

RESTORATION BELIEFS

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

REVISED EDITION

**Selected and Edited by
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FOREWORD

It is a divine injunction that every person who comes to a knowledge of the Restoration should seek opportunities to tell the gospel story to those with whom they come in contact. We became keenly aware of the need for a course of study which would help members and nonmembers alike understand the Restoration beliefs. We are making this text available in an effort to fulfill this need.

The material herein presented was written several years ago by the members of the Council of Presidents of Seventy and used for a short time in the School of the Restoration. Since the lessons have been written by different individuals, there will be different styles of writing. We have endeavored to arrange it in a way that would be available for study in the Church school, Sunday night classes, and by home study groups.

Please be aware that this book contains the words of man, and you may not agree with every word that is written. May our study and discussion help us become one with our Lord and one with each other.

As you study this text, may the Spirit of Christ, which moved upon the hearts of the founders of this Church, bring to you a testimony of the truthfulness of the Restoration.

Scriptures are from the Inspired Version of the Bible, the 1908 Book of Mormon, and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants.

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1

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

Some of the most perplexing questions that men face are those having to do with life and its purpose. Those who wander through the years of mortal existence, unaware of the eternal purpose and plan, find life holds nothing of deep meaning. To those who catch a glimpse of the eternal purposes, life is an endless challenge to achievement of the better things that can be. To live without at least a basic concept of this purpose is merely to exist.

“Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and, God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again in their infant state, innocent before God” (D&C 90:6b). Many people have erred in thinking that Adam and Eve were placed in the garden of Eden in a state of perfection and that, having fallen therefrom, it is the purpose of our lives to return to that state of perfection. This is a faulty point of view because we confuse perfection and innocence. Man was created in a state of innocence but not perfection.

“In the garden of Eden gave I unto man his agency; and unto thy brethren have I said, and also gave commandment, that they should love one another and that they should choose me their Father” (Genesis 7:40). Had man been perfect in his creation, he would also have been perfect in his use of agency; and there would have been no fall.

In the creation of man, God looked for people who were worthy to walk with Him, not because they could not sin, but because they chose to walk righteously. He sought for those who would not be simply submissive but for men who would be intelligently obedient, for “the glory of God is intelligence” (D&C 90:6).

Thus, He created man in a state of innocence, free of sin and having all the potential of godliness within him. However, to be godly, each man must by his own choice choose to live righteously. For man to become worthy of eternal life with God, it was necessary for him to be given opportunity not only to prove himself but to grow through untold numbers of right choices—making godly use of his agency.

The Lord said, “See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil, in that I command thee this day to love the Lord, thy God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, that thou mayest live and multiply; and the Lord, thy God, shall bless thee in the land whither thou goest to possess it I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live” (Deuteronomy 30:15-19).

Alma wrote, “Therefore, this life became a probationary state—a time to prepare to meet God” (Alma 9:41; see also 1 Nephi 4:52; 2 Nephi 6:56, 15:10).

Modern-day revelation tells us, “This is my work and my glory: to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (D&C 22:23b). Webster defines immortality as “unending existence.” In contrast, he defines eternal (in scriptural connections) as implying “a state or quality other than mere duration.” This is in agreement with the statement of Christ, Who said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

Thus, we see that God was not to be satisfied with the mere “unending existence” of man but sought to make it possible for him to become worthy of eternal life with God. Man, with the true understanding of the purpose of life, then becomes challenged by the values of eternity; and life becomes meaningful, filled with hope and expectancy.

Without God’s help, man is lost. With all the challenge of eternity, man must have a guide—a source of strength—if he is to achieve a quality of life worthy of its purpose. Alone, man is weak and unable to move toward God. The apostle Paul, recognizing the carnality of man and the nature of sin, cried out, “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:26). God, recognizing man’s need, sent His Son; and “as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12).

Webster says that religion is the service and adoration of God, expressed in forms of worship in obedience to divine commands. Jesus recognized the importance of this concept among the Jews

who believed in Him and said, “If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:31-32).

King Benjamin’s proclamation included this admonition: “Believe in God; believe that he is and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all things which the Lord can comprehend. And again, believe that ye must repent of your sins, and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God, and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you. And now, if you believe all these things, see that ye do them” (Mosiah 2:13-17).

Only as man obeys divine commands does strength come to free him of the sin that separates him from God. Religion is important to the extent that it teaches man these divine commands and causes him to be obedient to them. The resultant flow of the power of Christ into his life leads man to adore God and to achieve the purpose of life as he becomes a son of God.

Nephi reports the voice of the Lord, saying, “He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore, follow me and do the things which ye have seen me do. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ by baptism, yea, by following your Lord and your Savior down into the water, according to his word, behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost” (2 Nephi 13:15-16).

Nephi continues with the rest of the story: “And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this straight and narrow path, I would ask if all is done. Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far, save it were by the word of Christ, with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save; wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father, Ye shall have eternal life” (2 Nephi 13:27-30).

Ecclesiastes 12:13 sums up our purpose in life: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.”

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why is it impossible to live adequately without basic concepts of the purpose of life?
2. Why do we believe man is created in a state of innocence rather than perfection? What does such a belief demand of each of us?
3. What did Christ have as His main work on earth in relation to God? In relation to man?
4. What is religion? Why is it important?
5. What gift of God most expands or limits man’s growth?
6. How may man best enjoy his sonship with God?
7. What is the most important thing (purpose) in your life?

2

GOD

Belief in God is basic to the religious concept and life of all men. What one believes about God determines to a large extent his entire philosophy of life. All men believe something about God. Even the atheist has such a belief, for he believes that God does not exist.

An adequate concept of God, His being, and purpose is of utmost importance to the Church of Jesus Christ. Such a concept will either challenge its members to victorious achievement or limit them to misplaced satisfaction in mediocracy. One of the significant contributions of Jesus Christ to men is found in this beautiful revelation of God. In a similar manner, His Church restored in these latter days is under responsibility to so reveal the heavenly Father.

GOD IS

Paul, in writing to the Hebrews, said, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). A sense of the reality of God's existence is fundamental, for it is from this point that our God-concept begins.

Many great scientists, using scientific fact and logical reasoning, have tried to prove God and have come to the conclusion that He is. A number of good statements can be found in the pamphlet *What Latter Day Saints Believe about God*, by Elbert A. Smith. However, in the final analysis, science can no more prove the existence of God than it can prove a mother's love. The fact of God's being comes directly as a result of personal religious experience.

It is from such religious experience that we find at the heart of the Restoration and our guiding Scriptures this affirmation: GOD IS!

GOD IS INFINITE

"We believe in God, the eternal Father." In this, the opening declaration of the Epitome of Faith, we find the implication of His infinite nature. God is infinite; He is limitless and immeasurable; He is without bounds. The Psalmist said, "Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2). The Doctrine and Covenants declares, "By these things we know there is a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal" (D&C 17:4a). It is difficult for us to grasp the idea of an infinite God. Elbert A. Smith says, "We cannot think of time as having no beginning. Nor can we comprehend it as stretching back without a beginning and forward without end."

We must constantly seek within ourselves for that which is eternal and placed there by Him—such as intelligence, agency, and love. The finite mind, unaided, will never completely understand or know all there is about God. The challenge of this very thought should spur man on in unreserved effort to reach a higher plane of association with Him. In our own day comes the assurance, "The day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him" (D&C 85:12e).

GOD IS CREATOR

"I am the Beginning and the End, the Almighty God. By mine Only Begotten I created these things. Yea, in the beginning I created the heaven and the earth upon which thou standest" (Genesis 1:2-3). These are among the earliest words of Holy Writ. By the Son, God created all that is (see John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16). Through the concept of God as Creator, we see Him as the source of all that we have, know, enjoy, and anticipate. The fact of God's creatorship is upheld by the very detail of creation itself. It is inconceivable that the boundless universe or complex nature of life is the result of blind chance.

Recognition of God as Creator causes man to admit that God is owner of all and man is His manager or steward. This then begins to establish not only the relationship of man to God, but of man to life itself and to all that is given into our keeping.

GOD IS PURPOSEFUL

Back of all creation, all life is the purpose of God. It is not just an accident that there is oxygen in the air to sustain the life of man, nor that nitrogen is there to supply the needs of plant life. All things necessary for man's life have been carefully provided in God's creation. Could it be by chance that man's broken body can heal itself, bones knit together, infection be repelled? How long could man live if there were not forces of regeneration in his body constantly replacing the muscle cells spent to supply his energy?

"This is my work and my glory: to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (D&C 22:23b). These words help us understand something of the purpose of God, and this understanding puts purpose in man's life.

GOD IS PERSONAL

Recognition of God as the purposeful Creator attaches to Him the fact of personality. Many men look upon God simply as a Spirit. As such, He is everywhere and nowhere. We believe in a personal God. From the earliest declarations of the Restoration Movement comes the witness of this personal God through the experience of Joseph Smith, Jr., in the grove near Palmyra, New York (see *Church History*, Volume 1, pages 9ff).

God hears and answers our prayers. He sees our every act and understands every problem we take to Him. He weeps at our iniquity (see Genesis 7:35-41) and pays the price of our salvation (see John 3:16). Through the Holy Spirit, He speaks to lead us to all truth (see John 14:26; 16:12-15) and witnesses our adoption as His sons (see Romans 8:14; Galatians 4:4-7).

Elbert A. Smith says, "At the very foundation of our faith is the belief in a personal God who from time to time has revealed Himself to man, whose purpose is to save men and exalt them to the estate of sonship and brotherhood." President Joseph Smith III said, "The Father is a personage of spirit, glory, and power, in whom all perfection and fullness of attributes dwell."

GOD IS THE FATHER

God is more than personal; He is the heavenly Father! In the Scriptures, God is referred to as the "Father" more frequently than any other way. Jesus, in teaching men to pray, instructed them to address God as "Our Father who art in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

To know God as "Our Father" is to place significance on our own lives—to be assured that this being of infinite power and wisdom, Creator of all the universe, source of life itself, condescends to establish a personal relationship with individual men and reveal His concern for man. If God is concerned with individuals, then individuals must be important. "Remember, the worth of souls is great in the sight of God" (D&C 16:3c)

GOD IS LOVE

The love of God is assured us by the nature of His fatherhood. However, it is not sufficient just to say that God loves. John tells us, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). And just as God is the source of all power, wisdom, and knowledge, so also is He the source of all love. John also said, "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us" (1 John 4:12).

To the extent that we permit love to enter our lives, we also permit God to enter. His all-embracing love penetrates all creatures wherever He is. This love of God reaches out to all mankind, offering them the privilege of becoming His sons and daughters if they are willing to yield themselves to Him and live in that relationship (see John 1:12).

Only the knowledge that God is love can explain such compassion and concern as we find recorded in the testimony of Enoch, where we find God weeping because of the wickedness of men (see Genesis 7:35). Enoch's knowledge of God caused him to say, "Thou art just; thou art merciful and kind forever; . . . and naught but peace, justice, and truth is the habitation of thy throne; and mercy shall go before thy face and have no end" (Genesis 7:37-38). Knowing that God is love, we can then be assured of His justice, mercy, and kindness. Men who follow His leadings have no need to fear the future; for though they cannot see the distant scene, they move forward—confident that they do not walk alone (see Psalm 23).

GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE

“He changeth not; if so, he would cease to be God” (Mormon 4:82; also 68-70). “I am the Lord; I change not” (Malachi 3:6). “He is the same God yesterday, today, and forever” (D&C 17:2g). The Scriptures have consistently taught the unchangeable nature of God, and the Restoration Movement has maintained that He is unchangeable in every respect. He is perfect in knowledge and wisdom. Jacob said, “Oh, how great the holiness of our God! For he knoweth all things, and there is not anything save he knows it” (2 Nephi 6:44).

Believing that God is unchangeable has caused us to accept as truth many doctrines that are rejected by other religious bodies. For example, since God spoke to men in ages past, we believe that He does now and will continue to speak whenever men are willing to listen. Amos said, “Surely the Lord God will do nothing until he revealeth the secret unto his servants the prophets” (Amos 3:7). Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would come to men to speak to them, saying that this spirit would “take of mine and shall show it unto you” (John 16:15).

God, who healed the sick in ages past as they came to Him in faith, still heals men under the same conditions. Because of our belief in His unchangeability, we interpret His teachings and observe His ordinances more literally than many other bodies of religious men. We ought to be challenged to test that which we believe and are taught in the name of God by comparing it with that which He has revealed in ages past—lest we be deceived by the opinions of men and fall into the path of apostasy.

GOD IS SUPREME

We affirm this most important fact: God is supreme! He rules the universe. Being the maker of law, He is obedient to law; but He is not subordinate to law! There is no thing, no being, greater than God. In Him we move and live and have our being, for He is the source of life itself. Isaiah, speaking in the name of God, said, “I am the Lord, and there is none else; . . . a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me” (Isaiah 45:5, 21). “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory” (Isaiah 6:3). From Him alone does man receive divine help. To Him alone does man owe unending allegiance. What a wonderful God to know, worship, and seek to understand! Though our finite minds do not conceive Him for all He is, yet gratefully we ought to sing:

My God, how wonderful thou art,
Thy Majesty, how bright!
How glorious Thy mercy seat,
In depths of burning light!
Yet I may love Thee, too, O Lord!
Almighty as Thou art,
For Thou hast stooped to ask of me
The love of my poor heart.

Questions for Discussion

1. What are three eternal attributes of God that are also found in the personality of man?
2. In what way do the Scriptures most often speak of God?
3. Give at least three scriptures from the Three Standard Books which tell that God is unchangeable.
4. Why must Latter Day Saints have an adequate concept of God?
5. How does science help us in our search for knowledge of God?

3

JESUS CHRIST

The testimony of Christ comes to us with special importance in the Restoration, for through the Restoration the knowledge of Christ and a continued testimony of the divinity of His work has come. We approach this with a study of the scriptural story of His work before, during, and after His life on earth.

BEFORE HIS LIFE ON EARTH

Jesus Christ was in the beginning with God: “And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning” (Genesis 1:27). “In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God. The same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1-2). Christ in His prayer said, “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was” (John 17:5).

He shared in the creation. Though we recognize God as the Creator, for it was by His power that creation was possible, we find that Christ shared in creation. Modern-day revelation tells us, “And worlds without number have I created, and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten” (D&C 22:21c). This was apparently understood by the writers in the first-century Church (see John 1:3; Colossians 1:16); and Nephi records the words of Christ: “Behold I am Jesus Christ, the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are” (3 Nephi 4:44).

He chose to become the Savior (Genesis 3:3). This fact was known by many of the prophets centuries before the coming of Jesus Christ. Jacob writes, “For this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming; and not only we, ourselves, had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us” (Jacob 3:4).

HIS LIFE ON EARTH

In the meridian of time, Christ came to the earth and took upon Himself mortal life. His mission was clear. He came to make it possible for men to come again into the presence of God, to make the atonement (*at-one-ment*). Christ came to empower man: “As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; only to them who believe on his name” (John 1:12).

The mission of Christ is expressed in various ways in the Scriptures. He came to seek and save that which was lost (see Luke 19:10), make everlasting life possible (John 3:16), free men through truth (see John 8:31-32, 18:37), and give men abundant life (see John 10:10). All of these are caught up in His overall purpose—leading men back to God.

The nature of the work of Christ was threefold. Basically, it was *apostolic*. He was a witness for truth, and His chief concern was for the souls of men. He was also *prophetic*. He was an inspired interpreter and revealer of the divine will. He looked not only at the past or present but to the future. He was the *teacher*; He imparted much knowledge to His followers, dealt with the iniquity in their lives, and challenged them to cleanliness. He was also an example to mankind, leaving these records of His purpose: “I can of mine own self do nothing because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me” (John 5:31); “I do always those things that please him” (John 8:29); and “Ye shall observe to do the things which ye have seen me do” (Matthew 26:25).

AFTER HIS LIFE ON EARTH

The testimony of the Restoration becomes most distinctive in our belief that the nature of His work continues to be apostolic, prophetic, and teaching. Much of this work is accomplished through the Holy Spirit, in accord with His promise: “I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth” (John 14:16-17) and “When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13). While it is the Holy

Spirit who speaks, we note that He speaks only that which He hears Christ speak.

As further evidence that the crucifixion did not end the personal work of Christ with men, we note His promise that other sheep should hear His voice (John 10:16) and the testimony of Nephi bearing witness of the fulfilling of His promise (3 Nephi 7:16-23).

We believe that Christ continues to be concerned with living children of men and that His love and mercy reach beyond the grave in a continuous effort to influence even the wicked (see 1 Peter 3:18-20, 4:6). Some accuse us of believing in a second chance for man, but we see it is but a continuation of the work of Christ toward the accomplishment of the purpose of God.

THE WORK OF CHRIST IS ETERNAL

We can plainly see that the work of Christ is eternal. He works through precept and example to bring man to God. At the heart of His teaching is the Fatherhood of God. He seeks to challenge men by the proclamation of the intense and personal affection of our heavenly Father for every individual He has created. He invites men with His offer of power that we might become the true sons of God.

In a general way, all men are the sons of God by the fact of creation; but this natural relationship does not make us sons in the deepest sense of the word. That comes with mutual understanding, a unity of interest, activity, and will. Men truly become the sons of God through their relationship with Christ. To obtain this divine relationship, man must lay aside his personal desire and accept the will of God. He who has learned to yield his own will to the will of God and to take delight only in that which is well pleasing to God has learned to follow the life of Jesus and become filled with the joy of sonship.

The work of Christ seeks to do away with the separation between God and man which has resulted from sin. The outstanding feature of the life of Jesus has been His intelligent obedience to the will of God in every instance. His mortal suffering, the agony of the cross, and His physical death are symbolic of the sorrow and pain we cause the eternal Father by choosing that which separates us from Him. This is the price He pays, that we by choice and intelligence may become one with Him. However, this sacrifice of righteousness offered by Christ can alter the relationship in which we stand to God only as we bring ourselves into union with Him.

Jesus prayed, "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21). Who are we to hinder the fulfillment of His desire?

CHRIST OFFERS FULFILLMENT OF OUR NEEDS

In Christ alone do we find hope of fulfillment of our needs. The great cry coming from the hearts of the masses is "peace" —not just peace with neighbors but peace within. The cry is for peace that brings freedom from fear, freedom from agitating passion, and freedom from moral conflict. Such peace is not the result of outward environment but rather an inward quality. Christ promises such a peace—one that is not of this world, a peace that removes trouble from our hearts and fear from our minds (John 14:27). Stephen found this peace even in an agonizing physical death: "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts 7:60). Paul, in the midst of persecution, found this peace and the sureness of God's love (Romans 8:35-39). Some of the Book of Mormon people likewise found this peace in spite of persecutions (see Alma 1:42).

This peace comes to us as we respond to the Master's pleading to take His yoke upon us and learn of Him (Matthew 11:29-30). In the resultant fellowship, man need never again feel alone. Brother Elbert Smith wrote, "The only man who walks alone is the man who walks without God." The peace of Christ comes as we find the freedom that can result only in a knowledge of the truth (John 8:31-32). The peace of Christ comes as the raging passion and moral conflict find answers through His strength. When we sense that He comes to our aid, we are delivered from sin (Romans 7:14-22). We know this peace as we see the awfulness of death replaced with the reality of His promise of continuous, eternal life with God (John 11:25-26; 14:1-3).

