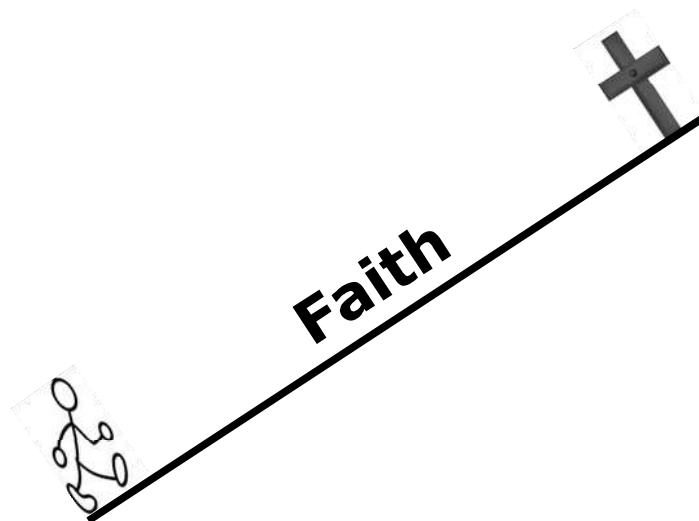


The above diagram represents ten of the most common obstacles both biblical Christians and Latter-day Saints encounter when attempting to understand, share and defend their respective faiths. Any number of these “Rocks” may come into play during the course of dialog or debate.

Note that the path to the cross for Latter-day Saints is on an incline. This is because many LDS will suffer incredible loss (e.g. family, friends, social acceptance/status, financial security, etc.) for exchanging the LDS gospel of *works* for the biblical gospel of *grace*.

The below diagram represents the ideal sharing scenario—all potential Rocks have been cleared from the road to redemption. In other words, the only thing standing between Latter-day Saints and being forgiven of ALL their sins (besides the potential losses mentioned above) is pure and simple faith in the FINISHED work of Christ on the cross and acceptance of His absolutely free gift of salvation.



Rock #6 Power Point

Priesthood Authority



...becomes a rock on the road to redemption when LDS remain unaware of the authority that we DO and DO NOT have!

The authority and thus the existence of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints literally hang upon its doctrine of the Melchizedek priesthood. The alleged logical progression is as follows:

1. Christ's true church is led by prophets and apostles.
2. Christ's prophets and apostles (as well as all worthy Mormons) are ordained to the Melchizedek priesthood authority.
3. Up to and following the death of Christ's NT apostles a great many people apostatized (i.e. "fell away") from their apostolic teachings (a.k.a. "the Great Apostasy").
4. As a result God took the Melchizedek priesthood authority from the earth and thus the succession of authoritative prophets and apostles ended and the authority to preach "the fulness [*sic*] of the gospel" was lost.
5. The Melchizedek priesthood, the authority to preach "the fulness of the gospel," and thus Christ's true church, were *restored* through the prophet Joseph Smith.

The aim of this lesson is to (1) give four reasons why *only Christ* can hold the Melchizedek priesthood, (2) demonstrate how Joseph Smith alters biblical Scripture to justify the LDS doctrine above, (3) explain from where the authority of the believers' priesthood is derived, and (4) prove why neither the laying on of hands nor baptism is NECESSARY to receive *the gift of the Holy Spirit*.

4 Strong Reasons Why Only Christ Can Hold the Melchizedek Priesthood

1. Nowhere in the Bible is anyone *explicitly* shown to have ever held the Melchizedek priesthood besides Melchizedek (Ge. 14; Ps. 110) and Christ (Heb. 7).

Warning! One must impose *unique LDS Scripture/interpretation* onto the Bible in order to show that anyone besides Melchizedek and Christ ever held the Melchizedek priesthood. (See "Satan's M.O." on pages 4.3-4.4 of Rock #4.)

Question: Why did Melchizedek hold the priesthood if ONLY Christ CAN and Christians CANNOT?

Answer: Melchizedek was "made like [*aphomoiōō*] unto the Son of God" (Heb. 7:3c KJV) and thus was a prophetic *copy* meant to point forward to the ONE TRUE reality, namely, Christ. Melchizedek was a *figurative* Christ.

