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# CREED MAKING

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Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ  
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I call your attention to two paragraphs of scripture; the first will be found in Revelation 22: 18, 19:

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

The other statement you will find in 2 Peter 1: 3, 4:

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

I do not flatter myself that I shall be able to present anything new in regard to these passages of scripture, for I judge they are familiar to all Latter Day Saints. It sometimes happens, however, that an old song sung to a new tune is interesting, and I hope by the help of the Spirit of God to be enabled to present some thoughts in connection with these texts that will edify and instruct.

You are well aware that these two passages of scripture are used as the strongest arguments of our opponents against our position concerning the Book of Mormon and continued revelation. Wherever we go and present the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and tell the people that God has again spoken from the heavens, as in ancient times, we find people who are willing to justify themselves in rejecting it upon the ground that the Apostle Peter says, "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" are "given to us," and that therefore the revelations given to this church are frauds, that they are impositions, and that they are an outrage against that blessed Bible. In the first place it will be necessary for us to understand what the Apostle John means when he says: "If any man shall add unto these things."

It seems to me that any person, who would but stop and think, would be able to see that John had reference only to the book of Revelation, which he had just written; for the books of

the New Testament had not then been compiled into one volume, as they are at the present time. Those letters and books composing the New Testament were scattered over different parts of the world; one perhaps at Galatia, one at Ephesus, another at Corinth, and another at Philippi, etc.; then the Apostle John simply had reference to the one he was then writing. Now for me—or any other man for that matter—to take up the book of Revelation, and insert thoughts or ideas into it which would change the sense, and then palm it off on the people as the Revelation of St. John, would be adding “unto these things.” Or if I should take up the book of Revelation and take out some words or sentences, changing the sense, and then palm it off on people as the Revelation of St. John, I would be guilty of taking “from the words of the book of this prophecy.”

But, while this text refers directly only to the book of Revelation, *the principle it teaches is applicable to every revelation that God has ever given to man*, whether the revelation be long or short, whether it contains ten words or ten thousand words. Man has no right to add to nor take from *anything* that God has given—has no right to do so now, never did have the right to do so, and never will have. You will remember the text says: “If any *man* shall add to,” or “take from,” etc., nothing said about what God proposes to do in the premises; there is nothing said about whether he will give more revelations, or whether he will withhold them. Mind you, he places this restriction upon *man*, and leaves himself free to do as seemeth him good.

Now, if you will turn back with me to the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy, I will show you there that as early as the days of Moses, men were forbidden to add to or take from God’s word:

Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you.—Deut. 4:2.

A little farther on, in the same book, Moses repeats this command:

What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it.—Deut. 12:32.

Here, that it might be impressive, the thought is repeated that man shall not add to nor take from that which Moses, the great prophet of God, has given unto the children of Israel. The same command is again repeated in Proverbs 30:

Every word of God is pure; he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.—Prov. 30: 5, 6.

Now, while it is true that Revelation 22: 18, 19 refers (directly) only to the book of Revelation, and that Deuteronomy 4:2 and 12:32 refer (directly) only to the five books of Moses, it is true, also, that the last quotation refers to “every word of God,” in whatever book it may be found, and the same is true of the following:

I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him.—Eccl. 3:14.

This establishes what I said a while ago, that *the principle* taught in Revelation 22: 18, 19, is applicable to every revelation that God has ever given to man—“nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.” God tells us through Moses, *the first writer of the Old Testament*, that “man” must not add to nor take from his word; and then tells us again through John the Revelator, *the last writer of the New Testament*, that “man” must not add anything to nor take anything from that which he had given. Why? Because “every word of God is pure,” and came from the lips of a being of infinite wisdom, and infinite knowledge; and, if man should take that up, with his imperfect understanding of God’s will and of God’s purposes, and should begin to add to or eliminate therefrom, he would render the word of God imperfect; or, rather, his substitute for the word of God would be imperfect—it would no longer be the word of God. The Psalmist says:

The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth; purified seven times.—Psa. 12:6.

Again he says:

Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.—Psa. 119:1.

Not only are his words pure, but his law is perfect. Of this the Psalmist says:

The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul.—Psa. 19:7.

