6,8) = a spiritual birth
 - Water used figuratively to describe cleansing or regeneration in both OT + NT (Psalm 51:2, Ezekiel 36:25-27, John 4:10, 1 Corinthians 6:11)
 - “Water and Spirit” describe God's cleansing and regenerating work, not two separate requirements of water baptism + the Spirit.
- Acts 2:38 — And Peter said to them, “**Repent and be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins**, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 - **Response:** Water baptism is the outward demonstration of conversion, but not the means to obtain forgiveness
 - Let the narrative of Acts settle it:
 - Acts 10:43-48 — “everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins”
 - Acts 15:9-11 — “having cleansed their hearts by faith”
 - Acts 16:30-33 — “believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved”
 - Why Would Paul Not Emphasize Water Baptism? (1 Corinthians 1:17)

#4 — “_____”

- Matthew 24:13 — But the one who **endures to the end** will be saved.
 - **Response:** Perseverance characterizes those genuinely saved, it doesn't merit eternal life (John 10:27-29, 1 John 2:19)
 - Endurance is the evidence, not the means of earning or maintaining eternal life

#5 — “_____”

- 2 Nephi 25:23b — for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, **after all we can do**.
 - **Response:** Informed Mormons read this verse as “despite all we can do”
 - Mosaic law keeping is the context of this passage (not a “gotcha” verse)
 - But it does not prove Mormons believe eternal life is by grace through faith
 - Plenty of better verses for that (under exaltation section)

Take This With You —

3 Questions for Conversations:

- 1. When you talk about being 'saved,' do you mean resurrection or exaltation?
- 2. What is necessary for you to receive eternal life? Is Christ's sacrifice sufficient or are ordinances necessary?
- 3. If you were to die today, do you know for certain that you have eternal life with God? What are you trusting in for that?

3 Verses to Memorize:

- Ephesians 2:8–9 (the grounds) | John 5:24 (the certainty) | Romans 11:6 (the exclusivity)