Another "Copy" in Hebrews

The Copy

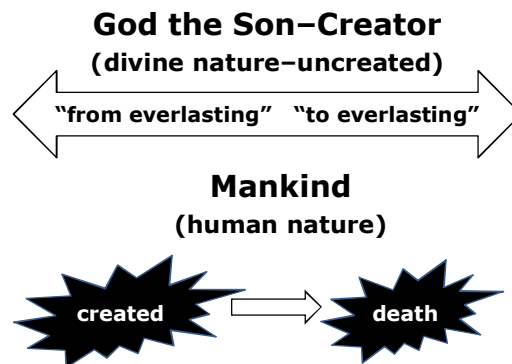
the earthly tabernacle
entered by the
OT "high priest"
(Heb. 9:7 KJV)

The One Reality

the heavenly tabernacle
entered by Christ our
"great high priest"
(Heb 4:14 KJV)

For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures ["copy"—NIV] of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: (Heb. 9:24 KJV; see also 8:5)

2. God the Son is literally eternal (i.e. uncreated); mankind is created.



Hebrews 7:3 NIV

³ Without father or mother, without genealogy, without beginning of days or end of life, like the Son of God he [Melchizedek] remains a priest forever.

*(v. 3)–One of the absolutely exclusive attributes of **divine nature** is **eternality of Person** (i.e. no beginning and no end), which Jesus is here shown to possess (see also Col. 1:17).*

Psalms 90:2 NIV

² Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.

*(v. 2)–God the Creator has **no beginning** ("from everlasting") in the same sense as He has **no ending** ("to everlasting").*

*Jesus as God the Son is also shown by the writer of Hebrews to be **the Creator** in that He "... laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of [His] hands" (Heb. 1:10 NIV; see also Jn. 1:3).*

Romans 1:22-25 NIV

²² Although they [mankind] claimed to be wise, they became fools

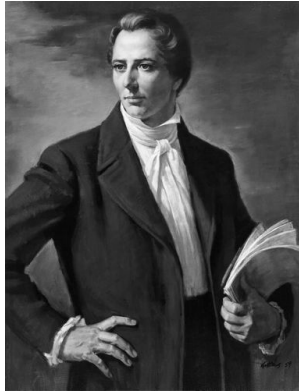
²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. ²⁴ Therefore God gave them

over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another.

²⁵ They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator--who is forever praised. Amen.

*(vv. 23, 25)–**Man is "mortal"** which requires a beginning (see Ge. 1:27); in contrast God is "the Creator" which requires no beginning as Hebrews 7:3 and Psalm 90:2 also demonstrate.*

LDS Contradictions to Hebrews 7:3 & the Bible



For this Melchizedek was ordained a priest after the order of the Son of God, **which order** was without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life. And all those who are ordained unto **this priesthood** are made like unto the Son of God, abiding a priest continually. (Hebrews 7:3 JST)

Joseph Smith's "New Translation" of the Bible
(available at www.amazon.com)

[Melchizedek] Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. (Hebrews 7:3 KJV)

- Joseph Smith adds 27 words to the King James Version of **Hebrews 7:3**, which are NOT supported in ANY of the Greek manuscripts that we possess *and from which our KJV and modern English Bibles are translated!*
- Joseph Smith makes *the Melchizedek priesthood* literally eternal ("which order ... having neither beginning of days, nor end of life") INSTEAD OF Jesus Christ thereby robbing the Son of God of this divine attribute. (See Bruce McConkie's quote below.)
- Joseph Smith makes *Christians* potential holders of the Melchizedek priesthood ("And all those who are ordained to this priesthood") thereby robbing Christ of this exclusive honor.



"Implicit in his [Jesus'] spirit birth as the Firstborn is the fact that, as with all the spirit children of the Father, he had a beginning; there was a day when he came into being as a conscious identity, as a spirit entity, as an organized intelligence."

Bruce R. McConkie, LDS Apostle/Doctrinal Scholar
The Mortal Messiah, 1978, p. 165

- Confirming core LDS doctrine, Bruce McConkie makes the LDS Jesus *a created being* thereby robbing Christ of His divine eternal nature and contradicting the biblical Jesus.

