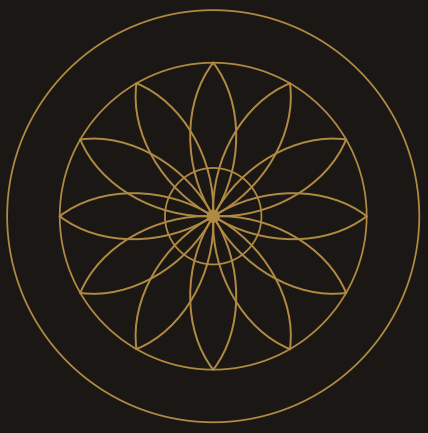


THE SACRED DIVIDE

THE FULL RECORD

Mormonism / LDS

Restorationist & Adventist family

HONOR THE FAITH · NAME THE MACHINERY

TEXT CHECKED 2026-10-03

NOBLEFATHERCREATIONS.COM/FAITH

Before you begin

This is the record of Mormonism / LDS in *The Sacred Divide*. It has 27 sections, the same 27 used for every tradition, so that any section can be set beside the same section for another. Every fact is sourced.

Before each section, a short note says what the section is built to show, so you know what you are looking at before you read the detail.

After each section, a note headed *Why this matters to you* points at the part of the section most likely to touch an ordinary reader: a member, a donor, a parent, a voter, someone thinking about leaving, or someone outside forming an opinion. It usually ends with a question. The questions are not traps. They are the ones a careful reader would ask anyway.

The hard questions in section 23 are set out one at a time: the question, why it is asked, and an example already documented in this record.

Where a note states a fact, the fact comes from this record's own tables and cited sources or, in a few places, from a well-known research finding named in the text. Corrections are logged, with their dates, in the last section, *What changed on this page*.

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How to read this

Every religion in The Sacred Divide is laid out the same way, in the same 27 sections, so that any section can be compared across religions. This file examines institutions, offices, money and power. It does not judge anyone's faith or the truth of any belief.

EVIDENCE GRADES

Each of the 30 techniques carries a grade for how it is established in this tradition.

- **CODIFIED** Written policy, published rule, contractual requirement, or a procedure the institution has confirmed in its own documents. The strongest grade and the hardest to deny.
- **DOCUMENTED** Established by court judgment, government inquiry, regulatory action, or financial filing. Not the institution's own words, but a body with subpoena power.
- **TAUGHT** Repeated leadership instruction from platform, publication, or curriculum, without a formal rule. Deniable as emphasis rather than policy.
- **CULTURAL** Community enforcement the institution neither mandates nor prevents. Real in effect, unattributable by design — the highest-deniability grade. A volume graded mostly Cultural has not been cleared of anything: it means the page names no document that makes the institution responsible. Cultural does not mean minor, and it is not a finding of absence.

- CONTESTED Occurs in some parts of the tradition and is actively opposed in others. Generalizing this grade across a whole tradition is a misuse of it.
- REFORMED Documented historically and materially changed since — policy withdrawn, practice ended, or independent oversight accepted. Recorded because omitting it would be dishonest.
- UNGRADED Present in the source material without a grade assigned yet. Read as an unverified pattern claim, not as a finding.

RECEIPTS

Bracketed labels such as [OFFICIAL POLICY] name the kind of source a claim rests on.

- **Official policy.** The institution's own written rule: handbook, canon, policy letter, catechism, trust deed, temple recommend question. The strongest evidence available, because it cannot be attributed to a rogue individual.
- **Court record.** Judgments, convictions, filings, and testimony given under oath. Adversarially tested, which is more than most religious claims about themselves have been.
- **Government inquiry.** Royal commissions, grand juries, parliamentary and state investigations with subpoena power. Where these exist they are usually the best record of what an institution did rather than said.
- **Regulatory action.** Findings and penalties from bodies like the SEC or consumer-protection regulators. Narrow in scope, unusually precise in what they establish.
- **Financial record.** Filings, audited statements, tax returns, disclosed compensation, property transactions. Frequently the only place an institution tells the truth about its priorities.

- **Leadership statement.** Recorded sermons, conference addresses, published letters. The institution in its own voice, to its own people, on the record.
- **Independent investigation.** Reports commissioned by the institution but conducted externally. Weaker than a court and far stronger than a press release — and notable when the institution publishes them in full.
- **Academic source.** Peer-reviewed history, sociology, and demography. Best for context, structure, and scale; weaker for specific institutional conduct.
- **Former member testimony.** Firsthand accounts from people who were inside. Indispensable and interested at once — graded as testimony, never presented as documentary proof.
- **Pattern observed.** A recurring configuration with no single document behind it. Labeled as an observation rather than a finding, and the weakest claim type in this codex.

METHOD

- Separation of targets. This codex analyzes institutional control patterns, never the worth of believers or the truth of beliefs. Theology is out of scope; behavior, money, and power are in scope.
- Pattern over anecdote. A tactic is attributed to a tradition's high-control expressions only where the mechanism recurs — one bad congregation proves nothing; the same architecture in a hundred proves the architecture.
- Evidence weighting. Every factual claim carries a bracketed source-type label and should carry a grade (A–D). Claims marked SOURCE NEEDED or PATTERN OBSERVED are analysis, not established fact, and must not be published as fact.
- Steelman rule. Every tactic section presents the institution's strongest defense before countering it. If the defense cannot be stated in a form its adherents would recognize, the counter is not yet earned.

- Asymmetry honesty. Similar tactic does not mean identical severity. A shunning policy that costs your entire family is not the same as a community that cools toward doubters, and the codex must never flatten that difference.
- The mirror rule. Any framework this powerful can itself be misused — to smear traditions, flatter one's own, or manufacture grievance. The self-audit and language guardrails apply to this project as much as to any institution it examines.

CITATIONS

A small raised number in the text links to the matching item in this religion's Sources, near the end. Every source was checked, and the date of the last check is shown at the top.

01 At a glance

BEFORE YOU READ

The whole page on one screen: how big Mormonism / LDS is, who sits at the top, how that person is chosen and whether anyone can remove them, where the money comes from, and what leaving costs. The disclosure scorecard underneath asks six yes-or-no questions any charity or public company would be expected to answer. Every later section expands one of these rows.

SIZE	The Church counts ~17.9 million members on its rolls (2025). Independent analyses estimate active participation at roughly a third of that, and self-identification in national surveys is far lower than official counts. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · Church statistical report / ACADEMIC SOURCE
WHO'S IN CHARGE	The President of the Church is Dallin H. Oaks, since October 2025. He succeeded automatically, by apostolic seniority (the longest-serving apostle becomes president), on the death of Russell M. Nelson in September 2025, and the queue of likely future presidents is visible decades ahead.
CHOSEN BY	Seniority — a queue, not a choice.
REMOVABLE BY	Nobody. The office ends at death.
MONEY IN ONE LINE	Tithing (10%) is linked directly to temple worthiness, which makes it salvation-gated revenue. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · temple recommend questions

LEAVING IN ONE LINE	Leaving strains multigenerational LDS families and ends temple participation in relatives' weddings. In the Mormon corridor (the heavily Latter-day Saint region centered on Utah) it carries social and professional costs, and missionary-age youth face identity-scale exit decisions.
THE UNANSWERED QUESTION	A portfolio a whistleblower valued at over a hundred billion dollars was hidden from securities filings for two decades; the penalty was five million dollars and no resignation. On what date do the members see the books?
EVIDENCE	Four of the 30 techniques are sourced to a named document (6, 13, 18 and 26). The grades are Codified 12, Taught 12, Cultural 2, Documented 2 and Reformed 2.
FAMILY	Restorationist & Adventist — mormonism, jehovahs-witnesses, seventh-day-adventism
LAST CHECKED	2026-10-03

Disclosure scorecard

ACCOUNTS	PAY	SAFEGUARDING	EXTERNAL FIRST	REMOVAL	REPLY
NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	PARTIAL

Y Yes — established from a public source · **P** Partial — true of some parts of the tradition, or true in some jurisdictions · **N** No — not established from any public source · **?** Not assessable — no institutional apex exists to assess

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The glance table's answer to who chooses the top office is "Seniority — a queue, not a choice", and to who can remove its holder, "Nobody. The office ends at death". Read that as though it described the board of a pension fund holding your savings. Would you accept the arrangement there? The scorecard finds no public evidence of accounts, leaders' pay, allegations going to police first or a written removal procedure. It does find a public safeguarding policy, and that deserves credit. Each "No" is something the institution could publish tomorrow. Ask yourself why it hasn't.

02 A day inside

BEFORE YOU READ

One ordinary day, told from inside. The person is a composite built from documented patterns, not a real individual. The point is to make the structure visible at human scale: phrases like "removal mechanism" or "giving record" are easy to read past, but a Tuesday organized around them is not.

Kimberly · A Tuesday in November · Utah County

Scriptures at 5:45 before the four kids are up, because that is when it can happen. Her testimony is not fragile and it is not borrowed. It is the load-bearing wall of her life and she has checked.

Tithing settlement (the year-end meeting at which members declare their tithing to the bishop) is coming in December. Ten percent of Brad's gross, which is $6,100 this year, which is also the transmission and the orthodontist. She will pay it, and they will find the money, and she will sit across from Bishop Anderson — who is a good man who sells insurance — and confirm that she is a full tithe payer, and he will sign the recommend (the temple recommend, the card that admits a member to the temple).

Her niece Sadie is getting married in the temple in March. Kimberly's brother Doug does not have a recommend. He will wait in the lobby during his own daughter's sealing (the temple ceremony that binds a family for eternity). Nobody in the family says anything about this and everybody thinks about it constantly.

At eleven she takes a casserole to a sister in the ward (the local congregation) who just had a baby, and stays forty minutes, and it is the best thing either of them does that week, and Kimberly wants this on the record too, because it is not decoration. It is what the Church is for and it works.

In the afternoon her son Cole, who is twelve, has an interview with the bishop. Alone. It is standard. Kimberly sits in the foyer and thinks about the questions she was asked at twelve, and about the fact that she cannot remember whether she was asked them or whether she is remembering someone else's account, and about the specific quality of not wanting to know.

At ten she is on her phone and there is an article about the Ensign Peak settlement (the SEC case against the Church's investment arm) — tens of billions of dollars, twenty years, shell companies, five million dollar

penalty. She reads it twice. She puts the phone down. She thinks about the transmission and the orthodontist and about the December meeting, and about the fact that in December nobody will ask Bishop Anderson anything, and that he could not answer it if she did, and that the only person in the entire arrangement who will be asked a question is her.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Did any moment in that day feel familiar: a cost nobody questions, a door nobody can see how to open? The section of this page that explains that moment is the one to read first. If nothing felt familiar, ask whether that's because it isn't your life, or because the patterns have become normal to you.

03 The forefront

BEFORE YOU READ

The page's thesis in one place. First, the single question the documented record could not answer. Then the widest gap between what the institution says and what the record shows, one cost of leaving set beside how it is officially denied, and the strongest objection to this whole page, answered rather than dismissed.

> You may have felt something in a testimony meeting that has never left you, and you may have a family you love organized entirely around this. Read the next part anyway, because there is one fact you were funding for sixty-four years and were not permitted to see — and a federal regulator, not an enemy of the Church, is the one who documented it.

THE UNANSWERED QUESTION

A portfolio a whistleblower valued at over a hundred billion dollars was hidden from securities filings for two decades; the penalty was five million dollars and no resignation. On what date do the members see the books?

The widest gap between word and record

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
The Church is a careful steward of sacred funds.	A federal regulator found that for over twenty years the Church's investment arm hid a securities portfolio, about $32 billion by 2018, behind thirteen shell companies; a whistleblower put the whole reserve at over $100 billion [27].	GOVERNMENT REPORT

One cost of leaving, beside its denial

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Family relationships	Yes	Family identity runs across generations, a member who leaves is excluded from relatives' temple weddings, and parents frame the departure as grief.	"Families are eternal — leaving is the member's own choice."

The strongest objection, answered

The objection. Your sources are apostates and anti-Mormon material.

What is true in it. Some critics are hostile and inaccurate, and the Church's welfare operations and lay ministry are genuine goods that critics routinely ignore.

The answer. The load-bearing evidence is not ex-member testimony. It is a Securities and Exchange Commission order, the General Handbook (the Church's official policy manual for leaders), the temple recommend questions, and the Church's own Gospel Topics essays (articles on contested history, published on the Church's website from 2013) — which

conceded material previously labeled anti-Mormon. A federal regulator is not an apostate.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Try answering the unanswered question yourself: *A portfolio a whistleblower valued at over a hundred billion dollars was hidden from securities filings for two decades; the penalty was five million dollars and no resignation. On what date do the members see the books?* If you can't, who could, and would asking them be welcome? How an institution reacts to a fair question often tells you more than the answer does.

04 What healthy looks like here

BEFORE YOU READ

What genuinely works in Mormonism / LDS, stated first and separately from any critique. That is a standing rule of this book: no tradition is reduced to its worst documented moments. Anything criticized later is measured against the best of what is described here.

> The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has ~17.9 million members on its rolls (2025). It is a 19th-century American restorationist faith (one that holds that the original church was lost and

> has been restored) with living prophets, lay clergy, temple covenants and a famously organized global structure.

Healthy practice here looks like the Church's genuine welfare and disaster-relief operations, and a lay ministry that involves members deeply. It also looks like faithful members who press for reform from inside, among them advocates of financial transparency and campaigners for changes to youth interviews, and who show that dissent can be loyal.

Some of that standard is already on the record. From 2013 the Church published the Gospel Topics essays, which acknowledged polygamy's scope, the origins of the race ban and translation methods [9]. The 1978 revelation ended the racial priesthood and temple ban [11], and in 2019 the Church reversed its 2015 policy on the children of same-sex couples (section 5). In Great Britain the Church's charity files public accounts with the Charity Commission [15]. Each is a place where the institution met the standard this page applies, and each is recorded here as credit.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

A bias check before the critique. People tend to read criticism of their own group as an attack and criticism of other groups as simply true. Social psychologists call this in-group bias; it shows up even when the groups are assigned at random (Tajfel's "minimal group" experiments, 1971). If you belong here, did this section feel fair? If you don't, did anything in it surprise you? The surprise is a rough measure of what you had assumed.

05 History

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated timeline and a few moments where the direction changed. Dates matter because they show that most rules had a beginning. A rule that began in a particular year, for a particular reason, is a rule that can be examined, and sometimes retired.

Joseph Smith founded the Church in 1830, in upstate New York, on new scripture and prophetic authority. Brigham Young's Utah settlement built a church-state, and the 20th century corporatized the institution into one of the wealthiest religious bodies per capita on earth.

Timeline

HISTORY AT A GLANCE



Numbered markers match the timeline below; spacing is proportional to the years.

