

Mormonism in Western Society: Three Futures

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Let me start with an explanation of my title. It may seem odd that I would restrict my focus to “Mormonism in the West” in an era in which everything has gone global. The LDS Church is a worldwide phenomenon with a presence in more than 150 countries, and more members and more growth outside the United States than within it.

The worldwide growth of the Church points to a premise of my remarks today. While Mormonism is a truly global phenomenon, its growth is much stronger in what is now called the global South—Africa, Central and South America, and parts of Asia—than it is in the global West—Europe, North America, Australia, and other societies tied closely to Western values. Anyone who has served a recent mission in Europe knows that the Church is struggling to maintain a demographic peak that was never very high. Church membership has rarely exceeded one-tenth of 1 percent of the population of any European country; and even in the United Kingdom, where the Church has its largest concentration of European members, Mormons constitute only three-tenths of 1 percent of the population, despite a historical presence since the 1840s. (See Appendix.)

Church membership is, of course, much stronger in the United States. Mormons make up nearly 2 percent of the U.S. population, with notable concentrations in California, Utah, and other

states of the interior West.¹ Even here, however, are disquieting signs of the challenges we face. Membership growth in the United States has been flat for the last decade; independent survey evidence shows that about as many people now leave the Church each year as join it.² Furthermore, convert baptisms in the United States have been declining during that last decade, which means that most of our U.S. growth has been internal.³

Perhaps most disturbing are declining activity rates among young adults. Our Church is more successful than most at retaining teenagers, an age when many other religions tend to lose their youth. Among members your age, however—young people in their twenties and thirties—we struggle, especially with singles.⁴ The reasons for this are complex, but one likely factor is the many ways in which Western culture is growing away from LDS values and beliefs. President Monson described this distance as a “chasm.”⁵ Most of you are familiar with that divide from your own experience, and you know how deep and real it is.

How might the Church engage a society—Western society—that is becoming ever more distant from Mormon beliefs, practices, and values? How should its members engage that society individually? These are recurring theological questions for many religions, captured in the familiar injunction to be “in the world, but not of the world” (John 15:19; Rom. 12:2).⁶ Religions call upon their members to live out their beliefs in a particular place and time; this requires that religious leaders and their followers make decisions about whether and how to engage the society in which they live.⁷ One of the best-known accounts of the ways in which Christians might engage the world is H. Richard Niebuhr’s *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Row, 1951), which described five different strategies, from complete withdrawal from society at one extreme to a fully acculturated integration with society at the other.

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In this vein, I will suggest three possible ways of thinking about how Latter-day Saints and our Church might engage contemporary Western society, drawn from three recent statements by members of the Quorum of the Twelve. In October 2011, President Boyd K. Packer condemned same-sex orientation and sexual

permissiveness as sinful choices wholly within human control.⁸ In February 2011, in a lecture to the student body of the religiously conservative Chapman University in southern California, Elder Dallin H. Oaks lamented the decline of religious influence in the United States and endorsed the active defense of religious freedom and traditional values by political interfaith coalitions.⁹ And on August 9, 2010, Elder Quentin L. Cook celebrated interfaith dialogue, service, and friendship, participating with other commentators in an online blog symposium sponsored by an interreligious website.¹⁰ Each of these declarations represents a different style or mode of engaging contemporary Western society and culture: a strict or fundamentalist mode, a social conservative mode, and an assimilationist mode.

Let me emphasize that I am not trying to classify these General Authorities; rather, I am simply using their statements as exemplars or types of different modes of engaging Western society. Nor am I suggesting that these three modes are an exhaustive catalogue. For example, one might construct a social liberal mode from the Church's recent endorsement of antidiscrimination ordinances that protect the civil rights of gays and lesbians, its signing of the progressive Utah Compact on immigration reform, its green initiative for Church buildings and sites, and its deep commitment to serving the poor and rendering other humanitarian service.

But while one might imagine other modes of engagement, these three are particularly salient today. Not only has each of them been manifest in a recent statement by a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, but each of them also corresponds to scholarly analyses in the history and sociology of religion. Perhaps most important, each of them represents a plausible way in which the Church as an institution, and each of us as individual members, might approach the problem of being in, but not of, the world, and thus each one offers a different window onto a possible future for the Church and its members in the West.