Yes, Christ is the answer to man's need!

OUR FINAL TESTIMONY—HE LIVES!

Basic to the witness of Christ as we know Him is the beautifully worded statement of Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon after seeing Him in vision in 1832: "And now, after the many testimonies which

have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: that he lives; for we saw him, even on the right hand of God" (D&C 76:3g).

In the midst of a Christian world that increasingly denies that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ of faith and thus rejects the fact of His resurrection, we move forth to proclaim boldly that "HE LIVES!"

Questions for Discussion

1. What three things must we know about Christ in the period prior to His earthly ministry?
2. Christ came to earth for what purpose?
3. What message is at the heart of all His teaching?
4. How did Christ's work continue after His crucifixion? Give scriptural proof.
5. How is Christ's work threefold?
6. In what ways does the message of Christ offer security to man?
7. How does one acquire the peace of Christ?
8. Of what are we speaking when we say, "the atonement of Christ" and in what way is it related to a living Christ?
9. Does Christianity require a living Christ in order to become productive and worthwhile?

4

THE HOLY SPIRIT

Paul wrote, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, except he hath the Spirit of God” (1 Corinthians 2:9-11).

Experience with the influence and power of the Holy Spirit has commanded the attention of disciples of Christ since the rise of the Church. This spiritual force has been, and is, one of the central features of the Restoration Movement. Perhaps more has been said—and little really understood—of this wonderful power than any other feature of the gospel message. No doubt we shall constantly learn more of its meaning and use in our lives as we grow toward our full maturity as sons of God.

If the full measure of God’s purpose is to be realized in the human form and spirit, then, as believers and faithful followers of the Christ, we must match ourselves with this creative force, the Holy Spirit. The Father has said, “This is my work and my glory: to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man” (D&C 22:23b). His purpose is caught up in the unifying and synthesizing force of the Holy Spirit between Himself and man in a perfect spiritual symphony.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

God is love. He is creative. Growing out of this motivation by love to create, there evolved in His creative will a point at which element and spirit could take form. The Scriptures state that the Father, through His Son, Jesus the Christ, created this heaven and the earth upon which we stand (Genesis 1:2-3; D&C 22:21). Worlds without number have been and are being created. Man cannot fathom the vast expanse of space in which other earths and heavens have been and are being placed. We can identify only a few with the aid of powerful telescopes.

The Holy Spirit longs to finish the creative work begun in the life of man. It seeks to fulfill the intent of God’s will in perfecting the life of man. It is with man and in man that the Holy Spirit shall realize its full purpose of creation. The power and glory of the Holy Spirit constantly challenges the agency of man. It is with the creative principle of the Spirit of God that man shall discover and realize his full manhood as a son of God. Man cannot live in the full measure of his being without the full manifestation of God’s Spirit. The degree of its indwelling marks the degree of man’s achievement.

We have an unalterable choice to make in terms of obedience to the perfect will of God the moment we decide to follow Him (see 2 Nephi 1:120-124). Our very life is caught up in the quality of our understanding of the workings of the Holy Spirit which emanates from the throne of grace. The outreach of God is the manifestation of His Holy Spirit. It is holy because it is His Spirit; it is spirit because He is Spirit. The quality of being a son of God is the ultimate for man.

WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

While the Holy Spirit is substance, it is not substance as we understand the known elements. It cannot be measured nor identified with the aid of the known elements. It is of a different matter and on a much higher plane. It is a substance which exists separate from the elements. It is the power which seeks to unify the human family into one great fellowship of love. Its purpose is to bring men, beasts, fowl, and fishes into an eternal relationship with God in a glorified earth. We understand this to be the celestial glory.

The Holy Spirit is the power which emanates from the person and presence of God, the outreach of Himself through time and space. It is an obedient Spirit. It responds perfectly to the will of God. It is the lifegiving force by which all things exist and have their being. It is the gift by which man is promised celestial glory in the presence of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. It is the manifestation of revelation within the spirit of man to receive the record of heaven, the peaceable things of immortal glory, the truth of all things, which maketh alive all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment (see Genesis 6:64).

The indwelling of the Spirit of God depends upon the quality of righteousness within man. His Spirit cannot dwell in unholy bodies (see Alma 5:36, 16:235; Helaman 2:59). Man's body is the temple for the indwelling of the Spirit of God. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Corinthians 6:19). The existence of man is the product of the creative will of God. He intends that the spirit of man shall evolve to the point of perfect union with the Spirit of God. The life of Christ is the perfect example of this possibility. Man must arrive at this essential achievement. The purpose of his being is pointed in the direction of a perfect union with God. It is the object of God's creative purpose.

THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"The Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit; and everyone that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father" (DC 83:7c-d).

To every man is given a measure of the Spirit of God. However, a full measure of the Holy Spirit cannot be given to man except he turns his attention from self to God who made him. In this attention he must reconcile himself to his Maker as a son to a Father. From desire, he must move to faith through the adjusting principle of repentance. The first concrete act of repentance is in the acceptance of the principle and ordinance of baptism by immersion into the Kingdom of God through the Church of Jesus Christ. When a man does this, he is committed to the way of life Christ has designated for man to travel. At least, he commits himself to the keeping of the commandments. Man is then born into the Kingdom of God.

Then there is the laying on of hands for the promise of the reception of the Holy Spirit. It is presumed that through obedience to preparatory principles, in cleansing the body of sin by repentance and faith and baptism by water, men are ready to receive the working principles of the blessing of the Holy Spirit.

What a man does with his life from the point of receiving the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit is his major problem in life. God does not interfere with agency. He inspires but does not assume complete command and control. He is there to help and lead and inspire, but He is not there to give of His power if man has not prepared for the full expression of that power. God and man must work together for the full endowment of the Holy Spirit. Man must attach himself to the ultimate purpose of God in the work of inheriting the Kingdom of God on the earth as well as in heaven. This initial attachment must carry the quality of embracing the truths of Kingdom building.

One of the first effects of the gift of the Holy Spirit is to create in man a vision of the will and purposes of God. His personal experiences which relate exclusively to himself should become secondary to the primary experience of the vision of the Kingdom. When a man seeks first for the Kingdom, then his secondary needs are met (see Matthew 6:38).

The testimony that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, finds its strength when seen in light of the purpose of God, through Christ in leading men into the Zionic situation. Zion is the evidence of the Kingdom of heaven on the earth. The Holy Spirit leads men into a "Kingdom-of-God-on-earth" experience through prophetic vision, revelation, and inspiration toward the implementation of the will of God. It does this in the measure of our willingness to go all the way toward God through Christ in the building of Zion. "Blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost" (1 Nephi 3:187).

It is through this gift of grace that we are saved. It is by this gift that faith is given purpose and point. The full measure of the Holy Spirit in man is the fulfillment of the fact of the atonement. It is by the operation in full measure of the gift of the Holy Spirit within man that the fact of the trinity of God, Christ, and man is achieved. This was the burden of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane (see John 17).

The guidance of the Holy Spirit is significant to our personal and collective approach toward God and His Kingdom. If we are going in the direction of Kingdom building, then we can expect the blessings of strength and guidance. If we honor those through whom ministry should come, then we can reasonably expect to receive the needed leadership of the Spirit.

The exercise of agency in determining and evaluating the course we should take in life is a necessary factor in the leadings of the Spirit of God. We must study the problems at hand to be

solved either personally or in the Church. And then, as we petition the throne of grace, the influence and light of the Spirit will come as a warming and prompting feeling.

“You must study it out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right; and if it is right, I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right” (D&C 9:3b-c). This feeling registers the rightness of the direction in which we are going, and it indicates the rightness of the course we must employ to achieve the goal. This experience, coupled with the major objective of God through His Church in Kingdom building, gives significance and meaning to our personal experiences.

“Deny not the gifts of God, for they are many; and they come from the same God To one is given by the Spirit of God that he may teach the word of wisdom; and to another, that he may teach the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; and to another, exceeding great faith; and to another, the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; and again, to another, that he may work mighty miracles; and again, to another, that he may prophesy concerning all things; and again, to another, the beholding of angels and ministering spirits; and again, to another, all kinds of tongues; and again, to another, the interpretation of languages and of divers kinds of tongues” (Moroni 10:8-11).

There are diverse methods or gifts through which direction comes in our lives. These are known as the gifts of the Spirit. The important thing is not the method so much as it is the message received through these gifts of God. The message must fit into the pattern of Kingdom building. It must be evidence of intelligence. In this is the glory of God revealed through the Church to the world. Its central testimony is Christ and His Kingdom. The first agent in the revelation of the Spirit is God Himself. He is the first and final determiner of its expression. The earnest longing of our prayers should be that the Church shall continue to implore God for the manifestation of His love and grace through the power and glory of the Holy Spirit.

“If ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you by the power of the Holy Ghost; and by the power of the Holy Ghost, ye may know the truth of all things” (Moroni 10:5).

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the relationship between bringing forth the cause of Zion and the endowment of the Holy Spirit?
2. The Holy Spirit is often referred to in other terms. Give at least three found in the Scriptures.
3. What determines the measure of the Holy Spirit that comes to any man?
4. What does the gift of the Holy Spirit do for those who accept it as an “abiding comforter”?
5. What three fruits of the Spirit can be found in the life of a godly man?
6. What is the purpose of the laying on of hands by the elders in relation to the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit?

5

THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Holy Spirit cannot be separated from the gifts of the Spirit, for these gifts are the manifestations of it. They are the real benefits. They are given to every man, “to profit withal” (1 Corinthians 12:7). It would be foolish to seek for the Holy Spirit and yet ignore its extraordinary manifestations of power. If the Holy Spirit is to be continuous, so also are its gifts. The two can no more be separated than fire and heat or wind and force.

The apostle Paul, concerned about the new Gentile converts, said, “Now concerning spiritual gifts brethren, I would not have you ignorant” (1 Corinthians 12:1). He spoke to those who had ignorantly followed the dumb (speechless) idols. He knew how important it was that they become informed; thus he spoke boldly. In spite of this, we find today there are many professing Christians who are ignorant of the spiritual gifts; many even deny they exist.

WHY THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

The Holy Spirit and the gifts it manifests come to testify of Christ, teach us all things, and give us strength—this that we might witness for Christ unto all men. Evidences of the power to witness are found in the examples of Peter at Pentecost (see Acts, chapter 2), Peter and the apostles before the council and the high priest (see Acts 5:27-32), and Philip at Samaria (see Acts 8:5-8).

The apostle Paul wrote, “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

He then enumerates some of the gifts: the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. The remaining portion of this discourse explains that while it is the same Spirit that gives all of these gifts, not every man receives every gift, for God divides “to every man severally as he will” (see 1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

In the above quotation, Paul mentions nine spiritual gifts. We do not believe this limits the manner in which God can manifest Himself through the Holy Spirit, but it indicates that there are many spiritual gifts. Paul’s admonition is to “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31). Although he may not have intended to enumerate the gifts in the order of their significance, it does seem clear that the first three are of major importance.

The first noted is “wisdom.” Of all gifts, this is most precious. A wise man judges according to moral and spiritual truth. The gift of wisdom is more than a knowledge of truth; it carries also the ability to apply this knowledge. James says, “The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy” (James 3:17; see 1 Corinthians 2:1-7). Wisdom permits man to interpret revelation in such a way as to come to an understanding of God.

The second of these three major gifts is “knowledge.” Spiritual knowledge comes as the result of inspiration and instruction given by the Spirit to the mind of man. It is given by the literal appearance of Jesus Christ, by the audible voice, visions, the ministry of angels, and the voice of inspiration. Jesus promised the Jews who believed on Him that knowledge of truth would make them free (see John 8:31-32). The truth of God is obtained through His Spirit.

Such was the knowledge that permitted Peter to proclaim, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:17). It was upon such a revelation of truth—knowledge that is sure and unmovable—that Christ built His Church (Matthew 16:19). The importance of knowledge that comes to man only through the Spirit of God was emphasized by Christ as He said, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3).

The third of these gifts is “faith.” Paul wrote, “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1). He further emphasizes the importance of faith: “Without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). A modern writer proclaims that faith is the

“dynamic of action.” Thus, we see that it is this great gift of God’s Spirit that moves men forward in the adventure for the divine possibilities that we believe exist. Without this gift, man would simply believe but never achieve.

While the remaining gifts of the Spirit may not be as significant as those just discussed, they are important and do show the outreach of God to man. Christ demonstrated on many occasions the gift of healing. Through His divinely called ministry this was continued. James instructed the Saints, “Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” (James 5:14-15; see D&C 34:3c, 42:12c-13).

We also note that in the life and ministry of Jesus, many miracles were performed (see Acts 2:22; Hebrews 2:4; Mormon 4:76-81). These were not done by breaking God’s laws but by putting into effect laws which man does not know. Anything is miraculous if it is beyond man’s understanding or his ability to perform without divine aid. That miracles should continue to be performed among God’s people is evidenced by the very unchangeable nature of God. Moroni said, “And behold I say unto you, He changeth not; if so, he would cease to be God; and he ceaseth not to be God and is a God of miracles” (Mormon 4:82).

The gift of prophecy has also been found among God’s people whenever they have served Him in righteousness. He placed prophets within the Church of Jesus Christ (see 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11). He promised that He would do nothing until he revealed His secrets unto His servants, the prophets (see Amos 3:7). The gift of prophecy makes it possible for God to speak to His people—admonishing, counseling, and encouraging them. Through this gift, man is given opportunity to understand that which has happened in the past and to look into the future—inasmuch as God sees it is wisdom for him.

However, we must also beware of false prophecy and false prophets. John admonishes us to “try the spirits whether they are of God” (1 John 4:1). The Scriptures give us numerous tests to apply in judging both the prophet and the prophecy (see Deuteronomy 18:21-22; Psalm 89:34; Matthew 7:24-29; Galatians 1:8-9; 2 John 1:7-11).

God does not leave man entirely to himself in this matter of judging prophecy and trying the spirits. Through the Holy Spirit the gift of discernment is given. While not everyone has this gift, it is within the Church. Satan has power to deceive and will try to deceive even the very elect (Matthew 24:23). We ought to seek for this gift of discernment and follow its leadings. If it is not ours to have, we should look to those who do have it and heed their advice and counsel.

One of the most dramatic examples of the gift of divers kinds of tongues was bestowed on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2:4-6). Nephi bore witness that this indeed is a gift of the Holy Ghost (see 2 Nephi 14:2-3). Moroni spoke boldly concerning those who denied this and other spiritual gifts (see Moroni 10:14-18). Paul warns about unwise uses of the spiritual gifts and insists that there should be no exercise of the gift of tongues without an interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:26-33).

ARE THE GIFTS TO BE FORGOTTEN?

In the Christian world there are many who would say that there is no longer any need for these spiritual gifts. Some say that Paul in his discourse on charity (see 1 Corinthians 13) substituted charity for these gifts. He wrote, “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing” (1 Corinthians 13:1-2). However, he did not say the gifts are nothing. He did emphasize the fact that these gifts must be used with charity, the pure love of Christ in our hearts (see Moroni 7:52). Certainly, without this love of God, we are as nothing—regardless of what else we have or do. In a further effort to clarify, he said, “Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts” (1 Corinthians 14:1).

Moroni writes of a serious condition in which angels cease to appear or the power of the Holy Ghost is withheld. “It is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased, wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief” (Moroni 7:41-42). May our faith fail not!

SUMMARY

In conclusion, we note that according to the gospel of Jesus Christ, as taught by Him and His disciples and as restored again in this latter day, the gifts of the Spirit are the manifestations of that Spirit within us as individuals and as a Church. Through obedience to the gospel, our lives become fit dwelling places for this good Spirit; and we are entitled to receive the Holy Spirit and the gifts it manifests. As we move forward with Christ in His great cause, we ought to covet earnestly the best gifts, using them with charity, the pure love of God. These gifts become meaningful to us only as we seek them, that we might manifest the fruits of God's Spirit in our lives and bear faithful witness of Christ to all men.

Questions for Discussion

1. What are spiritual gifts?
2. What are the three gifts of major importance?
3. Of what value is the gift of prophecy?
4. Give scriptural examples where spiritual gifts changed the life of a man.
5. What gift makes it possible for us to say with Peter, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"?
6. When may something be called miraculous?
7. What was the admonition of Paul in seeking spiritual gifts?
8. Are there gifts of the spirit other than those named by Paul? What might they be?
9. If spiritual gifts are not manifested to us, what is the cause?

6

THE SCRIPTURES

The Scriptures are the inspired record of God's revelation of Himself, His nature, character, and will. They contain divine revelations because they bring to men concepts of these divine truths of His personality.

These revelations were made to people who were chosen guardians of the Word of God and whose responsibility it was to communicate it to all mankind. The Scriptures, therefore, are the source, as well as the result, of inspiration. They were written under the direction and under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

The Scriptures, rather than being one book, are compiled of many books. They are not limited to the Bible but include also the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. What is said for the Bible can also be said for the other two. They are the Word of God to the world. Paul writes, "All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

HOW THE SCRIPTURES ARE VINDICATED

By a number of ways the Scriptures can be vindicated. Here are several that others have found to be helpful:

1. By a careful and exact study of the Holy Scriptures themselves, according to their own testimony, origin, and design;
2. From the interpretation of the Church in regard to their full meaning;
3. By reading with prayer and under proper conditions;
4. Through studying the background of how and why they were written;
5. By analyzing the effect they have had on the Church.

The Saint must ascertain what is meant by "inspiration" by complete submission to it. A person whose own life has not felt the rebirth of the Holy Spirit cannot expect to understand inspiration completely. It is more difficult for one to read the Scriptures and get the proper point of view unless he belongs to God's family.

It is the duty of every searcher of the Scriptures not to accept a doctrine because it is modern, but because it is true.

THE DIVINE ELEMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES

The divine element of Scriptures is made apparent through prophecy. All the prophets felt that their inspiration came not from within, but from without. They felt a divine call from God and were obliged to speak out in His name (see Jeremiah 15:16, 23:35; John 15:16; 2 Nephi 5:2-5; D&C 6:2b). At other times they were commanded to write, that the generations yet unborn could have the benefit of their knowledge and inspiration (see Isaiah 8:1; Jeremiah 36:28; Revelation 21:5; 1 Nephi 2:3; D&C 22:24). The inspiration received was often regarded as an answer to prayer.

The divine element of the Scriptures can be discerned in the laws and worship in the Church. Especially is this true in the symbol of the ordinances. It is found in Church marriages, caring for the needs of the poor, and administering to the needs of the aged. Prayer services, preaching, and Church school also enhance the divine element of worship.

The divine element of the Scriptures can be ascertained by the Word of God becoming flesh in us. Even the Church courts reflect the divine justice of God in dealing with the wayward and offenders of the Church.

When one needs forgiveness, where could he find greater help than in the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:10ff) and in Psalm 51? When one needs courage, what greater words could be read than "The Lord is my shepherd" (Psalm 23) or "My peace I give unto you" (John 14:27)? When one needs comfort and peace to his soul, where could he find it better than in the life of the Lord? When one needs a pattern for the Kingdom of God, read the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, 7).