1

1820–1830

Joseph Smith's visions; Book of Mormon published; Church organized 1830

New scripture is joined to living prophetic authority, a claim that makes present leadership unchallengeable.

2

1831–1844

Kirtland, Missouri (1838 executive order expelling the Saints), Nauvoo; polygamy introduced secretly; Smith killed at Carthage Jail 1844 [11]

Leaders practice a secret doctrine while publicly denying it, the founding instance of a pattern. ACADEMIC SOURCE

3

1846–1857

Brigham Young leads migration to Utah; theocratic territorial government

The church is also a state, an economy and a court system.

4

1857–1890

Federal conflict over polygamy; 1890 Manifesto ends the practice officially

Doctrine is reversed under state pressure and reframed as revelation.

OFFICIAL POLICY

5

1890–1950

Assimilation; tithing systematized; welfare program built

The institution consolidates and puts its finances under discipline.

6

1959

Church ceases publishing financial statements to members (U.S.)

Members fund an institution whose books they may no longer see.

FINANCIAL RECORD

7 1978

Revelation ends the racial priesthood and temple ban

A doctrine held for over a century is reversed, and the prior teaching is later disavowed. OFFICIAL POLICY

8 1980S–2000S

Correlation (the headquarters program that reviews and standardizes all Church teaching materials) centralizes all curriculum; excommunication of the 'September Six' (1993)

Historians and intellectuals are disciplined for their research.

INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

9 2013–2019

Gospel Topics essays acknowledge polygamy, race, and translation issues; 2015 exclusion policy on LGBTQ families, reversed 2019

Transparency arrives under internet pressure, and a major policy is reversed within four years. OFFICIAL POLICY

10 2018–PRESENT

Worthiness-interview reform campaigns; June 2018 guidelines let a youth invite a parent or other adult into the interview [25]; abuse-reporting litigation over the clergy helpline

The reform pressure comes from believing members inside the Church, and it won a partial change. OFFICIAL POLICY / COURT RECORD / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

11 2019–2023

Whistleblower alleges a $100B+ Ensign Peak reserve [27]; SEC fines Church and Ensign Peak $5M (Feb 2023), without admission, over a securities portfolio hidden behind shell companies (about $32B by 2018)

A federal regulator documents two decades of concealed filings.

GOVERNMENT REPORT · SEC order

Moments in the room

1959 — THE BOOKS CLOSE

The Church stopped publishing financial statements to its US membership. There was no vote, no announcement of principle, and no stated end date. Before that year, members could read the accounts.

Why it matters. It is the single most important date on this page. Transparency here is not something the institution never had — it is something it had and withdrew, which converts 'we have always done it this way' into a false statement.

SEPTEMBER 1993 — THE SEPTEMBER SIX

Six scholars and writers were excommunicated or disfellowshipped (placed under formal church restrictions short of excommunication) within weeks of one another, most for historical and feminist scholarship. Twenty years later the Gospel Topics essays conceded much of the history they had documented.

Why it matters. The institution punished people for saying what it would later publish itself. The essays are the receipt. Two of the six later rejoined the Church (Avraham Gileadi was

rebaptized in 1996 and Maxine Hanks in 2012) [29], but no discipline is recorded here as withdrawn on the ground that the history was true.

FEBRUARY 2023 — THE SEC ORDER

The Securities and Exchange Commission found that Ensign Peak Advisors had used thirteen shell companies over roughly two decades to obscure the size of the Church's portfolio, and that the Church was aware of and approved the arrangement. The penalty totalled $5 million.

Why it matters. The SEC's order, a settlement in which the Church and Ensign Peak neither admitted nor denied the findings, records the concealment. Note the arithmetic the members are left with: twenty years, about $32 billion, five million dollars, and no resignation.

Sources for this section: 1 2 4 9 11 12 25 27 29

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Pick one rule that shapes your week and look for it on the timeline. If it has a start date, it was decided by people at a particular moment, for reasons of that moment. Were you taught it as timeless? What would it mean for you if it turned out to be younger than your grandparents' grandparents?

06 Branches & variants

BEFORE YOU READ

Mormonism / LDS is not one bloc. This section maps the main branches and variants, so that nothing documented about one community is read as true of all of them.

The tradition includes The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which is the overwhelming majority; the Community of Christ (formerly RLDS, the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints); and fundamentalist polygamous groups (among them the FLDS, the Fundamentalist Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints) that the main church disavows.

BRANCH	SIZE AND PLACE	WHAT DIFFERS ON THIS PAGE'S QUESTIONS
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	It has 17.9 million members on its rolls (2025) and is headquartered in Salt Lake City [8]	It is governed by a First Presidency (the president and his counselors) and a Quorum of the Twelve (apostles), and tithing is tied to temple access [6] [10]
Community of Christ (formerly RLDS)	It is much smaller and is based in Independence, Missouri	It has been separate since the succession dispute after Joseph Smith's death in 1844 [11]
Fundamentalist groups (FLDS and others)	They are found in Utah, Arizona, Texas and elsewhere	They still practice polygamy, which the main church abandoned in 1890 [11]; the FLDS leader was sentenced in Texas in 2011 to life plus 20 years for child sexual assault [16]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you know one community of Mormonism / LDS, you know one community. Most bad generalizations about a religion, and most unfair defenses of it, come from treating one branch as the whole. Which branch is the one you picture when you hear the name? Is that picture yours, or one you were given by news coverage or by the community itself?

07 Structure

BEFORE YOU READ

The organizational chart: how many people and institutions there are, where authority sits, who holds the top office, and who holds what beneath it. The question to keep in mind is simple: if the person at the top got something badly wrong, what written procedure exists to correct or remove them?

Size and shape

Adherents	The Church counts ~17.9 million members on its rolls (2025). Independent analyses estimate active participation at roughly a third of that, and self-identification in national surveys is far lower than official counts. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · Church statistical report / ACADEMIC SOURCE
Regions	The largest memberships are in the United States (~6.9M at the end of 2025, concentrated in Utah, California, Idaho, Arizona and Texas [30]), Mexico, Brazil, the Philippines and Peru, and missionary work has built a large presence across the Global South.
Trend	Growth in the United States has slowed and youth retention has fallen; convert baptisms reached a record 385,490 in 2025 [8]; membership rolls include many inactive and unlocatable members, which the Church acknowledges only indirectly. **ACADEMIC SOURCE**

Participation	The rolls/activity gap is one of the largest in this codex — members are recorded from baptism and rarely removed, so official counts substantially overstate the population under institutional authority.

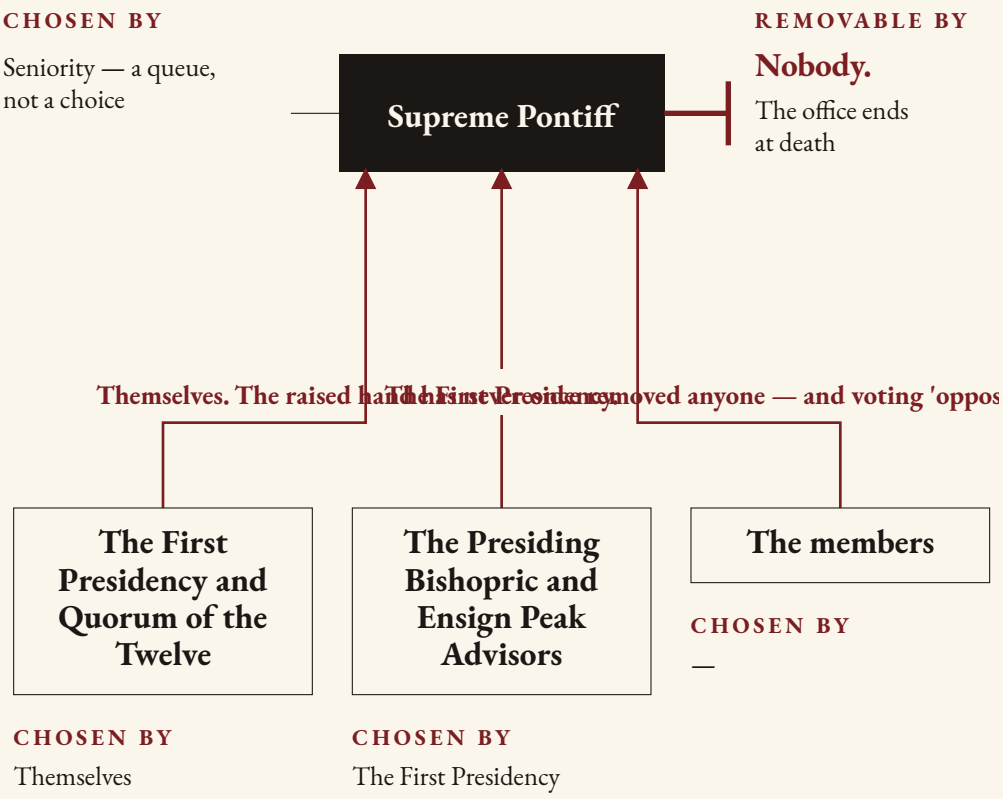
Authority

- The hierarchy is strict. Authority runs from the prophet and apostles, who serve for life and choose their own successors, to stake presidents (who lead a stake, a group of wards) and then to bishops. Worthiness interviews gate temple access, including interviews of minors, which historically included sexually explicit questions and are a point of reform pressure. Since June 2018 a youth may invite a parent or another adult to be present, an adult should remain nearby, and the questions are shared in advance [25] [26] FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT.
- Correlation gives headquarters centralized control of all curriculum and messaging. OFFICIAL POLICY

The top of the chain

> This is the only apex in this codex whose future occupants you can name today. Succession here is arithmetic, not selection.

WHERE THE ARROWS END



Each arrow points to whoever can remove the office below it. From the table that follows.

OFFICE	WHO SITS IN IT NOW	CHOSEN BY	REMOVABLE BY
President of the Church	Dallin H. Oaks has held the office since October 2025. He succeeded automatically, by apostolic seniority, on the death of Russell M. Nelson in September 2025, and the queue of likely future presidents is visible decades ahead.	Seniority — a queue, not a choice	Nobody. The office ends at death

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve	Fifteen men hold these offices for life and select their own replacements	Themselves	Themselves
The Presiding Bishopric and Ensign Peak Advisors	Presiding Bishop W. Christopher Waddell has overseen temporal affairs since November 2025. Ensign Peak manages the portfolio the SEC found concealed behind thirteen shell companies	The First Presidency	The First Presidency
The members	Members sustain (formally approve) their leaders by raised hand twice a year	—	The raised hand has never once removed anyone — and voting 'opposed' triggers a meeting with your bishop

THE TELL

You can name this church's probable president in 2045 with fair confidence today. An institution whose future leadership is arithmetic is an institution whose members' consent is ceremonial.

Who holds what

ENTITY	TYPE	HOLDER	HOLDS	WHY IT MATTERS TO YOU	RECEIPT
The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve	Governing office	Fifteen men hold it for life and choose their own successors	They control doctrine, all appointments and the entire financial apparatus	Their rules decide whether your family is sealed for eternity	OFFICIAL POLICY · General Handbook

Ensign Peak Advisors	Investment arm	Its management is appointed by the Church and named in the SEC order	A whistleblower put its reserve at over $100 billion [27]; the SEC found that a securities portfolio of about $32 billion by 2018 was concealed behind shell entities for over twenty years	Your ten percent sits in an account you were not told existed	**GOVERNMENT REPORT** · SEC administrative order, February 2023
Deseret Management Corporation	Commercial holding company	A board appointed by the Church runs it	It holds media, insurance, hospitality and other commercial operations	Your tithing capitalized these businesses	**FINANCIAL RECORD** · corporate filings
Farmland Reserve and Property Reserve	Real estate and agriculture	The Church controls these entities	Farmland Reserve says it is ranching about 365,000 acres in Nebraska, and the Church is estimated to own about 1.7 million acres of American real estate, probably an undercount	The land was bought with donations, and the worldwide church publishes no accounts of what it holds	**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT** · Flatwater Free Press, Nov 2023 [31]
City Creek Center	Commercial development	The Church's commercial arms developed it	It is a downtown mall, developed while members were asked to sacrifice	It shows what sacrifice was actually funding	**INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**

The temple recommend interview	Access control	Local bishops and stake presidents, who are unpaid volunteers, conduct it	It verifies tithing, and therefore controls access to sealing ordinances	It decides whether you may attend your own daughter's wedding	OFFICIAL POLICY · temple recommend questions
The abuse-reporting helpline	Risk management	Attorneys retained by the Church staff it	It is the route a bishop takes when a child discloses abuse	It decides who gets called before the police	COURT RECORD · litigation over helpline structure
Missionary self-funding	Labor supply	The Church's missionary department runs it	It receives eighteen months to two years of full-time unpaid labor per missionary, paid for by the missionary's family	Your savings fund your own child's unpaid work	OFFICIAL POLICY

Succession watch

OFFICE	NOW	MECHANISM	PREDICTION	WHAT WOULD FALSIFY IT
President of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints	Dallin H. Oaks has held the office since October 2025	Succession follows apostolic seniority, which is arithmetic, not selection	The successor is already knowable from the seniority order of the Quorum of the Twelve, years in advance. The codex predicts: no change to the financial disclosure position at the transfer, because the mechanism that produced the concealment is structural rather than personal.	Publication of member-facing audited accounts within twelve months of any succession would falsify the prediction.

Sources for this section: 1 2 4 5 6 7 8 25 26 27 28 30 31

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The next Church president is chosen by seniority, not by vote or discussion. The glance table calls it "a queue, not a choice," one you can see coming decades ahead, and the office ends only at death. The page finds no written way to remove a president. If you ever disagreed with one, where exactly would you take it?

08 Law & state here

BEFORE YOU READ

What states actually do. That includes how they fund, protect, regulate or enforce the tradition, and which outside body, if any, can compel an answer from it. For most readers, this is where the institution meets their own passport.

COUNTRY	WHAT THE LAW DOES	WHAT HAPPENED
United States — securities	Investment managers must disclose large equity holdings on Form 13F [1]	The SEC found the church's investment arm hid its portfolio behind 13 shell companies from 1997 to 2019; penalties of $4m and $1m (2023) [1] [2]
United States — Utah	A 2024 law protects clergy who choose to report abuse; confessions remain privileged [3]	Clergy are still not required to report what they hear in confession [3]
United States — abuse reporting	The church runs a help line for bishops staffed by its law firm [4]	An AP investigation and an Arizona lawsuit questioned whether it kept abuse from police; the church called the report a mischaracterization [4]
United States — Texas	Texas prosecuted child sexual assault after the 2008 raid on the FLDS ranch [16]	Warren Jeffs and seven other FLDS members were convicted [16]
United Kingdom	The church's British charity files public accounts [15]	Its income and spending are public; the worldwide church's are not [1] [15]

Who can compel an answer

The SEC has already demonstrated who can compel here. Beyond it, state attorneys general, the IRS and the courts could compel an answer. No internal body exists with the power — the sustaining vote has never once been a removal mechanism.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are American, the most important thing on this page came from a federal regulator, not from the Church. The SEC found that the Church's investment arm hid its portfolio behind 13 shell companies from 1997 to 2019. In Utah, a 2024 law protects clergy who choose to report abuse, but it does not require them to report what they hear in confession. If a child in your ward disclosed abuse to a bishop, do you know whether the law would require him to call the police?

09 Money

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the money comes from, how each flow is justified, how it can be used to control, and who benefits. Read it the way you would read any organization you give to: what is disclosed, what is not, and who decides.

Where it comes from

- Tithing (10%) is linked directly to temple worthiness, which makes it salvation-gated revenue. **OFFICIAL POLICY** · temple recommend questions
- Ensign Peak Advisors is the Church's investment arm. A whistleblower in 2019 estimated the reserve at over $100 billion [27]; in 2023 the SEC fined the Church and Ensign Peak $5 million for using shell LLCs to obscure the size of a portfolio that had reached about $32 billion by 2018, for over 20 years. **FINANCIAL RECORD / GOVERNMENT REPORT** · SEC administrative order, Feb 2023
- Membership statistics based on the rolls overstate activity, and the finances are not disclosed to the members who fund them. **PATTERN OBSERVED / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**

Follow the money

FLOW	STATED PURPOSE	HOW IT CONTROLS	WHO BENEFITS
Tithing (10% of income)	It is said to fund the Church's work.	It is directly linked to temple recommend worthiness, and access to the highest ordinances, including family sealings, is conditioned on payment. This is salvation-gated revenue, and it is written policy. **OFFICIAL POLICY**	The corporate church and its investment arms benefit.

Ensign Peak Advisors reserve fund	It is described as prudent reserves for future needs.	A whistleblower put the reserve at $100B+ [27]; the SEC found a portfolio of about $32 billion by 2018 concealed through shell LLCs for over 20 years until an SEC enforcement action.	The institution benefits, and members were never told **GOVERNMENT REPORT ·** SEC order, Feb 2023
Missionary self-funding	It is presented as serving a mission.	Families pay for their own children's unpaid full-time labor, so the Church's largest workforce funds itself.	The institution's growth operations benefit.
Commercial holdings (real estate, agribusiness, media, City Creek)	It is presented as stewardship of assets.	Members were asked to sacrifice for a mall development amid tithing rhetoric.	The corporate church benefits **INVESTIGATIVE REPORT**
Unpaid lay clergy and member labor	It is presented as service.	The Church saves enormous operational costs and members gain no equity, while leaders at the top do receive stipends.	The institution benefits.

WHERE THE MONEY GOES, AND WHAT IT HOLDS

Tithing (10% of income)

STATED PURPOSE
It is said to fund the Church's work.

HOW IT CONTROLS
It is directly linked to temple recommend worthiness, and access to the highest ordinances, including family sealings, is conditioned on payment. This is salvation-gated revenue, and it is written policy. OFFICIAL POLICY

→ The corporate church and its investment arms benefit.

Ensign Peak Advisors reserve fund	**STATED PURPOSE** It is described as prudent reserves for future needs. **HOW IT CONTROLS** A whistleblower put the reserve at $100B+ 27 ; the SEC found a portfolio of about $32 billion by 2018 concealed through shell LLCs for over 20 years until an SEC enforcement action.	→	The institution benefits, and members were never told · SEC order, Feb 2023
Missionary self-funding	**STATED PURPOSE** It is presented as serving a mission. **HOW IT CONTROLS** Families pay for their own children's unpaid full-time labor, so the Church's largest workforce funds itself.	→	The institution's growth operations benefit.
Commercial holdings (real estate, agribusiness, media, City Creek)	**STATED PURPOSE** It is presented as stewardship of assets. **HOW IT CONTROLS** Members were asked to sacrifice for a mall development amid tithing rhetoric.	→	The corporate church benefits INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
Unpaid lay clergy and member labor	**STATED PURPOSE** It is presented as service. **HOW IT CONTROLS** The Church saves enormous operational costs and members gain no equity, while leaders at the top do receive stipends.	→	The institution benefits.

Not to scale. The table gives one figure, the German church tax of €6.75bn in 2025; the other flows are shown without amounts.

Pipelines this tradition shares

TITHE TO RESERVE FUND

Source. The money comes from members' income, and giving it is taught as an obligation.

Path. Member → Ward → Church headquarters → Ensign Peak Advisors (reserves) and Deseret Management Corporation (commercial)

Disclosed. Only aggregate 'we use funds wisely' statements are disclosed.

Hidden. The portfolio's size, compensation and holdings are hidden.

UNPAID LABOR TO TITLED PROPERTY

Source. Volunteers supply construction, service and administration.

Path. Local congregation builds → Title held centrally

Disclosed. Not recorded on this page.

Hidden. Not recorded on this page.

MISSIONARY SELF-FUNDING

Source. The missionary's own family pays.

Path. Family savings → Central missionary department → Institutional growth operations

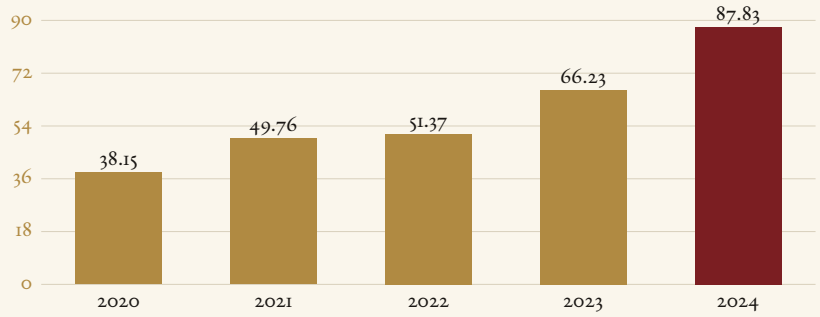
Disclosed. The monthly amount is disclosed.

Hidden. The aggregate value of the labor received is hidden.

Sources for this section: [1] [2] [10]

Money in numbers

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS (GREAT BRITAIN): INCOME



£ million, years to 31 December — The British charity only; almost all of it is donations. The worldwide church publishes no accounts. [15]

- **The reserve:** by 2018 the portfolio the SEC found hidden had grown to about **$32 billion** [1].
- **Penalties:** The penalties were $4 million for Ensign Peak and $1 million for the church (2023) [1].

- **Great Britain, 2024:** Of the £87.83m income, £84.93m came from donations, and £61,000 was spent on governance [15].
- **Tithing:** paying a full tithe is a condition of the temple recommend [10].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Tithing is ten percent, and paying it is a condition of the temple recommend. That means it decides whether you may attend your own child's sealing. The genealogy section records that the Church stopped publishing financial statements to U.S. members in 1959. A whistleblower revealed a reserve fund of more than $100 billion in 2019. You are asked for a tenth of your income. Do you know where to read the books? The page's answer is that you can't.

10 Genealogy

BEFORE YOU READ

Rules with a history. Each card asks the same three questions: what was this rule originally for, has that reason expired, and who benefits from the rule continuing anyway?

TITHING LINKED TO TEMPLE WORTHINESS

Origin. Tithing was formalized in the 19th century, and the temple recommend interview system linked payment to access as the institution consolidated. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. It served a destitute frontier community pooling resources to build settlements, irrigation and temples. Everyone could see where the money went — it was the wall going up outside.

Why that reason expired. Visibility ended in 1959, when the Church stopped publishing financial statements to U.S. members. The link between payment and access did not end. You are asked for ten percent, told your family's eternal sealing depends on it, and refused the books.

Who benefits now. The corporate church and its investment arms benefit. A whistleblower estimated the reserve at over $100 billion [27], and in 2023 the SEC fined the Church and Ensign Peak $5 million for using shell companies to obscure a portfolio of about $32 billion for over twenty years. GOVERNMENT REPORT · SEC order

WORTHINESS INTERVIEWS OF MINORS

Origin. The interviews developed through the 20th century as bishops became the local gatekeepers of temple access and standing. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. They provided pastoral oversight in small frontier wards, where the bishop was the community's known and accountable leader.

Why that reason expired. It means an untrained adult male volunteer may question a child alone about their sexual thoughts and behavior; since 2018 the child may ask for a parent to be present, but the default remains one adult and one child. The child's standing in their family's religion depending on the answers. Reform campaigns run by believing members target exactly this. No other institution that works with children would permit this structure.

Who benefits now. The institution benefits, through control of sexual conformity enforced without paid staff. The cost is borne by children, and by adults who report lasting sexual shame.

FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY

CORRELATION — TOTAL CENTRALIZATION OF CURRICULUM

Origin. Correlation was built from the 1960s–70s to standardize teaching materials worldwide. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. It was meant to give consistency across a rapidly globalizing church, and quality control over lesson content.

Why that reason expired. It produced a system in which difficult history — polygamy's scope, the origins of the race ban, translation methods — was absent from every official source until the internet made concealment impossible. The Gospel Topics essays from 2013 conceded material members had been told was anti-Mormon lies.

Who benefits now. The institution benefits, through control of its own narrative. And note the sequence: the disclosure followed the exposure. It was not led.

'POLICY, NOT DOCTRINE' REVERSIBILITY

Origin. Prophetic authority combined with continuing revelation permits reversal without error. OFFICIAL POLICY

What it was for. It allows a living church to receive new light, which is a genuine theological strength.

Why that reason expired. In practice it means positions held for over a century (the racial priesthood ban) or four years (the 2015 policy excluding children of same-sex couples from baptism) can be reversed without anyone being wrong, and without accounting to the families harmed in between.

Who benefits now. Leadership benefits, keeping its prophetic authority while changing positions. The cost was paid by Black members for 126 years and by LGBTQ families for four.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The expired-reason test works on any rule. Take one you follow or enforce, name what it was originally for, and ask whether that reason still exists. If it doesn't, and the rule survives anyway, the section's last question is the one that matters to you: who benefits from it continuing?

11 Reach

BEFORE YOU READ

How far the institution's authority extends into three private areas: what members may read and hear, how children are raised and schooled, and decisions about their own bodies.

Information

- Correlation gives headquarters control over every lesson manual, magazine, and curriculum item worldwide. OFFICIAL POLICY
- For decades, difficult history (polygamy's scope, the race ban's origins, translation methods) was absent from Church curricula; the Gospel Topics essays (2013–) acknowledged much of it only after the internet made concealment untenable. OFFICIAL POLICY / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
- Members were counseled against 'anti-Mormon' material, and historians who published on sensitive topics were excommunicated in 1993. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
- The abuse-reporting helpline routes bishops to Church attorneys, a structure litigated as prioritizing institutional liability over child protection. COURT RECORD / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Children

- Baptism at age 8 — designated the 'age of accountability' — enrolls children into covenants and tithing expectations before adolescence.
- One-on-one worthiness interviews of minors by adult male leaders, historically including sexually explicit questioning, are the sharpest child-safeguarding issue here and the target of an active reform campaign; since 2018 a youth may invite a parent or another adult to be

present [25]. FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

- Youth are expected to plan for missions from childhood; missionary service at 18–19 involves surrendered communication, assigned companions, and controlled schedules at a formative age.
- Temple garments (sacred underclothing worn by members who have made temple covenants), chastity teaching, and 'For the Strength of Youth' (the Church's published standards for teenagers) standards regulate dress and dating from early adolescence.

Bodies

- Priesthood is male-only; every governing office above the local women's organization is held by men. The leadership of the Relief Society, the women's organization, operates under male priesthood oversight. OFFICIAL POLICY
- Kate Kelly was excommunicated in 2014 for advocating women's ordination — a documented case of dissent penalized. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
- Temple ceremony language historically had women covenant differently than men; revisions in 2019 reduced but did not eliminate the asymmetry. OFFICIAL POLICY
- For LGBTQ members, the 2015 policy labeled same-sex married members apostates and barred their children from baptism; it was reversed in 2019 after documented family harm. Same-sex marriage remains grounds for loss of standing. OFFICIAL POLICY

- Chastity teaching has been linked by former members to lasting sexual shame, with worthiness interviews as the enforcement mechanism.
  FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY

Sources for this section: 4 10 12

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a parent, this is the section about your children: what they may read, what they are taught about their bodies, and who else has a say in their schooling. Ask what your child would need to do at sixteen to hear the strongest case against what they were taught. Would they be allowed? Would they know it existed?

Correlation gives headquarters control over every lesson manual, magazine, and curriculum item worldwide.



12

The 30 techniques

How the thirty techniques are established here

12	2	12	2	2
CODIFIED	DOCUMENTED	TAUGHT	CULTURAL	REFORMED

STAGE 1 Idealize	1	Love Bombing TAUGHT	2	Weaponized Generosity TAUGHT					
STAGE 2 Hook	3	Future Faking TAUGHT	4	Hoovering TAUGHT					
STAGE 3 Devalue	5	Devaluation CODIFIED	6	Gaslighting REFORMED	7	Double Bind CODIFIED			
STAGE 4 Confuse	8	Intermittent Reinforcement TAUGHT	9	Moving the Goalposts CODIFIED	10	Strategic Ambiguity TAUGHT	11	Projection CULTURAL	
	12	DARVO TAUGHT	13	Normalization / Desensitization CODIFIED					
STAGE 5 Isolate	14	Isolation CODIFIED	15	Triangulation CODIFIED					

STAGE 6 Extract	16 Flying Monkeys — CULTURAL	17 Smear Campaign — DOCUMENTED	18 Silent Treatment / Stonewalling — DOCUMENTED	19 Manufactured Consent — CODIFIED
	20 Trauma Bonding — TAUGHT	21 Learned Helplessness — TAUGHT	22 Benevolent Control — CODIFIED	23 Infantilization — CODIFIED
	24 Identity Erosion — TAUGHT	25 Spiritual Bypassing — TAUGHT	26 Financial Control — CODIFIED	
STAGE 7 Discard	27 Manufactured Crisis — TAUGHT	28 Discard — CODIFIED		
STAGE 8 Replace	29 Replacement — CODIFIED	30 Plausible Deniability — REFORMED		

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle.

BEFORE YOU READ

A fixed checklist of thirty influence and control patterns from research on coercive control and social psychology, applied here to institutions rather than to individual people. Every entry carries an evidence grade. The grade matters more than the name of the technique: Codified or Documented means there is a paper trail; Contested means the claim is disputed.

Thirty named techniques from domestic-abuse and social-psychology research, applied to institutions, in the eight stages of the cycle. Each carries an evidence grade for this tradition.

Stage 1 · Idealize

You arrive with a need and are met with more warmth than you have had in years.

