

## Introduction

On February 12, 2017, [The Faith of a Science Teacher](#) published a post entitled “[Questions about the Church and Gospel of Jesus Christ](#)”. I think many of these questions are very poignant. Having thought for many years about these same kinds of questions, I decided to offer up some responses.

The author indicates that the absence of a satisfying answer outside the general LDS framework of thought can be viewed as evidence in favor of the proposition that the Church’s truth-claims genuinely correspond to reality (i.e., they are veridical). He similarly points out that former members do the same thing with questions difficult to answer from *within* the standard LDS framework—for example, many of the questions asked by the author of [the CES Letter](#) seem not to have satisfying answers from within the orthodox LDS model and these kinds of unanswered questions weigh *against* the standard orthodox LDS model.

I agree with the author that a reasonable way to begin analyzing a model’s usefulness and correspondence with reality is to determine how well it fields answers to various questions—particularly questions with satisfying responses in competing models. In the spirit of subjecting models to analysis, I have attempted to answer the blog author’s questions, or offer counter-questions, using a [naturalist](#) or [deist](#) framework.

I hope my response may contribute to others’ efforts to form accurate models and to follow goodness and truth (see [my beliefs](#)).

[Questions from Faith of a Science Teacher are prefixed “FST” and numbered for reference.]

## Questions and Answers

**[FST-1]** *Where did the energy and matter in the universe come from?*

LDS theology does not answer this question except to say that matter always existed. Contrast LDS theological descriptions of matter with the exquisite detail science has provided about the nature of fundamental particles and the relationship between matter and energy, for instance.

**[FST-2]** *What was before the Big Bang? What caused the universe to form?*

I do not think LDS theology actually answers this question. Regardless, contrast what LDS theology says (or doesn’t say) on this question with the resolution provided by modern science on the question.

**[FST-3]** *Is everything we are—the beautiful world we live in, the loving relationships we form, and the amazing works we create—just the result of random chance?*

[Self-organization](#) and [emergence](#) seem to be properties intrinsic to chemical and biological systems.

What seems abundantly clear, however, is that humankind did *not* originate [6000 years ago](#) (even though this is taught in virtually every Church manual) somewhere close to [Missouri, USA](#) (also [currently taught in lesson manuals](#)).

This line of thinking (if we are the product of random chance then maybe we don’t really matter) is similar to the reductionistic approach to looking at humans. In its extreme form, the reductionist approach says, “because we are composed of atoms we don’t really matter and there are no real morals.” In its extreme form, the spontaneous generation approach says, “because we came from random processes and will someday die, we don’t really matter and there are no morals.” Both these approaches are highly flawed, IMHO, because they fail to acknowledge that meta-phenomena are “real” and that emergent “stuff” is as significant as fundamental “stuff” (even though emergent “stuff”, to be sure, is contingent upon fundamental “stuff”). We *are* conscious creatures and we appear to have at least some measure of genuine agency (scientists are just at the beginning of being able to

really analyze that process, so it's unclear exactly how much). If we can consider how our actions might influence the well-being of another conscious creature and alter our behavior based on that realization, then morality *also exists* in that very realization. And, given that we can directly influence the well-being of others and the fate of our planet now, we clearly are capable of creating meaning and purpose now, regardless of how we came to be or the fact that our consciousness is contingent upon the atoms of which we are composed.

**[FST-4]** *How could intelligent life spring from a non-intelligent universe? (Note: I am aware that many people answer this with the analogy that a team of monkeys writing on typewriters for an infinite amount of time will eventually recreate the works of Shakespeare. But that just opens up more questions, such as who gave them the typewriters and who identifies what Shakespeare's writings are. It seems that all intelligence must be preceded by intelligence.)*

Emergence appears to be a feature of the universe.

How do you explain the first God? Infinite Gods is not really an explanation because it only leaves us with a different question: Why would the existence of anthropomorphic Gods be a co-existent eternal feature of the universe? That seems just as miraculous and unanswerable a question as how to explain the emergence of intelligent life.

**[FST-5]** *Why have ... hundreds of societies used God or a similar Higher Power for their source of moral guidance? Or in the words of atheist historian Will Durant, why "is [there] no significant example in history, before our time, of a society successfully maintaining moral life without the aid of religion"?*

Why have all these societies' concepts of God differed so widely? And why do almost all *modern* societies have massively reduced belief in God?