GOD SPEAKS THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

It has been said that when God speaks and men listen, lives are changed. When lives are changed, communities and nations are changed. Most men want to live full and satisfying lives, but they need guidance. The best place to find that guidance is in the Word of the Lord. There are many questions that man asks himself and to which there are no answers outside of God and His Word. God gives the only answers to such questions as, “Why am I here?” “Where am I going?” “What is my place in life?” and “How am I to know and find true happiness and eternal life?” God can and will give us the answers we need to hear if we will only stop hurrying and listen and learn.

Man finds the true abundant life only as he associates with God. Man cannot fully associate with God unless he has God’s Holy Spirit; and we cannot have God’s Holy Spirit until we are obedient to His divine laws. We cannot know the full truth until we know God, Who is the fullness of truth. Men do not need answers doled out to them—they need to find them through association with the Father and His Holy Scriptures.

GOD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES

Too many times we consider the Scriptures as belonging to a generation that was strange and far removed from us. However, in reading the Scriptures, we find the people of the Old Testament had many of the same problems, temptations, failures, and successes that we have. Human nature has always been the same; men have always had the same questions to be answered and similar problems to be faced.

The discovery we must make is that God speaks through the Scriptures. His purest language is in the symbol of the ordinances. The man who speaks for God in prophecy limits God because of his own limitations; but when God speaks through His ordinances, the meaning is pure and undefiled. Reading the Scriptures opens our eyes, that we might see who He really is and what He is doing in the world today and—still better—what He is doing in our lives. We will never quite hear what He had to say to Israel through the prophets until we are able to hear what He says to us through them.

God has spoken; the whole Scriptures bear witness that this is true. Our Scriptures bear out that God is a living God, not a dead one. The same Spirit that gave vision and understanding to the prophets can and will dwell in us today, and it will help to take away our blindness and confusion. By the warm influence of God’s Holy Spirit, He can and will speak to us through His Holy Scriptures. This has been the experience of thousands of people who have been willing to listen and hear God’s Word.

The Scriptures are not like any ordinary book. At the heart of the Scriptures is the testimony of Jesus Christ, the central figure of human history. They bear record of how the world can be regenerated and molded into a perfect society. The remedy for the frequent misuse of the Scriptures is not to read them less but to read them more.

SCRIPTURES AND THE TESTIMONY OF MEN

There was a time when the Scriptures did not exist. Living always comes before writing. Man had to have experience with God before he could write about it. How, then, did the Scriptures start, and what is the story behind their production?

The story of the Scriptures begins with the advent of man many years before Israel became a nation. Before the sacred Scriptures were ever written, a revelation of God came to man and was passed from one generation to another. God chose Moses to reveal His will and bring a new understanding of His power, love, and purpose. The people could look back and bear testimony of God’s saving grace to them when their nation was headed for destruction and as they were delivered from bondage. At Mount Sinai they entered into a covenant with God, which proved to be a foundation upon which they built their future nation.

It would have been simpler, perhaps, if God had just chosen men at different dispensations of time and dictated the Scriptures to them and let them write them down. However, that was not God’s way of working. His Word first entered into men’s lives so that it first became clothed with human experiences. Suffering had to be endured by His servants and children before they could bear testimony of God’s love and power. No true child of God could keep God’s truth for himself alone. He had to share it with others to satisfy his inward longing for companionship with man and God.

The Word of God is God’s own truth, with power to redeem any man or nation who is willing to

hear, listen, and accept with an open heart.

Questions for Discussion

1. What are the Scriptures? How do they differ from other books?
2. What do the Scriptures tell us about man? How can scripture be called both human and divine?
3. What are ways the Scriptures can be vindicated?
4. Tell of three scriptures that meet specific human needs and tell what that need is.
6. List questions of eternal importance which can be answered only by God and by answers found in the Scriptures.
6. Why are the Scriptures not just one book? Why do we need to believe in an open canon of scripture?
7. When do scriptures become most meaningful to us?
8. Why must we accept the Scriptures if we are to grow in the likeness of Christ?

7

AUTHORITY

The need for authority to act in any given capacity is recognized in all areas of life, especially in government. No man has the right to represent the government of any nation unless he has been given authority to do so. The way in which this authority is given is prescribed by a very definite process, step by step. The limitations upon this authority are clearly set forth that there might be no misunderstanding.

Isaiah, looking down the stream of time, said, "For unto us a child is born; unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isaiah 9:6). The prophet here is speaking concerning the government of the Kingdom of God. There are many today who will claim there is no need for authority when one ministers for Christ. But we believe it is necessary that men receive authority to act in this Kingdom of God plan—just as it is necessary to have authorized representatives in world government in order to avoid confusion.

Jesus warned of men who would act without authority. He said, "Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name; and in thy name cast out devils; and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I say, Ye never knew me; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matthew 7:32-33). He warned of men who would teach in His name but never knew Him at all. What of their followers? He speaks plainly, "But in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrines and the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:8). One outstanding difference between Christ and any other ministers was His authority. Matthew records, "The people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority from God, and not as having authority from the scribes" (Matthew 7:36-37).

The very term "minister" means servant, and the word "servant" implies recognition of a master. The minister then should truly be the servant of God. Paul refers to it in this way, "We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us" (2 Corinthians 5:20).

The Church of Jesus Christ by its very name proclaims that it does not belong to itself or exist for itself. The Church is the Church only in direct proportion as it is of Christ. The ministers of the Church are ministers only in proportion to their calling of God through Christ.

Authority of His ministers is further emphasized by Christ as He said, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you" (John 20:21). It is important to know this, for it is by the same authority that Jesus was sent that He in turn sends others.

HOW AUTHORITY COMES TO MEN

There are many ideas about how authority is given men. Some believe it is the result of a feeling in one's heart. Some think of authority in terms of a theological diploma. We believe it must be revealed of God. Let us now search the Scriptures to see what the Lord reveals to us.

The author of the letter to the Hebrews says, "And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron" (Hebrews 5:4). The emphasis here is that authority comes from God, and it comes to men in the specific manner in which it came to Aaron.

The manner of the calling of Aaron is clear: "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, . . . Thou shalt bring Aaron and his sons unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, . . . and anoint him, and sanctify him; that he may minister unto me in the priest's office" (Exodus 40:1, 12-13). God spoke to Moses, one having authority, and told him to ordain Aaron. It was not sufficient that Aaron felt some kind of call within him.

The Scriptures give evidence that this was true not only in the case of Aaron but also with the seventy (see Numbers 11:16-17) and with Joshua (see Numbers 27:18-23; Deuteronomy 34:9). And as this was true in the days of Moses, we see that it was also true in the days of Christ and the apostles. In the calling of the original Twelve, we find that Jesus prayed all night on the mountain top; and "when it was day, he called his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles" (Luke 6:13). When Judas fell by transgression, there was need for another to take his place. The remaining eleven turned to God, after consideration of men whom they felt should be

worthy witnesses, and asked, “Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two thou has chosen” (Acts 1:24). At a later date, we are told that the Holy Ghost spake unto the prophets and teachers at Antioch and said, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them” (Acts 13:2). The next chapter tells us these men were called apostles (see Acts 14:14).

The above examples give evidence of what is meant by being “called of God as was Aaron.” From the beginning of the Restoration, this pattern has been followed. God calls men today as He called Aaron of old.

WHAT IS PRIESTHOOD?

We have indicated that authority is connected with that which we know as priesthood. So it is logical to ask, “What is priesthood?” We believe that priesthood is the authority and power from God delegated to man to officiate in all things pertaining to the gospel and the building up of the Kingdom of God on earth. Priesthood is unchangeable and eternal.

In order for men to possess this priesthood, they must obey the requirements of God’s laws, be legally ordained according to the will of God, and continue to walk in newness of life. The authority of priesthood must be possessed jointly with the power of God if we are to accomplish His will. Authority without power is of no use. The power of God of which we speak is manifested in faith, love, truth, mercy, justice, and judgment. Where these attributes exist along *with* authority, there is power to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances in God’s Kingdom.

DIVISIONS AND OFFICES

There is one priesthood. It comes from God through Jesus Christ. By the nature of the needs of man and the Church, there are many specialized functions in this priesthood. As Paul called the Church “the body of Christ,” we see the analogy. In the human body we have a number of organs we call “vital organs.” Of these, there are some which are respiratory and some which are digestive. These sustain the very life of man. There are, however, other parts of the body, such as legs and arms which give us the ability to move and draw things to us. These are called appendages. We see that there is a division as to vital organs and appendages as well as divisions within these divisions. All of this is for the sake of specialized function.

So also is the priesthood of God. There are two main divisions or orders, which the Scriptures call “Melchisedec” and “Aaronic” (Hebrews 7:11). Within these orders are other divisions which we recognize as offices of priesthood. Let it be clear: There is one priesthood. Though the functions of orders and offices differ, all are of God.

Note the distinction between priesthood authority and priesthood office. “Authority” comes to a man with his ordination. It is something which he holds within himself. It empowers him to act for God. It becomes part of his life, and he cannot be separated from it except as he may become disqualified by transgression. “Office” indicates the specific area of his service. This may be changed from time to time as God wills. Sometimes, because of disability, a man may be released from his office and still retain the authority of his priesthood.

Charles Fry in *The Nature of Priesthood* says, “When a member of the priesthood dies, he leaves the office; but he carries his authority with him.” Office is a designated area of service in which a priesthood member is placed to labor. Priesthood authority is the essential gift of God, empowering man to act in the office to which he has been appointed. Ordination gives authority, which connects man with the source of the power of Christ. Office is the area in which he puts that power to work. Priesthood is a means of receiving; office is the opportunity of giving to others that which God desires them to receive.

The Aaronic priesthood includes the function of the Levitical priesthood (see D&C 104:1a). The Melchisedec priesthood has power and authority to “administer in spiritual things” (see D&C 104:3b), and the Aaronic “has power in administering outward ordinances” (D&C 104:8b).

These same functions were true in the time of Moses. He was given spiritual authority and responsibility over the people. He was later commanded of God to share this responsibility with the seventy: “And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders; and it came to pass that, when the Spirit rested

upon them, they prophesied and did not cease” (Numbers 11:25). Aaron, his sons, and the Levites had charge of the sanctuary, even in the sense of physical protection (see Numbers 3:32, 38). The sanctuary was the place where the “outward ordinances” were administered.

HOW AUTHORITY IS CONFERRED

The Scriptures indicate the bestowal of priesthood authority came by the laying on of hands. In the case of Timothy, Paul admonishes, “Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery” (1 Timothy 4:14). In modern-day revelation we also find this: “Every elder, priest, teacher, or deacon . . . is to be ordained by the power of the Holy Ghost which is in the one who ordains him” (D&C 17:12). That is what was meant when the Lord commanded Moses to “put some of thine honor” upon Joshua (Numbers 27:20). Thus we see that it is not only the laying on of hands that constitutes a legal ordination but the power of God which is in the one who officiates.

RESTORATION

Because the children of Israel hardened their hearts against the Lord, “Therefore, he took Moses out of their midst and the holy priesthood also; and the lesser priesthood continued” (D&C 83:4c). Through the Restoration the power of priesthood was restored to earth again. John the Baptist ordered the Aaronic priesthood in the ordination of Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, and the Melchisedec priesthood was conferred on Joseph and Oliver when the Church was organized.

This authority should be respected, cherished, and held sacred by both those having it and those who do not. The Lord has said: “If my people will respect the officers whom I have called and set in the church, I will respect these officers; and if they do not, they cannot expect the riches of gifts and the blessings of direction” (D&C 125:14c). In humility and love, out of a compassion for souls, this authority should be used to build up the Kingdom of God and establish His righteousness.

Questions for Discussion

7. What is priesthood? What two priesthoods are found in Christ’s Church?
2. How was Aaron called? Why?
3. Give an example of the calling and ordaining of a man in the New Testament Church.
4. Is the setting apart in a priestly office the same as bestowing authority? What gives a man authority?
8. How did Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery receive the Aaronic priesthood?
6. What is the difference in authority between the Aaronic and Melchisedec orders? What is the difference in function?
7. What had the four sons of Mosiah done to make it possible for them to teach with power and authority from God?
8. What priesthood office did Christ hold? Give scriptural proof.
9. When a member of the priesthood dies, does he lose his priesthood office and/or authority?
10. Why is authority necessary in the Church for the building of lives and God’s Kingdom?

8

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The Kingdom of God is an organized effort of the Church to establish God's righteousness upon the earth. The prophets of the Old Testament called it "Zion." At the time of Enoch, Zion was described as a people of one heart and one mind, dwelling in righteousness and having no poor among them (see Genesis 7:23; D&C 36:2h). Jesus referred to it as the "Kingdom of God" and taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven" (Matthew 6:11).

The latter-day prophet Joseph Smith and his successors used "Zion," "Kingdom of God," and "A New Jerusalem" interchangeably (see D&C 36:12). "Zion must increase in beauty and in holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened; yea, verily, I say unto you, Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments" (D&C 81:4c). "The kingdoms of this world may be constrained to acknowledge that the kingdom of Zion is in very deed the kingdom of our God and his Christ" (D&C 102:9b).

Zion—the Kingdom of God—is a spiritual and economic enterprise that changes the hearts of men from self to God. It calls for the dedication of the whole of man to establish God's righteousness upon the earth as it is done in heaven. It is a call for justice to triumph over injustice, truth over error, kindness over cruelty, purity over lust, peace over enmity.

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isaiah 2:3).

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS WITHIN YOU

When the Pharisees asked Jesus how and when the Kingdom was to appear, He answered, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation The kingdom of God has already come unto you" (Luke 17:20-21). It cannot be observed by the senses, and it is not manifested by outward signs and political changes altogether. It must come by a spiritual regeneration of the heart and mind, the result of being reborn.

God told Enoch His plan for the last days: "Righteousness and truth will I cause to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth unto a place which I shall prepare, a holy city, that my people may gird up their loins and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion, a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch, Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there; and we will receive them into our bosom; and they shall see us, and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other; and there shall be mine abode, and it shall be Zion, which shall come forth out of all the creations which I have made; and for the space of a thousand years shall the earth rest.

And it came to pass that Enoch saw the day of the coming of the Son of Man in the last days, to dwell on the earth in righteousness for the space of a thousand years" (Genesis 7:70-73).

John had a vision of the last days: "And I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God" (Revelation 21:2-3).

THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM

The book of Revelation describes a woman in travail: "The woman, which was the church of God, . . . brought forth the kingdom of our God and his Christ" (Revelation 12:7). The Church of Jesus Christ is the mother of God's Kingdom. Its mission is to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. The responsibility of the Church is to nurture, feed, and care for the individual members—just as it is the responsibility of a mother to nurture, feed, and care for her children—that they may become the children of God.

The Lord spoke to the Church in August, 1833, and told the Saints that the power required to redeem Zion comes from those who are pure in heart: “Let Zion rejoice, for this is Zion, the pure in heart” (D&C 94:5).

A few months later this instruction was received: “There is, even now, already in store a sufficient, yea, even abundance, to redeem Zion and establish her waste places—no more to be thrown down—were the churches who call themselves after my name willing to hearken to my voice” (D&C 98:10c).

In June, 1834, the Saints were told that Zion could have been redeemed already, but they were not obedient and not united. “Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom” (D&C 102:2c).

Every Kingdombuilder must have one great desire, and that is to do the will of God. Even Jesus, the greatest of all, said, “For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). It must be a voluntary surrender of one’s own will to that of his Father. It is not our Kingdom that must be established—it is God’s Kingdom.

THE NEED FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Hosea and Isaiah, who were social reformers of Israel and Judah, were keenly aware of the fact that they belonged to a people of unclean lips (see Isaiah 6:5). Repeatedly they denounced the corrupt rulers of Israel (see Isaiah 3:14-15), judicial injustice (see Isaiah 5:23), and economic inequality and wasteful luxury (see Isaiah 5:11-12). The warning voices of the prophets to Israel were to establish God’s Zion or perish. The basic passions and motives of our society have changed little from those of Israel. The same problems and sins that perplexed and destroyed Israel have entrenched themselves within our society.

We have betrayed and disobeyed our conscience, refused to live up to our ideals, and therefore stunted our characters—all because of our selfishness instead of obedience to the Lord’s commandments. Our society has become self-centered instead of God-centered. This is the root of inequality and evil. David recognized this when he wrote, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest” (Psalm 51:4).

“Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:10). Men have wronged society because they have had no passionate loyalty to God. They have been unfaithful to God because they do not know Him and do not love Him. This is what stimulated the prophet Hosea to say, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6).

The antidote to the sickness of society is a knowledge of the Kingdom of God. If there is to be a perfect order as the Church of Jesus Christ teaches, those who are to participate in its establishment must have an intimate knowledge of the character and purpose of our Lord, Who not only was the perfect One, but gave His life that through knowledge of—and obedience to— Him, His children might build this perfect society.

Only those who know the perfect way can build the Kingdom of God. Ignorant people cannot build God’s way of life because they just don’t know how. They might want to help with all their hearts, but they are disqualified by the lack of knowledge. Knowledge does not come through instruction only, but by personal insight, experience, and the Holy Ghost.

Jesus told His disciples to put first things first: “Wherefore, seek not the things of this world; but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God and to establish his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33; see also 3 Nephi 6:11).

What is needed? “Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days” (Doctrine and Covenants 64:7a).

Questions for Discussion

1. Give two reasons why it is essential that the Kingdom of God be established.
2. Are we the only church working for the Kingdom? How do we differ from the others?
3. Why is this statement not true? “Give man enough time and he will achieve the Kingdom of God by the simple matter of evaluation.”
4. The final goal of the Kingdom of God is _____. How do you know this is true?

5. List one scripture from each of the Three Standard Books that deals with the Kingdom of God.
6. What are three personal qualities that are found in the lives of effective Kingdom builders?
7. Why must a Kingdom builder seek to do God's will and not his own?
8. Why is knowledge of Christ so important in establishing the Kingdom?
9. How can praying for the Kingdom of God help? Is prayer alone sufficient?

9

SIN

“We believe that men will be punished for their own sins and not for Adam’s transgression” (from the “Epitome of Faith”).

THE ORIGINAL SIN

The Word of God indicates that all men are created in a state of innocence at birth. The fact that God created man and pronounced that creation good does not indicate the immediate perfection of man. The Creator could not have been true to Himself and man if the finished product had been realized in the act of spiritual and physical creation. Perfection was to be realized through the process of conditioning by will or choice. No one could do for man what he himself must do for himself. Herein is the essence of his agency.

The gift of intelligence is the essence of our being. An ingenious arrangement of spirit made it possible for man to reach out and comprehend truth. All truth, as also all intelligence, has been placed within the area of man’s intellect. This is fundamental to the exercise of agency. It was not until man was placed in the garden of Eden that his agency was given (see Genesis 7:40). Choice depends upon the existence of two or more objects or ideas. When this condition exists, judgment can be exercised. Such was the symbolism in the garden situation.

In spite of the command of God, Adam and Eve decided to eat the forbidden fruit. They desired the thing which seemed to be most immediate and needful to them. As a result of this transgression, sin entered into their natures. At the same time, intelligence began to exist among men, and truth began to be comprehended. The existence of one demanded the existence of the other. In the act of choosing, man set himself upon the road to either become a son of God or a son of perdition. The choice was his and only his. The degree of his right or wrong choices—and acting upon these choices—determined his destiny. Even though God forgave Adam his sin in the garden, he was destined to experience the result of his sinning. That result was death. Since the days of our first parents, we have inherited the potential to choose either life or death. The struggle is ever with us between good and evil. We are constantly faced with the problem of agency. We cannot escape it.