Missionaries who remember your name, help you move, teach that families can be together forever, and tell you that you have a special spirit. Pray about it, feel something, get baptized — often before the tithing, the garments, the interviews, or the history.

What it asks of you: You were asked to interpret a feeling as evidence, then asked to commit before disclosure. That order was chosen.

1 · Love Bombing

Overwhelming affection on arrival to create emotional dependency before terms are revealed.

How it shows here

- Missionaries offer friendship, service, smiles, family-centered lessons, help moving furniture, meals, and repeated visits long before the convert understands temple obligations or historical controversies.
- New investigators (people taking the missionary lessons) are told they have a special spirit, that families can be together forever, and that the Church can give their life structure and purpose.
- The conversion sequence is emotionally optimized: meet kind missionaries, feel warmth, pray for a feeling, interpret the feeling as truth, get baptized quickly, then learn the harder material later.

The strongest defense. Missionaries sincerely care about people and invite them to pray for themselves.

The counter. Sincerity does not fix asymmetry. The missionaries know the destination. The investigator usually does not know the full cost: tithing, temple worthiness interviews, garments, callings (unpaid church positions assigned by leaders), historical problems, family pressure, and exit stigma. Affection before disclosure is not informed consent.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Missionary approach and the interpretation of feeling as confirmation are trained through a standardized program.

2 · Weaponized Generosity

Giving help that installs unspoken obligation.

How it shows here

- Missionaries offer free labor, moving help, meals, friendship, lessons, family-centered attention, and repeated visits before the investigator understands the full cost of membership.
- LDS wards often provide practical aid: food storage, welfare, childcare, youth programs, employment contacts, rides, and social structure.
- The debt becomes visible in expectations: baptism, tithing, callings, temple worthiness, missionary service, family conformity, garments, and obedience to leaders.
- LDS welfare can be generous, but it can also route vulnerable people through bishops, worthiness conversations, and institutional oversight.

The strongest defense. Latter-day Saints are taught to serve. Members help because they genuinely care.

The counter. Individual sincerity does not erase institutional leverage. If help comes through the same authority structure that controls temple access, family sealing narratives, tithing expectations, and worthiness interviews, then aid is not neutral. It is care administered by a system that also audits obedience.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Service to investigators and ward members is taught as a duty and delivered through a standardized missionary program; the obligation that follows is not written as a rule.

Stage 2 · Hook

You are given a future that cannot be verified, and a rope for whenever you drift toward the door.

Families together forever, the Celestial Kingdom (the highest degree of heaven in LDS teaching), eternal increase and your own worlds make up the largest promise in this codex, deliverable after death and conditional on continuous compliance. Retrieval arrives as ministering brothers and sisters (members assigned to visit a household), a bishop's call, and your mother's tears.

What it asks of you: The reward is your family, held in escrow, released on terms the institution sets and can revise.

3 · Future Faking

Promising a future that keeps you invested but never has to arrive.

How it shows here

- Mormonism future-fakes with extraordinary specificity: eternal families, celestial glory, exaltation (the highest state of salvation), becoming like God, temple blessings, priesthood promises, and eternal progression.

- The institution sells the family twice: first by threatening that it can be separated eternally, then by offering temple obedience as the way to keep it together.
- The believer must pay tithing, maintain worthiness, attend temple, accept callings, sustain leaders, obey the Word of Wisdom (the Church's health code, which forbids alcohol, tobacco, coffee and tea), and remain faithful to keep access to the promised future.
- The Celestial Kingdom becomes the ultimate deferred reward, while lesser kingdoms become spiritual demotion.
- The historical promise of becoming gods or attaining exaltation functions as an enormous cosmic incentive: ordinary obedience now, divine status later.
- When promised blessings fail — no marriage, infertility, divorce, family estrangement, depression, unanswered priesthood blessings — the answer is usually timing, worthiness, agency, or the next life.

The strongest defense. LDS doctrine gives families hope that relationships continue beyond death.

The counter. Hope becomes future faking when the institution places itself between the family and eternity. If your access to your dead parents, spouse, children, or future exaltation depends on loyalty to leaders, temple worthiness, and financial compliance, then family love has been turned into institutional leverage.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The promise of eternal families and exaltation, conditional on temple covenants and continued worthiness, is taught as the central doctrine.

4 · Hoovering

Pulling someone back after they've started to leave, through guilt, love, or fear.

How it shows here

- A less-active Mormon may receive bishop calls, ministering visits (visits by members assigned to look after one another), missionary visits, ward texts, cookies, invitations, and sudden friendliness from people who ignored them before.
- The emotional hook is family eternity: "Your eternal family is at stake."
- Parents, spouses, and ward leaders may urge temple attendance, tithing settlement, recommend renewal, sacrament meeting (the main Sunday service), or a meeting with the bishop.
- Doubt is often reframed as losing a testimony, being offended, wanting to sin, reading anti-Mormon material, or forgetting spiritual experiences.
- The person may be asked to "just come back once," "just meet with the bishop," "just read the Book of Mormon again," "just pray one more time."

The strongest defense. Latter-day Saints believe covenants and eternal families matter, so they naturally reach out.

The counter. Reaching out becomes coercive when family bonds are held hostage. If the institution teaches that your relationships after death depend on loyalty, tithing, temple worthiness, and obedience, then every friendly visit carries an invisible threat.

EVIDENCE GRADE

TAUGHT The appeal to an eternal family is taught doctrine; the visits themselves come through ministering assignments and callings.

Stage 3 · Devalue

You are taught that you are broken, that your perception is unreliable, and that both exits from the trap lead back inside.

You are never worthy enough. There is a literal interview to establish it, repeated, with a standard set by another person. Perfection is the stated goal and the shortfall is designed in.

What it asks of you: Your worthiness is assessed by a volunteer neighbor. Sit with what that means.

5 · Devaluation

Reducing your sense of worth so you become dependent on the institution for identity.

How it shows here

- Mormonism can devalue through worthiness interviews, temple recommends, callings, priesthood hierarchy, sexual purity standards, and eternal family pressure.

- The believer is repeatedly evaluated: Are you worthy? Are you obeying the Word of Wisdom? Are you paying tithing? Are you sexually clean? Are you sustaining leaders?
- Youth may be asked deeply intimate questions by adult male leaders under the banner of spiritual worthiness.
- Women may be valued through marriage, motherhood, modesty, support of priesthood authority, and family-centered obedience.
- Men may be valued through priesthood advancement, mission service, leadership, and provider roles.
- The person is not simply loved; they are assessed.

The strongest defense. Worthiness standards help members prepare for sacred covenants.

The counter. Worthiness language is devaluation with a smile. If access to family eternity, temple rituals, social standing, and spiritual identity depends on interviews and institutional approval, then the member learns to experience themselves as conditionally acceptable.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Worthiness is assessed by interview against published questions — the diagnosis is procedural, not merely homiletic.

6 · Gaslighting

Making you doubt your own experience so you trust the institution's interpretation instead.

How it shows here

- A member raises historical problems, and the answer is, "Doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith."
- Someone says worthiness interviews felt invasive, and the response is, "The bishop was helping you repent."
- A person questions temple rituals, tithing, garments, gender roles, or prophetic authority, and is told they are losing the Spirit.
- Former members are often described as offended, deceived, lazy learners, wanting to sin, or influenced by anti-Mormon material.
- The member's own research becomes suspect because approved sources are treated as spiritually safe and outside sources as dangerous.

The strongest defense. LDS leaders encourage faith during uncertainty and warn against hostile sources.

The counter. Warning against misinformation becomes gaslighting when the institution defines all threatening information as spiritually unsafe. If facts are dangerous unless filtered through loyalty, then the issue is not truth. It is control.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> REFORMED Gospel Topics essays from 2013 conceded historical material previously characterized as anti-Mormon, though only after the internet made concealment untenable. *(sourced)*

7 · Double Bind

A trap where both options lead to compliance. No exit serves you.

How it shows here

- LDS members are told to seek personal revelation — which is authentic only when it confirms the prophet. Pray and agree: testimony. Pray and disagree: deception, or you asked wrong.
- Doubters are told doubt is normal and welcome — and that voicing it publicly is apostasy-adjacent. Doubt your doubts before you doubt your faith: the inquiry is licensed only against itself.
- Temple worthiness requires honest interviews and full tithing; financial hardship is met with 'pay tithing first' — be honest about not affording it, and lose the recommend honesty was supposed to protect.

The strongest defense. Personal revelation operates within stewardship; God is a God of order, not confusion.

The counter. A private line to God that only ever transmits headquarters' signal is a speaker, not a phone. When every possible spiritual experience is pre-sorted — confirmation is real, disconfirmation is error — revelation has been nationalized.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED The temple recommend questions, which require both honest answers and full tithing, are published; the limit placed on personal revelation is taught rather than written as a rule.

Stage 4 · Confuse

The rewards become unpredictable, the standard keeps moving, the answers stop meaning anything, and the accusation gets turned around.

Material later published by the Church itself was previously called anti-Mormon lies. Members who researched it were excommunicated in 1993. A woman advocating women's ordination was excommunicated in 2014.

What it asks of you: You were told the truth was a lie, and then told the truth, and no one apologized for the interval.

8 · Intermittent Reinforcement

Unpredictable reward that creates addictive emotional dependency.

How it shows here

- Worthiness runs on renewable approval: temple recommends expire, callings are extended and released without explanation, and the member's institutional temperature is retaken at every interview.
- Spiritual witness is intermittent by design of interpretation — the burning in the bosom that comes sometimes confirms the Church; the stupor that comes other times indicates your question, your effort, your sin.

- Callings and releases arrive as revelation with no stated criteria; members serve intensely partly because the next assignment, like the last, will arrive unannounced from a source that is always watching.

The strongest defense. Callings come by inspiration, not merit; release is not demotion; recommends simply ensure covenant readiness.

The counter. A reward whose criteria are unstatable, whose timing is unpredictable, and whose interpreter is the institution is the textbook schedule — the doctrine that 'release is not demotion' exists precisely because every member's nervous system says otherwise.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Recommend expiry and the extending and releasing of callings are set out in Church policy, but the unpredictability the entry describes comes from how spiritual witness and releases are taught and interpreted, not from a written rule.

9 · Moving the Goalposts

The standard of success keeps shifting so you can never arrive.

How it shows here

- A person is told to pray about the Book of Mormon. If they feel something, that is testimony. Then testimony must become baptism, tithing, callings, temple worthiness, garments, obedience, and sustaining leaders.
- A member follows the rules but questions history. The goalpost moves: facts are not enough; they must study faithful sources, doubt doubts, pray harder, and trust prophetic authority.

- Worthiness interviews escalate inward: behavior, then desire, then thoughts, then loyalty, then whether one is fully aligned with the Church.

The strongest defense. Covenant discipleship naturally involves increasing commitment.

The counter. Commitment becomes moving the goalposts when the Church defines every new requirement as the next proof of a testimony it already claimed you had. The finish line keeps retreating toward institutional totality.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED The requirements that follow baptism (tithing, callings, temple worthiness) are published policy; the inward escalation of interviews rests on former members' accounts, not on a document of record.

10 · Strategic Ambiguity

Language that sounds profound but means nothing specific — functioning as a shutdown to real questions.

How it shows here

- "I know the Church is true" can mean gospel, leaders, institution, priesthood, temple, history, family, culture, or personal feeling depending on challenge.
- Leaders are prophets when obedience is required, but "men of their time" when past teachings become indefensible.

- Tithing is a commandment, temple worthiness requirement, spiritual test, and voluntary donation depending on legal or pastoral context.

The strongest defense. Revelation unfolds, and human leaders are imperfect.

The counter. Imperfection becomes strategic ambiguity when leaders claim divine authority for commands and human fallibility for consequences. If prophecy is binding before harm and contextual after harm, ambiguity is preserving authority without responsibility.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The Church's own essays and leaders' statements disavow earlier teachings and describe leaders as men of their time; that is published teaching, not a court or regulatory record, and the strategic use of the shift is the entry's reading.

11 · Projection

Accusing the outside world of the exact thing the institution practices.

How it shows here

- LDS leaders may accuse former members of being offended, lazy learners, deceived, or wanting to sin while avoiding historical, financial, doctrinal, or institutional criticism.
- Members are told to doubt their doubts while the institution rarely doubts its own authority claims.
- A person who objects to worthiness interviews may be told they have a repentance problem while invasive questioning is framed as pastoral care.

- Families may accuse the leaver of breaking the eternal family while the doctrine itself makes family unity conditional on institutional loyalty.

The strongest defense. The Church encourages faithfulness and warns against distorted sources.

The counter. If the institution must explain away leavers as morally defective instead of engaging their evidence, it is projecting its own fear of scrutiny onto them. The person who finds the hidden room did not build the hidden room.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL The description of former members as offended, deceived or wanting to sin is observed practice among members and leaders; no written rule or finding records it.

12 · DARVO

Deny the wrongdoing. Attack the person who raised it. Reverse victim and offender.

How it shows here

- A member raises historical concealment, temple pressure, worthiness interviews, tithing coercion, racism, sexism, LGBTQ harm, or authority abuse. The Church denies wrongdoing or reframes it as misunderstanding, policy, culture, or imperfect people.
- Then the doubter is attacked as lazy, offended, deceived, prideful, anti-Mormon, or wanting to sin.
- The Church becomes the persecuted victim of anti-Mormon hostility, while the member harmed by institutional claims becomes the threat.

- Families may accuse the leaver of breaking the eternal family, even though the doctrine made family unity conditional on Church loyalty.
- The person who discovers hidden history is blamed for losing trust, while the institution that hid it avoids the deeper accusation.

The strongest defense. The Church encourages faith and warns against hostile sources that distort history.

The counter. If the institution controls the story, then blames people for feeling betrayed when they find missing chapters, that is DARVO. The betrayal is not the discovery. The betrayal is the concealment.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Material once called anti-Mormon was later published in the Church's own Gospel Topics essays, so the denial stage is on the public record; the attack on the doubter is observed practice, not a written rule.

13 · Normalization / Desensitization

Practices that would seem extreme to an outsider feel normal to insiders because they were installed before critical evaluation developed.

How it shows here

- Children and teens may be normalized into worthiness interviews, bishop authority, temple recommends, tithing, modesty, missions, callings, testimony-bearing, and surveillance of private behavior.
- Private sexual questions from adult male leaders can become normal because they are framed as worthiness care.

- Members become desensitized to constant institutional demand: callings, ministering, family history, temple work, meetings, youth programs, seminary (weekday religious classes for teenagers), missions, tithing, cleaning buildings.
- Historical changes or contradictions are normalized through "continuing revelation," "line upon line," and "imperfect leaders."
- The person learns to treat institutional evaluation as a normal part of spiritual life.

The strongest defense. LDS practices build covenant commitment, service, and moral accountability.