If you [read the Durants](#) you will find that they are simultaneously asserting that *modern* societies are able to maintain moral life without the aid of religion. And, please note that belief in a supreme being is *not* shared by some pygmy tribes and also Jains, both of which have moral codes.

In general, religion can be viewed as a highly successful meme that [satisfies many human desires](#).

Furthermore, many of these societies practiced human sacrifice to appease their Gods. Hence, a moral system derived from belief in God is clearly subject to abuse. If you haven't already, please consider the arguments found in [Euthyphro's dilemma](#). Also, consider how atheists tend to think about morality (it's far more robust than God-centric versions of morality, IMHO):

- [How Morality Has the Objectivity that Matters—Without God](#)
- [The Case for Objective Morality](#)
- [Morality without religion](#)
- [Arguments about atheism and morality on Quora](#).
- Sam Harris discussions:
  - [What is moral progress](#)
  - [Being good and doing good](#)
  - [The virtues of cold blood](#)

**[FST-6]** *What about the Bible? How did the teachings of some wandering Israelis and a carpenter's son become the most influential book in modern civilization?*

How did the Quran become so influential? And if you accept the Quran as true, then why do you not believe that Muhammed is God's prophet and Jesus is *not* the son of God as Muslims believe?

**[FST-7]** *And that carpenter's son, Jesus of Nazareth, how was he able to teach revolutionary moral ideas that upended everything people had been taught previously?*

Have you read the writings of those who preceded Jesus? The Stoics? Socrates? Aesop's fables? The Babylonian "Counsels of Wisdom"? I agree that Jesus's teachings were, by and large, quite revolutionary, but they were definitely not without precedent in the ancient world (for instance, Aesop was a slave which makes being the son of a carpenter sound lovely, right? And the defining feature of Socrates, besides his brilliant intellect, was that he **was considered "ugly"**. How did an ugly man have so much influence on philosophy?)

**[FST-8]** *How did this humble man teach truths that had as much of an impact as the ideas of Plato and Aristotle?*

How did Plato and Aristotle have such an impact? They clearly weren't divine, yet their thoughts were so powerful that they shaped the following 2500 years of history.

**[FST-9]** *He told them to love their enemies (because all people are your neighbors) turning the other cheek instead of retaliating.*

Very similar variants of the Golden rule were at least somewhat common among ancient civilizations. For instance, the Babylonian **Counsels of Wisdom** says:

Do not return evil to the man who disputes with you; Requite with kindness your evil-doer, Maintain justice to your enemy, Smile on your adversary.

And ancient buddhist wisdom (centuries before Christ) **taught**:

Shame on him who strikes, greater shame on him who strikes back. Let us live happily, not hating those who hate us. Let us therefore overcome anger by kindness, evil by good, falsehood by truth. Do not hurt others in ways that would be hurtful to yourself.

And there are other examples of this concept in the ancient literature.

**[FST-10]** *He answered a moral dilemma by simply telling his followers to render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and render unto God that which is his, one of his many proverbs that we continue to quote today.*

I am not sure that Jesus's wisdom was far superior to the wisdom and pithiness of Aesop's fables, ancient Buddhist wisdom, the words of Confucious, or the Tao Te Ching.

Also, how do we know that Jesus's followers didn't embellish or improve upon his original sayings?

**[FST-11]** *Jesus' message was that God loves the poor and penitent not the self-righteous and wealthy; he went against social norms by inviting them to be humble like children, because the greatest man should be a servant.*

Again, similar kinds of ideas pervaded the ancient wisdom literature.

**[FST-12]** *If such a wise man were not the Son of God, why did he say he was?*

Some modern biblical scholars think the Son of God appellation **was a somewhat later addition** (i.e., Jesus may not have actually taught that himself, but it was layered on by the authors of the Gospels).

**[FST-13]** *And why do millions of people still believe him?*

Why do billions of people still follow Confucious, Mohammed and the Buddha? Does that make each of them divine?

I think that since most of the stories of Jesus and his teachings are highly altruistic they **elicit the**

**emotion of elevation in people.** This goes a long way to explaining why Jesus's teachings have been passed on and preserved in various societies (i.e., they tend to stimulate the vagus nerve and bring feelings of joy and peace and inspire altruistic attitudes and behavior).

**[FST-14]** *What about the Book of Mormon? Where did that come from? I don't believe that Joseph Smith or any of the people around him could have written it themselves.*

I agree that the exact manner of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon is a fascinating historical puzzle, and I'm not sure it will ever be solved, completely. However, many authors have created difficult to explain works in relatively short periods of time that seem extraordinary and beyond the author's innate capability: **The Other Holy Books**. How do you explain where these books came from? Many people do not believe that mortals without divine assistance could have written them.

And, even if we concede that the BoM were a literal miracle (I don't think the evidence is strong enough to make that claim, but let's just grant it for the moment) that still would not be sufficient to convince an objective person that the book was not the work of an author from the early 1800s once you have examined all the parallels with works of its time (see point #2 of **Five Key Facts**). The *content* of the BoM is very clearly the *content* of a book written in the early 1800s (whether God inspired its creation or not). The *manner* in which it comes forth does not, to my mind, trump the strong 1800s signature that bleeds out of every page and in every doctrinal exposition.

**[FST-15]** *While I have read some possible explanations of the book's origin, none of them seem to answer the most difficult question, which Elder Tad Callister posed in a recent BYU devotional: Even if Joseph had obtained historical facts from local libraries or community conversations—for which there is no substantiating evidence—the real issue still remains: Where did he get the deep and expansive doctrine taught in the Book of Mormon—much of which is contrary to the religious beliefs of his time? For example, contemporary Christianity taught that the Fall was a negative, not a positive, step forward, as taught in the Book of Mormon (see 2 Nephi 2).*

2 Nephi 2 follows very closely **the anti-Pelagian arc of thought among Protestants of his time**. Viewing the fall in a positive light was not original to the BoM.

It's appropriate to point out that Tad Callister made other assertions about the Book of Mormon's uniqueness which are demonstrably incorrect. For instance, he claimed "2 Nephi 9 introduces for the first time the phrase 'an infinite atonement'", but **the phrase "infinite atonement" was commonplace** and discussions similar to those found in the BoM. Here are just a couple of examples (emphasis added):

The inference that you draw from my saying, that "I did not believe an infinite atonement necessary in order for God to be just in the pardon of sin," I think, wants propriety. If it be my belief that the Son of God is not the eternal infinite God, still I think you have no right to declare it from any thing that I have written to you. You say, "that in order to support" my "favourite system," I "find it *necessary*." How so? If it require an **infinite atonement** made by an infinite God to save a part of the human family is it necessary to have a finite atonement by a finite person to save the whole? (**A Correspondence, by letters, between Samuel C. Loveland, Preacher of the Doctrine of Universal Salvation, and Rev. Joseph Laberee, Pastor of the Congregational Church and Society in Jerico, Vermont. 1818. Windsor, Vermont. pg 51**)

I do not consider the necessity of an atonement as arising from the number of sins, but from the nature of them. As the same *sun* which is necessary to enlighten the present inhabitants of the earth is sufficient to enlighten many millions more; and as the same perfect *obedience* of Christ which was necessary for the justification of one sinner, is sufficient to justify the millions that are saved; so, I apprehend the same **infinite atonement** would have been necessary for the salva-

tion of one soul, consistently with justice, as for the salvation of a world. ([The Works of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, vol I. 1820. Philadelphi. pg 391](#))

**[FST-16]** *Likewise, contrary to contemporary beliefs, the Book of Mormon refers to a premortal existence in Alma 13 (see Alma 13:1–11)*

Terry Givens recently wrote a book on the topic of the premortal existence in various thought across time (*When Souls Had Wings*). He [recently commented](#):

The LDS faith is the only significant Christian denomination teaching this doctrine today. But it turns out, literally dozens—perhaps hundreds—of poets, mystics, philosophers, theologians and pastors have taught this same principle across the centuries.

And, Givens indicated that Joseph Smith was likely exposed to these ideas.

Finally, there is also the question of why the author of Alma 13 [repeatedly alludes to teachings and phrases from the New Testament](#) rather than the Old Testament.

**[FST-17]** *and to a postmortal spirit world in Alma 40 (see Alma 40:11–14). Where did Joseph Smith get these profound doctrinal truths that were in fact contrary to the prevailing doctrinal teachings of his time?*

The discussion in Alma 40 on the spirit world matches closely the discussion in Matthew Earbery's book "Of the state of the dead and of those that are to rise", including suspiciously similar phraseology:

What the future State of the Soul is after the Corporeal Dissolution; or concerning the middle **State of Souls betwixt Death and the Resurrection, as to the Degrees of Happiness and Misery**. [emphasis added]

As we have already proved from natural Reason, and from the Evidence of sacred Writ, That human Souls survive the Body; we must next examine in what State they are, and what Life they enjoy after this corporeal Separation. We must first enquire if they are invested with another Body after they have parted from this; of what Nature that Body is; or, whether they remain naked and divested of all Matter to the Resurrection. The Solution of this Question leads us directly into a Knowledge of a future State. But as the other, concerning the Degrees of Happiness and Misery, is more general and less obscure, we shall bring upon the Test into Examination, the Opinion of some \* Neotericks, who will have the Souls immediately after Death carried up into Heaven, and to the highest Glories of the Beatifick Vision; or to be depressed into the utmost Miseries of Hell: Both, I think are too much upon the Extremes. The reformed Divines, to avoid the Terrours of Purgatory, have entirely taken away the intermediate State; as we are too apt in avoiding one Folly to fall upon another. It is very well known, the Roman Purgatory is adapted to the Humours of the People and the Benefit of the Priest: But why should these Phantasms fright us away from the Search of Truth, and the Opinion of the Ancients concerning the hitherto unfulfilled **State of Misery and Happiness, before the Day of Judgement**. We shall at present defer to speak of the Miserable, and confine our selves to shew, how dissonant it is to the sacred Writings and the ancient Faith, to assert the immediate Translation from this Life to the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Beatifick Vision, before the Resurrenction and coming of CHRIST. [emphasis added]

See additional similarities with Earbery [here](#).

**[FST-18]** *Where did he get the stunning sermon on faith in Alma 32?*

It appears to mostly be an extension of the parable of the sower found in Matthew 13:

**Matthew 13:6** And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

**Alma 32:38** ... and when the heat of the sun cometh and scorcheth it, because it hath no root it withers away, and ye pluck it up and cast it out.

Perhaps a better question is, why did the author of Alma 32 frequently quote New Testament verses and phrases and not Old Testament verses and phrases? (see [book of mormon origins project on Alma 32](#))

**[FST-19]** *Or one of the greatest sermons ever recorded in all scripture on the Savior's Atonement as delivered by King Benjamin (see Mosiah 2-5)?*

Again, this sermon is rich with similarities to works of its time.

For instance, King Benjamin talks about actual blood coming from Jesus's pores, but that idea was common in Joseph's time (see, for instance, [A Selection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs. 1817. New York.](#)).

Also, the description King Benjamin gives of Christ's suffering is similar to other works from the early 1800s. [The Book of Wonders, Marvellous and True. 1813. London.](#) states:

I became flesh and blood to dwell with men; and like man I became an infant of days, to be born of the woman. Here I became in all things like man, to suffer temptations, to suffer persecution; to resemble man's weakness, by hiding myself. All this I have done, to be a judge of the infirmities of man, that I might be a judge of what man had to go through, and a clear judge of the different conduct in mankind.

I'm currently working through the claims made by Tad Callister, so I hope to include more examples in the future on this point.

**[FST-20]** *Or the allegory of the olive tree with all its complexity and doctrinal richness (see Jacob 5)? When I read that allegory, I have to map it out to follow its intricacies.*

The parable of the Olive Tree may be viewed as an amalgamation and embellishment of Romans 11 and Isaiah 5, and it still bears the imprint of that patchwork (there's a distinct shift between *olive tree* and *the whole vinyard* in Jacob 5:41), as I discuss [here](#).

**[FST-21]** *Are we supposed to believe that Joseph Smith just dictated these sermons off the top of his head with no notes whatsoever?*

How do faithful scholars reconcile the fact that there are [1769 King James Version edition translation errors](#) [pg 6] also found in the Book of Mormon? Whatever manner he used to copy those translation errors *exactly* seems like a viable candidate for how he was able to dictate other complex sections of the Book of Mormon.

**[FST-22]** *And if Joseph did make it up, what did he find in the hill by his home? Why did so many people try so hard to steal it from him? What was it that Isaac Hale, who hated Joseph, felt in a box?*

Consider some of [Dan Vogel's work on the topic](#).

**[FST-23]** *What about the Three and Eight witnesses to the plates, why did none of them ever deny that the ancient record was real?*

Consider the arguments from Chapter 3 of [For my Wife and Children](#).

**[FST-24]** *I know that many of the early church leaders left to form their own denominations, but why did some of them, like Martin Harris, come back?*

Why do people follow totalistic groups in the first place? Why did the Heavens Gate community all commit suicide? ...

Also, consider some of [these arguments](#) about their returning.