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Let me start with that most difficult of terms, "fundamentalism." In contemporary American usage, "fundamentalist" is sometimes used as a synonym for "extremism." The meaning of "funda-

mentalism” that I intend, however, originated in the Protestant revivalism of the early twentieth century, when evangelicals called for a return to the “fundamentals” of reformed Christianity in response to the corruption, permissiveness, and immorality of the newly industrialized and urbanized United States.¹¹ Fundamentalist Protestantism was (and still is) characterized by resistance to modernism, scriptural literalism, insistence on absolute and unchanging truth, and nostalgia for earlier eras when Americans were thought to be more faithful to their God.¹²

The academic meaning of “fundamentalism” is now used more generally to describe religions that endorse strict and uncompromising fidelity to their authorities, doctrines, and practices, without making any compromise or concession to contemporary life. This academic meaning preserves the dual original meaning of antipathy to current values and yearning for a return to the more righteous ways of the past.¹³

The defining characteristics of this sort of fundamentalism are on full display in President Packer’s talk. The talk begins with a general rejection of contemporary values, emphasizing the “confusion,” “danger,” and “turmoil” that they cause. It contrasts worldly values with revelatory ones, declaring that the commandment to “multiply and replenish the earth” has “never been rescinded,” framing sex as “the power to create life” without mention of an independent role in expressing love and intimacy, and endorsing traditional marriage between “a man and a woman” as the foundation of society and the only legitimate place for sexual expression.

In contrast to worldly values, God’s commandments are portrayed as clear, universal, timeless, and unavoidable: “There are both moral and physical laws ‘irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world’ that cannot be changed. History demonstrates over and over that moral standards cannot be changed by battle and cannot be changed by ballot. To legalize what is basically wrong or evil will not prevent the pain and penalties that will follow as surely as the night follows the day.”¹⁴ In President Packer’s view, God’s laws and punishments precede and condemn any political settlement that does not honor them—they apply whether one accepts them or, indeed, whether one even believes in God.

President Packer's talk is classically prophetic in the Old Testament sense. It describes pornography and immorality as "plagues" that will destroy us if we do not change. It is a voice crying in the wilderness, calling the wicked to repentance, urging members and nonmembers alike to make themselves pure and to conform themselves to righteousness, the only and true way to peace and happiness.

* * *

On now to social conservatism. Some years ago, the prominent American sociologist James Davison Hunter popularized the use of "warfare" as a metaphor for American social conflict in his *Culture Wars*.¹⁵ According to Hunter, cultural conflicts stem less from religious difference than from "political and social hostility" rooted in "different systems of moral understanding."¹⁶ On one side of these conflicts he places "progressives," cultural liberals with a libertarian social agenda defined by rationalism and individual choice. The liberal instinct is to reject a constant and common American morality in favor of constant moral reinterpretations according to the varying assumptions of contemporary life.¹⁷ On the other side of the culture wars, Hunter places the "orthodox"—social conservatives who are committed to transcendent authority and unchangeable values that tell us "what is good, what is true, how we should live, and who we are."¹⁸ This contrast of "progressive" and "orthodox" across denominational lines is now a standard way of interpreting conflicts over social values.

Elder Oaks's Chapman address clearly aligns the Church with Hunter's social conservatism. It is closely reasoned and carefully supported, so I caution that I cannot capture its depth and nuance in this brief summary. The address argues that religious belief and practice are entitled to special protection in the American constitutional order because of their preeminent place in the text of the First Amendment and their special contributions to Western democracy; religious freedom "undergirds the origin and existence" of the United States, the address declares, "and is the dominating civil liberty." Consequently, it condemns the abandonment of special constitutional protection for religious liberty, which is attributed to the "ascendancy of moral relativism." It argues that these developments affect all religions that

stand for principles of traditional morality and endorses Francis Cardinal George's appeal for Catholics, Mormons, and others to stand together against the secularism of American public life. The address concludes with its own call for a "broad coalition" of religions based on the "common belief that there is a right and wrong in human behavior that has been established by a Supreme Being."

