

"Mormons Are Not Christians" Debate Cheat Sheet

Core Position (One Sentence)

Christianity is defined by Christ, not by fourth-century creeds; by every New Testament measure — belief in Jesus as Savior, love, obedience, confession — Latter-day Saints are Christians.

The Biblical Definition of "Christian"

The word appears 3 times in the NT. Every usage = follower of Christ. No creedal test.

- **Acts 11:26** — Disciples called Christians. Definition: followed Christ.
- **Acts 26:28** — Agrippa understood it meant following Christ's teachings.
- **1 Peter 4:16** — Bearing Christ's name and suffering for Him.

The apostolic confession: "Jesus is Lord" (Rom. 10:9, 1 Cor. 12:3, Phil. 2:11). Not "Jesus is homoousios with the Father."

What LDS Actually Believe About Jesus Christ

- Son of God, Only Begotten of the Father
- Creator of heaven and earth (John 1:3)
- Born of the Virgin Mary, lived sinlessly
- Suffered in Gethsemane and died on the cross for our sins
- Literally, physically rose from the dead on the third day
- The ONLY means of salvation (Mosiah 3:17, Acts 4:12)
- Will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
- The Church is named after Him

2 Nephi 25:26 — "We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ...that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins."

Quick-Fire Objection Responses

"You believe in a different Jesus."

Same Jesus of the NT: born of a virgin, worked miracles, died on the cross, rose the third day, ascended to heaven. "Different" = "your philosophical framework for His nature differs from ours." The apostles had no Nicene framework. Were they following a "different Jesus"?

"Christianity is defined by the creeds."

The apostles who walked with Christ knew nothing of Nicaea or Chalcedon. If they were Christian without the creeds, the creeds are not the definition of Christianity. Christ defines Christianity.

"You believe humans can become gods — that's heresy."

Early Church Fathers taught it explicitly:

- **Irenaeus:** "He became what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself" (*Against Heresies*, 5, preface)
- **Athanasius:** "He was made man that we might be made God" (*On the Incarnation*, 54.3)
- **Eastern Orthodoxy still teaches theosis today**
- Biblical basis: Matt. 5:48, 1 John 3:2, Rom. 8:17, John 10:34/Ps. 82:6, 2 Peter 1:4

"You don't believe in salvation by grace."

We absolutely do. "There is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah" (2 Ne. 2:8). "Since man had fallen he could not merit anything of himself" (Alma 22:14). Faith + repentance + baptism + obedience = how we ACCESS grace, not how we EARN it. Same as James 2:17-26, Phil. 2:12, Matt. 7:21.

"You have extra scriptures — that's not Christianity."

The New Testament was "extra scripture" to the Jewish canon. Early Christians didn't stop following God when they accepted new revelation. The Book of Mormon is "Another Testament of Jesus Christ." Its whole purpose is to testify of Him.

"You reject the Trinity — so you're not Christian."

Pre-Nicene Christians were subordinationist (Justin Martyr, Origen, Tertullian). Were they not Christian? See the Trinity defense document for full treatment. Our Godhead doctrine is arguably CLOSER to the earliest Christian understanding than the Nicene formulation.

The Gatekeeping History

The "not real Christians" charge has been used against:

- Early Christians (by Jews)
- Catholics (by Protestants)
- Protestants (by Catholics)
- Calvinists vs. Arminians
- Now: Latter-day Saints (by Protestants)

It's a power move, not a theological argument. The question is not "do you match our specifications?" but "do you follow Jesus Christ?"

Jesus' Own Tests for Discipleship

Scripture	Test	LDS Pass?
John 13:35	Love one another	Yes
Matt. 7:21	Do the Father's will	Yes
John 14:15	Keep His commandments	Yes
Matt. 16:16	Confess He is the Christ	Yes

Scripture	Test	LDS Pass?
John 3:16	Believe in Him	Yes
Rom. 10:9	Confess Jesus is Lord, believe in resurrection	Yes

Power Quotes for Debate

"The fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are only appendages to it." — Joseph Smith

"We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins." — 2 Nephi 25:26

"He was made man that we might be made God." — Athanasius, On the Incarnation, 54.3

Key Resources

- [FAIR: Are Mormons Christian?](#)
- [Church: Jesus Christ](#)
- Stephen Robinson, *Are Mormons Christians?*
- Robert Millet, *A Different Jesus? The Christ of the Latter-day Saints*
- Dallin H. Oaks, "The Only True God and Jesus Christ Whom He Hath Sent" (Oct 2007 GC)