3. Because Christ conquered death there is no need for another priest in the order of Melchizedek.

Hebrews 7:23-24 NIV

²³ Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office;

²⁴ but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood.

*(v. 23)-The primary reason there was MORE THAN ONE Levitical priesthood holder was because **once a high priest died** there had to be another to take his place in office.*

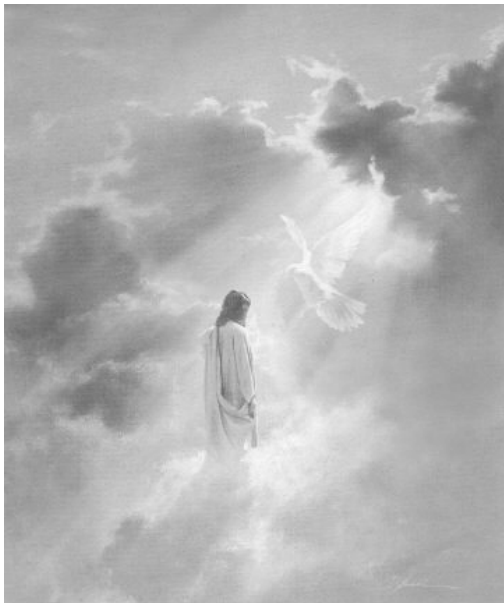
*(v. 24)-The primary reason there is ONLY ONE Melchizedek priesthood holder—namely, Jesus Christ, is because **He conquered death** (see Jn. 2:19 and Ro. 6:9); no other priest must take His place in office.*

4. Because ONLY Christ is sinless, ONLY He can hold the Melchizedek priesthood.

Hebrews 7:26 NIV

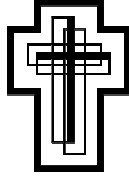
²⁶ Such a high priest meets our need--one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.

*(v. 26)-Even LDS doctrine concedes that **only Jesus** ever lived a PERFECTLY SINLESS life. This fact alone disqualifies all Christians from holding the Melchizedek priesthood because, **UNLIKE Jesus**, we all need to repent of our sins.*



In What Sense Are Christians "Priests"?

**Christians are called "priests"
(Rev. 1:5b, 6).**



To him [Jesus Christ] who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. (Rev. 1:5b, 6 NIV)

Christians offer "spiritual sacrifices" of holy living and praise to God (1 Pt. 2:1, 5; Heb. 13:15-16).



Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. ... you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 2:1, 5 NIV)

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name. And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased. (Hebrews 13:15-16 NIV)

Christians minister "to the ends of the earth" by being witnesses for Christ (Acts 1:8).

"And you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my [Jesus'] witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea ... and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8 NIV)

Where Do Christians Get Their Authority?

1. All Christians receive *authority* as “children of God” by *receiving* Jesus and *believing* in His name.
 2. *Who* Jesus is and *what* His name means has its source in God’s Word in the Bible.
 3. Therefore, God’s Word in the Bible is *the authority* for all Christians.
-

Yet to all who received him [Jesus Christ], to those who believed in his name, he [Jesus Christ] gave **the right** (*exousia*–“authority”) to become children of God. (John 1:12 NIV)

1. All Christians have “life in his [Jesus] name” by *believing* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.”
 2. *Who* the Christ, the Son of God, is and *what* these titles mean “are written” in John’s Gospel, which is God’s Word in the Bible.
 3. Therefore, God’s Word in the Bible is *the authority* for all Christians.
-

But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31 NIV)

1. All Christians are “saved” by the “gospel.”
2. “That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures” is the Gospel.
3. Therefore, “the Scriptures” in the Bible are *the authority* for all Christians (see also 2 Tim. 3:16-17.)

By this gospel you are saved ... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures. (1 Cor. 15:2a, 3b NIV)

Is the Laying On of Hands Required to Receive the Gift or Baptism of the Holy Spirit?

Acts 10:44-48 NIV

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message.

⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles.

⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said,

⁴⁷ "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."

⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

Acts 11:15-17 NIV

¹⁵ "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.