And the Apostle James says:

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, . . . this man shall be blessed in his deed.—James 1:25.

Perhaps you are thinking, “If his law is perfect, we don’t

need any more revelation." But you will please remember that the Psalmist said "the law of the Lord is perfect" about one thousand years before the birth of the Savior, and that the Lord kept right on giving revelations to man—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and all the prophets, wrote after that statement was made. And, according to the chronology as given in our Bibles, James calls the gospel "the perfect law of liberty," in the year A. D. 60, and after that, Paul wrote his epistles to the Ephesians, Phillippians, Colossians, first and second Timothy, Titus, Philemon, and Hebrews; Peter wrote his second letter, John wrote his first, second and third epistles, his gospel, and also the book of Revelation, all written after James calls the gospel the perfect law of liberty." We believe that "the law of the Lord is perfect," "the perfect law of liberty," that "every word of God is pure," "very pure;" but we believe this also:

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him.—James 1:5.

And this:

For precept must be upon precept; precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, and there a little.—Isa 28: 10.

That is, we believe that every revelation that God has ever given to man is perfect, for the purpose for which it was given, whether that revelation be long or short.

But, as God has never told us that he has revealed all his will to man, as he has never told us that the canon of Scripture is full and complete, as he has never told us that the day of revelations and angelic ministrations is past, as God has never told us any of these things, we have refused to accept them simply upon man's assertion. To assert and to teach such things, when God has not taught them, seems to us too much like adding to the word of the Lord. The Lord has never told us that the Bible contains all the wisdom and knowledge of God, neither has he, so far as we know, authorized any *man* to tell us so. He has never told us that any man who claims to have received a revelation from God must be at once denounced as an imposter and false prophet, nor has he told us that any man who claims to have had a revelation from God is guilty of adding to the word of God as revealed to us in the Bible. Men have been dinning

these things into our ears for years past, and during those years we have been asking them to give us a "thus saith the Lord" for their assertions, but have asked in vain. It is not *receiving* revelations that is forbidden. No inspired writer, from Moses to John the Revelator, has ever said that man shall not receive any more revelations from God, neither has any inspired writer told us that God will not give any more revelations to man. No, friends, those men of God who wrote "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," have never told us these things. Uninspired men who write as they are moved by the wisdom of men, are the ones who have been teaching these things. Inspired writers, from Moses to John the Revelator, have told us that "man" must not add to nor take from anything which God has revealed, that "every word of God is pure," that "nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it," that "the law of the Lord is perfect," but, during all that time, the Lord kept right on giving "precept upon precept" and "line upon line;" during all that time, when men lacked wisdom and went to God in prayer and faith, the Lord heard their prayers and gave them the necessary wisdom. And, if Moses saying that men should not "add to" nor "diminish aught from" what he had written, does not mean that God will give no more revelation after his day, then this scripture in Revelation does not mean that God will reveal nothing more after it was written; if Joshua, Samuel, Jeremiah, Daniel, Matthew, John, and all the writers of the Bible after Moses' day, do not come under condemnation for receiving and writing revelations after Moses had said, "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you," then a man should not be considered a criminal nor an idiot for believing that man may receive revelations from God after John wrote:

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.

It is certainly plain to any man of even ordinary intelligence, who will divest himself of prejudice and tradition, that this text does not intimate, does not contain even the shadow of an intimation that revelations from God were to cease when the book of Revelation was finished.

I am satisfied that some before me have been in the army during the late war, and have gone out to face the enemy, and

you know, sometimes you had to take a strong battery and in taking that battery you had to fight manfully. Now when you had captured that battery, driven the enemy from it after much toil, perhaps the sacrifice of many precious lives, did you take that battery and throw it away, or did you turn it, face it about, and use it against the enemy that had been using it against you? I dare say that if the guns had not been spiked you would turn them upon the enemy. And just so I propose to do with this text this morning. Having captured it from them, I propose using it against them, or see, at least, whom it condemns. If it be the Latter Day Saints, let them bear the condemnation; if it is some one else, let them bear the judgment that their works deserve.