**[FST-25]** *Why did Oliver Cowdery and William McLellin claim that Joseph Smith's revelations answer questions he couldn't have known they had?*

Perhaps in a manner similar to [cold reading techniques](#).

**[FST-26]** *Then there's Solomon Chamberlain, who had a vision similar to Joseph Smith, telling him that none of the churches were true. I've seen critics who use this as evidence that Joseph borrowed his visionary story from the accounts of others. Then why did Solomon believe that the restored church was a fulfillment of his vision? Wouldn't he, more than anyone, have known if Joseph had invented or plagiarized the story?*

I can't really answer for Solomon Chamberlain, but we could ask why so many others joined similar [restorationist movements](#) (and see [here](#)). Why did people believe in [Jan Matthias and Jan Van Liden](#)?

**[FST-27]** *And what about all those who remained faithful-Hyrum Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, or Wilford Woodruff? They were closest to Joseph Smith, and they believed everything he taught, even when it wasn't easy. Why were they willing to give their lives for this cause?*

Most followers of highly charismatic leaders are willing to give their life for the cause. Consider the fate of the [Branch Davidians](#), the [Heaven's Gate group](#), and the [Peoples Temple Agricultural Project](#). Extreme devotion to a cause clearly does not make it veridical.

**[FST-28]** *Why did my own ancestors believe in this gospel? Why did William and Catharine Morgan cross the country in handcarts in the same year that over 200 pioneers died making the same journey? Why did the Van Tussenbrooks send their 11 children one or two at a time from Holland to Utah?*

It is not atypical for people to make fantastic and extreme sacrifices to join high-demand religions in a quest for meaning and purpose. Extreme sacrifice to follow a religious thought or movement is not unique to Mormonism ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#)).

**[FST-29]** *Why do I feel a connection to these people when I am doing family history and temple work? Isn't the love and connection we feel to other people a sign of a higher power? Does that really end with death?*

The oxytocin mediated emotion of [elevation](#) is an evolutionarily conserved mechanism for encouraging group behavior.

**[FST-30]** *What about the current leaders of the church? How can they bear sincere testimony that Jesus Christ directs this church?*

Why do Catholic leaders and the leaders of groups like the FLDS bear testimony that Christ directs their group?

**[FST-31]** *If the Church were man-made, they would know it. But every six months, I hear talks by men like Thomas S. Monson, Dieter F. Uchtdorf, and Jeffrey R. Holland, and I can't possibly imagine that they are trying to deceive us.*

I think the leaders are sincere in their belief and are doing their best to lead the Church.

Still, consider how leaders dance around the question of **whether they have actually seen Jesus**. And, consider how straightforward Holland is **when asked about Mitt Romney and temple oaths**.

**[FST-32]** *And if there were some sort of conspiracy, wouldn't there be a general authority who would crack at some point? From what I can tell, in the last 100 years, no general authority has left the church for any reason except personal misconduct.*

There is a huge incentive to stay in (male GAs receive a \$120,000 / yr paycheck) and there is a huge disincentive to leave (imagine the shunning a person would experience from almost everyone they knew—virtually all their friends and family). Psychologically, it's just not set up to allow someone who has achieved that level of leadership to be able to objectively re-examine their beliefs.

Still, consider the stories of **area authority Hans Mattsson** and **former Stake President Tom Phillips**.

**[FST-33]** *How is this church growing so rapidly in age of fading religiosity?*

It's **growth rate is dropping off**. And why are there *more* Seventh Day Adventists and they still experience growth rates far above the Church?

**[FST-34]** *How do young, inexperienced missionaries have so much success in changing people's lives and bringing them to a new religion?*

They are trained in a variety of very effective sales tactics focusing on **the emotion of elevation** and people are always searching for meaning and purpose and the Church offers that (even if its truth claims are not veridical).

Finally, missionaries studiously avoid all the controversial parts of Church history and Church truth--claims. Imagine a missionary discussion where the missionary related **the 1832 account of the First Vision**, discussed the translation process of the Book of Mormon **as it actually occurred**, shared their testimony of the Book of Abraham **"catalyzed" from papyri**, and shared **the complete story of polygamy** (including teenage wives, polyandry, hiding it from Emma, and **liberal denials that it was occurring**).

**[FST-35]** *Why does the Church of Jesus Christ do so much good in the world through humanitarian and education services?*

I agree that the Church and its members do a lot of good in the world. Still, as an organization, the Church **is on the stingy side of charitable contributions** compared to its income and resources.