Adam and Eve were as innocent as children prior to the first transgression. They were growing up in their understanding of life. Their knowledge was in a very immature and undeveloped state. If they had remained and eaten together of the tree of life, they would have been immature in their eternal existence; and the plan of God for them toward perfection would have been stopped. They would have had eternal immaturity with eternal existence. This was not to be.

It seems reasonable, in the plan of justice, that each man projected into the world must experience this cycle of life as did our first parents—birth in innocence, exercise of judgment and choice, determination of his own destiny through the struggle of agency and the revelation of Jesus Christ, which gives meaning to existence. The fact that man was driven from the garden indicates that in his sinful condition the process of procreation was to persist. In this sense children are conceived in sin. When they begin to arrive at the condition of accountability, sin conceives in their hearts due to the insidious and subtle temptations of Satan to transgress the laws of God.

Agency can work only in a state of relative freedom. Man needs time to think, evaluate, and act. His life span on earth is necessary for the expression of these functions. Within the framework of this freedom to act for himself lies the fundamental need for revelation and redemption from God. Even though man is endowed with agency and free will, it is God Who established the conditions of his redemption. It was, and is, in this atmosphere of opposites that succeeding generations were and are born. History is the testimony of how well man has responded in either direction.

REDEMPTION FROM SIN

Redemption from sin rests primarily with God. Man cannot nor does he possess the power to

redeem himself. He possesses the ability, through choice, to redeem himself as those choices are directed and related to the redemptive plan of God through Christ. An infinite atonement had to be made for man. The vicarious sacrifice made for man through Jesus Christ was in the original plan. Inasmuch as Christ was involved in man's creation, He must also be involved in his salvation.

Against the background of the purpose of God—that of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man—we must necessarily understand the relationship of man's experience in the use of agency. We understand his temptations and sins, his redemption through Christ by repentance, and baptism by water for the remission of sins. We see his worthiness, because of obedience to laws and ordinances, to receive the Holy Spirit in order to continue the transformation of his fallen nature into that of a son of God.

THE NATURE OF SIN

Once a man has sinned, there is established a sympathetic tendency to commit sin again. The act of sinning writes itself into the nature of man. Repentance cannot erase the effect immediately; the memory and effect are still there. For this reason, death is the only answer. It is the only way of release. In this light, death is a blessing. The tragedy lies in the fact that sin remains a quality of spirit and is taken with man into death. He cannot rid himself of this, even in death. The body disintegrates and goes back to its original sphere. The spirit of man retains its quality, and its nature is changed through repentance. There is no escape from self. Sin corrupts our natures. It conditions the will and heart to hardness and ultimately to rebellion against God. This is the most serious manifestation of sin in man. Interminable absence from the presence of God and Christ and the ministry of the Holy Spirit is the worst effect of sin.

FORGIVENESS OF SIN

Sin is both individual and social. The responsibility for sin rests with Satan and is shared by those who obey and follow him. We also share in the effects of sin to the degree of our sinning. However, there is the principle of the forgiveness of sins. This is revealed in the outreach of love as it flows from God through Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Men must develop a forgiving nature. Jesus taught, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us" (Matthew 6:13). The delicate balance between forgivability and forgiveness spells the difference between fellowship with God and Christ and fellow man or fellowship with darkness.

Men cannot carry forever the effects of their sinning. Those who do deny themselves the priceless possession of peace of mind. Those who are at peace within are those who have been forgiven. The conditions for forgiveness lie within man. Those conditions are written in his very nature. The opportunity for forgiveness lies before all. The fact of forgiveness lies with those who have accepted the challenge to become sons of God.

It is God who declares the conditions for forgiveness. It is obedience to those conditions that frees man from his sin. As man understands the relationship of repentance and forgiveness to his growth and development toward fellowship with his God, he begins to appreciate the full value of his being.

The Kingdom of God is the ultimate goal of man's existence and achievement. The degree of his cooperative effort to establish righteousness in every field of legitimate human relationships marks the degree of his forgiveness. Inasmuch as repentance is the basis for forgiveness, repentance finds its expression in the building up of right social relationships between man and his fellow man. These relationships are identified in institutions within the Zionite community. Men are not really forgiven until they manifest their relationship to God through the Zionite plans. They find there an ever growing, unfolding revelation of God's Spirit within the community of man.

Baptism for the remission of sins is not fully realized in the act itself. There are personal sins which might be forgiven in the experience of the performance of the ordinance. There are many sins which are forgiven only through accepting the principle of baptism as a way of life. Baptism, in this light, becomes the beginning of the fulfillment of forgiveness and not the culmination of forgiveness.

Remission of sins is achieved at the end of building the Zionite community. For this reason, sin persists in the Church in proportion to the distance between what we are and what we are to be. Baptism commits us to the promise of forgiveness and remission of sins, but the achievement of the

Kingdom is the guarantee of complete remission of sins. The achievement of the abundant life is realized only through struggle and eternal vigilance.

Singleness of purpose under God is the eternal principle underlying the Zion life. In this upward way, many areas of immaturity reveal themselves. Each error, made in an honest effort under God to establish the Kingdom, will be forgiven immediately if we correct the error.

A responsibility rests upon the people regarding forgiveness of sins. Sometimes sins are magnified out of proportion to their true setting and situation. When enlarged upon through gossip and when the facts are not known, almost invariably there is established an impossible barrier for the sinner to reestablish himself in the company of his fellows. Forgiveness must transcend the sinner's repentance. If it does not, we are jeopardizing the man's salvation. When we hinder the function of forgiveness, we are placing ourselves in a delicate and precarious position. "I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive; but of you it is required to forgive all men" (D&C 64:2e).

JUDGE NOT UNRIGHTEOUSLY

"Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment. For with what judgment ye shall judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:2-3).

We can be sure of the fact that final judgment rests with God. He shall have the final word in evaluating any and all conditions resident in man. He made man and seeks to perfect man. He judges man. It is by His grace that we are saved. The measure of our salvation is in our acceptance of His grace. His love for man is unmeasured. It is in this principle of love for man that mercy and justice are the moving factors in the final judgment. When we partake of His nature, we are motivated in our judgments by the same spirit which motivates Him. Joy, responsibility, and pleasure become ours when our life has His nature and the infusion of His Spirit.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is sin?
2. Evaluate this statement, "A man can constantly think sinful thoughts and yet remain pure."
3. What was the nature of original sin? Can we still commit the original sin?
4. Where does the responsibility for sin lie? Are things sinful if they affect only ourselves and not others?
5. Can anything we do that involves a wrong choice affect only us?
6. What are three things sin does to us?
7. Why should we be concerned about the balance between forgiveness and the ability to forgive?
8. Why should men not judge one another?
9. Why is agency such an essential part of man's growth toward perfection?

10

THE ORDINANCES

The word “ordinances” appears only once in the gospels (see Luke 1:6). It appears a few times in the epistles but not always in a commendable manner (see Romans 13:2; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14; Hebrews 9:10; 1 Peter 2:13). In the first and the last of these references, ordinances of civil authorities are in the minds of the writers. When the first two verses of Romans 13 are read from the Inspired Version, the Church appears to have ordinances such as civil governments have.

Paul’s seeming denunciation of some ordinances should not be taken to mean that there were no ordinances in the Church of Christ. As there is government in the Church, there must be something of God ordained for that government to do. The Church on earth has always been pictured as militant, and as such she needs “helps.” These helps are imparted spiritually and on some occasions in a ceremonial manner known under the term of ordinances. The difficulty with the Jews was that they took the ordinances of God and made them the end. Paul saw the ordinances, as well as the whole of the Mosaic law, acting as a veil in obscuring Christ from men (see 2 Corinthians 3:14-16). In this sense only were the ordinances denounced.

When Luke writes about Zacharias and Elizabeth “walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord” (Luke 1:6), they were rightfully enacting that which divine authority gave them. The ordinances of the gospel are that part of the teaching of our Lord which catches the eye but also has a deep spiritual meaning affecting our moral conduct. Such doctrines as baptism, the laying on of hands, and the sacrament of the Lord’s supper are ordinances. They are ceremonial in nature, but underlying the ceremony there is a spiritual force influencing our behavior.

With the coming of the Reformation, there arose a heated debate between the old and established religion and the new reformers concerning the meaning and value of the sacraments. Even the reformers held different views, and the meaning of the ordinances suffered considerably.

Knowing of the confusion which existed in the theological world, it is with pleasure that we read in latter-day revelation of the value of the ordinances (see D&C 1:3d, 52:4c-d, 53:2b, 64:2a, 83:3, 104:8-10, 107:13f, 122:3a). It is extremely doubtful that Joseph Smith was acquainted with this theological debate over the meaning of the ordinances and sacraments. Without divine help, he could not have delivered these instructions.

“Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest; and without the ordinances thereof and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh” (D&C 83:3c). From this statement it is clear that having priesthood is a prerequisite to the performance of ordinances.

Man is a needy creature. Christ was God’s answer to this universal need. As the Redeemer, He had a message; and the message is just as important as the Messenger (see Matthew 7:3ff; John 1:1-5, 3:1-16, 12:46ff). To carry this message to the world and administer its ordinances, He called certain men from among His disciples, ordained them, and sent them forth (see Matthew 10:1-5, 28:16-19; Mark 16:12-18; John 15:16). The qualifications of these men were compassion (see Hebrews 5:1-3) and godly life (see Psalm 4:1-3). God calls such men today through His Holy Spirit (see John 15:16; Acts 13:1-3; Hebrews 5:4). Because of their compassion for their fellow men and also because of their godliness, the power of God becomes manifested through them when the ordinances are performed.

Who are the ones who receive the benefit of religion? The answer is simple: the needy who go to the Savior with complete humility and self-surrender. Through repentance, these men make their return. When we see such an individual going into the waters of baptism, we should not think of him as a man simply being immersed. If we do that, we miss the meaning and value of the ordinance. What we should see is a man who was once filled with fears and the perplexities of life. We should see him as he once frantically tried to drown the pains of his fears in such escape measures as the pursuit of happiness through the accumulation of wealth or the gratification of his carnal nature with intoxicants, sports, sex, and the like—only to find himself in greater misery.

But now he has found the true Physician through faith; and in humility he is going through the

waters of regeneration, vowing all to the service of his new Master. Baptism to him is the promise of godly life, and with it comes the manifestation of God through the remission of sins. Forgiveness is a most thrilling experience. It releases man from his old self and turns his energies in a completely different direction—the building of the Kingdom of God on earth. Through the ordinance of baptism the power of godliness is manifested in forgiveness, and a new creature is born.

It is anticipated that from this moment on, the life of this individual would be a godly one that carries out the teachings of the Lord. But let us not be guilty of the thought that the carrying out of instruction is enough. These instructions must be intelligently obeyed in the spirit of humility, dependence, and love. We have to continue to be children crying out, “Our Father” and not “My Father.” This means that we have brothers toward whom we have responsibilities. The godly man is one who is aware of the peril surrounding him and would say, like Paul, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall” (1 Corinthians 10:12).

When combining the two—the compassionate and godly life of the minister and the penitent, godly life of the one ministered to—power will be manifested. This power in latter-day revelation is referred to as the “power of godliness” (D&C 83:3c). In the face of our accumulated knowledge in physical sciences and arts, this statement is not surprising. As there is power in studiousness, cleanliness, etc., so there is in godliness.

An example of this is our automobile. The battery is there to give us the first turnover—the start. But we cannot drive on the battery very long. A car also has a mechanism called the generator or alternator. As we drive, the generator is working quietly and storing power in the battery for the time of need. The same thing is true in the Christian life. By the power of God, we were brought to Him and His Church. As we live our lives in a godly way, we are storing power against the time of need. Perils will attack us. This is where the ordinances become important, for it is through them that the power of godliness is made manifest. As the godly man participates in the ordinances, with the servant of God, there comes the power of Christ. Remember: “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (James 5:16).

These ordinances require the use of the hands. This is true of baptisms and the administering of the Lord’s Supper as well as of the more obvious ones such as the blessing of children or administering to the sick. To those who do not believe in the ordinances, the reference to hands is something that borders on the ridiculous. They fail to recognize that the hand demonstrates that which words cannot. A good, warm handshake conveys a feeling of friendship which words are not able to express. A clenched fist tells us something else, and so do folded arms.

Here is an example of what the blessing of children means to godly parents. After they came in contact with this message, they endeavored to live godly lives. When they were married, they began to look for progeny; and their lives of prayer were directed to that end. After a child was given, what should be their first thought? God gave them the child, and to Him the child belongs. They are only stewards or guardians over it. Part of their prayer was answered, but that part of the child’s life which lies in the future is still the object of prayer.

Only God can make this life meaningful. Consequently, the parents follow the example set by our Lord and take the child to be blessed. Why? Because they recognize God’s calling behind the elder and witness his godly life. Behind his hands and his words is the power of God. Also, they realize their own importance in dealing with the many needs of their child, and they ask God to bless them so they may continue in this stewardship. They ask that the life of the child may be protected by Him. To some, the act may be simply cute; but to the minister, because of his compassion, the occasion is serious. To the parents, it is a moment of thanksgiving as well as help in the guidance they need so much.

Questions for Discussion

1. Name five ordinances within the Church.
2. How does an ordinance differ from a sacrament?
3. What is the relationship of priesthood to ordinances?
4. In order for godliness to be made manifest through the ordinances, there must be a combination of what factors? What two (or more) individuals have to be involved? What kind of individuals must they be for maximum power?

5. Why did Paul once seem to denounce all ordinances? Did he mean to do away with them?
6. What does modern-day revelation have to say about the power of godliness manifested in the flesh? What does it involve?
7. Who benefits most from the gospel of Christ?

11

REPENTANCE

The modern Christian world tends to discount the importance of doctrine because it only creates confusion. The confusion, of course, results from the many opinions of men as to what this doctrine really is. The Restoration Movement has once again called attention to the importance of the doctrine of Christ, Who placed emphasis upon the fact that, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me" (John 7:16). When He taught, men were astonished at His doctrine because of the authority with which He taught (see Matthew 7:36-37; John 7:15).

Paul was thankful because the Roman Saints had obeyed the doctrine and had thus become the servants of righteousness (see Romans 6:17-18). He told Timothy that if he would take heed and continue "unto the doctrine," he would "both save thyself and them that hear thee" (1 Timothy 4:16). He warned the Galatians against any being, angel or man, who would teach any other doctrine (see Galatians 1:7-9) and predicted the time when men would not endure sound doctrine but heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears (see 2 Timothy 4:3). John warned that if men did not abide in the doctrine of Christ, they would not have God. He explained, "He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son" (2 John 1:9). Thus, we see that Christ and the apostles after Him placed great emphasis on the doctrine.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

In the oft-quoted Hebrew letter, we find enumerated six of the principles of the doctrine of Christ (Hebrews 6:1-2). This is the purpose of Christ and His doctrine. The principles here enumerated are elementary; they form the basis of growth. But if we always stay right there and never go beyond, we will never reach the goal.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCTRINE

The principles of the doctrine of Christ must be constantly operative within our lives if we are to move toward Him at all.

Many teachers have used the analogy of a "gospel ladder" to explain the principles. Instead of the gospel ladder, let us think of the illustration of a great tree. When it is small, its roots are tiny, and there are not too many of them. However, as it grows upward, it does so in proportion to the growth of these roots. If the tree grows out of proportion to the roots, it is unstable; it will not stand the test of wind and storm and will fall. The roots serve two purposes for this tree: They gather strength and food so that the tree may grow, and they furnish the stability that keeps the tree standing against all forces of destruction. So it is with the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Repentance, faith, baptism, and the other principles reach out and bring into our lives the power of God, which in turn helps us grow. However, unless these principles themselves grow and become strong within us, our growth is unstable; and we will fall when faced with the crises of life.

The six principles, as we know them, fall into three natural divisions which cover the scope of man's relationships both here and in eternity. The first two, repentance and faith, are moral principles. To a great extent, these are things which are personal. I must repent as an individual. I must have faith within me. The next two, baptism and the laying on of hands, are sacramental. In these, man recognizes his need of covenanting with and receiving help from God. A man makes his allegiance with God through these principles or ordinances. He accepts in his life the Church and the authorized representatives of God. He thus reaches out past self to God and the Christian society. The last two principles are "eschatological" (having to do with immortality or life after death). As man responds to these principles, he reaches out beyond the span of mortal life and lives with the sense of immortality, seeking eternal life with God. Only as man lives with the sense of eternal values can he move on to perfection.

WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

Webster says that repentance is "to feel pain or sorrow on account of something done or left

undone—a change from past evil.” Paul tells that repentance is motivated by godly sorrow which demands a change in our lives (see 2 Corinthians 7:9-10). He indicates that worldly sorrow is not enough. This is typified by the example of a boy who gets caught swearing and has his mouth washed with soap. He is truly sorry, but mostly because he got caught and was punished. Such sorrow does not inspire change. Only as men are challenged by their love of God and the sense of their great need can they be moved to change from the evil of their lives.

True repentance is not satisfied by merely ceasing to do evil. Repentance inspired by godly sorrow does not work by self-pity or self-condemnation but rather by the challenge of learning to do well. It is in this sense that Isaiah said, “Wash ye; make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well” (Isaiah 1:16-17). When Judas recognized the wickedness of his betrayal of Christ, he was made truly sorry for that which he had done. However, he was not made sorry to the point of doing well. In a moment of self-pity and condemnation, he took his own life.

Without doubt, Peter also sorrowed much when he recognized the wickedness of his three-time denial of discipleship. The crowing of the cock brought this realization and must have filled his life with remorse for that which he had done. The difference between Judas and Peter can be called repentance. Judas hanged himself in his sin. Peter, sorrowing with a godly sorrow, went forth to rectify that which he had done and became one of the greatest of the witnesses for Jesus.

Ezekiel commanded, “Cast away from you all your transgressions . . . and make you a new heart and a new spirit” (Ezekiel 18:31). Here again we have embodied the idea of not only ceasing to do evil but of entering into a new way of life. This change might be *from* something done or *to* something left undone. The Kingdom languishes because of what men *do* and especially because of that which they *fail to do*. In his chastisement of the Saints as they were being driven out of Independence, God spoke of their transgressions: “They have not learned to be obedient . . . and do not impart of their substance” (D&C 102:2b). Men need to repent of the things they leave undone; because of the godly sorrow they feel, they will cease this “not doing” and through obedience to Christ will “make a new heart and a new spirit.”

Any consideration of repentance demands a consideration of what sin is and what transgression is. Sin is manifest in many ways; but basically it is rebellion against God and His way of life (or the way of life He has planned for man). This rebellion may be expressed as we move in the opposite direction to the divine purpose of life, as we move in the right direction but with less speed than if we used our full potential, and as we stand in the way or retard the progress of another. Sin is more than an act of a moment; it is a way of life. Inasmuch as repentance is a change from evil to good, we see a process. It is not a thing of a moment but of a lifetime.

WHY IS REPENTANCE NECESSARY?

We must repent that we might live. Jesus admonished, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). Since repentance is the adjustment of man’s way of life to Christ’s way of life, repentance is necessary if man is to return to God. James said, “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye doubleminded” (James 4:8). Without having repentance, man cannot draw nigh to God and must stay forever separate from the source of all good, love, and mercy.