We start now with the understanding that every word of God is pure, that the law of the Lord is perfect, that it is the perfect law of liberty. And, being perfect, complete and pure, if you begin to add to it or take from it, you make it imperfect, incomplete and impure; and that no power, less than the one which gives the law, has a right to revise that law

And, to simplify matters, and get before your minds, as clearly as possible, the thoughts which I desire to present, I shall ask you to draw upon your imagination this far: Let us imagine that we have met, this morning, for the purpose of organizing a new church, and to draw up the articles of faith by which we purpose being governed—that we have become thoroughly convinced from reading the Scriptures, that all the churches of our day are more or less in error, and that this is to be a new one, organized and built according to the teaching of the Bible. And, as we can't very well agree upon what is to be the faith of this church till it is organized, we shall proceed at once to organize. Jesus says:

Upon this rock I will build my church.—Matt. 16:18.

And Paul says:

And now hath God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him.—1 Cor. 12:18.

Now if Christ is the builder of his church, if he "set the members every one of them in the body," we must go to the Bible and learn from it, if possible, what kind of a church he built. We read first:

And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach.—Mark 3: 4.



And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.—Luke 6: 13.

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.—Luke 10: 1.

And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.—1 Cor. 12:28.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.—Eph. 4: 11.

Paul and Timotheus . . . with the bishops and deacons.—Phil. 1: 1.

And when they had ordained them elders in every church.—Acts 14: 23.

Now, from the above texts, we learn that the Savior, in organizing his church, placed in it apostles, prophets, evangelists, seventies, pastors, bishops, elders, teachers, deacons, miracles, tongues, gifts of healing, helps and governments. Shall we ask the Lord to set all these in our church, which we are organizing this morning? Some one says, "No; we don't need some of those things in the church now." Which ones are not needed now? "Well we don't need any apostles, prophets, we don't need any seventies, we don't need any miracles, gifts of healings, nor diversities of tongues." But didn't the Savior put all these in his church, and haven't we agreed that when God does anything, nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it? "Yes but those things were necessary *then*; *now* we don't need them." Well, if they are not necessary, we will have it understood, to begin with, that this church will have no apostles, prophets, seventies, miracles, healings nor tongues—that we don't believe in such things in our day. Yet our text says:

If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

There is just as much condemnation for taking from God's word as there is for adding to it.

We shall organize our church, then, with evangelists, pastors, bishops, elders, teachers and deacons. But how are these to be called? Again we take up the Bible and read:

Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.—Luke 10: 2.

And no man taketh this honor unto himself but he that is called of God as was Aaron.—Heb. 5: 4. (Aaron was called through the prophet, Moses. See Ex. 28: 1).

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers. . . . As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.—Acts 13: 1, 2.

The Bible says that men must be “called of God as was Aaron,” but as Aaron was called through a prophet (and Barnabas and Paul were called in a similar manner), and as we have no prophets in our new church, we can’t expect men to be “called of God as was Aaron.” So we decide that if a man feels “impressed” that he ought to go and labor for the Lord, he doesn’t need to be called by the Lord speaking to “prophets and teachers” in the church, as he did in apostolic times. But, in this, we have committed a double wrong; we have disposed of the Lord’s way of calling men, and have substituted one of our own—have both taken from, and added to, the word of God.

Now that we have decided upon the form of organization, and the manner in which the officers are to be called, let us proceed to an examination of the Bible, and see how much of it we can accept as our rule of faith and practice. “But,” says one, “I thought we agreed that the gospel is ‘the perfect law of liberty,’ and that we were to take the New Testament in its *entirety*, neither adding to nor taking from the word of God. Well, we shall read some of the New Testament and see if we can all agree to accept it. So we begin with the 1st of Matthew and read along all right till we run up against this:

And no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.—Matt. 11:27.

But here another objection is raised, and it is argued that although God did make himself known to men by revelation in the days of the Savior and his apostles, things have changed since then, and that we can know God now by reading of him in his word. A vote is taken, the congregation declare that this position is correct, and this new church, which was to be built according to the Scriptures, teaches that men can know God *now* without its being revealed to them by the Son—they can know

him by reading his word. The same double sin of taking from God's word and teaching the opinions of men in its stead.