My understanding is that, for its size, the **Seventh Day Adventists do far more for charity than Mormons**. Does that mean Ellen White is a prophet?

**[FST-36]** *Why are religious people more likely to donate to charity and give service?*

Good question. I'm not totally sure. What about these findings from recent studies:

Religious and nonreligious participants did not differ in the likelihood or quality of committed moral and immoral acts. (**Morality in everyday life. Science 2014**)

Across all countries, parents in religious households reported that their children expressed more empathy and sensitivity for justice in everyday life than non-religious parents. However, religiousness was inversely predictive of children's altruism and positively correlated with their punitive tendencies. (see **here** and **here**)

**[FST-37]** *What about my own experience? Why do I feel such power when I read the Book of Mormon, as if it were written by prophets who kept a record for future generations?*



See [Testimony, Spiritual Experiences, and Truth: A Careful Examination](#)

Also, consider [the testimony of those who read other Holy Books](#).

**[FST-38]** *Why is religious music so beautiful and inspiring?*

I don't know, but I agree that it's wonderful. Still, does religious music have a monopoly on "beautiful and inspiring"?

Also, a lot of religious music preaches doctrines that are fundamentally contrary to LDS teachings. Why doesn't the Spirit "turn off" [when false doctrine about the trinity is sung in the credo](#) of Bach's B Minor Mass, for instance?

**[FST-39]** *Why has the doctrine of grace and the Atonement given me comfort and peace, helping me feel that I can change and be forgiven of any mistake?*

The atonement is a very powerful concept.

Still, we should consider this hypothetical scenario: What if the atonement had not *actually* been performed but the gospel writers merely asserted that it was properly performed. How would you know? Is there any proof of the atonement outside of you believing in it? What if some aspect of the atonement wasn't really part of the atonement package (for instance, what if the atonement didn't really cover pain but only sin?) How would you know?

**[FST-40]** *Why does the gospel of Jesus Christ make so much sense and feel so true?*

Why does it seem silly and unbelievable to almost all outside observers? (see the section "Testimony, bias, and propaganda" [here](#))

Also, it is extremely difficult to realize you are thinking *inside* a hermetically sealed system of thought until you can look at it from the outside. [Many LDS systems of thought](#) are organized to discourage your mind from ever noticing that alternative interpretations exist.

**[FST-41]** *How have I received impressions of things that I needed to do or places I needed to go that I could not have known beforehand?*

Because minds are really amazing and are constantly doing "instinct" calculations which are not rational but subliminal.

Why does a baby chimpanzee that's never been exposed to snakes or flowers before quickly learn fear of snakes but not fear of flowers (this [source](#)).

**[FST-42]** *In fact, I have heard hundreds of people testify of experiences that cannot all be explained by coincidence or imagination.*

See [Type I and Type II miracles](#). Also, consider these [Catholic miracles](#). Do these miracles mean the Catholic church is true?

**[FST-43]** *There has to be something greater out there, and for me personally, the Church of Jesus Christ answers the questions of where we came from and why we are here far better than any other source I have found.*

Almost all models answer a few questions well. Maybe the real test of a model is how it deals with edge cases. So, how well does the LDS model deal with these questions:

- How do models of pre-mortal life deal with scenarios where two distinct twins exist and one twin subsumes the other (i.e., creating [human chimeras](#))? What happens to the spirits?
- The Old Testament demands the stoning to death of women who have committed adultery. Depending on when the adultery was discovered, some of these women were undoubtedly pre-

gant. Does God condone abortion?

- What kind of a plan does the gospel provide for those with **complete androgen insensitivity syndrome**? Biologically they talk, feel, and think almost exactly like a female. To what gender should they marry? Would they remain married to that gender in the after-life?
- Genesis and the temple ceremony suggests that it is “not good for man to be alone”. What are homosexual people really supposed to do with themselves? Is the “plan of happiness” so happy for them?
- Why do you not give other religions the same benefit of the doubt as Mormonism? If you were raised in another religion and gave that religion the same benefit of the doubt as Mormonism, could you ever leave it? If you hadn't been raised in Mormonism, would you seriously consider converting to it?

Current biological and psychological models can give a highly complete answer to each of those questions, but the Mormon model seems so much less clear and precise on these kinds of questions.

### **Conclusion**

The blog's author asked many excellent questions. I hope that some of my answers (and counter-questions) will aid those seeking truth. I wish my very best to the Morgans in their personal, religious, and professional lives.