Unlike President Packer's talk, Elder Oaks's address barely mentions LDS doctrine or beliefs. Its focus is instead on the shared interest of all religions in the free exercise of beliefs and practices, whose specific content is left largely undefined. It nonetheless speaks primarily to socially conservative religions as these are defined by Hunter. Its references to the Christian origins of the United States and the historically unique place of religion in its Constitutional order resonate with the conservative Protestant contention that the United States is a Christian nation that need not apologize for its Judeo-Christian tradition. The address places "religion" apart from and in opposition to worldly values, decrying the view that "a religious message is just another message in a world full of messages," and concluding that this relativism ends in anger against religious beliefs and practices. The supporting quotations are almost entirely from Roman Catholic, Evangelical, and Mormon clerics, or from socially conservative academics. Finally, in the few places where some specific content is given to the term "religion," it is the opposition to abortion, same-sex marriage, and gay rights that is associated with socially conservative religions. The talk disclaims any partisan objective. Its argument, however, speaks primarily if not exclusively, to social conservatives.

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The third approach, "assimilation" is a familiar concept to sociologists and historians of new religious and social movements. Genuinely new movements challenge society at its deepest level.¹⁹ Think, for example, of the polygamous, economically cooperative, theocratic Mormonism that arose in the midst of Victorian capitalist democracy in late nineteenth-century America. Faced with such a challenge, society will either assimilate the new movement by eliminating its most threatening features, or destroy it.²⁰

Again, note the example of nineteenth-century Mormonism, which was ultimately forced to abandon its most distinctive characteristics of polygamy, economic experimentation, and theocracy as the price of obtaining Utah's entrance into the Union.²¹

New religious movements that are subjected to violent persecution, like nineteenth-century Mormonism, may well experience assimilation as a positive. It reduces cultural distance from the social mainstream and thereby eliminates the principal ground for persecution. If the new religion becomes wholly assimilated to mainstream culture, however, it loses its separate identity and disappears into the majoritarian mass. Mormon sociologist Armand Mauss calls this dynamic the tension between "disrepute" and "respectability."²² A new religious movement can achieve respectability while still preserving its unique identity by finding the proper balance, narrowing the cultural distance enough to achieve acceptance, but not enough to lose its distinctive characteristics. Perhaps another way of describing this kind of development is that a successful social movement assimilates to the point—but *only* to the point—where it can plausibly say that what unites it with the mainstream is more important than what sets it apart.

Elder Cook's online essay illustrates the assimilationist mode of engagement. Like Elder Oaks's address, Elder Cook's essay does not discuss LDS doctrines or beliefs. It actually begins with an endorsement of social conservatism, noting Cardinal George's forum address at Brigham Young University on February 23, 2010, and the shared moral interests of Mormons and Catholics. But this reference to social conservatism turns out to be mostly a means of pivoting toward assimilation: "Becoming partners in the defense of shared moral principles," it suggests, "starts with sincere efforts by religious faiths to understand and to learn from each other."²³

I'm not certain, actually, that mutual understanding must necessarily precede political coalitions, though it certainly doesn't hurt. Political coalitions are built on shared outcomes that obviously depend on some minimum level of understanding and respect. Even so, political coalitions can form and function without any friendship and with little respect, as the Proposition 8 episode taught us. Elder Cook's essay seems to be talking about a different kind of interfaith relationship, one that is not essentially in-

strumental or pragmatic, but one that has value in itself apart from any political goal or purpose.

For example, Elder Cook relates his wonderful experiences in accompanying leaders of other faiths on pre-dedication temple tours, observing that such exposure has helped these leaders “to know and understand us better” and, at the same time, has given him “a greater understanding and appreciation for their beliefs.” “It is heartwarming,” the essay continues, “that those of other faiths would take the time to appreciate something that is deeply personal and meaningful” to Latter-day Saints. He gives a similar account of the interaction of Latter-day Saint volunteers with a Protestant congregation in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, which ended with the declaration by the pastor that “the Mormons are now our friends.”²⁴

Elder Cook emphasizes that these relationships are not ecumenical. They are not expected to bring agreement on doctrine or theology but rather to develop “mutual respect for others’ beliefs and a desire to collaborate on important issues where we find common ground.”

It closes with this call for interfaith service: “Whether it is helping the victims of disaster through humanitarian aid, providing relief to communities in economic need, or supporting religious liberty, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its members often stand shoulder to shoulder with other faiths. The future of Mormonism in the public sphere will, in part, be a shared one as we work with other like-minded faiths to follow the gospel of Jesus Christ in reaching out to our fellow citizens.”²⁵

In short, Elder Cook suggests that the cultural distance between Mormonism and the Protestant-Catholic mainstream might be closed by avoiding doctrinal discussion and emphasizing shared Christian values of friendship, dialogue, and service to those in need.

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Fundamentalism, social conservatism, and assimilationism each represent a different mode of engaging the Western world, and thus each foreshadows a different future for Mormonism in the West. There is no question, for example, that fundamentalist engagement would clearly set Mormons apart from and against

the dominant trends of contemporary American society. Consider the repeated emphasis on Mormon doctrine in President Packer's talk; it does not acknowledge any source of truth or knowledge outside LDS scripture and revelation. It gives no quarter to moral pluralism—that is, to the possibility that the moral questions it addresses might have more than one correct answer. Nor does the talk acknowledge the claims of science. In its view, same-sex orientation is a temptation of the devil that can be overcome by spiritual obedience and priesthood power, and scientific pronouncements to the contrary are simply dismissed as wrong. The documented trends of contemporary American belief—personal choice and convenience, cafeteria-style consumerism, declining faith, reluctance about personal sacrifice, uncertainty about worship, rejection of absolute truth—none of these find any place in the rhetoric of this talk. It also brooks no compromise with secular social trends—smaller families, two-career couples, sexual permissiveness, gay rights, and multiculturalism. These are all implicitly and in some places, explicitly, condemned.

There is and has always been a market for religious fundamentalism in the United States, particularly in times of cultural change and uncertainty like the era in which fundamentalist Protestantism first emerged. President Hinckley urged us to “stand for something,”²⁶ and Mormonism in this mode will indeed make crystal clear what it stands for. But the market for fundamentalism is by now a small market, not a mass market, at least in the contemporary West. Unapologetic stands on unchangeable Mormon truths would inevitably enlarge the already considerable cultural distance between orthodox Mormonism and mainstream American society. The wilderness metaphor is instructive: The prophet is portrayed as preaching in a wilderness because hardly anyone lives in a wilderness; the few out there who heed his words are dwarfed by the many who have already left for the great and spacious buildings of the city.

With a fundamentalist mode of engagement, the Church may well maintain a strong presence in the United States, maintaining its numbers and perhaps modestly growing them. It may even maintain its membership levels in Europe, Australia, and other Western societies despite current suggestions of decline. But explosive growth like that of the past will come, if at all, from Africa,

Central and South America, and other countries of the global South—not from the West. An LDS Church marked by fundamentalist engagement with the Western world will eventually lose its identity as a vital and growing demographic force in the West; its Western members will be active, committed, doctrinally pure, socially idiosyncratic—and relatively few.

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Elder Oaks's address overlaps in many respects with President Packer's. They both, for example, defend Mormon morality, though Elder Oak's does so mostly implicitly while President Packer is explicit in that defense. Even so, the social conservatism illustrated by Elder Oaks's address suggests a very different Mormon future in the West.

Returning to Hunter, perhaps the most provocative aspect of his argument is the conclusion that the divide between social liberals and social conservatives cuts across religious and denominational lines.²⁷ Hunter argues that social and political conservatives within American religions and denominations are often socially and politically closer to each other than they are to their more liberal brothers and sisters within the faith.²⁸ Political battle lines are thus drawn on the basis of social and cultural attitudes rather than denominational doctrine or religious belief. Noting the extent to which Latter-day Saints have entered into political alliances with theologically conservative Christians in recent years,²⁹ Hunter predicts that this will be the dominant way in which all religions will relate to each other in the future.

Mormonism in its social conservative mode would be powerful—or, at least, it would have powerful friends. Mormons themselves are barely 2 percent of the U.S. population, but a Mormon alliance with Roman Catholics and conservative Protestants would approach a political majority. One can imagine that, over time, such a coalition might be sufficiently powerful to restore and to maintain the preeminent place of religion in the American constitutional order and in public life generally. It might succeed in slowing or even halting the legal tide running in favor of sexual permissiveness, abortion, gay rights, pornography, and other legally protected activities that currently challenge traditional morality and values. The benefit for Mormons, of course, would be

the reestablishment of communities that are generally more consistent with the belief and practice of Mormonism than communities built on contemporary worldly values.

The LDS Church is already widely viewed as socially conservative; although the membership of the Church currently contains substantial numbers of social liberals and moderates, they constitute a numerical minority. Were the Church to consistently and tightly bind itself to the kind of conservative interfaith alliances described in Elder Oaks's address, one might expect Western liberals and some Western moderates, both in and out of the Church, to find membership less attractive. To think about this another way, consider that polling data puts self-described "liberals" at 20 percent of the U.S. population, "moderates" at 37 percent, and "conservatives" at 42 percent.³⁰ These numbers are skewed more toward the left in Europe. These figures suggest that, while Church membership might not diminish in the West with social conservative engagement, it would likely become more socially conservative—in the long run exchanging conservatives for existing liberal and some moderate members. Missionaries would be more likely to find converts among social conservatives, while liberals and some moderates born in the Church might reduce their activity or even leave the Church altogether because of its increasingly strong social conservative identification.

One might hope that interfaith alliances defending socially conservative values would break down theological animosity, such as that commonly exhibited by some conservative Protestants who persist in treating the Church as a non-Christian cult. Personally, I am skeptical. Political alliances are marriages of convenience which often do not change the hearts and minds of those involved in them; when a political alliance becomes inconvenient, it quickly dissolves.

Take, for example, Proposition 8 and its aftermath. That campaign involved the Church in a successful interfaith initiative campaign to reverse the judicial legalization of same-sex marriage in California. The success of the campaign was generally attributed to the intervention of the Church, which together with its members supplied about half of the funds and the majority of the volunteer manpower deployed in support of the proposition. Although the coalition included large numbers of Evangelical and

conservative Protestant Churches and organizations, there seems to have been no softening of the long-standing theological antipathy of such Protestants toward Mormonism. As you know, in the aftermath of the campaign, some LDS buildings were vandalized, some Church members were pressured economically at the cost of their jobs or businesses, and the Church and its members were generally subject to strident demonstrations and criticism. Despite all we had done for the pro-8 coalition, no Evangelical or conservative Protestant leader of note came to our defense, though many Catholic leaders did.³¹ Conservative Protestant leaders continue to reject the Church's claims to be Christian, and recent polls continue to show that conservative Protestants are hardly more likely to vote for a Mormon presidential candidate now than they were in 2008 before our Proposition 8 involvement.³²

In sum, social conservative engagement may lead to a more powerful Church, but one with more conservative members that is still no closer to the American theological mainstream.

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Elder Cook's essay shows that assimilationism is yet another mode of engaging the West that leads to a different future than social conservatism or fundamentalism.

This kind of engagement is evident as much from the venue in which Elder Cook's appears as from the substance of what it says. The essay is among twenty linked in alphabetical order to an online symposium sponsored by patheos.com, an interreligious, non-LDS website that describes itself as offering "balanced views of religion and spirituality."³³ The particular authors in this symposium are from diverse backgrounds that diverge from those of Elder Cook and other LDS General Authorities. Many are academics, a third are women (including feminists), a few are not LDS, and some of the LDS authors appear less than conventionally orthodox. Unlike President Packer's general conference talk and Elder Oaks's address to the Chapman student body, which were delivered in venues that underscored their authority, Elder Cook's essay literally appears as just one view among many.