HOW CAN REPENTANCE WORK IN MY LIFE?

Basic to repentance in any life is recognition of the need for repenting. This is not an easy matter. It is natural for the sinner to defend himself. While most men do not sin willfully, many rationalize themselves into thinking they are not sinners. The fact is that sin blinds us. Somehow we must see ourselves for what we are and what we could be in relationship to Christ. There must come to us the conviction that God’s way is best. Paul recognized this as he said, “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to perform that which is good I find not, only in Christ” (Romans 7:19). Our repentance cannot be successful without divine power. We thus need to bring ourselves into constant association with Christ—in thinking, acting, and speaking. In such association we find strength. If we love Him enough, this association will help us become like Him. To the extent that the Spirit of Christ dwells in us, sin must depart—for the two

are not compatible. Thus, the process of repentance begins.

Repentance must be continuous. We must be aware of the danger of returning to the former way of life. As we drive sin from our lives, we must fill them with the joy of good works.

Repentance is more than ceasing to do evil. It is even more than learning to do well. It becomes complete when we come into obedience with all the Lord's commandments—when, having availed ourselves of all the help He offers, we have adjusted our lives to His way of life and moved toward the abundant life.

F. Henry Edwards wrote that repentance comes from the heart and becomes an upward change in the direction of a man's life—and it occurs because that man has met God, has felt God's rightful claim on his life, and has given to God the place which is His due. Repentance is a change of mind based on a change of heart and issuing in a changed way of living.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why is doctrine important?
2. What scriptural evidence do we have that Christ believed and taught doctrine?
3. What is repentance?
4. Why is repentance necessary?
5. What are the basic elements of repentance?
6. How can repentance be a working factor in our daily lives?

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FAITH

Faith is one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ (see Hebrews 6:1-2). It is also listed as a gift of the Spirit of God in 1 Corinthians 12:9. The Master taught faith by precept and by example. Man, on occasion, has moved by faith to the achievement of greatness in relation to the purpose of God. However, far too often the real power of faith and the appreciation thereof have remained hidden to man's vision.

WHAT IS FAITH IN GOD?

"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). It is the witness of the Spirit within us. In this thought we can see plainly that faith is truly one of the gifts of the Spirit. This is consistent with all we read in the Scriptures. Without this spiritual sense of reality, which is a gift of God's Spirit, the principle of faith could not function fully in our lives.

There is some evidence that truth seems to be born within us; other truth comes as we move forward in search of it. Some truth can be proven by experience; but there is some that can be known only by faith—the spiritual sense of reality.

As an active principle within our lives, faith can be defined in a number of ways. "Hope in action" indicates that we move in accord with the assurance that is within us. "The dynamic of action" defines faith as the power to move according to this assurance. "Vision plus valor" points to the strength which carries man toward that which he has not yet reached but has visioned by faith. "Adventuring for a divine possibility that we believe to exist" carries the connotation of moving forward toward the achievement of that which has not been experienced but which the gift of faith has assured us is possible.

In the light of the foregoing, we see something of the meaning of the statement, "Even so, faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17). If faith, a gift of the Spirit, gives us the spiritual sense of reality, and faith as an active principle does not cause us to move forward to achieve that which is not seen, then the gift becomes dead within us. Without the active principle of faith giving us power, moving us to achievement of divine purpose, the sense of divine purpose accomplishes little—if anything—in our lives. No matter how much we may believe in the possibility of Zion, if we have not the power to adventure with our lives toward that possibility, the belief is of little effect or result in our lives.

It is indeed unfortunate that we have too often tried to separate "faith, the gift" and "faith, the principle." They are dependent upon each other; and if either of the two is missing, faith can have no power for us. Just as achievement of divine purpose (of which we are assured by the gift of faith) is impossible without the active principle of faith working within us and moving us toward this achievement, so also is it impossible for the active principle of faith to move us toward achievement of that divine purpose of which we have no vision or assurance.

We realize that if the principle of faith is to be the power it ought to be to us, there needs to be some spiritual assurance of God's will in us. The active principle of faith cannot operate against the will of God. Jesus said, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matthew 17:20). This statement has often been misunderstood because we have interpreted it in the sense of the active principle of faith and forgotten that faith is also a gift which brings spiritual assurance of divine will. It is not logical to think that man by any thought or prayer could cause that to happen which was in opposition to this will.

The power of the faith of Jesus was possible because of His knowledge of God's will. Jesus said, "And he that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him" (John 8:29) and "For I can of mine own self do nothing because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who hath sent me" (John 5:31). In keeping with these statements by the Master, does it seem likely that He could have healed the sick and caused the blind to see if it had not been in accord with the Father's will? Just prior to the raising of Lazarus, Jesus

said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by, I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 11:41-42).

The principle of faith was powerful in the life of Christ because He always subjected His will to the will of the Father. In the agony of prayer concerning His own crucifixion, He said, "Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done" (Luke 22:42).

FAITH IN OTHER THAN GOD

We have thus far spoken of faith in the sense of faith in God. We must recognize that with few exceptions all men have some faith, although many do not have faith in God. Only those who wander aimlessly through life have no faith at all. Some men have faith in humanity. Such faith as this works as a principle, often moving men to heights of achievement, yet it can never move them to the fullest possibilities of divine purpose for it lacks divine assurance and revelation of that purpose. However, whether it be faith in God or faith in something else, strong faith involves confident trust.

WHY HAVE FAITH IN GOD?

The words of Christ, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:24), were more than advice and counsel. They were more in the nature of command. We read, "Without faith it is impossible to please him [God]" (Hebrews 11:6). Our loving, heavenly Father cannot be pleased unless we avail ourselves of every opportunity for the achievement of eternal life. Eternal life is a quality of life which the Scriptures indicate will make us worthy of dwelling with Him. Therefore, our faith must be centered in that which will produce in us the best about the things that matter most. Nothing short of faith in God can do this. It was out of compassionate concern for man that Jesus said, "Have faith in God."

Faith in God becomes a shield to protect us against the fiery darts of the wicked (Ephesians 6:16). The forces of evil are constantly around us and seeking to destroy us. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). Only as the gift of faith brings divine assurance can the principle of faith move us positively in the direction of God and protect us from the evil of which idle, purposeless men are susceptible.

Men whose lives are not caught up in the onward movement of accomplishment of God's purposes—not having the protection of faith—stand in grave danger of becoming victims of the deceit by which "the devil cheateth their souls and leadeth them away carefully down to hell" (2 Nephi 12:26). It must have been with the knowledge of this that Christ said, "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired you, that he may sift the children of the kingdom as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not" (Luke 22:31-32).

Faith in God brings the assurance and strength that helps us through times of crisis. The vision of faith challenges us beyond the crises of our day to the possibility of a loftier race, a better day, a greater life. The assurance of faith calls us on beyond momentary doubt, discouragement, and fear. The confident trust of faith witnesses that "The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated; neither can they come to naught" (D&C 2:1a).

Faith in God offers the best explanation of our universe and our place in it. It answers more questions more inspiringly than any other belief has done. True faith in God challenges men above mediocracy. It does not permit us to be satisfied with contributing less than the best there is within us to the enrichment of life. Such faith clarifies the relationship of man with God and his fellow man, creating within us compassionate concern for all. Enlightened faith in God calls men to become the sons of God. Why have faith in God? Without it, man can never know the joy for which he was created.

THE POWER OF FAITH

The power of faith is not a hypothetical idea. Evidences of this power in the lives of men are abundant. Throughout the Scriptures we find testimony of the faith and the fruits thereof. In Hebrews 11 many of these are recorded. The author calls our attention to the fruits of faith in the lives of Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Moses, and others. By the power of faith, the brother of Jared beheld the person of our Lord and was shown all things (see Ether 5:19-21).

FAITH IN CHRIST

“Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God; believe also in me” (John 14:1). As we must have faith in God, so also is faith in Jesus Christ necessary. Faith in God points to Christ, our Savior, Who paid the price of atonement that we might have power to achieve the divine purpose. In His gospel we find the guideposts pointing to the path of our return to God. Faith in Christ, His promises, and His instructions changes our entire sense of values. By faith, we so adjust our lives that the Holy Spirit can dwell within, renewing and transforming each of us into the “new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Ephesians 4:24).

CONCLUDING THOUGHT

Faith, as a gift of the Spirit, provides us the spiritual sense of reality toward which the principle of faith can move. Just as we limit by our lives the manifestation of the other gifts of the Spirit, so also we limit the manifestations of the gift of faith. As Paul has admonished, we ought to “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31). This is most surely true of the gift of faith. As we seek the gift of faith, we should also actively accept the principle of faith and make possible its working in our lives. If we will seek this faith and nurture it, it will grow in our lives; and through it we will gain strength and stability for our growth toward perfection.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the purpose of the six principles of the gospel in the life of man?
2. Are faith and belief the same thing? Explain.
3. What is the purpose of faith?
4. Why can it be said, “All men have a form of faith”?
5. How does our faith affect our work?

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BAPTISM AND LAYING ON OF HANDS

Essentially, baptism is an ordinance through which a person makes his covenant with God and thus becomes a member of Christ's Church. Socially, it is a positive action by which man recognizes his need for allying himself with God. Paul said, "Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:4). Baptism becomes more than a covenant which a person makes by his own power, for herein is the power of God.

Our baptism in water is symbolic of the burial of Christ; and in this we are buried with Him into death that will permit a new life to emerge. Likewise, as Christ was raised by the glory of God, so also by that power can we be raised to this newness of life. Paul says it this way, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12).

Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3-5). The reference to baptism as rebirth is significant. It also points to this "new life" idea. As we examine what takes place as a result of birth, we can see this plainly. Prior to birth, the unborn individual is completely limited. By the nature of his existence, he is dependent and will ever remain so until he is born. He is limited also by darkness which blinds his vision. He is likewise limited as to the possibilities of growth physically and otherwise. Birth removes these limitations. Darkness is removed, and he can see. Physically he is now free to grow. His intellect now becomes useful. Through birth he enters a new life with possibilities he could not have realized if he had remained unborn. So it is with baptism.

WHY BAPTISM?

The fact that it is a command of Christ gives reason for baptism. We have noted His command for rebirth, saying that without it man could neither see nor enter the Kingdom. In what is considered His last great commission, He said, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son; and of the Holy Ghost" (Matthew 28:18).

Baptism is also for remission of sins. John proclaimed the "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1:3). In answer to the question of those who had crucified Christ, Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Ananias said to Paul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16).

As Jesus came to John and asked for baptism, John hesitated. He could probably see no reason for Christ, the Son of God, to be baptized. Nevertheless, Jesus said, "Suffer me to be baptized of thee, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:43). On another occasion the Master said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:15).

WHO SHALL BE BAPTIZED?

Repentance is a requirement for those who would be baptized (D&C 17:20). John the Baptist rebuked the Pharisees and Sadducees, "Repent, therefore, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:35). Who shall be baptized? Those who repent, believe, and gladly receive the teachings of Jesus.

From the earliest days of the Church established by Jesus, the mode of baptism was immersion. It is obvious that Jesus was thus baptized, for when He was baptized, He "went up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:45).

Certainly the symbolic significance of baptism cannot be portrayed in any other way. Paul called it "buried with him in baptism" (Colossians 2:12). Only total immersion can fulfill this. We also find that John was baptizing at Aenon specifically because there was "much water" there (John 3:24). Likewise, when Philip baptized the eunuch, "both Philip and the eunuch" went down into the water

(Acts 8:38). There is no evidence that baptism was ever performed in any other way in the Church under the personal direction of Christ or the apostles.

BAPTISM OF LITTLE CHILDREN?

Since we affirm that baptism involves a sacred covenant, we believe that it is neither required nor does it have any value to those who have not reached the age of moral responsibility—an age of understanding where they can believe with all their heart. The fact that Jesus blessed little children rather than baptized them is significant. Mormon specifically denies the need of baptizing little children, saying that they are alive in Christ (Moroni 8:25). Modern-day revelation tells us that when a child is eight years old, he has become accountable. It places the responsibility upon the parents to teach the child so that at this age he will have sufficient understanding to believe with all his heart and to intelligently covenant with God (see D&C 68:4a-b).

AUTHORITY TO BAPTIZE

One cannot become a citizen of any earthly kingdom unless he has met the requirements for citizenship. Also, even though he may have met these requirements, citizenship can be administered only by one having specific authority to do so. In like manner, we positively affirm that no one can become a citizen of the Kingdom of God without meeting the requirements; and he can be inducted into the Kingdom only by one who has been given specific authority of God for this purpose. Baptism from other sources is invalid regardless of the sincerity of the participants.

Paul said, “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). Through baptism man affirms his appreciation of Christ and all that He has done and does for us. It is truly a privilege to join with Christ through baptism, accepting from Him the power to become the sons of God, to work with Him in building up the Kingdom of God and establishing His righteousness, and to share with Him as “joint heirs” of God (Romans 8:16-17).

LAYING ON OF HANDS

The principle of laying on of hands is significant because in each case the needy individual approaches God seeking a gift or blessing. In that seeking, he recognizes the authorized ministers of God as those standing in the stead of Christ. Together the minister and seeker approach God. The use of the hands in the act of giving gifts is common; and we find that it is so with the ordinances. The gift of God comes to the seeker through the laying on of hands by God’s servants (see Acts 8:14-17, 19:6; 2 Timothy 1:6). While neither a man nor his hands bestow the gift, it is through or by the laying on of the hands that God bestows the gift.

CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES

Jesus taught His doctrine not only by precept but by example. This is equally true with the principle of laying on of hands as it is with the others. When little children were brought to Him, He “took them up in His arms, and put His hands upon them, and blessed them” (Mark 10:14). He might have simply said a prayer in their behalf, but this was more than that. The fact that He blessed them indicates that He bestowed a blessing upon them.

Laying on of hands for healing the sick was common with Jesus and His disciples. Mark records, “Jesus said, . . . A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. And he could do no mighty work there, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk and they were healed” (Mark 6:6-7).

Luke tells us, “Now, when the sun was setting, all they who had any sick, with divers diseases, brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them” (Luke 4:40). Concerning Paul, it is noted, “And it came to pass that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux, to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him” (Acts 28:8). James admonishes the sick to call for the elders to anoint them with oil, that by the prayer of faith, healing could come (see James 5:14-15).

Ordination of men to ministerial (priesthood) authority by the laying on of hands was recognized early in religious history. This was commanded in the case of Aaron (see Exodus 40:12-13) and Joshua (see Numbers 27:18-23). In the Church following the resurrection of Jesus, we find

record of this, too. The seven men who were chosen to look after the temporal things were thus ordained (see Acts 6:6), as were Barnabas and Paul (see Acts 13:3).

In the Book of Mormon record we also find this to be true: "Alma . . . ordained priests and elders, by laying on his hands according to the order of God" (Alma 4:1). In latter-day revelation this procedure is prescribed: "Every elder, priest, teacher, or deacon is to be ordained according to the gifts and callings of God unto him; and he is to be ordained by the power of the Holy Ghost which is in the one who ordains him" (D&C 17:12).

When men were baptized of water, the gift of the Holy Ghost was bestowed upon them through the laying on of hands. Two examples of this are found in those baptized in Samaria (see Acts 8:14-17) and with disciples in Ephesus baptized by Paul (see Acts 19:6). Paul writes of "the gift of God which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:6).

Moroni records, "The words of Christ which he spake unto his disciples, the twelve whom he had chosen, as he laid his hands upon them: And he called them by name, saying, Ye shall call on the Father in my name in mighty prayer; and after ye have done this, ye shall have power that on him whom ye shall lay your hands, ye shall give the Holy Ghost; and in my name shall ye give it, for thus do mine apostles" (Moroni 2:1-2). We find a similar command in latter-day revelation: Elders are "to confirm the church by the laying on of the hands and the giving of the Holy Ghost" (DC 17:8e; also see D&C 34:2c, 49:2g-h). The laying on of hands is certainly one of the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Through it God bestows rich blessings upon man.

Questions for Discussion

1. Give a definition of the word "baptism."
2. Give three reasons why the Scriptures say a man must repent and be baptized.
3. Why are baptism and the laying on of hands called the "sacramental principles"?
4. Why are both of the two baptisms necessary? What is the meaning of each?
5. Why is authority of priesthood necessary in the rite of baptism? Upon what do we base the authority of our Church?
6. Where do we find the precedent of the mode in which we baptize? Why is this the only mode accepted by the Church?

14

THE RESURRECTION

The latter two of the “principles of the doctrine of Christ” enumerated in the Hebrew letter are “eschatological” principles, having to do with future life and final things. It is notable that in these six basic doctrines, the Master challenged men to find God personally and relate their lives to His purpose. He challenged them to receive of the power of godliness made manifest through participation in sacramental ordinances and to live with a sense of reality concerning immortality and God’s eternal plan for man’s good. While the principles of resurrection and eternal judgement will find their fulfillment in times that man cannot now know, their principles are actively at work within us now.

To every man who believes in life hereafter there comes a stream of questions, many of which are unanswerable, at least until our finite concepts are enlarged. We are prone to speculate and go beyond that which God has actually been able to reveal to us. Frequently our concern for that which we believe to be final (eternal judgment) has taken so much of our attention that we have lost the beauty and significance of the resurrection, which makes eternal life possible.

Many people refuse to believe in the resurrection at all. Others simply take it for granted and move on. Few men feel the real urgency of its proclamation or the deep consciousness that caused Job to proclaim: “Oh, that my words were now written! Oh, that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” (Job 19:23-26).

Man cannot fully appreciate the Christ, our Redeemer, until there comes an appreciation of the resurrection and what it does for him.

The story is told of a missionary who went to deepest Africa to work among the tribes there. It was their custom to raid neighboring tribes and take prisoners, who became their slaves. As a symbol of bondage, the slaves were forced to wear metal bands around their necks. Only as someone of their own tribe would risk his life to rescue them from their captors would they be freed and have the bands from around their necks removed. The missionary tried to tell them of Jesus Christ and found that there was no word in their language to portray the meaning of “redeemer.” He tried to illustrate what he meant. After some time their faces lit up, and they said, “That’s the one who takes the neck out.”

To them “redeemer” meant the one who freed them from bondage. Simple as that may seem, it provides a vivid illustration of the importance of Christ and the resurrection. In this life we are under the bondage of sin and death. Christ, our Redeemer, paid the price of His own precious life, that through atonement and resurrection we might be free from this bondage. He breaks the bonds of sin and death, and He sets the prisoner free! Because of his sense of reality, his conviction of resurrection, Paul triumphantly challenged, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” (1 Corinthians 15:55).

Great is the hope and endless the challenge that comes to us with the knowledge of the sureness and significance of the resurrection. There is the assurance that death does not end life but that, through the power of God revealed in Christ, man’s life will be eternal! It is no marvel that the apostles and disciples of that early day went forth to preach a new and vibrant message. The resurrection of Christ guarantees that man shall not always be bound either by mortal flesh and concept or by death. In the hope of resurrection, there shines forth the challenge of life beyond our fondest dreams. In this spirit, Paul called attention to the promise of old: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

THE RESURRECTION—A REALITY

The resurrection is not a dream nor is it a hypothetical idea; through Jesus Christ it becomes a reality. He became “the firstfruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). Though the fact of Jesus’ resurrection is questioned by some today, there was no question in the minds of the early

Saints, for many had seen Him (see 1 Corinthians 15:6). Such evidence as this left no room for doubt. This fact of His resurrection deepened their conviction of His divinity and increased their appreciation of His power.