¹⁶ Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

¹⁷ So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"

*(v. 44)–Peter was preaching the NT gospel of salvation (see vv. 39-41). That **"the Holy Spirit came on"** Cornelius "while Peter was still speaking" is proof that FAITH in the gospel message is the sole NECESSARY CONDITION for salvation!*

*(v. 45)–Notice that Luke (the writer of Acts) here does not write "the GIFTS of the Holy Spirit" (e.g. prophecy, tongues, teaching, evangelism, etc.), but **"the gift of the Holy Spirit"** which is synonymous with the Spirit coming on individuals.*

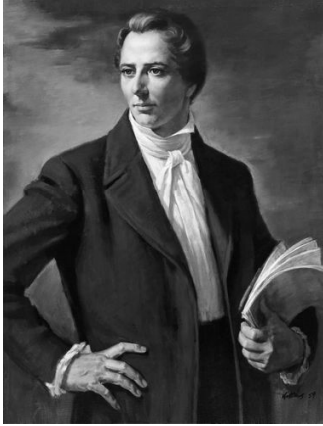
*(v. 47)–It is obvious that Cornelius received "the gift of the Holy Spirit" BEFORE being baptized and **WITHOUT the laying on of hands!***

Receiving the Spirit, the gift of the Spirit and the Spirit coming on individuals here are all synonymous (see vv. 44 and 11:15).

*(vv. 15-16)–As Peter and the apostles were **"baptized with the Holy Spirit"** (see Acts 2:1-4) so too were Cornelius and the Gentiles "as [Peter] began to speak," which again indicates this was BEFORE water baptism and **WITHOUT the laying on of hands!***

(vv. 16-17)–Being baptized with the Holy Spirit, receiving the gift of the Spirit and the Spirit coming on individuals here are all synonymous.

Joseph Smith Contradicts Acts 10:44-48



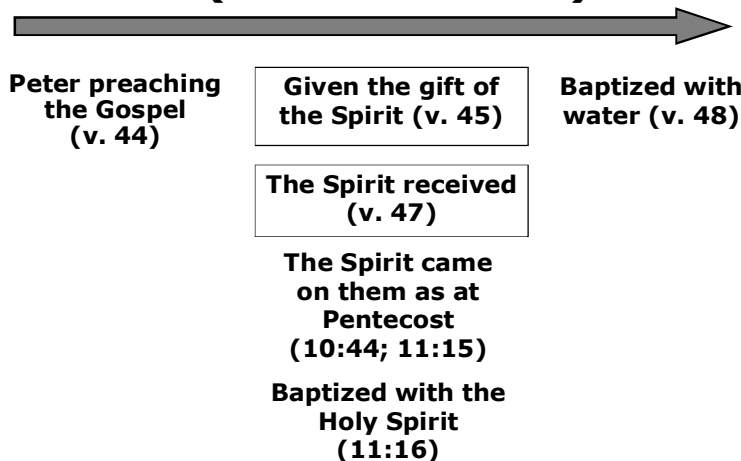
"Cornelius received the Holy Ghost before he was baptized, which was the convincing power of God unto him of the truth of the Gospel, **but he could not receive the gift of the Holy Ghost until after he was baptized**. Had he not taken this sign or ordinance upon him, the Holy Ghost which convinced him of the truth of God, would have left him. Until he obeyed these ordinances and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, according to the order of God, he could not have healed the sick or commanded an evil spirit to come out of a man, and it obey him."

Joseph Smith, 1st LDS Prophet & President
Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 1943, p. 199

- Nowhere in the NT is receiving the Holy Ghost upon placing faith in Christ identified merely

as "the convincing power of God unto ... the truth of the Gospel" to the exclusion of salvation itself. To receive the Holy Ghost is to be indwelt by Him and sealed for salvation (see Ro. 8:15-17; 1 Cor.2:12; 6:19; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:13-14; 2 Ti. 1:14).

No Laying on of Hands! (Acts 10:44-48)



- Receiving *the Holy Spirit* and receiving *the gift of the Holy Spirit* are synonymous in **Acts 10:44-48**—not separate events separated by baptism as Joseph Smith claims.