One sees the assimilationist mode also in the substance of the essay, and not just in its presentation. There is a softness in the

rhetoric that blurs the hard lines of dogma and exclusivity drawn by fundamentalism and, at the same time, opens itself to social liberals and moderates as well as conservatives. The essay advocates mostly charity and friendship—charity in our dialogue with others, in our views of their beliefs and practices, and in our service to others, and focuses on the sincere and mutual friendship that this charity might generate. These are values shared by all Christians; indeed, they transcend Christianity to all of humankind, believers and unbelievers alike.

An assimilationist future, then, might be one in which the Church experiences the most growth, or the least contraction, in Western society. It would close the cultural gap between Mormonism and the American religious mainstream by deemphasizing both doctrinal and social differences in favor of values widely shared among all religions and people. One might also look for more diversity and even idiosyncrasy among “active” Mormons, as friendship displaces doctrinal orthodoxy or positions on social issues as a mode of living the gospel. An assimilationist Mormonism would be more open to difference, warm to strangers, and anxious to serve the poor both in and out of the Church in body and in spirit.

Assimilationist Mormonism, however, could also be less distinctive, if not wholly indistinct, in Western society. The challenge of assimilation is always how to join one’s movement to the mainstream without sacrificing the very differences that make the movement new and different. If Mormon doctrine softens and Mormonism becomes more accepting of everyone on the doctrinal or social-political spectrum, then why become a Mormon? Although openness might seem to represent the greatest potential for missionary converts, it would actually undermine the conversion imperative if taken too far. The result then could be a Mormon Church that everyone likes and admires but that no one feels the personal need to join.

Being a Mormon involves many commitments, of which one of the most important is respecting the order of the Church. Discerning the Lord’s will about emphasizing fundamentals, aligning with like-minded faiths, and assimilating to the mainstream will be challenging. The manner in which the institutional Church engages Western society in the years ahead is in the hands

of the Prophet, the First Presidency, and the Twelve, all of whom are entitled to receive revelation for the Church.

The manner in which each of you engages the West as an individual, however, is in your own hands. All of us should think regularly and seriously about what the gospel requires of us in our relationships with others in United States and the rest of the Western world. Many of us will feel a greater attraction to one mode of engagement than the others, and different people will make different choices. Though each of us can decide this for ourselves, none of us can speak for the Church, so we should respect the choices of others, remembering that all of these modes are authentically Mormon.

I am not a prophet, and I do not know the future of our Church. So I will leave you with some things that I do know. My great-grandparents were among the first converts to the Church in Nova Scotia, Canada, in the early twentieth century; and a portion of their family remained committed to the Church through the decades despite the absence of Church organization and other members for fellowship and support. My mother was part of that faithful remnant. She converted my Lutheran father, and they were sealed in the temple, so I was blessed to grow up in the covenant even though we lived in areas without a strong Church presence. I think often of what I owe to the early pioneers whose sacrifice and vision made possible the place where I'm grateful to work; but I have always in mind my family, whose faithfulness in the face of different but still difficult trials, made me into the kind of person who could work there.

I have felt the peace promised by the Savior as I have tried to live His gospel. I am blessed with a wife and children who love me more than I deserve. I know the hope that, when we call upon God in our desperate moments, He hears us. As I stood during the priesthood session in April general conference to sing "Redeemer of Israel" with hundreds of thousands of men all over the world, I felt blessed to be part of this great work.

Whatever future unfolds for our Church, these are the truths that will endure for me.

**Appendix:
LDS Membership in Europe**

NOTE: *Frederick M. Gedicks's compilation from the 2010 CIA World Factbook (January 15, 2009), <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/> (accessed July 27, 2011) and from the Deseret News 2010 Church Almanac (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2009).*