THE RESURRECTION IN MORTAL LIFE

Through baptism, Christ has made possible the function of the principle of resurrection in our mortal lives. We can experience it! Paul wrote of some, who had been “dead in trespasses and sin,” “you hath he quickened” (Ephesians 2:1). He also wrote, “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection, knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Romans 6:5-6). It is His power that raises us through baptism to a “newness of life,” making it possible for us to be free from the bondage of sin. It is also His power that shall raise us through the resurrection to immortality and eternal life.

TESTIMONY OF THE RESURRECTION

Old Testament prophets, by the power of God, saw and bore witness of the resurrection centuries before it became a reality through Christ. We have noted the moving testimony of Job. Hosea, speaking in God’s name said, “I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction” (Hosea 13:14). Ezekiel was commanded to “prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, O my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves” (Ezekiel 37:12).

So sure was the witness of Paul that resurrection was a reality that he proclaimed, “But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen? And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruits of them that slept For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:13-22). With assurance he taught, “For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Corinthians 15:52-53).

The Book of Mormon also witnesses of the resurrection. Abinadi affirms, “There is a resurrection; therefore, the grave hath no victory, and the sting of death is swallowed up in Christ. He is the light and the life of the world, yea, a light that is endless, that can never be darkened, yea, and also a life which is endless, that there can be no more death” (Mosiah 8:81-82). Amulek, in discussion with the unbelieving Zeezrom, said, “For behold, the day cometh that all shall rise from the dead, and stand before God, and be judged according to their works. Now there is a death which is called a temporal death; and the death of Christ shall loose the bands of this temporal death, that all shall be raised from this temporal death; the spirit and the body shall be reunited again, in its perfect form” (Alma 8:98-100). Indeed, there is an abundance of testimony of the resurrection.

WITH WHAT BODY SHALL WE COME?

This is a question that has concerned some ever since the concept of resurrection was recognized. Paul answered the question this way: “Thou fool! That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die. And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but grain—it may be of wheat, or some other; but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body” (1 Corinthians 15:36-38). It really doesn’t matter what body we shall have in the resurrection. Let us be assured that God will provide us with a body perfect for whatever condition we may be in. It just isn’t important what body it will be as long as that body meets the need of that condition. Paul’s analogy of seed indicates a variety of possibilities; while the grain of wheat produces other grains like it, the tulip bulb shoots forth a new and glorious body.

In another realm of life, the fuzzy, creeping caterpillar emerges from apparent death in the form of a beautiful butterfly. While argument cannot settle the question, we can be sure ours will be wonderful bodies. Through Paul comes the promise that Christ, “shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even

to subdue all things unto himself” (Philippians 3:21).

TWO RESURRECTIONS

Thus far we have spoken of the glory of the resurrection. However, the fact of resurrection brings two possibilities since the life we now live shall have effect on the life that is to come.

We find that there will be two resurrections. Jesus said, “The hour is coming in the which all who are in their graves shall hear his voice [speaking of Himself] and shall come forth—they who have done good, in the resurrection of the just; and they who have done evil, in the resurrection of the unjust” (John 5:28-29).

The first will be one of everlasting joy for those who die in Christ. We read, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Abinadi taught, “All those that have kept the commandments of God shall come forth in the first resurrection” (Mosiah 8:56).

The second resurrection will be that of the unjust. Speaking of this, Daniel prophesied, “And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to everlasting shame and contempt” (Daniel 12:2). Abinadi, speaking of some who come forth in this second resurrection, said, “All those that have perished in their sins ever since the world began, that have willfully rebelled against God, that have known the commandments of God and would not keep them— these are they that have no part in the first resurrection salvation cometh to none such; for the Lord hath redeemed none such” (Mosiah 8:62, 64).

We ought to be challenged to so live as to merit a place in the first resurrection, for on such as these, “the second death hath no power” (Revelation 20:6). We need, likewise, to be warned of the danger that faces those who come forth in the second resurrection.

The principle of resurrection is proven. By the power of Christ, through resurrection, all men shall be raised to the possibility of eternal life with God or to eternal suffering. To some it will mean salvation, but to others it will mean damnation. With the apostles and men of old, let us fervently proclaim this principle of the doctrine of Christ.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why are resurrection and eternal judgment called the “eschatological principles”?
2. What scriptural proof do we have that resurrection is a reality?
3. How does the principle of resurrection function in our mortal life?
4. What are the two resurrections?
5. How did Christ teach and fulfill the principle of resurrection?
6. Is it possible to be a good Christian and not believe in the principle of resurrection? Explain.

15

ETERNAL JUDGMENT

As we approach this matter of eternal judgment, it is with a realization that much about life in the hereafter is beyond our present knowledge. This may be because we could not understand if God revealed it, or it may be that God feels we do not need more than He has given. Rather than reach into the realms of speculation, we prefer to stay on the basis of the fundamental principles of that which has been made known. Obviously, even this requires caution, for our interpretation of these principles can greatly affect our final thinking. The Restoration Movement has insisted that all Scriptures be interpreted to reveal God as He is—loving, kind, merciful, and just. As a result, many of our affirmations concerning the hereafter are distinctive.

JUDGMENT AT DEATH

The Scriptures tell us that when a man dies, his body returns to the dust from whence it came and the spirit returns to God Who gave it (see Ecclesiastes 12:7). At this time a judgment takes place, for the spirits of the righteous go to paradise (see Luke 23:44; Revelation 2:7) while the rebellious and unbelieving are assigned to hell (see Psalm 9:17, 55:15). Hell is also referred to as the pit (see Ezekiel 31:16, 32:27-29) and the prison (see Isaiah 24:22).

We affirm that this is not eternal judgment because it is apparent that both in paradise and hell, men shall be taught and given the opportunity to respond to Christ. It is certain that those who go to hell are taught, for Christ “preached unto the spirits in prison” (1 Peter 3:19). The purpose of Christ teaching the spirits in prison is so they “might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live in the spirit according to the will of God” (1 Peter 4:6).

Essentially, hell is the abode of the rebellious and unbelieving from death until the great day of judgment. It is likewise apparent that there are different levels in hell, for both Moses and David speak of the “lowest hell” (see Deuteronomy 32:22; Psalm 86:13, 88:6).

ETERNAL JUDGMENT

As we have noted, the judgment of which we have been speaking so far is not eternal judgment. It is apparent that even those consigned to hell will not remain there forever, for death and hell must deliver up the dead and will then be themselves destroyed (see Revelation 20:13-14). This is but more evidence that all men must one day face eternal judgment. We cannot escape responsibility for the way we live either here or in eternity. Following that judgment, some will live gloriously in the presence of God or in lesser glories, but others will taste the second death. God will not be vindictive in eternal judgment. His mercy will be extended beyond the fondest hopes of man.

Nevertheless, the law of mercy cannot cancel the law of justice. As God is infinitely merciful, He is also infinitely just (see Alma 19:104-112). Even though He reaches with grace through the life beyond in His attempt to save man, there comes a time when man—if he has left sin unchecked in his life—is beyond salvation. Thus, there must come a time when all men will stand before God to be judged and receive the rewards of their choosing—choices made in their lives to that time.

BY WHAT SHALL MEN BE JUDGED?

Jesus is both the judge and the standard of judgment. We will be judged according to our works (see Revelation 20:12-13; Matthew 7:31, 16:30; 2 Nephi 12:66; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Galatians 6:7-8), according to the words of Christ (see John 12:46-48; 2 Nephi 11:30), and by the law (see Romans 2:12-15; 2 Nephi 6:51-56). Each of these is ultimately related to Christ. By the law is established a basic way of life; by His words and life come the ultimate standards for humanity. Our works are the measure of our response to these.

REWARDS OF GLORY

The very nature of justice tells us that not all men should receive the same reward. Inasmuch as judgment and reward depend upon our response to the standards set by the Christ, the differences in men regarding this response demand varying degrees of reward. Our Master revealed this when speaking of the “many mansions” (John 14:2). Paul also bore witness as he wrote of the glories of the sun, moon, and stars (see 1 Corinthians 15:41).

Latter-day revelation tells us that those who are fitted for life in the celestial kingdom with God are those who received the testimony of Jesus and were obedient to His commandments, whereby they received the Holy Spirit in their lives and gained power through faith to overcome. They have been willing to receive of the fullness of the gospel and have responded positively. Most important of all, “These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood” (D&C 76:5q).

Some by interpretation have felt this indicated that only those who accepted the fullness of the gospel during this life could ever attain such glory. Such interpretation does injustice to the nature of God—for many have died and will yet die without any earthly opportunity to receive this fullness. The fact of the infinite justice and mercy of God demands that all men have opportunity to accept this fullness of Christ, either in this life or in the life to come.

The Spirit of God revealed this to Joseph Smith, Jr.: “All who have died without a knowledge of this gospel, who would have received it if they had been permitted to tarry, shall be heirs of the celestial kingdom of God; also all that shall die henceforth without a knowledge of it, who would have received it with all their hearts, shall be heirs of that kingdom; for I, the Lord, will judge all men according to their works, according to the desire of their hearts” (*Church History*, volume 2, page 16).

We read that the terrestrial world differs in glory as the moon differs from the sun. In this kingdom will be some who “are the spirits of men kept in prison, whom the Son visited and preached the gospel unto them, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, who received not the testimony of Jesus in the flesh but afterwards received it” (D&C 76:6c). They are also “honorable men of the earth, who were blinded by the craftiness of men” (D&C 76:6d). These receive of the glory of God and the presence of the Son but not the fullness of the Father. They obtain not the crown over the Kingdom of God because they were not valiant in testimony. These are those who for one reason or another refused to accept the fullness of the gospel; when that opportunity came to them, they were satisfied with less. In this life they either rejected His gospel and thus had to pay the price of imprisonment to receive Him, or they were willing to accept a portion and were part of the deception which caused them to fail to seek the fullness Christ made possible (see D&C 76:6).

Concerning the telestial glory, we find a number of interesting things (D&C 76:7). As one star differs from another star in glory, it seems there are to be many degrees of reward in this classification. These are those who have spent much time in hell. They did not come forth in the first resurrection but remained among the wicked during the millennial reign, when Christ will be on earth for a thousand years. Among them are liars, sorcerers, adulterers, and whoremongers—those who have manifested all manner of evil, save one: “They deny not the Holy Spirit” (D&C 76:7c). But they have eternally refused to receive the gospel and testimony of Jesus.

These have suffered the wrath of almighty God. As a result, they receive not the ministry of the Father or the Son in the eternal world. But they do receive “the administering of angels, who are appointed to minister for them” (D&C 76:7f). In that great day of judgment, they shall see that which they had not previously seen. At that time, “These all shall bow the knee, and every tongue shall confess to him who sits upon the throne forever and ever” (D&C 76:7u). “They shall be judged according to their works; and every man shall receive according to his own works and his own dominion in the mansions which are prepared; and they shall be servants of the Most High; but where God and Christ dwell, they cannot come, worlds without end” (D&C 76:7v).

In many ways even the glory of the telestial and those permitted to enjoy it are beyond human comprehension. Only a deep conviction of the extent of God’s love and mercy can explain it. Here are men who have rejected God and Christ for countless ages of time. They will have paid the price of God’s wrath on earth and through the long imprisonment of hell. Nevertheless, having paid this price, when they stand before the judgment bar, they receive a reward of glory according to the good they have done in their lives—little or great as it might have been. What great love our Lord extends to all men!

Only the sons of perdition, those who have rejected the power of God after receiving it in their lives—having willfully yielded themselves to the power of the devil and defied the power of God—only these taste of the awfulness of second death and are consigned to eternal torment in the lake of fire and brimstone along with the devil and his angels (see D&C 76:4; Revelation 20:15).

WHAT OF ETERNAL PROGRESSION?

There are many who fail to see the eternal nature of eternal judgment. They feel that if Christ is to be successful in His work, the time must come when all men will stand worthily before God and live gloriously in His presence. As a result, they believe in the “doctrine of eternal progression.” They believe that through the eons of eternity, men will progress toward God until all achieve life with Him. This is not so, not because God does not want it to be, but because sin destroys agency. If man has yielded himself completely and endlessly to Satan, there is no agency left by which He can choose the power to return to God. Sin left unchecked will inevitably produce death. Sin at its worst, as seen in the sons of perdition, inevitably results in the second death, a death so real that they shall not and cannot be redeemed in the due time of the Lord (see D&C 76:4e).

They have chosen the devil as their master, and with him they must live. Even those of the telestial kingdom, who receive some degree of reward, must ever remain where they are. “Where God and Christ dwell, they cannot come, worlds without end” (D&C 76:7v). From the day of their birth, the principle of judgment has worked within them; and now comes the climax of it all. This is eternal judgment. If they have not returned to God, it is not Christ who has failed. He has conquered sin and death and has victoriously offered every man the power to become the sons of God, not only in this life but in the life to come. Christ does not fail; but it is men who fail—by choice—to achieve the glory God created them to enjoy.

Alma tells the importance of using our “time of probation” wisely: “If we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness, wherein there can be no labor performed. Ye cannot say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God For that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world. For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his” (Alma 16:230233).

Questions for Discussion

1. Explain the statement, “Any glory less than celestial glory will be one of condemnation.”
2. Why must we be careful in the study of this principle to rely on revelation and avoid speculation?
3. What judgment awaits us immediately at death?
4. By what are all men judged?
5. What are the rewards of glories, and why do we not believe in progression in eternal life?

16

STEWARDSHIP

The principle of stewardship is not new with the Restoration Movement. The Scriptures tell us that the first words of God to man expounded this principle: “Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:30). In this brief statement we find the basic elements of stewardship.

God created all things, and at no time has He relinquished the right of ownership. However, He did place man here to govern and manage this part of His creation. Thus, man is His steward, for he acts as a custodian, administrator, or supervisor.

This is the promise of Christ to man: “I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). We believe this abundant life will be both physical and spiritual. An abundant physical life will result from obedience to laws that make possible abundant physical production. Christ promises that when men seek first to build up the Kingdom, all things necessary to him will be given (see Matthew 6:38). The Kingdom is not a place of idleness but rather of constructive activity guided by intelligent obedience to all of God’s laws.

A GOOD STEWARD LOOKS TO GOD

Man is the steward, charged with the responsibility of being an overseer. His role is not one of ownership but rather that of manager. The good steward senses his dependence upon God and recognizes the rightness of the command that he account for his stewardship (see D&C 42:9, 101:2). Just as man is responsible for governing and subduing the earth and accounting to God, so also is he responsible for sharing with his fellow man. Since the earth was not created for one but for all, each person must be concerned about all mankind (see D&C 81:4e-g).

TEMPORALITIES

The principle of stewardship covers every phase of life, including our bodies, talents, intellect, and the rest. However, the Lord has made a special effort to instruct men concerning stewardship over temporalities—the tangible, material things in our lives. Perhaps this is because things can so easily become the objects of our worship and that seeking after riches so frequently governs our lives and becomes our master (see Matthew 19:16-22). When this happens, we lose sight of the values of eternity and shut ourselves off from the source of infinite power that can be ours as we share with God in His concern for all mankind.

Early in the experience of man, the law of the tithe was taught. The Inspired Version tells us that Abraham paid to Melchizedec “tithes of all that he had, of all the riches which he possessed, which God had given him more than that which he had need” (Genesis 14:39). Man was taught, “Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed that the field bringeth forth year by year” (Deuteronomy 14:22).

The importance of man’s recognizing God’s rightful claim to the tithe of his increase is found in the charge of Malachi—that those who refused to pay their tithe actually robbed God (see Malachi 3:8-9). The promise for obedience is that God would “Open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it” (Malachi 3:10). Man cannot purchase the blessings of God with money. But only as man is obedient to God’s laws can he become able to receive and appreciate the spiritual blessings of God.

Material wealth is not evil. But the love of that wealth, which causes man to withhold from God His rightful share, is evil (see 1 Timothy 6:10). Few men would willingly admit, even to themselves, that they love money more than God. However, if a man fails to comply with God’s law of temporalities, either he does not see his proper relationship to God, his fellow man, and the earth or else his love for material wealth is so great that he continues to keep to himself that which is not rightfully his. The person who really intends to pay tithing, but doesn’t have anything left with which to pay, must face the fact (with few exceptions) that either he has managed his stewardship poorly or

he has willfully misused that which really belongs to God.

ONE-TENTH OF THE INCREASE

God does not demand that which is unjust from man. The interpretation of the law of the tithe that has been restored in the last days is evidence of this. First, He requires a consecration of all surplus property—that which is not needed by the steward. “And after that, those who have thus been tithed shall pay one-tenth of all their interest annually” (D&C 106:1b).

Man has certain basic needs—food, clothing, and shelter— if his life is to be sustained. All that he has above the necessities of life is an “increase” to him above his needs, and it is from this increase that God requires a tithe. If a man is a good steward and has an increase—little or big—he can pay his tithe because it is taken out of that which is above his actual needs. Thus, as far as the law of the tithe is concerned, each man has the same requirement—one-tenth of that which he has above his needs.

ACCOUNTING

“It is required of the Lord at the hand of every steward to render an account of his stewardship both in time and in eternity” (D&C 72:1c). This matter of accounting is basic to the entire philosophy of stewardship (Matthew 25:14-31). Proper accounting is recognized in all avenues of economy. A farmer who rents from another and pays a percentage of his crops must make a faithful accounting of income and expenses if he is to know rightfully how much rent to pay. No landlord would be willing to have his renter pay by guess. Yet, many men refuse to account to God, preferring to pay their tithe by guess.

We cannot fulfill our responsibility as stewards by simply paying what we think to be our tithe. Accounting is essential. Anything that we pay which is more than the tithe is not really a tithe but an offering. Anything which we pay less than the tithe leaves us in debt. Thus, the only true basis for the paying of the tithe is accounting.

The matter of accounting brings us an immediate question: “Where do I start?” The answer is obvious—we must start right where we are. There are those who would like to ignore any increase they have accumulated throughout the years of their lives and start simply by paying the tithe on future increases. However, the good steward will recognize that whatever he has accumulated as a net worth is an increase to him; after all, “We brought nothing into this world” (1 Timothy 6:7).

Accounting begins with the filing of the inventory, which makes it possible for a man to accurately determine his net worth (his gain in life to that point) and thus discover what his accumulated tithe (his debt to God) is. From that time forth, the annual accounting determines the steward’s increase for each year. Basically, accounting is a matter of self-discipline. It has been said that the individual who is not willing to discipline himself for the good of the group is not worthy of the Kingdom.

THE USE OF INCREASE

Accounting and paying the tithe, however, still fall short of the total understanding of stewardship. What a man does with the portion of his increase that is left after he has paid his tithe is equally important because he could do many things with that increase. He could use it in riotous living, to gain power over his neighbor, to entice others to sin, to gratify worldly lusts, to gain other material increase, or to enrich the life of his fellow men. Obviously, some of these would be wicked and wasteful.

Actually, any use of the increase that fails to bring enrichment to life falls short of the purpose for which God created it. In the use of the increase, we dare not overlook our responsibilities to our fellow man. It is from this increase that our offerings, oblations, consecrations, surplus, and wise investments come.