I turn over a little further and read, Matthew 16:18, where Jesus says that Peter had received a knowledge that Jesus was the Christ, by the revelation given by the Father; and Jesus says that "upon this rock I will build my church," that is, upon the revealed truth that Jesus is the Christ. But we soon decide that a church, now, should be built upon the Bible and the Bible alone; so we do away with this text and build upon—our interpretation of the Bible. In the next verse, Matthew 16:19, Jesus says unto Peter:

I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

I turn to Matthew 18:18 and I find that this promise is extended to the church or especially to the officers of the church, and he says to them, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven," etc., making it apply to the church. But we conclude that the church cannot have the keys of the kingdom of heaven in the nineteenth century, so we take that text out, too, and undertake to run our new church without the keys of the kingdom. We read on, then, until we come to Matthew 19:13-15:

Then were brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

I turn next to Mark 10:16 and I read the same statement, only he says that Jesus took up the little children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. It takes the congregation but a moment to decide that it would be more becoming to bring the little children to the ministers of the church, now, and have them sprinkled; so we decide to leave out the blessing of little children, by the laying on of hands and prayer, and substitute "christening" in its stead—taking away the example of the Master and "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." And yet part of our text says:

If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the holy city.

In Mark 11, commencing at the 22d verse, we read:

And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them. (See also Matt. 21: 21, 22).

But our "new fangled" church this morning soon makes up its mind that such faith as is spoken of here was confined to the apostolic age, and that it would be folly to preach that now; so we take that out of the gospel—as we expect to preach it; and God says:

Whosoever shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city.

We read on, then, till we come to Mark 16:15-18, the great commission given by Christ to the apostles, and where Jesus says:

Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

We believe that and put it in our creed.

He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved.

We do not believe that baptism is essential to salvation therefore we will not incorporate that in our creed; but we believe that he that believeth shall be saved, and will put that in; and:

He that believeth not, shall be damned.

We believe that and will also place that in our creed.

And these signs shall follow them that believe. In my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues.

We do not believe that, and shall not preach it either.

They shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

We do not believe men can drink poison, and it not hurt them, they would surely die; neither do we believe in laying hands on the sick, and they shall recover. We therefore shall not place such a belief in our creed. And yet the text says:

If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city.

We next turn to John 3: 5 and read:

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

An objection is at once raised here, that this is too narrow; that men can say, "Lord, save me now," and be saved in a moment—between two pulsations of the heart; that the thief who was crucified with the Savior, simply said, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom," and was saved immediately; and that we can be saved, now, just like the thief on the cross. But some other good brother modestly suggests: "It may be nice enough to be saved 'like a thief,' if it suits one's fancy, but for my own part I would rather be saved 'like a christian.'" But, as the Savior was baptized of John in Jordan and then received the Holy Spirit afterward (Matt. 3: 16), being thus 'born of water and of the Spirit,' and, as he said, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and *follow me*' (Matt. 16:24); and, as he further says, 'He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber' (John 10:1), then I suppose, if a man isn't 'born of water and of the Spirit,' he will have to be saved 'like a thief' if he is saved at all, for he will have to 'climb up some other way.'" But the members of the congregation promptly "sit down on" this brother as "an old fogey," and vote to take out the word "water" and put the word "truth" in its stead, making the text read, "Except a man be born of the truth and of the Spirit"—"take away from" and "add to;" a double condemnation.

We next read Acts 2: 38:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

And before taking any position on it we read Acts 22: 16, where Ananias said unto Saul:

And now why tarriest thou? arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Having already decided that a person can be saved, freed from sin, by simply giving his heart to God, and, too, in a moment, we of course cannot see the necessity of telling people to "repent and be baptized . . . for the remission of sins," nor of telling them to "arise and be baptized and wash away your sins," so out go these two texts. Yet we know what the penalty

is—our name is to be “taken out of the book of life, and out of the holy city” for doing so.

The next principle of the gospel as taught and practiced in New Testament times is just as obnoxious to modern church goers as being “baptized for the remission of sins.” We find it in the following texts:

Now, when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. . . . Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.—Acts 8: 14-17.

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied —Acts 19: 5, 6.