<i>Country</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>LDS Membership</i>	<i>Stakes</i>	<i>Districts</i>	<i>Wards</i>	<i>Branches</i>	<i>Total Congregations</i>	<i>Missions</i>	<i>Temples</i>
Albania	3,659,616	1,838		1		10	10	1	
Andorra	84,525	58				1	1		
Austria	8,214,160	4,215	2		13	5	18		
Belgium	10,423,493	6,043	2		10	8	18		
Bulgaria	7,148,785	2,214		2		21	21	1	
Croatia	4,486,881	513		1		6	6	1	
Czech Republic	10,201,707	2,093		2		14	14		
Denmark	5,515,575	4,362	2		13	10	23	1	1
Estonia	1,291,170	969		1		4	4	1	
Finland	5,255,068	4,548	2	2	15	15	30		1
France	64,057,792	34,906	9	2	59	58	117	1	
Germany	82,282,988	37,539	14	3	92	83	175	2	2
Greece	10,749,943	693				5	5	4	
Greenland	57,639	23				1	1	1	
Hungary	9,880,059	4,474	1		5	14	19		
Iceland	308,910	241				2	2	1	
Ireland	4,250,163	2,799	1	1	4	9	13		
Italy	58,090,681	22,886	5	9	31	71	102	1	
Latvia	5,517,969	1,025		1		7	7	3	
Lithuania	3,345,319	847		1		5	5	1	
Luxem- bourg	497,538	290			1		1		
Malta	406,771	132				1	1		

<i>Country</i>	<i>Population</i>	<i>LDS Membership</i>	<i>Stakes</i>	<i>Districts</i>	<i>Wards</i>	<i>Branches</i>	<i>Total Congregations</i>	<i>Missions</i>	<i>Temples</i>
Moldova	4,317,483	285				2	2		
Netherlands	16,783,092	8,709	3		18	16	34		1
Norway	4,676,305	4,164	1		7	15	22	1	
Poland	38,463,689	1,552		2		12	12	1	
Portugal	10,735,765	38,188	6	4	35	40	75	2	
Romania	22,181,287	2,736		2		19	19	1	
Russia	139,390,205	19,946		13		102	102	8	
Serbia	7,344,847	277		1		3	3		
Slovakia	5,470,306	139				4	4		
Slovenia	2,003,136	380		1		4	4	1	
Spain	40,548,753	44,304	9	9	61	61	133	4	1
Sweden	9,074,055	8,966	4	1	24	18	43	1	1
Switzerland	7,623,438	7,939	5		23	16	39	2	1
Ukraine	45,415,596	10,557	1	4	8	51	59	3	1
United Kingdom	61,284,806	186,082	45		282	65	347	6	2
Total	711.040 mil	466,932	112	63	701	778	1,479	49	11

Notes

1. *Deseret News 2011 Church Almanac* (Salt Lake City: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011), 185–86.

2. See, e.g., Barry A. Kosmin et al., Graduate Center of the City University of New York, *American Religious Identification Survey* (2001), 24–25 (data showing that LDS membership growth in the U.S. was flat in 2001); Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, *Religious Identification Survey* (2008), 26 (data showing that net LDS membership in the U.S. declined slightly in 2007). See also Peggy Fletcher Stack, “LDS Church’s Worldwide Growth Slows Down; Mormon Myth: The Belief the Church Is the Fastest Growing Faith in the World Doesn’t Hold Up; Church Growth Slower than Believed,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, July 26, 2005.

3. I am unaware of official Church reports of the number of annual U.S. convert baptisms. Annual *worldwide* convert baptisms during the

last decade have fluctuated, but the trend over this period suggests, at best, no growth in the annual number:

Year	Convert Baptisms
2000	273,973
2001	292,112
2002	283,138
2003	242,923
2004	241,239
2005	243,108
2006	272,845
2007	279,218
2008	265,593
2009	280,106
2010	272,814

Statistical reports announced at April general conference for 2001 through 2011 are available at lds.org (accessed July 27, 2011). To find, enter “[year] Statistical Report” in “Search all LDS.org” site search engine. See also Roger Loomis, “Mormon Church Growth,” paper presented at 2002 meeting of the Association for the Society of Religions, Chicago, August 15–17, 2002; he concluded that the rate of LDS membership growth worldwide slowed substantially during 1983 through 2001. Paper available at <http://www.lds4u.com/growth2/Index.htm> (accessed July 27, 2011). Growth rates in the global South, however, are substantially greater than such rates in the West. Rick Phillips, *Nova Religio: The Journal of Alternative and Emergent Religions* 10, no. 1 (2006): 52, 56–57, reported substantially higher growth rates for Chile and Mexico than for Australia, Austria, and Canada. Although one cannot be sure without the actual data, it seems unlikely that the rate of growth in convert baptisms is as high in the United States as it is in Africa, Central and South America, and the other nations of the global South.