SEEK RICHES FOR THE INTENT TO DO GOOD

Jacob has written: “Before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ, ye shall obtain riches if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good: to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief

to the sick and the afflicted” (Jacob 2:23-24). Here is the basic philosophy behind stewardship. We seek not and live not for selfish purposes but that life might be enriched because of our being.

Following the day of Pentecost, when men were transformed by God’s Spirit, they still possessed things. But their attitude of possession was changed, for “Neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common” (Acts 4:32). In the days of Alma, the Church and its members became exceedingly rich. “They did prosper and become far more wealthy than those who did not belong to their church.” We find that they did not have pride in their riches. Instead, they gave of their substance to those in need, both in and out of the Church (see Alma 1:40-47). Those people used their wealth for good; and when men use wealth as God intends it to be used, they can rightfully expect His blessings.

WHAT ABOUT EQUALITY?

The term “equality” is frequently used as we think of Zion and stewardship. Again this is a matter of attitude. Only as we lose ourselves—in sharing with Christ His concern for all men— can equality be achieved. In modern revelation we find this instruction: “And you are to be equal, or in other words, you are to have equal claims on the properties for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and needs, inasmuch as his wants are just; and all this for the benefit of the church of the living God, that every man may improve upon his talent, that every man may gain other talents, yea even an hundredfold, to be cast into the Lord’s storehouse, to become the common property of the whole church, every man seeking the interest of his neighbor and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God” (D&C 81:4e-g). Temporal equality is essential if we are to receive “the abundance of the manifestations of the Spirit” (D&C 70:3d) and be “equal in obtaining heavenly things” (D&C 77:1f).

WE WORSHIP THROUGH STEWARDSHIP

When man makes his life, talents, and material wealth sacred, returning to God His rightful portion (the tithe) is a natural result. The mechanics of stewardship are secondary, although necessary, and the thing of prime importance is man’s attitude and purpose. No man’s worship of God is complete without the full expression of his stewardship. Any person who does less than he can with the resources he is given also does less than he can in worshiping God.

Questions for Discussion

1. How old is the practice of stewardship? Give scriptural references.
2. What are the basic elements of stewardship?
3. How is a good steward obligated to the society in which he lives?
4. Tell how a good steward relates himself and his possessions to God, to the Church, and to other people.
5. What are temporalities? How do they become spiritualized?
6. Why is accounting one of the most important parts of stewardship?
7. Can one be a good steward and not produce an increase?
8. It is said, “The mechanics of stewardship are secondary to the spirit of sacrifice.” Do you agree? Explain.
9. How does a man worship through stewardship?

17

REVELATION

REVELATION AND MAN

For quite some time there has been the idea among us that receiving of revelation was an exclusive practice of the Latter Day Saint Movement. Now the thought is rather widespread among many Christian sects. In its broadest sense, the revelation of God relates to the very life of man, regardless of his philosophy or geographical location. And it is not exclusively Christian. All religions are based on some quickening spirit, and their foundations are laid on movements completely outside of man. As man looks upward, God looks downward; that is why prayer is universal. John tried to explain this when he called Jesus Christ “the true light, which lighteth every man who cometh into the world” (John 1:9; see also D&C 85:2-3).

Knowledge, which has been unfolding in multiple discoveries in the physical world, is the result of a spirit of revelation. This spirit has always been working in man, though man may prefer to attribute his increase of knowledge to natural causes and evolutionary processes. Nevertheless, the germ thought for every major invention must be regarded as revelation, a disclosure of things unknown to man before. We may dismiss it as an “idea” or a “hunch,” but where does an idea or hunch come from? It comes from that light “which lighteth every man who cometh into the world.” The same is true of art, literature, music, and the like. Something was born within the heart of the artist and gave him a picture of that which his hands were able to paint into a most glorious scene.

REVELATION AND THE SAINTS

Revelation to the Saints brings a recognition of Jesus Christ. It is quite possible for one to be quickened by the Spirit of Christ and yet not recognize Him. John made that very clear when he wrote: “The world was made by him, and the world knew him not” (John 1:10). But to those recognizing Him and receiving Him “gave he power to become the sons of God” (John 1:12). As sons, they are accessible to the intimacy of the heavenly family circle (see Ephesians 3:13-19).

The beginning of revelation is found in the reaching out of both man and God. This outreach must be with intensity or else it will be unproductive. “Blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled,” said the Lord (Matthew 5:8). This hunger led Peter to say, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:17). There was a hunger in the souls of the early followers of Jesus for the fulfillment of God’s promises to Israel. We have a glimpse of this hunger in the joyous announcement of Philip to Nathaniel. “We have found him, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph” (John 1:45).

Paul made the emphatic statement: “No man can know that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 12:3). This revelation comes to the individual soul, convincing him of the divinity of Christ. When the individual accepts the redeeming message, he becomes entitled to further revelation as the adopted child of God (see Romans 8:14-17). This may come directly to the individual to help in particular needs as is the case with the manifestations of the Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 12:3-11), or it may come to the individual as part of the body of Christ.

REVELATION TO PROPHETS AND SEERS

Revelation that comes to prophets and seers does not as a rule consider the personal needs of an individual but the needs of the Church. When it is given to an individual, it is given in consideration to the part he may play in the greater movement.

The revelation experienced by Paul on his way to Damascus to persecute the young Church was not given for the sole purpose of edifying Paul (see Acts 22:1-15). The revelations to both Saul and Ananias were given in view of the need of the work (see Acts 9:6-18). The revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos was given for the benefit of the Church as a whole. The seven churches of Asia are symbolic of the universal Church. Revelation was also given to seers and prophets for the clarification of doctrine and policy. The vision to Peter while in prayer on the housetop of Simon, the tanner, (see Acts 10) opened the doors of the Church for the reception of the Gentiles and settled an important controversy.

The apostle Paul was so careful in his teachings on doctrinal matters that he nearly always attributed them to the Lord. When he had no revelation, he said so plainly (see 1 Corinthians 7:25). The heavenly light which came to the Church through the seers and revelators distinguished her wisdom from worldly wisdom (see 1 Corinthians 2:7-14). This prophetic gift through seers and revelators is the property of the Church for all time, providing she is faithful to her mission (see 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-14).

THE CREDIBILITY OF REVELATION

There is one test for the credibility of revelation, and that is “experience.” The high moral precepts taught by the prophets of the Old Testament could not have survived until our day had they been so many empty words. Experience has told us time and again that departure from them meant ruin. When prophecy foretells the future, experience again is the standard of its truthfulness (see Matthew 24:35).

Jacob’s statement expresses the need and grandeur of the revelation of God: “Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord! How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways! And no man knoweth of his ways, save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God” (Jacob 3:9-11).

Revelation in its truest meaning points to Christ. This is true of the prophets who came before Christ as well as of those who appeared after His advent. Christ and His teachings have become an experience in history as well as in the lives of noble men. If we depart from Him and His message, we do not enjoy the fullness of life. This has been true of the individual and the group. Credibility of the revelation in the Restoration also depends on experience. In its predictions, as well as in its moral teachings, the revelation that came to Joseph Smith is true. There was —and still is—a need for it.

CONDITIONS FOR REVELATION

It is important that we consider the conditions for revelation. We may say that a saintly life is all that is needed, but that would be an over-simplification of the point. There are certain qualities in the saintly life that need to be present. We tend to limit the receiving of revelation to a prayer service or a conference. We need to seek to discover the revelation of God that surrounds us, in all times and in all places.

John on the Isle of Patmos, Paul, Daniel, and the sons of Mosiah all sought for God’s Word. John’s revelation came as the result of his suffering for the Word of God and concern over the seven churches which were located on the mainland (see Revelation 1:9ff). It is also obvious that he was in prayer and fasting on Sunday, the Lord’s day. How else could he be “in the spirit on the Lord’s day?” He certainly gave heed to the command to “Be still, and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). The intensity of His concern, suffering, service, and prayer led the Spirit to show John that the seven churches and their ministers were in the hand of God.

Paul was zealous for the Word of God, even receiving stripes and being put in prison (see 2 Corinthians 11:23ff). Behind Daniel’s visions was a concern which led to study, prayer, and fasting (see Daniel 9:1-5). The same is true of the sons of Mosiah (see Alma 12:1-13).

Finally, we must not ignore the statement of the Lord on this subject: “If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him; and we will come unto him and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). Only as we are obedient to the commandments of Christ can we receive of Him.

Questions for Discussion

1. Why can it be said, “Revelation is in the life of every man, and it is not exclusively Christian”?
2. How are art, literature, and music examples of God’s revelation?
3. How does revelation to the Church differ from the kinds of revelations discussed in the first two questions?
4. What are the requirements for individual revelation?
5. How does revelation to prophets and seers differ from revelation to individuals?
6. Give scriptural examples of individual revelations and prophetic revelations.
7. How can revelation be tested?
8. Why is revelation so important in the Church and in the life of man?

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SALVATION

Salvation for the individual is the chief objective of all Christian teachings. But it does not belong to Christianity alone. Every religion—Christian, Islam, Judaism, and others—has held out some hope or some program of salvation. There are as many different ideas as there are different religions as to the meaning of salvation and how it is attained. The Restoration has brought a unique challenge to the religious world in regard to the final destiny of the soul of man.

As a result of the many philosophies, it would be wise for us to consider well these questions: From what does man want to be saved? To what does he hope to be saved? By what means does he go about being saved? We realize that salvation has two sides from which it can be viewed—what we are saved *from* and what we are saved *to*. We may be saved from the burning house and still lose all our possessions. The criminal may be saved from the electric chair but still have a life sentence. In our spiritual warfare, we may be saved from everlasting torment but fall far short of celestial glory. Because of our principles and religious teachings, we may be saved from being tempted by the evils of society but at the same time fail completely to catch a glimpse of the Kingdom of God. Jesus came preaching and teaching a way of life that would not only save mankind from the terrible destruction coming upon the earth but it would also save man to the Kingdom of God.

MAN'S FALL

In Genesis, we read that man was created and placed in the garden of Eden, where Adam conversed with God. When Adam and Eve were disobedient, they were cast out of the garden and from the presence of God. Because of the fall of man, a plan of salvation was prepared from the very beginning. This plan was revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, “the lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). Therefore, salvation lies in man finding the way prepared and qualifying himself to come again into the presence of the Father. The Lord said, “If you will that I give unto you a place in the celestial world, you must prepare yourselves by doing the things which I have commanded you and required of you” (D&C 77:1g).

Salvation is the act of both redeeming man from the fall and bringing him back to God. The fall is described as “that our first parents were cut off, both temporally and spiritually, from the presence of the Lord” (Alma 19:88). Therefore, salvation is the act of bringing man back into the presence of God to dwell with God and Christ. This is made possible only through God’s gift of mercy. However, mercy can have no claim upon us unless we repent. Repentance is not only ceasing to do evil, but also learning to do right (see Isaiah 1:16-17). “None but the truly penitent are saved” (Alma 19:106).

MANY REWARDS OF GLORY

There are many rewards of glory. Celestial glory, terrestrial glory, and telestial glory are suggested in 1 Corinthians 15:40-42 and are described in D&C 76. Every person will be rewarded according to that which he has qualified himself to receive. “The dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works” (Revelation 20:12).

When Jesus spoke of salvation, He referred to being saved to God and coming again into His presence. By His atonement, Jesus prepared a way for men to come again into the presence of the Father and inherit celestial glory. Therefore, anyone who has not qualified himself for full citizenship in the Kingdom of God (celestial glory) is not “saved,” regardless of what lesser glory he might achieve.

Many religions use the word “saved” to include all but the lowest reward—a kingdom of no glory. But Jesus apparently used it in the restricted sense to mean only the highest—celestial glory. The atonement of Christ brought about the resurrection of all men, and the law of mercy prepared the celestial glory for those who would live the celestial law.

Some people have thought that all the glories are included in the term salvation. This is true only when we consider it from the standpoint of *what we are saved from*. The person who receives telestial glory is *saved from* the lake of fire and brimstone. Also, the person who qualifies for terrestrial glory is saved from the lesser rewards of the telestial glory.

It is evident that man can attain a lesser glory without accepting the gospel or the testimony of Jesus. In speaking of the telestial glory, the Lord says, "These are they who . . . received not the gospel, neither the testimony of Jesus, neither the prophets; neither the everlasting covenant" (D&C 76:7m). The lesser glories are prepared because of the justice of God in rewarding every man for any good works he has done. The celestial glory can be attained only through Christ and by our obedience to His teachings.

REDEMPTION AND SALVATION

In some Scriptural references, the words "salvation" and "redemption" are used interchangeably and are generally thought of as meaning the same. However, redemption is different from salvation. If not for the plan of redemption, there would be no resurrection, and all men would become devils. "For behold, if the flesh should rise no more, our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the eternal God and became the devil, to rise no more. And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself" (2 Nephi 6:20-21).

The plan of redemption makes possible the resurrection from the dead and places man again under the law of God. "For it behooveth the great Creator that he suffereth himself to become subject unto man in the flesh and die for all men, that all men might become subject unto him" (2 Nephi 6:10). Redemption is not to be earned; it is a gift. We can't redeem ourselves; it has to be done for us. Redemption makes possible the resurrection, the reuniting of the body and spirit, and bringing men back into the presence of God to be judged. "Redemption cometh in and through the holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth" (2 Nephi 1:71). Redemption is made possible through Jesus Christ, but it does not denote salvation.

CAN ONE KNOW THAT HE IS SAVED?

The Bible enumerates several things as saving us: saved by hope (Romans 8:24), saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8), saved by belief (John 3:15-16), saved by the foolishness of preaching (1 Corinthians 1:21), saved by works (James 2:14-25), and others. Each of these has its place in the plan of salvation, but no one of them is complete without the others.

In the eyes of much of the Christian movement, being saved seems to be a matter of a special experience in a moment of time. But, in its truest sense, salvation is a process which eventually leads us back into the presence of God. Yes, we should have some special experiences which indicate that this process has begun in our lives. But it is not likely at any given time in this life that we can know this process has been complete and has achieved its purpose.

To say that we know we are saved is to say that either we can never sin again or that sin will no longer have any effect on our salvation. To say that we have no sin within us is to classify ourselves with those who have not the truth within them (see 1 John 1:8). To say that sin we commit no longer has effect on our salvation is to deny the purpose and power of righteousness. Paul warned the Saints, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

IS BELIEF ENOUGH?

Inasmuch as some misinterpret the Scripture, "Whosoever believeth on him [Jesus] should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:15), we must analyze the word "believeth" and see what part it plays in our salvation. Belief is very closely akin to faith, and in some scriptural references they can be used interchangeably. Almost everyone believes in the ability of doctors to learn the function of the human body and that which causes disease. But would such belief in doctors save us from lung cancer if we continued to smoke? Only as we live *in accord* with our belief can we thus be saved. That is why Jesus said, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Belief alone is not enough. Sincere belief leads to action! Belief in Christ demands that we live according to His teachings!

GRACE

What about salvation by grace? We most certainly believe that salvation comes by grace. One of the best definitions expressed in recent years is that grace is the quality of God that causes Him to continue to reach out past the rejection of man, seeking to lift man from his fallen state and challenge him to live in accord with the good that was created in him. Paul wrote of his deep gratitude: "Being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7).

The fact that grace includes works is indicated by Paul, who says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith—and that not of yourselves; but it is the gift of God—not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). The works he speaks of are those of the Mosaic law in which the Jews had placed so much trust.

Note that grace saves through faith. James clarifies this as he challenges, "What profit is it, my brethren, for a man to say he hath faith and hath not works? Can faith save him? . . . Faith without works is dead and cannot save you . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead" (James 2:14-25).

WORKS

Jesus taught: "It is not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:30). The Pharisees and Sadducees were told by John the Baptist, "Repent, therefore, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance" (Matthew 3:35). Many things could be listed under the heading of works: baptism, sacraments, other ordinances, care of the poor, paying tithes, prayer, church attendance, bearing testimony, and others. Our reward and judgment will be according to our works (see Matthew 16:30; Revelation 20:12-13, 22:12). With this understanding of grace and works, the statement of Paul becomes most meaningful: "Work out your own salvation" (Philippians 2:12).

Further evidence of the importance of works in the process of salvation is found in Paul's letter to the Galatians. To those who felt works were unimportant, Paul wrote, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). John indicates that the blood of Jesus can cleanse us only "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light" (1 John 1:7).

Questions for Discussion

1. In what ways are the plan of salvation and redemption different?
2. Salvation comes as a result of a man doing certain things. What are these things?
3. Salvation not only means saved *from* hell but saved *to* what?
4. In what ways do our works affect our salvation?
5. Explain why belief in Christ is not enough, in itself, for salvation.
6. How does preaching play a part in the salvation of man?
7. What responsibility do we have for the salvation of our neighbors? Our family? Fellow Church members?
8. What are some of the things listed in the Bible that will save us?

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THE CHURCH IN CHRIST'S DAY

The history of the Church begins not in 1830, as we sometimes think, but actually in the time of Christ and His apostles. The Church we represent was formally organized in 1830. It is significant that we of the Restoration believe this not to be a new church but literally that one built by Christ many centuries ago. A knowledge of the history of the Church, from that day to this, forms the basis of belief that this Church is not just another religious organization. It is, in fact, Christ's own Church.

Our first consideration is of the promise of Christ: "Upon this rock I will build my church" (Matthew 16:18). There are many who believe this to have been a symbolic statement rather than a statement of fact. Some others do believe that Christ has a church but that it is an unorganized body consisting of all the good people of all churches regardless of their contrasting beliefs. We believe that Christ spoke literally and that the Scriptures of the New Testament witness that a definite organization was accomplished. Christ's Church was a divine organism. In the Scriptures we find the Church symbolically referred to as the "body of Christ" (see 1 Corinthians 12:27; Ephesians 4:12; Colossians 1:18).

WHY DID CHRIST BUILD HIS CHURCH?

Back of Christ's promise to build His Church we find His purpose. It is not unreasonable to ask, however, why should He build a new church? There were a number of sects of Judaism such as the Pharisees and Sadducees in His day. These were composed of people who believed in God. The Pharisees were a body of very devout men, at least according to their beliefs. They lived strictly by the moral standard they believed to be set forth in the law. More than this, they were men of influence. Why did not Christ join them and through His leadership reform their beliefs? They would then have become His Church. Certainly this would have added prestige to His work. The answer is simple—their beliefs were taught by the precepts of men; and though they honored God with their lips, their hearts were far from Him. They were prejudiced by the indoctrination of centuries-old tradition. Their hearts were not open to new truth. Christ gave this example: "No man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine doth burst the bottles and be spilled" (Matthew 9:25; Mark 2:20; Luke 5:37-38). None of the forms of Judaism were adequate to express the spirit of Christianity. Christ was to teach new doctrine, radical to the extreme in that day. In contrast to the old teaching, "An eye for an eye" (Exodus 21:24; Matthew 5:40), He said, "Whosoever smite thee on the right cheek, turn the other also" (Matthew 5:41). His teaching that men should love their enemies (Matthew 5:46) was one that Judaistic bodies could not have assimilated. Christ built His Church that it might be based on new principles and give adequate expression of His spirit. That God's Kingdom was to be built up and His righteousness established through the Church is evidenced by Christ's early instruction to His disciples, "Seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God and to establish his righteousness" (Matthew 6:33). He built His Church because there was no religious organization on the earth capable of carrying on His work. He had to have an instrument through which His authority (Matthew 7:28-29) could continue, through which His personal ministry and leadership might be given.