And Paul, in Hebrews 6: 2, enumerates “the principles of the doctrine of Christ,” and gives as the *fourth principle* the “laying on of hands.” The laying on of hands, then, was taught and practiced, for the reception of the Holy Spirit in the church which Christ built—after individuals had been “baptized for the remission of sins.” Shall we teach and practice it in the new church which we are building “according to the Bible” this morning? “No,” some one says, “it is out of date; it was all right in the days of the apostles, but it is done away with—is not for us.” So we decide to risk getting the Spirit in some other way, and drop this “principle of the doctrine of Christ” from the gospel—as it is to be preached by us. But we do not stop at this; we continue to find things taught there that this new church of ours can’t accept. In 1 Corinthians 12: 8 11 we read of the gifts of the Spirit which the Lord promised to his children, that “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”

To one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom.

That is good; we will insert that in our creed.

To another the word of knowledge.

Yes, that is good too, so we will put that in

To another faith by the same Spirit

The gift of faith; we believe in that. we will put that in also.

And to another the gift of healing.

We do not want that in our creed; we do not believe any one has the gift of healing now.

To another the working of miracles.

We do not want that; we will strike that out; it is preposterous to believe in such things.

To another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits.

We will eliminate these from our creed, for we do not believe in them, for such are done away.

To another divers kinds of tongues.

Well, we do not believe that, and we do not want it in our creed, for it is folly to believe in such things in these days.

To another the interpretation of tongues.

As we have done away with the gift of tongues we do not want the gift of interpretation, so we will strike that out too.

We next read in 1 Corinthians 14: 1:

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.

We say it is all right to follow after charity, but that advice to desire to prophesy is all a delusion; so we will not place that in our creed. And we read further in verse 39:

Covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.

We do not believe that, so we take it out also. And in this same chapter, 1 Corinthians 14: 26, we also find this:

How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation.

Now, shall we teach this in our new church? Shall we tell our members that, if they live for it, they too may come together from time to time and have the gift of tongues, and receive revelations from God? Upon a vote being taken it is decided that this, too, is done away—is not for us; so out it goes along with the others.

These are principles of the doctrine of Christ, the greatest bulk of which we have left out of our creed, and as a consequence have taken them from the word of God; and yet my text says:

If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city.

We next examine Ephesians 4: 4, 5:

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism.

Well, we do not believe that; just having one church, just having one body; one system of faith. We do not believe that; it is of no consequence that we should believe it; and lest men shall say we are narrow minded, we will teach that there are many bodies, many different systems of faith, and that a man can be saved in one just as well as another—just so a man's conscience is clear is all that is necessary. So away goes the "one body" and the "one faith" doctrine, and the doctrine of many churches and the many different systems of faith is substituted for it. We know the apostle says:

Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.—1 Cor. 1: 10.

But it can't be, it is too much to expect of us, so we shall not teach it. We turn to James 5: 13-15 and read:

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.

That is a very glorious idea; if you get merry, sing songs to God. Well, we will put that down. If you want to pray, that is all right; make your wants known to your heavenly Father. We can put that down in our creed.

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.

Well, it is all right to send for the elders and let them pray; that is good doctrine, and we are going to put that in our creed; but anointing with oil we do not believe in, even though the apostles anointed with oil. We do not believe in it now; it was good doctrine *then*, but not *now*. But we read that:

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.

We do not believe the Lord will raise up the sick now, and so we eliminate that from the word of God; and that sins shall be forgiven through the laying on of hands and anointing with oil we do not believe, and we eliminate that from the word of God; yet we are told:



If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, etc.

We read in James 1: 5:

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

But we do not believe in that, we do not want that now; so we leave it out.

We then read this, from the Apostle John:

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.—2 John, 6th verse.

And before taking any position on it, we read this, from the angel which came to John on the isle of Patmos:

But that which ye have already, hold fast till I come.—Rev. 2: 25.

Now, we are told in these two texts that the children of God must walk as they had ‘heard from the beginning,’ and they were to ‘hold fast’ that which they then had ‘till I come.’ But how can we? Why? if we walk as they had heard from the beginning, we would have to preach and practice ‘baptism for the remission of sins,’ for Mark says:

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God: . . . John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.—Mark 1: 1-4.

Peter taught the same on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38), and Ananias taught the same to Saul of Tarsus (Acts 22: 16). Then we shall have to teach and practice the laying on of hands (after baptism) for the reception of the Spirit, for the blessing of little children, for ordination of officers in the church, and also in administering to the sick. We would have to ‘covet to prophesy and forbid not to speak with tongues.’ We would have to ‘follow after charity and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy.’ You see they had ‘heard from the beginning’ all these things, and now John tells us, ‘This is love, that we walk after his commandments,’ and that the commandment is, ‘As ye have heard *from the beginning*, ye should walk in it.’ And then the angel tells us that what they then had—all these things and also apostles, prophets, revelations, tongues, interpretation of tongues, and angelic ministration—they were to

“hold fast” till the coming of the Savior. But we have been taught that these things were given to establish christianity, and that they were to cease when the twelve apostles, and those upon whom they laid their hands, all died, and if that is correct, then it would be impossible to “hold fast” to these things till Jesus comes. And as it will be impossible for us to teach our creed and at the same time teach these two texts of Scripture also, we will leave out these two verses along with the rest which we have taken out.

We get along fairly well now, till we get to this:

And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come.—Rev. 14: 6, 7.

This, mind you, is in “The words of the book of this prophecy,” of which John says, “If any man shall take away from” it, that “God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.”

And the voice which called to John out of heaven said: “Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter” (Rev. 4: 1); so it is plain that John is writing of things which are to come to pass *after* his day. And besides this, the angel who brings the gospel is to declare that “The hour of his judgment is come,” showing that the gospel is to be restored, and preached “to them that dwell upon the earth” just before “the end shall come” (Matt. 24:14).

Then in the 15th verse of this same chapter (Rev. 14), we are told that “another angel” is to cry:

Thrust in thy sickle, and reap; for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

And Jesus says:

The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. . . . The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity.—Matt. 13:39,41.

But notwithstanding all this evidence supporting the restoration of the gospel, by an angel, just before the hour of God’s judgment—“at the time of the harvest,” “the end of the world”—we decide that there is no necessity for an angel bring-

ing the gospel, that angelic ministrations are things of the past, and that those who preach such things are fanatics and deceivers; so away goes that part of "the words of the book of this prophecy," even though it may cause our names to be taken "out of the book of life."

Now, friends, we have hastily run through the New Testament this morning and, in forming our creed, we have left out so much that we haven't very much of the gospel of Christ left. Ingersoll would say, "Just about enough to swear by in the courts." But when we get through, we take up the Bible and say, "Here is the blessed book, we believe in the Bible, and in the Bible alone; we are going to build, and we build upon the Bible alone. There is the word of God; there is the blessed book we are required to build upon. Now we are going to have no more revelation; we are going to have nothing more revealed from the heavens, nothing more at all; here is the last will and testament of our Lord Jesus Christ, and now the heavens are sealed, and God will give us nothing more." You begin now to see the difference between the creed of the Lord Jesus Christ and our creed. Jesus has given the law, and commands us not to add to it nor take from it, not to attempt to revise it in any sense; but we have taken up this law and have revised it, have added to it, and taken from it, and now we say, "Lord, do not give us any more; we have our creed; we have organized our church upon this basis; we want you to come into our church if you will be a silent partner, but we propose to run this thing ourselves. In this nineteenth century we have become wise and we consider ourselves sufficient for this work; and if the people shall find out that we depend upon you they will think we have lost our respectability; hence we do not want anything more, we are going to stop right here and shut the door against anything more from God." Here is the difference: God gave so much of his word as he wants man to observe, and gave it *as he wants it*; and then we, in our creed making, say, We accept so much of it as suits us, and reject what does not—and that is a very considerable part. In other words, God gives his law as *he* wants it, and says that "man" must not "add to" it nor "take away from" it; "man" comes along and adds to it and takes from it till it suits *him*, and then says that God must

not add anything more. God has said by the prophet Isaiah, 55th chapter:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Let us beware, then, of the creeds of men; of "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men," for Jesus says of those who do so, "In vain do ye worship me."

The Latter Day Saints take the Bible and believe it to contain the word of God; believe it where it says:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Believe it where it says:

To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Believe it where it says:

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.—2 John, 9th verse.

The Latter Day Saints believe the word where it reads:

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him.

They accept it and preach it because they believe men lack wisdom, even the wisdom of God, in order that they may carry on the work of God successfully; and they believe that except they abide in the doctrine of Christ, except they speak the things that God has placed in his word, they will come under condemnation. Hence it is, that they accept, teach and practice all those things which we have been rejecting and refusing to put in our new church and its creed, this morning: "Baptism for the remission of sins," "laying on of hands" for the reception of the Holy Spirit, "laying on of hands" for the blessing of little children, for ordinations, and for the healing of the sick, in connection with the "anointing him with oil." They believe and teach the same kind of church organization as existed in apostolic times, the same gifts and blessings of God's Holy Spirit; the restoration of the "everlasting gospel" by an angel just before the hour of God's judgment, or the "end of the world"—in fact, they believe the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in its entirety, and that there is no other gospel

that will save, "none other name under heaven," and that men must take upon them the name of Christ and live by his law in order to be partakers of the inheritance "reserved in heaven for you." Are they orthodox? Are those who reject those parts of the gospel referred to above, teaching the opinions of men as a substitute, orthodox?

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Let us now examine the other part of our text, that part found in 2 Peter 1:3. This is thought by some to be against our position on continued or present revelations from God; but we think it is in our favor, and against those who reject the doctrine of present revelation. We believe that men have put their own "private interpretation" upon this text, and that they preach their "interpretation" instead of the text. First, I will quote the text as it is:

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.—2 Peter 1:3.

Now let us quote it as it is commonly understood :

According as his divine power hath REVEALED unto ALL MEN all things that pertain unto life and godliness, THROUGH THE APOSTLES.

Peter says nothing about what God has *revealed*, but he speaks of these things which God had GIVEN, not to all men, but "unto us"—"UNTO US." Now, don't forget that. Peter is talking about what God had *given to them*, and not about what the Lord has revealed to all men in his word. And the apostle says the Lord "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness;" so if we can learn from the Scriptures just what things God had *given* to them, then we shall know what things "pertain unto life and godliness."

And he gave some apostles, and some prophets.—Eph. 4:11.

The first things that God GAVE to them were apostles and prophets.

Then we read next in Matthew 16:19, where Jesus says to Peter:

I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

We find he *GAVE* unto the apostles the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to open the door of the kingdom, to induct men and women into the same. But what else did he *give*? Turn to Luke where he sent them out to preach, where he says:

I *GIVE* unto you power and authority over devils, to cast unclean spirits out of those possessed with them.

And what else did he *give*? Turn to John 14:15, 16.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall *GIVE* you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever.

And this Comforter "shall guide you into all truth and show you things to come." (John 16:13).

Now turn to 1 Corinthians 12, and it reads:

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits, etc.

Here we find what God *gave* unto that church. He gave them inspired apostles; he gave them the keys of the kingdom of heaven; he gave them power over unclean spirits; he gave them the Spirit that would open the windows of heaven and bring down the things of the Father and the Son to give unto them. He gave them this Comforter and the gifts of the Spirit; and, most of all, He gave His presence; for we read that the church is builded for a habitation of God through the Spirit; that God himself, the source and fountain of life, together with the Redeemer, might dwell in their midst; hence, they had all things which pertain to life and godliness, and the Apostle Peter might well say so.

Yes, friends, a church to which God "hath given" inspired apostles and prophets; a church to which God "hath given" the keys of the kingdom of heaven; a church to which God "hath given" power over devils and unclean spirits; a church to which God "hath given" the Spirit which guides into all truth, shows things to come, and takes of the things of God and shows them

unto his people; a church to which God "hath given" the gifts of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healings, prophecy, miracles, discerning of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues, along with the privilege of asking him when they "lack wisdom," with a "thus saith the Lord that "it shall be given him;" a church to which God "hath given" all these things, and in which He and the Savior both take up their abode, can well say "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." But you can see that the church we have been organizing this morning is quite different from this one—the one in which the apostle says that God "hath given to *us* all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

In organizing our new church, and drawing up the articles of faith by which it is to be governed, we have discarded, as unnecessary, all but a few of the things which God gave to that church, and then we stand before the people and say that God has given to us the New Testament in which the history of these things is recorded, and that because God has given us the history of these things, we have all things that God gave "to that church." There is quite a difference between the history of the things and the things themselves; there is quite a difference between eating a good meal, and somebody else eating it for you and then telling you how good it was.