4. See Peggy Fletcher Stack, “Loss of Members Spurred LDS Singles Ward Changes,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 26, 2011, <http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/news/51700209-78/lds-single-ballard-lake.html.csp> (accessed July 25, 2011). During the recent disbanding of “singles wards” and the creation of “young single adult” stakes, Church leaders in Utah reported over the pulpit an activity rate of 29 percent among young single adults living along the Wasatch Front.

5. President Thomas S. Monson, “Priesthood Power,” April 2, 2011,

Ensign, May 2011, <http://lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/priest-hood-power?lang=eng> (accessed July 25, 2011).

6. See, e.g., Elder James A. Cullimore, "To Be in the World but Not of the World," *Ensign*, June 1974, <http://lds.org/ensign/1974/01/to-be-in-the-world-but-not-of-the-world?lang=eng> (accessed July 25, 2010).

7. Angela C. Carmella, "Theological Critique of Free Exercise Jurisprudence," *George Washington University Law Review* 60, no. 3 (1992): 782, 784–85.

8. President Boyd K. Packer, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," general conference address, October 3, 2010, edited version: <http://lds.org/general-conference/2010/10/cleansing-the-inner-vessel?lang=eng&query=Packer+cleansing+inner+vessel> (accessed March 14, 2011).

9. Elder Dallin H. Oaks, "Preserving Religious Freedom" (Chapman University, February 4, 2011), transcript, <http://newsroom.lds.org/article/elder-oaks-religious-freedom-Chapman-University> (accessed March 14, 2011).

10. Elder Quentin L. Cook, "Partnering with Our Friends from Other Faiths," in Symposium: The Future of Mormonism, <http://www.patheos.com/Topics/Future-of-World-Religions/Mormonism.html> (accessed March 14, 2011).

11. Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God* (New York: Random House, 2000), 171; Gilles Kepel, *The Revenge of God: The Resurgence of Islam, Christianity, and Judaism in the Modern World*, translated by Alan Braley (Malden, Mass.: Polity Press, 1994), 105; Bruce B. Lawrence, *Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt against the Modern Age* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989), 168–69; George Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1991), 50–57.

12. Armstrong, *The Battle for God*, 172–74; Kepel, *The Revenge of God*, 123; Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, 66–67.

13. "Fundamentalism," <http://www.oed.com> (accessed March 21, 2011).

14. Packer, "Cleansing the Inner Vessel," edited version.

15. James Davison Hunter, *Culture Wars* (New York: Basic Books, 1991).

16. *Ibid.*, 42.

17. *Ibid.*, 44–45.

18. *Ibid.*, 47.

19. Armand L. Mauss, "Assimilation and Ambivalence: The Mormon Reaction to Americanization," *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* 22, no. 1 (1989): 30, 31.

20. Ibid., 31.
21. Ibid., 33.
22. Ibid., 32.
23. Cook, "Partnering with Our Friends from Other Faiths."
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid.
26. Gordon B. Hinckley, *Standing for Something* (New York: Three Rivers, 2000).
27. Hunter, *Culture Wars*, 42–43.
28. Ibid., 47.
29. See, e.g., *ibid.*, 100, 129–30, 145, 181.
30. Gallup Poll, "In 2010, Conservatives Still Outnumber Moderates, Liberals," June 25, 2010, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/141032/2010-conservatives-outnumber-moderates-liberals.aspx> (accessed July 26, 2011). The number of conservatives relative to the other two groups is the highest since 1992; in 2008, for example, conservatives and moderates each constituted 37 percent of the population, with liberals at 22 percent.
31. I discuss these matters in depth in Frederick Mark Gedicks, "Truth and Consequences: Mitt Romney, Proposition 8, and Public Reason," *Alabama Law Review* 61 (2010): 337; <http://www.ssrn.com/id=1354175>.
32. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/148100/Hesitant-Support-Mormon-2012.aspx> (accessed July 30, 2011).
33. Cook, "Partnering with Our Friends from Other Faiths."