UPON THIS ROCK

Jesus gave a parable of two men, one building his house upon sand and the other upon rock. His statement, "And it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock" (Matthew 7:24-25), is similar to His proclamation, "Upon this rock . . . and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18). Many believe that the rock upon which the Church was built was Peter. Some have said it was Christ Himself. Still others say that it was Peter's confession of Christ that was the rock. We believe it goes beyond Peter, who was a man and moveable. Since Christ was the cornerstone of the Church (Ephesians 2:20), which was built upon the rock, it was not Him. As important as was the confession of Peter, it was the experience which made it possible that held promise for all men. Jesus said, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). In this experience, truth known of God, but not of man, was revealed to Peter in such a way

that he recognized Jesus as “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:17). This was a divine experience. Paul later emphasized the importance of revelation in relation to both the knowledge of Christ and His gospel (see 1 Corinthians 12:3; Galatians 1:11-12). Thus, the rock upon which the Church was built was the divine experience of the revelation of Jesus Christ and the truth that shall make men free (see John 8:31-32).

MINISTERS IN CHRIST’S CHURCH

The Church had for its foundation the apostles and prophets, with Christ Himself the chief cornerstone (see Ephesians 2:19-20). That there were specific ministers in the Church is a scriptural fact. The purpose of these ministers in the Church is noted by Paul: “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we in the unity of faith, all come to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” (Ephesians 4:11-16). Certainly the specific ministers were placed in the Church for the purpose of giving leadership in the work entrusted to the Church. These ministers were apostles (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Luke 6:13), prophets (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Acts 13:1-2), seventies (Luke 10:1-2), high priests (Hebrews 3:1, 5:1, 8:3), evangelists (Ephesians 4:11), bishops (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Philippians 1:1), elders (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5), priests (Hebrews 7:11), teachers (Ephesians 4:11), and deacons (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8ff).

It is important to note that the ministers in Christ’s Church are individuals specifically called to the special function of their separate offices. Paul uses the analogy of the parts of the body to teach this, finally stating that all are not apostles, all are not prophets (see 1 Corinthians 12:29). From this writing we can see that the functions are separate and specific, for the foot would not do the work of the hand.

PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

The Church taught the basic principles of the doctrine of Christ. Paul enumerates these as, “repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment” (Hebrew 6:1-2).

A study of the Scriptures reveals many instances in which Christ taught these principles. Jesus came to Galilee preaching repentance (see Mark 1:12-13), returning to God in the parable of the prodigal son (see Luke 15:11-32), and the lifetime process required by His admonition to the woman in adultery (see John 8:3-11). He used incidents such as the woman healed of the issue of blood (see Luke 8:44-49), and Peter sinking in the water (see Matthew 15:19-27) to teach faith. The coming of Christ to John for baptism (see Matthew 3:41-46) and His teaching of Nicodemus (see John 3:3-5) emphasized the doctrines of two baptisms. He laid hands on the sick (see Mark 6:7; Luke 4:40) and by the same method blessed little children (see Mark 10:11-14). His disciples later used this ordinance also to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost (see Acts 8:14-17, 19:5-6) and to ordain men to priesthood responsibility (see Acts 13:1-4). The literal resurrection of Jesus (see Matthew 28:1-5) evidenced that principle, and with the promise of His second coming He taught eternal judgment (Matthew 25:32-47).

POWER IN THE CHURCH

However, the Church was not merely one of priesthood and doctrine; it was distinguished by its power (1 Thessalonians 1:5). Paul was greatly concerned that those coming into the Church should know of this. He addressed the Corinthian Saints accordingly: “Now, concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant” (1 Corinthians 12:1). He continued to instruct them about this matter, listing for them some of the ways in which the Holy Spirit is manifested in the Church (see 1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Joel, the prophet, had also foreseen other manifestations (see Joel 2:28). Wisdom, faith, and knowledge are as much the gifts of God’s spirit as are miracles, prophecy, and speaking in tongues. Paul taught that not every man had every gift and admonished all to “covet earnestly the best gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:29-31).

THE LOVE OF GOD

The distinguishing mark of discipleship and thus basic to the Church was the expression of Christian love. The Master said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). Early in His ministry He had commanded a quality of love that surpassed any previous requirement. He taught that His disciples should love friends, neighbors, and enemies as well. He admonished, "Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:46-47). When asked which was the first commandment, He said, "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength And the second is like this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Mark 12:35-36).

THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

Christ did build His Church. It was organized with purpose. Moving by the power and light of God's Holy Spirit, it taught the doctrines and practiced the ordinances of salvation, ever challenging men to the greater achievement—the triumphant building up of the Kingdom of God and the doing of His will on earth as it is done in heaven.

Questions for Discussion

1. When did the history of the restored Church begin? Why do we need to date it before 1830?
2. What was the rock upon which God built His Church?
3. What two teachings of Christ differed radically from Judaistic principles?
4. Give an example of Christ sending out ministers.
5. Give instances when Christ taught faith, repentance, and baptism.
6. Jesus said that men would be known as His disciples when they did what things? Can we find the followers of Christ by the same means today?
7. In what sense is the Church of Christ a divine organism?
8. Why did Christ build His own Church instead of joining another religious sect of His day?
9. How does Paul's analogy of the human body apply to the organization of the Church?
10. What two great commandments did the law and the prophets depend upon, according to Christ?
11. Christ gave an early command to His disciples that their first concern should be what?

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THE APOSTASY

The history of the Church in the post-apostolic period can best be understood when studied in the light of the prophetic predictions concerning it. Such predictions are abundant and serious in the recognition of the apostasy—the departure from Christ—which seemed inevitable by the very nature of men. Isaiah, who had so accurately foretold the coming of the Christ and the nature of His work, warned, “Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people” (Isaiah 60:2). Micah, in speaking of any time when the spiritual leaders of the people would lead them astray, said, “Therefore, night shall be unto you, that ye shall not have a vision; and it shall be dark unto you, that ye shall not divine; and the sun shall go down over the prophets, and the day shall be dark over them. Then shall the seers be ashamed and the diviners confounded; yea, they shall cover their lips; for there is no answer of God” (Micah 3:6-7). In both of these, we see the prediction of darkness over the people.

Amos foresaw a time when human life would be held as cheap by the leaders of the people—a time of great injustice and inequity—a time in which, “We may buy the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes” (Amos 8:6). He bears witness that God will not forget many of their works and prophecies, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land—not a famine of bread nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord; and they shall wander from sea to sea and from the north even to the east; they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord and shall not find it” (Amos 8:11-12).

Jesus warned of the same when He said, “Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you” (John 12:35). Some would say Christ was speaking of His own departure here because He proclaimed Himself to be the light of the world (see John 12:46). However, we note that He also said to His disciples, “I give unto you to be the light of the world” (Matthew 5:16). The light that Christ brought to the earth was the truth, the Word of God. His disciples, by sharing this truth, then could also become a light to the world. Thus, it was as Amos had said—the Word of God was to be taken away. When the light of God’s Word was gone, the natural result would be the darkness which had been predicted.

APOSTOLIC PREDICTIONS

The apostles also saw what was to happen and warned the Church of the coming darkness. Paul warned the elders, “After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock” (Acts 20:29). These were outside forces that would seek to destroy the Church. He also charged, “Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:30). He left Timothy in Ephesus to “Charge some that they teach no other doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:3). He warned of a time when men would “not endure sound doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:3). He spoke of “perilous times” when there would be men, “having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof” (2 Timothy 3:1-5). Peter joined Paul in this admonition as he said, “There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in abominable heresies” (2 Peter 2:1). John foresaw the time when the Church would flee to the wilderness (see Revelation 12:5).

THE APOSTLES SAW THE APOSTASY COMING

It did not take long for the forces of apostasy to find their place. Paul wrote, “The mystery of iniquity doth already work” (2 Thessalonians 2:7); “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel” (Galatians 1:6); and “Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). John also noted, “Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist” (2 John 1:7).

HISTORICAL PROGRESS

Apostasy, however, was not accomplished in a day. It took hundreds of years for false doctrine to replace the word of truth. This took place step by step, year by year, and century by century. The age of the apostles seems to have come to a close near the end of the first century, for we hear nothing of them after that. However, the Church continued to grow in spite of persecution, which took the lives of many and drove others into hiding. History shows that during the first three centuries after Christ it was truly dangerous to be a Christian.

It was during this period that real evidence of Paul's predictions began to be seen. There were indeed many who sought to pervert the gospel of Christ and draw away disciples after themselves. Changes in the doctrines of baptisms and the Lord's supper began to take place during this time. Infant baptism was introduced as early as A.D. 185, but it did not become a universal practice until the sixth century, despite earlier church sanction.

In the years that followed, many heresies entered the apostate church. Among these, we find Mary was called the mother of God, A.D. 438; priests dressed differently, A.D. 500; prayers offered to Mary, A.D. 593; holy water introduced, A.D. 682; ritual of kissing pope's toe introduced, A.D. 708; cardinals created, A.D. 817; transubstantiation of bread and wine declared, A.D. 1215; and baptism by sprinkling first legalized, A.D. 1311 (see *Catholic Encyclopedia*).

The church became an institution of force and fear. God was portrayed as a God of wrath, punishment, and vengeance. Men were held in fear of eternal burning. The church gained power in religious and civil matters. Even emperors and kings bowed before this power, for they dared not make war against it. An example of this is the case of Henry IV of Germany. Because of his revolt against Papal power, he lost his authority over his people.

Christ had promised the abundant life to man, but the Church which professed to be His was under apostate leaders. It controlled the world but brought no abundant life; in fact, there was probably less of this abundance than at any other time in recorded history. Indeed, the effects of apostasy were great. Darkness had covered the earth and gross darkness the people.

THE REFORMATION

While the apostasy progressed, forces began to move in the hearts of men, which eventually resulted in the Reformation. One of the great men of this movement was Martin Luther. His serious devotion and study caused him to realize that the church had indeed departed from God. His first serious break with the church came with his preaching against the practice of selling indulgences. It was not his purpose to form a new church but simply to reform the old one and bring it back to God and truth.

Other men soon followed, each of them agreeing that Luther was right in his belief that the church had left God and needed to be brought back. However, they disagreed with Luther and each other as to just what was the truth. Each moved forward on the basis of personal convictions—convictions stemming from the opinions of man. It is little wonder that such confusion resulted.

THE CRY FOR RESTORATION

As the work of reformation moved on, it became evident to many that it was not enough—the works of men could never bring the church back to God. Alexander Campbell proclaimed, "We argue that all Christian sects are more or less apostasized from the institution of the Saviour" (*Christian Baptist*, Vol. 5, p. 402). "The primitive gospel, in all its effulgence and power, is yet to shine out in its original splendor to regenerate the world" (*History of the Disciples in the Western Reserve*, p. 37). He taught the need of restoration: "Either some new revelation or some new development of the revelation of God must be made . . . We want the old gospel back, sustained by the ancient order of things" (*The Christian System*, p. 250).

In his day, Roger Williams denied that any ministry existed "which is authorized to preach the gospel to the impenitent or to administer the ordinances" (*Baptist History*, p. 461). He, too, looked for divine assistance to answer the need. "He conceived that the apostasy of antichrist hath so far corrupted all, that there can be no recovery out of that apostasy till Christ shall send forth new apostles to plant churches anew" (*Struggles and Triumphs of Religious Liberty*, p. 238).

John Wesley was another who recognized the weakness of man's attempts. He sensed

the need of the gifts of the Holy Ghost “because the Christians had turned heathens again and had only a dead form left” (*Wesley Sermons*, Vol. 2, p. 266). He, too, looked for the restoration and taught, “What could God have done which He hath not done, to convince you that the day is coming, that the time is at hand, when He will fulfill His glorious promises, when He will arise to maintain His own cause and to set up His Kingdom over all the earth?” (*Wesley Sermons*, Vol. 2, p. 98).

GOD AT WORK

We have seen how the forces of evil, the grievous wolves, entered the flock and how even the ministers of the church perverted the gospel and thus led the church away from Christ into the darkness of apostasy. The history of the corrupt church in those centuries is indeed sad.

However, this was not always to be. Although the reformers did not succeed in their effort to bring the church back to God, they must have been moved by His Spirit at least to recognition of the apostasy. It must have been this same Spirit that gave them strength to stand against the power of the apostate church. While it is to be regretted that even in Reformation they increased their apostasy in some areas of belief, it is to be noted that they succeeded in turning the attention of sincere men to a study of God’s Word. As a result of their works, there came about a form of freedom in religious thinking. Without this, the Restoration which was to come could never have been received by men. Thus, we see the hand of God at work, even in reformation, patiently preparing men’s hearts for the fuller revelation of truth.

Questions for Discussion

1. What is the apostasy?
2. The gross darkness predicted by Isaiah was the natural result of what things?
3. Paul gave two great warnings to the elders of Ephesus concerning the coming apostasy. What were those warnings?
4. In the years that followed the baptism of Emperor Constantine, several heresies entered the church. List four of them.
5. What are the most significant contributions of the reformers?
6. What standard did Paul give to the Galatian Saints by which they could judge whether or not any doctrine was true?
7. What great change in belief about God took place during the apostasy?
8. Aside from the fact that the church of the middle ages departed from the doctrine of Christ, what is the greatest evidence that it was no longer Christ’s Church?

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THE RESTORATION

We have seen the history of Christ's Church has included its organization and movement in the early centuries and its fall into apostasy. We have briefly examined the work of the men of the Reformation as they sought to bring the Church back to God. However, the real hope is to be found in the Restoration of the Church and the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

In order for us to understand the meaning of the Restoration, we need to examine the prophecies relating to it. We need to know that God prophetically promised that this would happen. These prophecies in the Scriptures call for a fulfillment of the promises of God: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing until he revealeth the secret unto his servants, the prophets" (Amos 3:7). Jesus also said, "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe" (John 14:29).

Forces opposing the Restoration have argued that the Restoration Movement has sought to destroy the good works of other organizations. This is untrue. Jesus said, regarding His own ministry, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matthew 5:19). Likewise, the Restoration Movement has not come to destroy any good works, but it has come in direct fulfillment of prophecy. Many of the prophets of the Old Testament spoke with reference to the last days and the work of restitution that would take place.

PROPHETIC BACKGROUND

Isaiah told of a time when the Word of the Lord could not be heard for there would be no prophets (see Isaiah 29:9-10). Micah predicted the same (see Micah 3:6-7), and Amos foretold of the great famine of hearing God's Word that was to come (see Amos 8:11-12). Such a time would indeed be a time of darkness. Isaiah boldly stated, "For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isaiah 60:2-3). The light of God would shine forth again in the Restoration, when God would "proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder" (Isaiah 29:26).

One part of the marvelous work was to be the coming forth of a book containing "a revelation from God" (Isaiah 29:12). The deaf would hear the words of the book; and the eyes of the blind would see out of obscurity (see Isaiah 29:30). They that "erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine" (Isaiah 29:32). The Book of Mormon came forth to restore the plain and precious things that had been taken away from the Bible during the dark ages and to bear witness of the divinity of Christ and the truthfulness of the records of the twelve apostles (see 1 Nephi 3:165). Indeed, this was Restoration!

John the Revelator saw into the future and related a vision in which he saw an angel come to the earth with the everlasting gospel to be preached to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people (see Revelation 14:6). This was to happen after his day and after the time of the apostasy. Then, "The hour of his [Christ's] judgment is come" (Revelation 14:7).

THE TIME OF THE RESTORATION

While it is difficult to time the Restoration to the point of giving the exact day it was to begin, it is good for us to give consideration to such indications as are set forth in prophecy. We have already discussed the indications found in Isaiah 29. In this it appears clear that the 19th century was the century of the Restoration. However, let us look at others.

Daniel told the king, "There is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (Daniel 2:28). Daniel saw the image in the king's dream and its division into ten parts with ten kings as represented by the ten toes. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). History shows that 1829-30 was the first time in history that all the kingdoms of the image were represented at the same time.

In vision, John saw a woman representing the Church. She fled into the wilderness to a place prepared of God and was to remain there for 1260 days (see Revelation 12:5). The apostate church took over the temporal power of Rome around A.D. 570. Adding 1260 years to this date, we arrive at A.D. 1830, the very year the Church of Jesus Christ was organized.

Many people scoff at the idea of prophetic fulfillment in terms of years and say that it is convenient for us to subtract 1260 from 1830 and thus arrive at A.D. 570. Nevertheless, as we examine the many evidences, we find too many converging facts to be mere coincidence. The restoration of the gospel, the coming forth of the Book of Mormon, and the organization of the Church in A.D. 1830 all fit into the character and timing of the prophetic picture. However, these do not give evidence in any way that the Restoration is complete. It is still going on and will continue to do so until the return of Christ. The Kingdom of God is yet to be achieved in its triumphant form, which shall break down all national and racial barriers.

THE RESTORATION

The work that we call the Restoration took organic form April 6, 1830, by the direct commandment of God. That the Church came from the wilderness is evidenced in modern revelation: “This church have I established and called forth out of the wilderness; and even so will I gather mine elect from the four quarters of the earth, even as many as will believe in me and hearken unto my voice” (D&C 32:2a-b). The “old Jerusalem gospel” was brought back in the New Testament form of Church organization with apostles and prophets and having the gifts and blessings of old. Once again, men were challenged to worship God as a God of love, mercy, and justice. The portrayal of God as a God of hatred and vengeance, wrath and destruction—which had held men in abject fear during the apostasy—was replaced by the restoration of the truth. The preaching of the “gospel of the kingdom” was again heard. So great has been the impact of the Restoration on the Christian world that most, if not all, Christian Churches have felt its leavening influence and have improved their doctrines. No longer do revivalists sing, “Hell is crammed with infants damned without a day of grace.” The Restoration moves on!

GOD’S WILL

Most important to our concept of the Restoration is the realization that it was God—not man—who willed and ordered this Restoration of the Church with its primitive organization, doctrines, objectives, and blessings. It is more than a part of the history of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is part of the great plan of God to achieve His purpose of bringing to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.

We are sometimes tempted to wish we could have lived in the time when Jesus walked the shores of Galilee, that we could have heard the gentle words that came from His lips and could have gazed upon His kindly and compassionate face. Truly, that would have been a wonderful experience. Nevertheless, how fortunate we are to live in this day of Restoration, for it is a great privilege to help rear the walls of Zion. By the grace of our heavenly Father, we have opportunity to help prepare for the return of His Son.

May we be obedient to the admonition of the Lord: “Men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness; for the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves” (D&C 58:6d).

Questions for Discussion

1. Why was a restoration necessary?
2. List two verses of Scripture which predicted that God would restore the Church and the gospel after the apostasy.
3. What are two purposes of the Book of Mormon? In what ways can we fulfill these purposes?
4. Give two scriptures that point prophetically to the time of the Restoration.
5. What are three significant and distinctive contributions that the Restoration movement can bring to the religious thinking of today’s world?
6. How should the members of the Restoration Movement view the good works of other organizations?

7. When is the work of the Restoration completed?
8. What is the “marvelous work and a wonder?” Is it still to come forth or has it already been fulfilled?
9. By what power and means did the Restoration come? What responsibility do we have toward the Restoration Movement?