If God had *given* unto them apostles, if God had given unto them the keys of the kingdom of heaven, if God had given unto them power and authority over devils, if God had given them the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom, if God had given them the Comforter which takes the things of the Father and shows them unto his children, if he had given unto that church all the spiritual gifts spoken of in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians, that every one might profit withal, and if these things were given that the people of God might attain to life and godliness, how can we in these days attain to life and godliness without them?

But if God "hath given unto *us*" inspired apostles and prophets, if He "hath given unto *us*" the keys of the kingdom of heaven, if He "hath given unto *us*" power over devils and unclean spirits, if he "hath given unto *us*" the Spirit of revelation, if He "hath given unto *us*" the Comforter which takes of things

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Here we find what God *gave* unto that church. He gave them inspired apostles; he gave them the keys of the kingdom of heaven; he gave them power over unclean spirits; he gave them the Spirit that would open the windows of heaven and bring down the things of the Father and the Son to give unto them. He gave them this Comforter and the gifts of the Spirit; and, most of all, He gave His presence; for we read that the church is builded for a habitation of God through the Spirit; that God himself, the source and fountain of life, together with the Redeemer, might dwell in their midst; hence, they had all things which pertain to life and godliness, and the Apostle Peter might well say so.

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In organizing our new church, and drawing up the articles of faith by which it is to be governed, we have discarded, as unnecessary, all but a few of the things which God gave to that church, and then we stand before the people and say that God has given to us the New Testament in which the history of these things is recorded, and that because God has given us the history of these things, we have all things that God gave "to that church." There is quite a difference between the history of the things and the things themselves; there is quite a difference between eating a good meal, and somebody else eating it for you and then telling you how good it was.

If God had *given* unto them apostles, if God had given unto them the keys of the kingdom of heaven, if God had given unto them power and authority over devils, if God had given them the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom, if God had given them the Comforter which takes the things of the Father and shows them unto his children, if he had given unto that church all the spiritual gifts spoken of in the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians, that every one might profit withal, and if these things were given that the people of God might attain to life and godliness, how can we in these days attain to life and godliness without them?

But if God "hath given unto *us*" inspired apostles and prophets, if He "hath given unto *us*" the keys of the kingdom of heaven, if He "hath given unto *us*" power over devils and unclean spirits, if he "hath given unto *us*" the Spirit of revelation, if He "hath given unto *us*" the Comforter which takes of things

of God and shows them unto us, if He "hath given unto" *the church which we represent* all the spiritual gifts spoken of in 1 Corinthians 12, if God hath indeed, "given unto us" all these things in these last days, then *we* can stand before the people and say that God "hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness," because he "hath given unto us" the same things which he gave unto the church which was represented by the Apostle Peter when he made the above claim. And, as the Latter Day Saints claim that God "hath given" to them all these things, they can claim with the Apostle Peter, consistently too, that God "hath given" unto them those things which are necessary to "life and godliness." But they, or any other church, would be inconsistent in claiming to have "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," unless the Lord had indeed given to them just what He had given to the church in the days of Peter.

Now please remember that the Lord had "given" all the above to His church in the apostles' day, and that the Apostle Peter said:

According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

And that the Apostle John said:

If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

If you want to be on the safe side, if you want your name written in the book of life, if you want a name and place in the holy city, if you want to be free from the plagues that are written in this book, teach it and practice it--accept it *as it was given*. My friends, do not undertake to add to *nor take from it*; do not undertake to revise or change the word of God, for his word is perfect. If you undertake to change it the wise man says you will be found a liar. We do not want to be liars; therefore let us accept God's word as it is given.