The counter. Accountability becomes desensitization when members grow used to being evaluated by institutional authority from childhood onward. If worthiness must be certified by the system, self-trust has been replaced by approval paperwork.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED One-to-one worthiness interviews of minors are set out in the General Handbook. *(sourced)*

Stage 5 · Isolate

Your world narrows until every voice you hear is inside the system, and everything you came for now runs through a middleman.

Ward, calling and family narrow it, and in the Mormon corridor so do employment and the social world. Students live under the honor code of BYU (Brigham Young University, the Church's university). Missions begin at eighteen, with controlled communication and assigned companions.

What it asks of you: Count what you would lose. Then notice you were asked to build that exact dependency deliberately.

14 · Isolation

Shrinking your world until the only voices you hear are inside the system.

How it shows here

- Mormonism can isolate through ward life, callings, youth programs, missions, temple recommend systems, family sealing doctrine, tithing accountability, church schools, and approved media.
- Members are warned against anti-Mormon literature, critical history, ex-Mormon content, and sources that threaten testimony.

- Social life becomes church life: activities, friends, dating, marriage, youth programs, missions, temple worthiness, and family identity all run through the institution.
- A person who doubts may be told to speak to the bishop, read the Book of Mormon, pray, attend church, and avoid critical sources — all paths leading back inside.
- Leaving can isolate the person from spouse, parents, children, ward friends, temple identity, and the eternal family narrative.

The strongest defense. LDS community gives members strong family support and protects faith from hostile misinformation.

The counter. Support becomes isolation when belonging depends on loyalty. If a member must avoid outside information to preserve testimony, and risks family rupture by leaving, then the Church has made itself the condition of both truth and love.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Temple access, garment wearing, and standards for youth are published requirements in the General Handbook.

15 · Triangulation

Inserting intermediaries between you and the thing you came for, so the institution is always in the middle.

How it shows here

- Mormonism triangulates through bishop, stake president, prophet, apostles, spouse, parents, children, missionaries, ward members, ministering brothers and sisters, and deceased ancestors.

- The strongest triangle is the eternal family: your doubts are placed between you and your spouse, children, parents, and dead relatives.
- A questioning member is told, "Think about your covenants," "Think about your children," "Think about your eternal companion."
- Worthiness interviews triangulate through institutional access: bishop, temple recommend, tithing, garments, and family sealing all become interconnected pressure points.
- Former members are contrasted with faithful members who "stayed on the covenant path."
- Missionaries, ward friends, and family may all reach out separately, creating the feeling that everyone is lovingly concerned — while repeating the same institutional script.
- Ancestors are used through genealogy and temple work: you are part of a chain stretching backward and forward, and leaving interrupts it.

The strongest defense. LDS belief is family-centered, so loved ones naturally worry when someone steps away.

The counter. Family concern becomes triangulation when doctrine makes the institution the condition of eternal togetherness. If your spouse, children, parents, dead ancestors, bishop, temple, and afterlife are all used to pull you back, then family has been turned into a retention system.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Temple recommend interviews gate access to the highest ordinances through a local leader's assessment.

Stage 6 · Extract

Now the harvest: your labor, your money, your identity, your silence, your children's schooling, your capacity to trust yourself.

Ten percent is verified in an interview and required for temple access. A whistleblower put the reserve at over a hundred billion dollars; the SEC found a portfolio of about $32 billion hidden behind shell companies for two decades until a federal regulator intervened. Missionary labor is funded by the missionary's own family. Worthiness interviews of minors are conducted by adult male volunteers, one adult and one child by default; since 2018 the child may ask for a parent to be present. Ask about the finances and be told the question reflects on your faith.

What it asks of you: You were asked to sacrifice for a mall while a reserve that a whistleblower valued at over a hundred billion dollars sat in an account you were not permitted to know existed.

16 · Flying Monkeys

The community enforces the institution's norms without being asked — mobilized by culture, not memos.

How it shows here

- A doubting member may receive visits from ministering brothers and sisters, missionaries, ward friends, bishops, Relief Society leaders, parents, spouses, and siblings.
- Everyone sounds loving: cookies, texts, invitations, testimonies, conference talks, "we miss you," "come back to the covenant path."
- Family becomes the most powerful flying-monkey network because the doctrine ties loyalty to eternal togetherness.
- A leaver may be watched through ward gossip: coffee, garments, church attendance, dating, alcohol, social media posts, and whether they criticize the Church.

The strongest defense. LDS members minister because they love people and believe covenants matter.

The counter. Ministering becomes FLYING MONKEY pressure when it functions as retention. If the same visits always lead back to bishop, tithing, temple, garments, testimony, and family eternity, then cookies are carrying doctrine.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CULTURAL Ministering assignments are Church policy, but the family and ward pressure the entry describes is custom that the Church neither mandates nor prevents.

17 · Smear Campaign

Rewriting your character after departure to protect the institution from the implications of your leaving.

How it shows here

- Former members may be described as offended, lazy learners, deceived, bitter, anti-Mormon, prideful, or wanting to sin.
- A person raising historical concerns may be accused of consuming anti-Church material.
- Families may say the leaver is destroying eternal family unity.
- Church social networks may quietly recast the person as unsafe, rebellious, or spiritually lost.

The strongest defense. The Church warns members against hostile sources and spiritual danger.

The counter. Warning becomes SMEAR CAMPAIGN when it explains away evidence by attacking the person who found it. If the institution must make leavers morally suspect to keep members from listening, the smear is doing doctrinal labor.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> DOCUMENTED Excommunication of historians in 1993 and of a women's-ordination advocate in 2014, both publicly recorded.

18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

Refusing to engage with legitimate questions in order to maintain control.

How it shows here

- A member asks about history, finances, temple changes, worthiness interviews, racism, sexism, or LGBTQ harm and receives correlated answers, testimony language, or invitations to pray harder.
- Leaders say some answers will come later, in the Lord's time, or after faithful study.
- Local bishops may be kind but powerless, while higher authorities remain inaccessible.
- The member's pain is acknowledged emotionally but not institutionally.

The strongest defense. The Church encourages faith, patience, and seeking answers through prayer and authorized sources.

The counter. Authorized answers become stonewalling when they only preserve authority. If every hard question ends with "trust the Brethren" (the Church's senior leaders), then the answer is not an answer. It is a loyalty test.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **DOCUMENTED** SEC administrative order, February 2023, finding two decades of concealment through shell entities. *(sourced)*

19 · Manufactured Consent

Creating the appearance of choice when the conditions of choice were shaped before you could evaluate them.

How it shows here

- Children say they "choose" baptism at eight after being raised in a world where baptism is expected and celebrated.
- Members "choose" callings, missions, tithing, temple worthiness, garments, and sustaining leaders under intense family and social pressure.
- Temple covenants may be made before participants fully understand the ritual, wording, social consequences, or exit costs.
- A person "chooses" to stay because leaving threatens eternal family belonging.

The strongest defense. LDS covenants and service are voluntary expressions of faith.

The counter. Voluntary is not the same as unpressured. If saying no risks disappointing family, losing temple status, damaging marriage, or threatening eternal belonging, the yes has been manufactured by the covenant system itself.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Baptism at eight, designated the age of accountability, enrolls children into covenants and tithing expectation.

20 · Trauma Bonding

The wound and the bandage come from the same hand.

How it shows here

- LDS life bonds through family eternity, worthiness, testimony, bishop approval, temple access, and community belonging.
- A member feels fear of losing eternal family, then relief through obedience: tithing, recommend interviews, garments, callings, sacrament, and temple attendance.
- Doubt creates panic; testimony-bearing and faithful activity restore calm.
- The institution creates the threat of eternal separation, then sells covenant loyalty as the solution.

The strongest defense. LDS doctrine gives families hope and encourages covenant faithfulness.

The counter. Hope becomes TRAUMA BONDING when the institution places itself between love and eternity. If fear of losing family is relieved only by loyalty to the Church, the family bond has been routed through institutional control.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Eternal-family teaching pairs the highest promise in the codex with the loss of it — taught continuously.

21 · Learned Helplessness

Teaching you that your own judgment is unreliable until you stop trusting it entirely.

How it shows here

- Members ask about history, doctrine, finances, gender, racism, or LGBTQ harm and are told to pray, study faithful sources, doubt doubts, and trust leaders.
- Local leaders may be kind but unable to change institutional realities.
- Worthiness systems teach members that access to temple, family eternity, and belonging depends on compliance.
- Eventually the member stops expecting answers and settles for managing cognitive dissonance.

The strongest defense. Faith involves patience, trust, and continuing revelation.

The counter. Trust becomes LEARNED HELPLESSNESS when answers never arrive but obedience is always due. If continuing revelation only moves from the top down, members are trained to wait instead of act.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Worthiness assessed by another person's judgment rather than the member's own, structurally and repeatedly.

22 · Benevolent Control

Control wrapped in the language of care, so that resisting the control feels like rejecting the love.

How it shows here

- Bishops, worthiness interviews, callings, temple recommends, tithing, garments, and family sealing are framed as loving covenant care.
- Members are told leaders are protecting eternal families.
- Youth may answer intimate questions because the bishop is presented as a caring spiritual judge.
- Leaving is discouraged because the Church says it wants eternal happiness for the family.

The strongest defense. LDS leaders help members keep sacred covenants and protect families.

The counter. Covenants become BENEVOLENT CONTROL when the institution places itself between the person and eternal family. If obedience is required to keep love forever, care has become leverage.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED The instruments the entry names (worthiness interviews, temple recommends, tithing and callings) are set out in the General Handbook and the recommend questions.

23 · Infantilization

Positioning the adult believer as permanently childlike and dependent on institutional authority.

How it shows here

- Adults meet with bishops for worthiness approval, temple recommends, sexual confession, tithing status, callings, and spiritual permission.
- Members are called to positions rather than simply choosing service.
- Doubters are told to return to basics, pray, read approved sources, and trust leaders.
- The institution keeps adults in a system of interviews, permissions, and parental-style oversight.

The strongest defense. Priesthood leaders help members keep covenants and stay spiritually safe.

The counter. Safety becomes INFANTILIZATION when adults need institutional permission to be considered worthy. If grown people must be interviewed like children to access family eternity, authority has replaced adulthood.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED The interviews, recommends and callings that keep adults under oversight are set out in the General Handbook.

24 · Identity Erosion

Gradually replacing your identity with a role the institution provides, until you can't separate who you are from where you belong.

How it shows here

- LDS identity can absorb the whole self: testimony, covenant path, temple worthiness, garments, tithing, callings, family sealing, mission, genealogy, priesthood, modesty, and eternal family.
- Members may learn to narrate every major life choice through the Church.
- Personal doubt becomes identity threat: if the Church is not true, who am I?
- The person may not know what they want apart from what the Church says an eternal family, worthy member, faithful woman, priesthood holder, or covenant keeper should want.
- Leaving becomes existential collapse, not just belief change.

The strongest defense. LDS identity gives purpose, family meaning, and eternal direction.

The counter. Purpose becomes IDENTITY EROSION when the institution owns the map of the self. If your underwear, money, marriage, family eternity, time, thoughts, doubts, and future are all Church-mediated, identity has been centralized.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT Identity fused to calling and covenant, taught continuously rather than mandated.

25 · Spiritual Bypassing

Using spiritual language to avoid engaging with real pain, real questions, and real accountability.

How it shows here

- Historical problems are bypassed with "continuing revelation," "not essential to salvation," or "focus on the basics."
- Harm from worthiness interviews or LGBTQ teaching is bypassed with "the leaders are imperfect but the Church is true."
- Doubt is bypassed with testimony-bearing.
- Family pain is bypassed through eternal-family hope.
- Obedience is used to avoid unresolved contradiction.

The strongest defense. Faith involves focusing on core truths despite unanswered questions.

The counter. Faith becomes SPIRITUAL BYPASSING when unanswered questions are actually unanswered injuries. If testimony is used to step over evidence and pain, belief has become avoidance.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The responses the entry records ('continuing revelation', 'the leaders are imperfect but the Church is true') are taught answers, not written rules.

26 · Financial Control

Extracting money through spiritual obligation while offering no transparency about where it goes.

How it shows here

- LDS financial control is especially direct through tithing, temple worthiness, missionary costs, fast offerings (monthly donations for the poor), callings, church cleaning, youth programs, and unpaid leadership.
- Tithing can become tied to temple access and therefore to eternal family rituals.
- Members may pay money, perform unpaid labor, accept callings, and fund missions while local leaders frame it as covenant faithfulness.
- Financial transparency at the top may feel limited compared with financial accountability expected from members.

The strongest defense. Tithing and offerings are commandments that fund the Lord's work and bless members.

The counter. Tithing becomes FINANCIAL CONTROL when access to temple and family eternity depends on payment. If money stands between a member and sacred belonging, the donation has become a gate.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Temple recommend questions link tithing to access; the SEC's 2023 order documents the concealment of the reserve fund. *(sourced)*

Stage 7 · Discard

You become expensive — too many questions, too much independence — and the urgency ramps up until you are removed.

Leavers are excluded from relatives' temple weddings, pay a social and professional cost in the corridor, and historically found resignation obstructed until legal services forced it. And the highest-stakes threat in this codex is eternal separation from your own children.

What it asks of you: Not hell. Your family. That is a more effective threat and it was chosen for that reason.

27 · Manufactured Crisis

Creating urgency to suppress critical thinking and generate loyalty.

How it shows here

- LDS manufactured crisis may center eternal families, temple worthiness, anti-Mormon material, pornography, modesty, missions, tithing, and staying on the covenant path.
- A child, spouse, or parent leaving becomes an eternal-family emergency.

- Historical questions are treated as testimony-threatening danger.
- Bishops and family may mobilize quickly to restore worthiness and activity.

The strongest defense. LDS families worry because covenants and eternal relationships matter.

The counter. Eternal concern becomes MANUFACTURED CRISIS when it turns belief change into family catastrophe. If love is routed through institutional loyalty, doubt becomes an emergency because the doctrine made it one.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> TAUGHT The teaching that leaving endangers an eternal family is taught doctrine; the urgency with which family and bishops respond is observed practice.

28 · Discard

Removing members who become too costly — too many questions, too much independence, too visible a contradiction.

How it shows here

- Former members may lose callings, temple access, ward belonging, family trust, and eternal-family security.
- A doubter may be treated warmly at first, then increasingly as dangerous if they continue.
- Families may grieve the leaver as spiritually dead or lost.

- The person becomes ex-Mormon, anti-Mormon, lazy learner, deceived, or fallen away.
- Discard can be masked by smiles and casseroles.

The strongest defense. Members naturally grieve when loved ones leave covenants.

The counter. Grief becomes DISCARD when the person is treated as a threat to eternal family rather than a human being with reasons. If love remains only for the version that returns, the institution owns the family bond.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> **CODIFIED** Church discipline procedure with defined consequences including loss of temple access.

Stage 8 · Replace

Your seat is filled before the door shuts, and nobody is responsible for any of it because the authority was attributed to God.

A new convert is baptized in your ward the month you leave, your calling is reassigned, and your absence becomes a lesson about pride. And the authority is the prophet, who speaks for God — take it up with Him.

What it asks of you: The prophet's authority was invoked for a race ban held 126 years and reversed without an apology. Ask what that tells you about the chain of command.

29 · Replacement

Your seat is filled before the door closes behind you.

How it shows here

- A member leaves a calling; another is called quickly.
- A missionary returns early or leaves; another missionary becomes the success story.
- A doubting child is contrasted with faithful siblings on the covenant path.
- A family grieving a leaver may invest more intensely in obedient children, temple work, or missions.
- The ward continues by filling roles.

The strongest defense. Callings rotate and the work of the Church continues.

The counter. Rotation becomes REPLACEMENT when people are treated as positions with testimonies attached. If the system can replace your labor instantly but never answer your pain, the calling mattered more than the called.

> EVIDENCE GRADE
>
> CODIFIED Callings are extended and released by local leaders under published Church procedures, so a vacated role is refilled as a matter of course.

30 · Plausible Deniability

The institution is never responsible, because the authority is attributed to God — who isn't available for cross-examination.

How it shows here

- The Church says members have agency, while temple access, family eternity, callings, tithing, garments, and community status depend on obedience.
- Leaders are prophets when issuing commands, but imperfect men when commands age badly.
- Temple covenants are voluntary, but many members encounter them inside family pressure, limited disclosure, and high emotional stakes.
- Bishops ask intimate worthiness questions as pastoral care, while the institution denies coercion because members "choose" interviews.
- Historical issues are handled through approved essays and apologetics, allowing the Church to claim transparency while controlling interpretation.

The strongest defense. Agency is central to LDS theology. Leaders are inspired but imperfect. Temple and tithing commitments are voluntary.

The counter. Agency under eternal-family pressure is not neutral. "Inspired when obeyed, imperfect when harmful" is PLAUSIBLE DENIABILITY built into authority. Voluntary commitments are compromised when social, familial, and eternal consequences make saying no unbearable.

EVIDENCE GRADE

REFORMED The racial priesthood ban, held 126 years and reversed in 1978 with the prior teaching later disavowed — reversibility recorded as evidence of human authorship.

Sources for this section: 1 2 10

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Count grades, not names. A long list of Contested entries says something very different from a short list of Codified ones. A bias to watch for in yourself: people rate the same pressure as "normal" when their own group applies it and as "manipulation" when another group does. Before you judge an entry, try imagining it applied by a group you distrust. Does it look different?

13

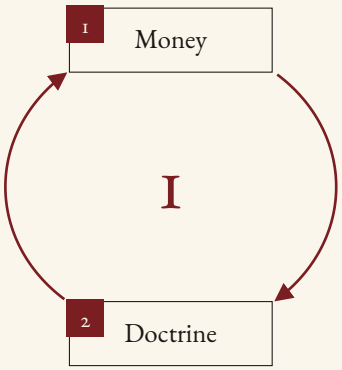
The loops

BEFORE YOU READ

How the techniques connect into cycles. A single practice can look harmless on its own. The loops show how one step feeds the next, so that, for example, a newcomer's welcome turns into an obligation.

> The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first. The loops are analysis built from findings recorded elsewhere on this page PATTERN OBSERVED; each step names the section or technique where its fact is recorded.

1 · Money to Doctrine to Money



Tithing is verified in an interview and gates the sealing ordinances; the same office sets the doctrine, the rate, and the eligibility.

How it runs.

1. The Church teaches that a family can be sealed for eternity only in the temple, and only members holding a temple recommend may enter (section 24; technique 3).
2. The recommend interview verifies that the member pays a full tithe of ten percent (sections 7 and 9).
3. The money goes to the corporate church and its investment arms, including the portfolio the SEC found hidden behind thirteen shell companies (sections 8 and 9).

4. No financial statements have been published to U.S. members since 1959, so the giver cannot see where the money went (sections 5 and 10).

5. The same leadership that holds the money sets the doctrine and the eligibility rules, and the next tithing settlement asks the same question (sections 2 and 7).

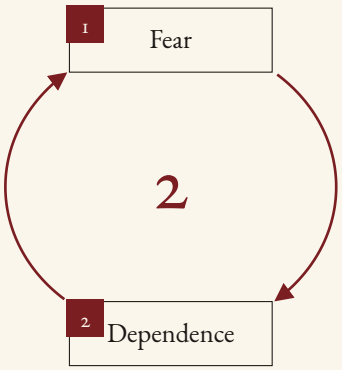
Techniques that feed it. 26 · Financial Control, 3 · Future Faking, 15 · Triangulation, 22 · Benevolent Control.

Why it closes. The office that defines what a member needs for eternity also verifies the payment and holds the money. The member cannot reach the temple without paying, and cannot see the accounts without the institution's permission.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens wherever the money becomes visible. Section 20 names the change: member-facing audited financial statements, the practice that existed before 1959. The Church's British charity already publishes accounts (section 22), so the decision lies with the First Presidency. A member can also stop tithing, at the cost of the recommend (section 24). This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2 Kimberly will confirm to her bishop that she is a full tithe payer so that he signs her recommend, in a year when the tithe is also the transmission and the orthodontist.

2 · Fear to Dependence to Fear



The fear of losing your eternal family, the highest-stakes fear in this codex, is installed in childhood and relieved only by continued worthiness.

How it runs.

1. Children are baptized at eight, the 'age of accountability', and taught that families can be together forever (section 11; technique 19).
2. The same doctrine teaches that leaving jeopardizes the sealing to spouse and children (section 15).
3. Relief comes through obedience: tithing, recommend interviews, garments, callings and temple attendance (technique 20).
4. Worthiness is never settled. Recommends expire, and each interview retakes the member's standing (technique 8).
5. Each renewal restores calm until the next interview, and the fear returns with it (techniques 5 and 20).

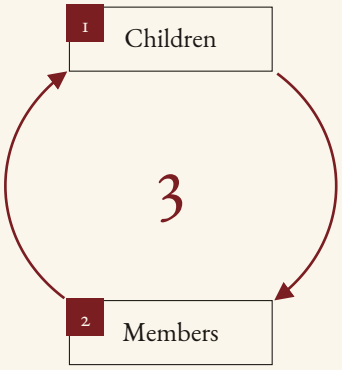
Techniques that feed it. 20 · Trauma Bonding, 5 · Devaluation, 8 · Intermittent Reinforcement, 27 · Manufactured Crisis.

Why it closes. The only relief on offer comes from the institution that defines the threat. The fear is of losing a family, and the family can be kept only on the institution's terms.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where a family treats its bonds as independent of a member's standing, or where the institution stops tying the eternal family to continued worthiness. Parents decide the first; the leadership decides the second. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2 Kimberly's brother Doug, who has no recommend, will wait in the lobby during his own daughter's sealing.

3 · Children to Members to Children



Baptism at eight, seminary, youth programs and missions at eighteen all come before the difficult history is disclosed.

How it runs.

1. Children are baptized at eight, which enrolls them in covenants and tithing expectations before adolescence (section 11; technique 19).
2. From twelve, bishops interview them about worthiness, historically alone and with sexually explicit questions (sections 2 and 11; technique 13).
3. Seminary, youth programs and 'For the Strength of Youth' standards regulate their dress, dating and teaching (section 11).
4. At eighteen or nineteen they serve missions paid for by their own families, with controlled communication and assigned companions (sections 9 and 11).
5. Those who stay raise their own children inside the same sequence, and those children are baptized at eight (section 11).

Techniques that feed it. 19 · Manufactured Consent, 13 · Normalization / Desensitization, 14 · Isolation, 24 · Identity Erosion.

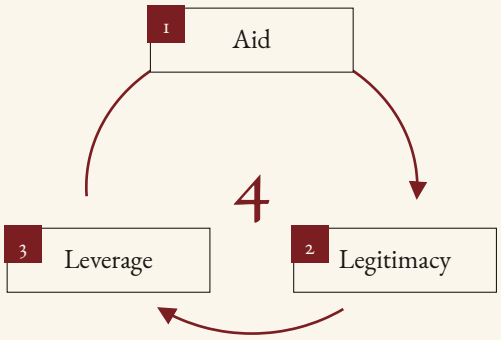
Why it closes. Each commitment is made before the difficult history is disclosed. That history was absent from Church curricula for decades and acknowledged in the Gospel Topics essays only from 2013 (sections 10 and 11), so by the time a member meets it, baptism, mission and covenants are already

behind them.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the history is taught before the commitments rather than after, and where a parent sits in on a child's interview (section 24 notes that a parent can ask to be present). That lies with the Church's curriculum and with parents. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. In section 2 Kimberly's twelve-year-old son Cole has an interview with the bishop, alone, while she waits in the foyer.

4 · Aid to Legitimacy to Leverage to Aid



Welfare and disaster relief buy standing; standing sustains exemption and political access; the access protects the revenue.

How it runs.

1. The Church runs genuine welfare and disaster-relief operations (section 4).
2. That work earns standing with members and with the public.
3. The Church files no Form 990, and its investment arm's holdings were hidden from securities regulators from 1997 to 2019 (sections 8 and 22).
4. Standing becomes political reach: church-organized campaigns, most visibly California's Proposition 8, mobilized member money and volunteer labor into legislation affecting non-members (section 16).
5. The revenue stays protected and undisclosed, and it funds the Church's work, including the next round of welfare and relief (section 9).

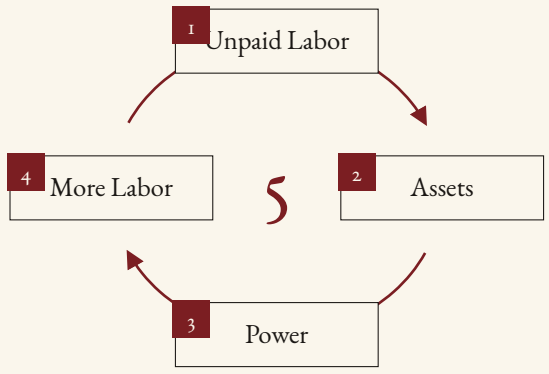
Techniques that feed it. 2 · Weaponized Generosity, 22 · Benevolent Control, 26 · Financial Control, 30 · Plausible Deniability.

Why it closes. The good the welfare does is the institution's strongest answer to questions about its money, and the money that stays undisclosed is what funds the welfare. Each step makes the next easier, and the last step returns to the first.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where the aid and the accounts are separated: where the Church publishes what it spends on welfare against what it holds, as its British charity already must (section 22). That lies with the leadership, or with a legislature that required disclosure. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. LDS welfare can be generous, but it can also route vulnerable people through bishops, worthiness conversations and institutional oversight (technique 2).

5 · Unpaid Labor to Assets to Power to More Labor



Unpaid lay clergy, member labor, and family-funded missionaries build an institution with a portfolio of tens of billions of dollars and no member disclosure.

How it runs.

1. Lay clergy serve unpaid, and bishops carry a full-time-equivalent pastoral load on top of a job (sections 9 and 18).
2. Families pay for their own children's eighteen months to two years of full-time missionary labor (sections 7 and 9).

3. Members accept callings, clean buildings and run the welfare and children's work of the Church (section 18; technique 26).
4. The savings and the tithing build a portfolio whose hidden securities holdings the SEC found had reached about $32 billion by 2018, with no member equity and no member disclosure (section 9).
5. Callings are refilled as they are vacated, and the institution calls the next generation of volunteers and missionaries (technique 29).

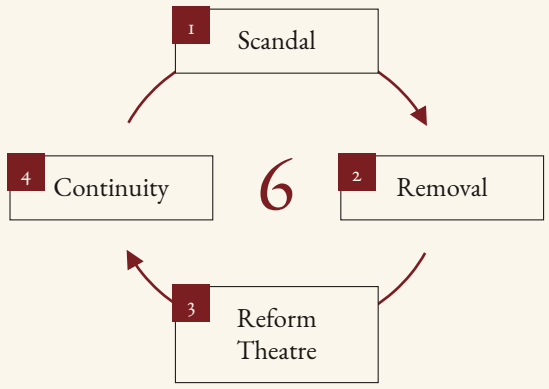
Techniques that feed it. 26 · Financial Control, 23 · Infantilization, 24 · Identity Erosion, 29 · Replacement.

Why it closes. The people who supply the labor hold no office that controls what it builds. Value flows one way, from unpaid work and tithing to assets held centrally, and leaders at the top, who do receive stipends, decide how it is used (section 9).

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens where members can see what their labor and money built, and where a calling can be declined without cost to standing. The first lies with the First Presidency; the second lies with ward members and their bishops. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The Relief Society and Primary presidencies run the actual welfare and children's work of the Church on a budget they may not set (section 18).

6 · Scandal to Removal to Reform Theatre to Continuity



A leader errs, a policy reverses, nobody is identified as wrong, and prophetic authority is unaffected either way.

How it runs.

1. A position is taught with prophetic authority: the racial priesthood ban for over a century, and the 2015 policy on the children of same-sex couples as revelation (sections 5 and 14).
2. Pressure builds from inside and outside the Church (section 20).
3. The position is reversed, in 1978 and in 2019 (sections 5 and 20).
4. The reversal is presented as continuing revelation, and nobody is identified as having been wrong (sections 10 and 14).
5. Prophetic authority is unaffected, and the next position is taught with the same authority ('policy, not doctrine', section 15).

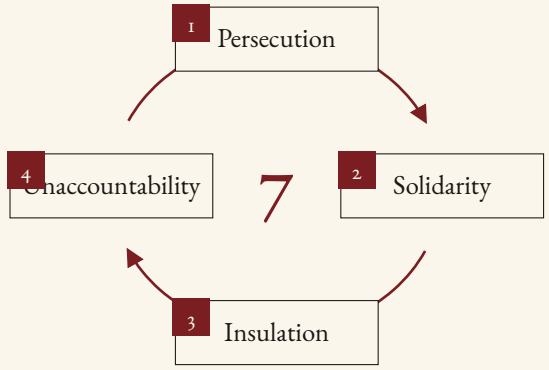
Techniques that feed it. 10 · Strategic Ambiguity, 30 · Plausible Deniability, 25 · Spiritual Bypassing, 12 · DARVO.

Why it closes. Continuing revelation lets the institution reverse a position without admitting error (section 10). The teaching and its reversal are both attributed to God, so neither leaves a leader accountable.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. Section 14 names what is missing: an accounting to the families harmed in between. An acknowledgment of error for a named decision would break the loop, and that lies with the First Presidency. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. The 2015 policy barred the children of same-sex couples from baptism and was reversed in 2019, with no accounting to the families harmed in between (section 14).

7 · Persecution to Solidarity to Insulation to Unaccountability



Historic persecution — Missouri, the extermination order, Carthage — is real and is invoked to reframe a question about accounts as an attack on the Restoration.

How it runs.

1. The Church's early history includes real persecution; Joseph Smith was killed in 1844 (section 5).
2. Critical material is labeled anti-Mormon, and members are counseled against it (sections 11 and 14).
3. Members close ranks: those who raise the material are described as offended, deceived or wanting to sin, and family and ward reach out to bring them back (techniques 6, 16 and 17).
4. Scholars who documented the history were excommunicated in 1993, and campaigners for women's ordination and for interview reform in 2014 and 2018 (section 19).
5. When the Church later publishes the same material, the label is retired for the material, and no discipline is recorded as withdrawn on the ground that the material was true (section 14).

Techniques that feed it. 17 · Smear Campaign, 11 · Projection, 16 · Flying Monkeys, 12 · DARVO, 6 · Gaslighting.

Why it closes. Each critic can be read as further proof of hostility, and the solidarity that follows protects the institution from the question the critic asked.

Where it could be broken, and by whom. It weakens when members read the Church's own essays as confirming what the disciplined scholars wrote (section 5), and when the load-bearing evidence comes from a regulator rather than a critic, as section 3 notes of the SEC order. This paragraph is analysis, not a documented finding.

An example from this page. Section 3 records the strongest objection to this page, that its sources are apostates and anti-Mormon material, and answers that the load-bearing evidence is an SEC order, the General Handbook, the temple recommend questions and the Church's own essays.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The loops explain why good people stay in arrangements they would never sign up for from scratch. The more you have already put in, the harder it is to walk away. Researchers call this the sunk-cost effect (Arkes & Blumer, 1985), and it works on time, money and relationships alike. Ask yourself: if you were starting today, knowing what you know, would you join?

The seven loops below show how the practices connect, so that each step makes the next one easier and the last step feeds the first.

14 Say versus do

BEFORE YOU READ

Direct, checkable comparisons: a public statement on one side, the documented record on the other, and the receipt that links them. This is the most falsifiable section on the page, because each row either matches its source or it doesn't.

What they say, what the record shows

THEY SAY	THE RECORD SHOWS	RECEIPT
The Church is a careful steward of sacred funds.	A federal regulator found that for over twenty years the Church's investment arm hid a securities portfolio, about $32 billion by 2018, behind thirteen shell companies; a whistleblower put the whole reserve at over $100 billion [27].	GOVERNMENT REPORT
That material is anti-Mormon propaganda.	Much of it was published by the Church itself from 2013 onward, after the internet made concealment untenable.	OFFICIAL POLICY · Gospel Topics essays

The prophet cannot lead the Church astray.	The racial priesthood ban was held for 126 years, reversed, and the prior teaching later disavowed — with nobody identified as having been wrong.	OFFICIAL POLICY
The 2015 policy was revelation.	It was reversed in 2019, with no accounting to the families harmed in between.	OFFICIAL POLICY
Tithing is a spiritual principle, not a transaction.	Payment is verified in an interview, and access to sealing ordinances depends on the answer.	OFFICIAL POLICY

Accountability or theatre?

Last time the chair ran. The concealment of a portfolio the SEC put at about $32 billion produced a $5 million penalty, no resignation, and no disclosure policy.

Who holds the chair now. The First Presidency holds it, with lifetime tenure, and the Presiding Bishopric it appoints answers to it; members have no audit right.

Prediction. The next financial revelation will come from a regulator or a whistleblower, the response will be a legal settlement, and members will still not see the books.

Words used here

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS INSIDE	WHAT IT DOES	SAID PLAINLY
Worthy / worthiness	It means fitness to hold a recommend or an office, assessed in interview.	It turns a financial and behavioural compliance check into a statement about a person's spiritual condition — and links it, in practice, to attending your own child's wedding.	'Have you paid and complied? We will call the answer your worthiness.'
Anti-Mormon	It means material hostile to the Church.	It was applied for decades to historical claims the Church itself later published in the Gospel Topics essays. The label was retired for the material; no discipline is recorded as withdrawn on the ground that the material was true.	'This is true and I would rather you did not read it.'
Faith crisis	It means a member's loss of confidence, usually after encountering history.	It locates the problem in the member's faith rather than in the information. The word does the work of the whole cycle in two syllables.	'You found out something accurate and we will call your reaction the event.'
Sustain	It is the raised-hand vote supporting leaders.	It is presented as consent. It has never removed anyone, and voting opposed triggers a private meeting.	'Please perform agreement.'
Milk before meat	It means doctrine is disclosed progressively as a member matures.	It is a principle of teaching used to justify the sequencing of disclosure, with the institution deciding both what is meat and when you are ready.	'We will tell you later, and we choose when later is.'

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Test one row yourself. Pick a "they say" line you have actually heard said in person, then read the receipt. If the record matches the statement, this page is wrong about that row, and you should tell us. If it doesn't, what does it mean that you had never seen the receipt?

15 Cost & cover

BEFORE YOU READ

What leaving actually costs here, in family, work, housing, money and legal status, and how each of those costs is officially denied. Where the cost is low, the page says so plainly.

What leaving costs

- Leaving strains multigenerational LDS families and ends temple participation in relatives' weddings. In the Mormon corridor it carries social and professional costs, and missionary-age youth face identity-scale exit decisions.
- Resignation was historically obstructed. Formal processes, and the QuitMormon legal service, emerged under pressure. FORMER MEMBER TESTIMONY

The ledger of exit

COST	DOCUMENTED?	DETAIL	THE OFFICIAL DENIAL
Family relationships	Yes	Family identity runs across generations, a member who leaves is excluded from relatives' temple weddings, and parents frame the departure as grief.	“Families are eternal — leaving is the member's own choice.”
Community and employment	Yes in the Mormon corridor	Social and professional networks overlap heavily with the ward; BYU honor-code enforcement affects students and staff	“Employment standards apply to everyone who agreed to them.”

Records and resignation	Historically obstructed	Resignation requests were once routed through local leaders, and legal services (QuitMormon) emerged to force removal	"Members may withdraw at any time."
Eternal-family threat	Yes	Leaving is taught to jeopardize eternal sealing to spouse and children — the highest-stakes spiritual threat in this codex	"It's doctrine about consequences, not coercion."

Leaving strains multigenerational LDS families and ends temple participation in relatives' weddings.

How the cost is denied

CHANNEL	LEVEL	NOTE
Explicit policy	Very low	The General Handbook, temple recommend questions, and financial policies are written — tithing-for-temple-access is documented policy, not inference.
Informal enforcement	High	Ward social standing, callings, and family expectation do most of the day-to-day work.
Leadership distance	Medium	Correlation centralizes messaging, which makes deniability harder — but local leader discretion absorbs blame for individual harm.
Doctrinal ambiguity	Medium	'Policy, not doctrine' is used to reverse positions (race ban, 2015 policy) without acknowledging error.
Cultural outsourcing	Medium	Harms attributed to Utah culture or overzealous local leaders rather than to structure.
Volunteer enforcement	High	Unpaid lay leadership means neighbors conduct the interviews and the discipline.
Sacred secrecy	Low	Temple covenants are secret, and financial reporting was concealed — both documented, the latter by federal regulators.
Exit cost denial	High	'Nobody is holding you here' — said by an institution that teaches your family is eternal only through it.

Sources for this section: [13]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Picture a father waiting in the temple lobby while his daughter is sealed, because he doesn't hold a recommend. That scene opens this page's "day inside," and for many families it is the real cost of leaving, or of simply not paying. In the Mormon corridor, leaving can also cost friendships and business. If a sibling of yours stopped believing, would they still be invited in to the wedding?

16 The ledger

BEFORE YOU READ

The balance sheet. It shows who benefits, who pays, and what leverage flows back to the institution in return for what it gives.

Who benefits

- The corporate church benefits. A self-perpetuating leadership controls a portfolio of tens of billions of dollars with zero member-facing financial disclosure since 1959 (U.S.). FINANCIAL RECORD / INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

- Church-owned commercial arms in real estate, media and agribusiness benefit; the City Creek mall development, for example, was funded amid tithing rhetoric. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Money out, leverage back

- A whistleblower put the Ensign Peak reserve at $100 billion or more [27]; the SEC found that a portfolio of about $32 billion by 2018 was concealed through shell LLCs for over two decades until its 2023 enforcement action. Members funded it, were told to sacrifice for it, and were never shown it. GOVERNMENT REPORT
- Church-organized political campaigns — most visibly California's Proposition 8 — mobilized member money and volunteer labor into legislation affecting non-members' civil status. INVESTIGATIVE REPORT
- Missionary labor is self-funded: families pay for their own children's eighteen months to two years of unpaid full-time work for the institution. The largest workforce in the Church funds itself. OFFICIAL POLICY
- The abuse-reporting helpline routes bishops to Church attorneys rather than to police; litigation has argued this structure prioritized institutional liability over children. COURT RECORD

Who pays

- Children pay when they are interviewed about their sexuality by adult male leaders, with a parent present only if the child asks.
- Abuse survivors pay when their reports are routed through a legal-liability helpline. COURT RECORD
- Women pay, excluded from all governing authority and disciplined for advocating inclusion.
- LGBTQ members and their children pay, especially under the 2015–2019 policy.
- Poor tithe-payers pay, because for them 10% is the difference between rent and eviction, while a reserve a whistleblower estimated at over $100B sat unseen.
- Missionaries' families pay, self-funding eighteen months to two years of unpaid institutional labor.
- Members who gave decades of money to books they were not permitted to see pay too.

Sources for this section: 1 2 11

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Find yourself in this table. Are you among those who benefit, those who pay, or both? Most readers are both. The question is whether the exchange was ever explained to you in these terms, and whether you would agree to it if it had been.

17 Who gets hurt most

BEFORE YOU READ

Where the weight lands hardest, and what it compounds with: poverty, childhood, gender, a lack of civil alternatives. This is the human stakes stated plainly.

Where the weight lands

The costs in section 15 do not fall evenly. They fall hardest where a person has the least power inside the institution and the fewest places to go outside it. The table names who carries the most, how, and what makes it worse.

WHO	HOW	WHAT IT COMPOUNDS WITH
Children in worthiness interviews	They may be questioned about sexual conduct by an untrained adult volunteer, with a parent present only if the child asks.	The harm compounds where the interviewer is also the family's ecclesiastical leader and neighbor.
Abuse survivors	Their disclosures are routed through a legal-liability helpline.	It compounds where the bishop is a friend of the accused.
Women	They are excluded from all governing authority and disciplined for advocating inclusion.	It compounds with large families, a single income and no institutional standing.
LGBTQ members and their children	The 2015 policy labeled them apostates and barred their children from baptism	It fell hardest on minors in believing households during those four years.
Poor tithe-payers	Ten percent is verified in an interview while a reserve a whistleblower estimated at over a hundred billion sat unseen.	It compounds where paying it means missing rent and not paying means missing a wedding.
Missionaries' families	They self-fund eighteen months to two years of the institution's labor.	It compounds when several children serve consecutively.

From The Children's Codex

- *Education* — Adventist and evangelical school-history curricula: Curricula across several traditions in this codex omit the institution's own documented controversies — the 1919 Bible Conference and the Veltman study in Adventism; the Gospel Topics material in its pre-2013 form for Latter-day Saint youth. The omissions are not disputed; they are simply not discussed.
- *Unsupervised adult access* — Youth-interview practice, several traditions: Latter-day Saint worthiness interviews and comparable one-to-one youth practices in other traditions have been the subject of sustained member campaigns for a chaperone option. Several institutions have moved partway; the practice of one adult and one minor alone remains permitted in more places than it is prohibited.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

The table's first row is children in worthiness interviews, questioned about sexual matters by an untrained volunteer adult who is also a neighbor and the family's ecclesiastical leader, with a parent present only if the child asks. If you are a parent, you can ask to sit in, or decline on your child's behalf. What do you think would happen if you did? The second row is survivors whose disclosures are routed through a legal-liability helpline. Who is that helpline built to protect?

18 The middle tiers

BEFORE YOU READ

The people in the middle: local clergy, teachers, officials and volunteers who apply rules they did not write. The section exists so that an institution is not collapsed into a monolith, and so that people in the middle can see their own position in it.

Most of the Church's work is done below the First Presidency by unpaid members who see the decisions without making them. Bishops, clerks, youth leaders, the women's and children's presidencies and missionaries each carry part of the load, and each stands at one point where the next decision could be declined. The table sets out what each tier does, what it sees, what it is asked to do and where it could refuse.

ROLE	DOES	SEES	IS ASKED TO	COULD REFUSE
Bishops	Carry an unpaid, untrained, full-time-equivalent pastoral load on top of a job	Every family's finances, marriage, and disclosures — and that the helpline routes to lawyers	Call the helpline first	Call anyone before the police when a child discloses abuse

Ward clerks and finance clerks	Record tithing and reconcile the ward's money	That the money leaves and never comes back as an account	Keep records confidential	Verify tithing status for an interview
Youth leaders and seminary teachers	Form adolescents	Which youth are being interviewed, mostly without a parent in the room, and what it does to them	Support the interview process	Leave a minor alone with an adult for a sexual-conduct interview
Relief Society and Primary (the children's organization) presidencies	Run the actual welfare and children's work of the Church	That every decision is subject to priesthood approval	Operate under supervision	Accept a budget they may not set
Mission presidents and missionaries	Deliver the growth on family-funded, unpaid labor	The teaching sequence, and what is disclosed when	Follow the lesson order	Invite baptism before disclosing tithing and temple obligations

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

If you are a local leader, a teacher or a volunteer, this section is about you. It is not an accusation: most of the people who carry out a rule did not write it. But the middle tier is also where a rule is most often quietly softened, or quietly enforced. Which do you do, and what would happen to you if you chose differently?

19 Documented cases

BEFORE YOU READ

Named, dated, sourced incidents: court records, government inquiries, regulators' findings and on-the-record reporting. Read the outcome lines in particular. They show what actually changed, if anything.

SEC order against Ensign Peak Advisors

WHEN: February 2023

WHAT: A whistleblower alleged in 2019 a reserve of over $100 billion [27]. The Securities and Exchange Commission found that the Church and its investment arm had used shell companies to obscure the size of a securities portfolio that had reached about $32 billion by 2018, for more than twenty years, and imposed a $5 million penalty in a settlement in which neither respondent admitted or denied the findings.

RECORD: SEC administrative order (regulatory action)

OUTCOME: Penalty paid. No leadership change announced. Members had been asked to sacrifice for building projects throughout the period of concealment.

TACTICS: 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling, 26 · Financial Control, 30 · Plausible Deniability

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Resignation obstruction and legal workaround

WHEN: 2015–present

WHAT: Members reported that resignation requests were routed through local leaders who delayed or attempted to dissuade them. A pro bono legal service was established to submit resignations directly on members' behalf.

RECORD: Former member accounts, the legal service's own record, and press reporting of the Church's 2019 change [13][24]

OUTCOME: In 2019 the Church began requiring notarized letters for resignations sent through the service, saying some of the filings were fraudulent [24]. Members said the workaround existed because the ordinary route did not function.

TACTICS: 4 · Hoovering, 28 · Discard

GRADE: CULTURAL

The bishop who asked for a closed door to open (United States, 2018)

WHEN: 2017–2018

WHAT: Sam Young, a former bishop, campaigned for more than a year against one-on-one "worthiness" interviews in which bishops asked children and teenagers about their sexual behaviour, including a 23-day hunger strike [17].

RECORD: KUER, 16 September 2018 [17]

OUTCOME: He was excommunicated in September 2018 [17].

TACTICS: 17 · Smear Campaign, 28 · Discard, 18 · Silent Treatment / Stonewalling

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Excommunicated for asking (United States, 2014)

WHEN: 2014

WHAT: Kate Kelly, founder of Ordain Women, led public campaigns for women's ordination to the priesthood [18].

RECORD: ABC News, 23 June 2014 [18]

OUTCOME: Excommunicated in absentia in June 2014 [18].

TACTICS: 17 · Smear Campaign, 28 · Discard

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

The September Six (United States, 1993)

WHEN: 1993

WHAT: Church leaders disciplined six scholars and feminists in one month — five excommunicated and one disfellowshipped — including the historian D. Michael Quinn [12].

RECORD: *The Conversation* [12]

OUTCOME: An episode that, in *The Conversation*'s words, continues to trouble the church [12]. Avraham Gileadi (1996) and Maxine Hanks (2012) were later rebaptized [29].

TACTICS: 17 · Smear Campaign, 28 · Discard, 6 · Gaslighting

GRADE: DOCUMENTED

Sources for this section: 1 2 12 13 17 18 24 29

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

These are not hypotheticals. Five documented cases on this page rest on a named record. The most common reaction to documented cases is "that was them, not us." Before settling on that, read the outcome lines. Did anything change in the structure that allowed each case to happen, or did one person leave while the structure stayed?

20 Precedent

BEFORE YOU READ

What has already been broken once, somewhere, and what would count as real change here. It is a benchmark, not a prediction.

It has been broken before

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	WHAT IT COST
The Gospel Topics essays acknowledging polygamy's scope, the race ban's origins, and translation methods	Historians and members who would not stop asking forced it	2013 onward	The 1993 excommunications came first
The SEC enforcement action	A whistleblower who had worked inside Ensign Peak brought it about	2019–2023	He resigned from Ensign Peak in August 2019 and then filed with the IRS; no further cost is recorded on this page [28]
Reversal of the 2015 exclusion policy	Members, including believing ones, who documented the harm to families pressed for it	2019	Children were denied baptism for four years first

Worthiness-interview reform campaigns	Believing members and abuse survivors run them	2018–present	Some organizers were excommunicated; the June 2018 guidelines, which let a youth invite a parent or other adult into the interview, were a partial result [25]
The 1978 revelation ending the racial priesthood ban	Sustained internal and external pressure brought it	1978	It came only after 126 years of exclusion

Promises on the record

COMMITMENT	MADE	STATUS	NOTE
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — accuracy and openness about history	2013 onward, via the Gospel Topics essays	Kept, narrowly	The essays were published and conceded material previously labelled hostile. Two things remain undone and are recorded here as separate entries: financial disclosure to members, and any withdrawal of discipline on the ground that the material was true (two of the September Six, Avraham Gileadi and Maxine Hanks, were later rebaptized [29]).
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — financial transparency to members	No commitment has been made	Silent	Included deliberately as a null entry. Publication ceased in 1959 with no stated principle and no end date, and no commitment to resume has ever been given. A register that only records broken promises misses the institutions that never made one.

What would change this page

Member-facing audited financial statements — the practice that existed before 1959, simply restored — would revise the concealment findings on this page overnight, and nothing else would be needed.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Some rows here record a change that has already happened somewhere; others name what would count as change here. When you are told something "can't change", it is fair to ask: can't, or won't? And who decided?

21 Voices from inside

BEFORE YOU READ

People from inside Mormonism / LDS who raised the hard question publicly, often at real cost. They answer the objection that criticism only ever comes from outsiders.

- **Sam Young.** A former bishop, he campaigned for more than a year against sexually explicit youth interviews, including a 23-day hunger strike, and was excommunicated in September 2018 [17].
- **Kate Kelly.** The founder of Ordain Women, she led public campaigns for women's ordination to the priesthood and was excommunicated in absentia in June 2014 [18].
- **D. Michael Quinn.** A historian, he was excommunicated in 1993 as one of the September Six, the six scholars and feminists disciplined that month [12].
- **Mark Naugle.** A lawyer, he runs QuitMormon, a free service that has filed about 80,000 resignations since 2015, as of a 2021 interview [13].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Were these people traitors, or the most loyal members their tradition had? Most were treated as the first at the time, and some are honored as the second now. If someone in your community raised one of these questions tomorrow, how would they be treated, and by you?

22 Regional variants

BEFORE YOU READ

The same tradition under different governments. What a member can say, leave, marry or inherit depends heavily on the state, and these cards show how differently it plays out.

United States (Utah corridor)

APEX: The apex is the First Presidency in Salt Lake City.

LAW: Churches file no Form 990 (the public annual return other US charities must file). The SEC has jurisdiction over the investment arm and exercised it in 2023. Utah has not removed the clergy-penitent privilege; a 2024 law only protects clergy who choose to report.

DOCUMENTED: The 2023 SEC order documents Ensign Peak's use of thirteen shell companies, and investigative reporting documents the abuse helpline's routing to legal counsel.

EXIT: The exit cost is the highest in this tradition anywhere: employment, family, housing, schooling and social world are frequently all inside the same network in Utah, Idaho, and parts of Arizona.

REGULATOR: The SEC acts on securities matters and the Utah Division of Consumer Protection on consumer matters; the state legislature decides the reporting exemption; and police and DCFS (Utah's Division of Child and Family Services) act directly on any child matter.

TELL: Concentration is the variable. The same church in Ohio has a fraction of the exit cost it has in Utah County, with identical doctrine.

United Kingdom

APEX: The apex is an area presidency reporting to Salt Lake City, and the UK entity is a registered charity.

LAW: Charity Commission registration means published accounts for the UK entity — a level of disclosure unavailable to American members of the same church.

DOCUMENTED: UK charity filings are public and searchable. In 2014 the European Court of Human Rights held that the UK had not breached the Convention by refusing the Preston temple the business-rates exemption for places of public worship, because the temple is open only to members with a recommend [32].

EXIT: The exit cost is low socially; the community is small and dispersed, so the total-network effect does not apply.

REGULATOR: The regulator is the Charity Commission, and a UK member can read filings that a Utah member cannot.

TELL: This is the single most useful comparison in this volume: identical institution, identical doctrine, one jurisdiction requires accounts and one does not.

Sources for this section: [3]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page covers the United States (Utah corridor) and the United Kingdom. Your country changes what this tradition can do to you, and what you can do about it. If you live somewhere not listed, ask which of these cards your country most resembles. If you are a voter, note that each of these arrangements was chosen by a government.

23 The questions

BEFORE YOU READ

The six questions the documented record could not resolve. Each is set out below: why it is being asked, and a concrete example already on this page that it points back to.

QUESTION 1 OF 6

A federal regulator fined your Church for hiding its investment portfolio from disclosure for twenty years. A whistleblower put the reserve at over $100 billion. Ask why the disclosure required a regulator, and ask which leader was held accountable.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If the members who funded a portfolio learned its size from a whistleblower and a regulator, then the Church's own reporting did not tell them. The question asks why disclosure took outside force, and whether anyone was held responsible.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The law table records the SEC's finding: the portfolio was hidden behind 13 shell companies from 1997 to 2019, with penalties of $4m and $1m in 2023 [12]. The glance table notes "no resignation."

QUESTION 2 OF 6

If tithing is a spiritual principle, ask why access to your daughter's sealing depends on your having paid it.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Tying a spiritual principle to a payment makes the payment the gate to a family's most important ceremony. The question asks whether that link is spiritual, or financial.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The money table records that tithing is linked directly to temple recommend worthiness, so that access to family sealings depends on payment. The day inside shows a father waiting in the lobby during his own daughter's sealing.

QUESTION 3 OF 6

Why may an untrained volunteer still question a twelve-year-old alone about sexual matters, with a parent present only if the child asks, and what institution that works with children would call that acceptable?

WHY THIS IS ASKED

Any other institution that works with children has safeguarding rules against one-to-one questioning about sex. The question asks the Church to meet the standard any school or sports club would.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The structure section records worthiness interviews of minors, historically with sexually explicit questions. The who-gets-hurt table adds that the interviewer is an untrained volunteer who is also the family's ecclesiastical leader.

QUESTION 4 OF 6

Material the Church now publishes was called anti-Mormon lies when members raised it. Ask whether any discipline was withdrawn because

the history was true, and whether the historians excommunicated in 1993 have been thanked.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

If material called lies later appears in the Church's own publications, the people disciplined for raising it were right before the institution was. The question asks whether the institution has said so.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The say-do table records that material once called anti-Mormon propaganda was published by the Church itself from 2013 onward. The history section records the excommunication of the "September Six" historians and intellectuals in 1993.

QUESTION 5 OF 6

The 2015 policy was revelation, then reversed in 2019. Ask what happened to the families in between, and who apologized to them.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

A policy announced as revelation and reversed four years later left real families in between. The question asks who accounted to them.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The genealogy section records the 2015 policy excluding children of same-sex couples from baptism, reversed in 2019, "without accounting to the families harmed in between."

QUESTION 6 OF 6

If a bishop learns a child is being abused and calls a Church attorney instead of the police, ask plainly who that call was protecting.

WHY THIS IS ASKED

The first call after a disclosure decides whose interests are protected. The question asks who a call to a Church attorney protects, and who a call to the police protects.

EXAMPLE ALREADY ON THIS PAGE

The structure table lists the abuse-reporting helpline as risk management, staffed by Church-retained attorneys, "who gets called before the police." The history section records litigation over the helpline from 2018 onward.

In closing

Your own scripture says a prophet is only a prophet when acting as such, and your own tradition insists you seek personal confirmation rather than take a leader's word. That is not a loophole. It is the mechanism your religion gave you for exactly this situation, and the people using it — the transparency advocates, the interview reformers, the members who forced the essays — are not enemies of the Church. They are the reason it changed at all.

You can keep the family, the covenants, and the God, and refuse to fund an institution that will not show you the ledger. Asking a question is not apostasy. And if a portfolio worth tens of billions of dollars had to be hidden from you for twenty years, the honest question is not whether you are worthy of the temple. It is whether they were worthy of your paycheck.

Sources for this section: [1] [2]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Choose one question and ask it this month, out loud, to a real person who could answer it. Then write down what happened. Were you answered, redirected, or told that asking was the problem? Whichever it was, the response is information.

24 Leaving safely here

BEFORE YOU READ

Practical, non-theological guidance for someone who needs to step back or step away safely. It is a safety document, not an argument.

This is practical guidance, not legal advice.

1. **You can resign by letter** without a disciplinary council; a lawyer's service can file it for you [13].
2. **Stop tithing first** if money is a pressure point; the temple recommend depends on it [10].
3. **Expect family costs,** especially around temple weddings, which only members holding a temple recommend can attend [10].
4. **If a child is being interviewed alone,** you can refuse or ask to be present.
5. **If you were abused,** go to the police first; clergy are not required to report what they hear in confession in Utah [3].
6. **Find support** from the organizations in the next section [19] [20] [21].

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Even if this section is not for you, it may be for someone you know. Most people who leave a high-demand community say that the first person who listened without trying to argue them back mattered more than anything else. Could that person be you?

25 Where to get help

BEFORE YOU READ

Organizations that can help, each checked directly against its own site, with the date of the check. Nothing here is endorsed beyond that check.

Checked 2026-09-27.

ORGANIZATION	FOR	WHERE	CONTACT
Recovering from Religion	People questioning or leaving faith	US, Canada and online	**(844) 368-2848** [19]
Faith to Faithless	People leaving high-control religion	UK	**0800 448 0748** (freephone; Monday 10:00–13:00, Wednesday 10:00–13:00, Thursday 16:00–19:00 UK time) [20]
ICSA	Former members of high-control groups; families	International	Via website [21]
Childhelp	Child abuse	US	**1-800-422-4453** [22]
RAINN	Sexual assault	US	**1-800-656-4673** [23]

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Save one contact now, before anyone needs it:

Recovering from Religion (people questioning or leaving faith; US, Canada and online). People in crisis rarely have the energy to research options. Having a name ready is one of the most useful things you can do for someone else.



26

Sources

BEFORE YOU READ

Every numbered citation on this page, with a named, checkable source. Spot-check a few before trusting the rest; that is the honest way to read any page in this book, including this one.

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WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

Don't take this page's word for anything either. People tend to believe a claim more the more often they have heard it, whether or not it is true; this is the "illusory truth effect" (Hasher, Goldstein & Toppino, 1977). Spot-check three citations at random. If any fails, tell us, and it will be corrected and logged.

27 What changed on this page

BEFORE YOU READ

A dated log of what changed on this page: corrections, additions and new sources. Changes are logged in public rather than made quietly.

- **2026-10-03:** Corrected the Ensign Peak figures (the SEC found a hidden portfolio of about $32 billion by 2018; the $100 billion figure is a whistleblower's estimate and is now attributed); recorded the June 2018 change that lets a youth invite a parent into a worthiness interview; corrected the September Six outcome (two later rejoined); fixed the QuitMormon figure, the Presiding Bishopric, the missionary service length and the church-funded Proposition 8 wording; regraded eight techniques whose grades were stronger than their entries, with matching counts; removed unsupported claims from the money cards; and added nine sources.
- **2026-09-27:** Added Branches, Law & state, Money in numbers (British charity accounts 2020–2024), three more documented cases, Voices from inside, Leaving safely and Where to get help.

WHY THIS MATTERS TO YOU

This page keeps a public log of its own changes, mistakes included. Does the institution you belong to, give to, or were raised in keep one like it? If not, how would you know what it got wrong, and when?

Colophon

Set in EB Garamond (SIL Open Font License), regular, italic and bold, with true small capitals and old-style figures in text and lining tabular figures in tables. Laid out with Paged.js in Chromium from the same Markdown that feeds the website. US Letter, single-sided, tagged for accessibility and checked against PDF/UA-1 with veraPDF. Built 2026-10-27. Text checked 2026-10-03.

Palette: ink, oxblood, gold, cream, rule. Seven type sizes. Rules of 0.4 pt and 2 pt only.