

SYLVIA'S CORNER

MORMON LAWS OF ETERNAL PROGRESSION

Before being born on this earth, Mormons believe that they existed in a place called the Pre-Existence. They believe that they were born there with spirit bodies, not physical ones. They also believe that they were born this way by God and one of his spiritual wives. There, they believe that they waited for an opportunity to be born into this world and to receive an earthly body in order to advance to "godhood". The ones that are born here on the earth to Mormon parents are considered the most fortunate.

Once on earth, there are choices that they can make, according to Mormon doctrine. You might call these the high road, the middle road, and the low road. Each of these roads lead to a different place. The high road is the most desired, because Mormons believe that once there, they can become gods, equal to their creator. This is the road that requires all the effort. This is a road of works. Once they get to the end of this road, they believe that they will be in the Celestial Kingdom where they can create and populate worlds of their own and start the process all over again.

So the question would be, how do they get there? Well it requires a lot. First, they have to believe in the doctrine of Mormonism. Then they have to repent of their sins, be baptized into the Mormon church, and receive the Holy Ghost, (not the Christian one), by the laying on of hands. This is done by members of the Melchizedek priesthood. Then they're on their way. They attend Sacrament meetings every Sunday, which is a requirement. They attend Sunday School too, usually at a different time. The men become Aaronic priesthood holders, then Melchizedek priesthood holders and the women attend Relief Society and often teach the children.

The church requires loyalty to their doctrines, to the Prophet, to founder Joseph Smith, and to "the church" with the threat of ex-communication if this is breeched. Morality is required often, with periodic interviews by the Bishop of their Ward, or even sometimes by the Stake President. This often happens when a member is being appointed to a new position within the group. Duty to the church is expected. A member is required to tithe ten percent of their gross income to the church. They must obey the Word of Wisdom, given to Joseph Smith. This means no coffee, no tea, and no tobacco. Then if a Mormon is to become a God, they must be married in the Mormon Temple.

According to Mormons, the Celestial Kingdom is divided into three parts. The best place in that kingdom to be, they believe, is the section that you get to by participating in celestial or temple marriage, but there are two other ways to get there. If Mormons have not married, like young Mormon missionaries or single people, they can still reside in that kingdom. They just can't populate other worlds if they haven't been married in a LDS temple while here on earth. The other way would be if someone had not heard the gospel of Mormonism in this life, and they wanted to accept it in the next one. Then they would have the ability to go there if they had been baptized by proxy by someone still living on this earth.

Well, say all that didn't happen. What if someone lived a good, honorable life here, but as the Mormon's say, they were blinded by the craftiness of men. Where would they go? They would go to the Terrestrial Kingdom. Then what if they were dishonest, liars, sorcerers, adulterers, or whoremongers? These people would be directed to the lowest kingdom, the Telestial Kingdom. These people would go to hell first, pay their debt, and earn the glory of the Telestial kingdom. Even this place is a place that Mormons say that is so beautiful that

they would kill themselves to get there. And did you know that Mormon's believe that a distinct member of their godhood resides in each place, God in the Celestial, Jesus in the Terrestrial, and the Holy Ghost in the Telestial?

How did they come up with the names Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telestial, you might ask. Let's look at a couple of scriptures. Let's look at I Corinthians 15:41 first. It reads: " There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the *glory* of the terrestrial is another." Do you see any mention of the word Telestial anywhere here? In fact, do you see it anywhere in the Bible?

What is this talking about? Let's think for a moment. In Webster's Dictionary, it refers to celestial as pertaining to the sky. There it refers to terrestrial as of or representing the earth, of or pertaining to land as distinct from water or air, growing or living on the ground, earthly or worldly. Let's ask ourselves, does this not simply sound as if it is referring to God's creation? Next, let's look at the next verse, I Corinthians 15:40. Here it says, *There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory.*" Can you see that this is talking about differences in the brightness of stars and planets in the solar system? It seems clear to me. Continuing along, let's look at I Corinthians 15:46. We read, "Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." Wow! We were created naturally first, not spiritually. Imagine that!

It seems to me, and I hope to you, that the Mormon doctrine of Eternal Progression requires an endless doctrine of works. On the other hand, true Christianity only requires the acceptance of Jesus' work on the cross when he died for us therefore paying our entire sin debt in full.

With our belief, we are eternally secure. With the Mormon concept, they are always having to

strive to be perfect and to measure up. By requiring works, they are saying to their Savior; "Your coming to die for us was not sufficient. Let's see if we can help you save us."

Remember that Ephesians 2:8-9 says that, **"For by grace ye are saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

Thank you Lord that as born again Christians, we will be able to live with you eternally with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen....