

Latter Day Saints and what they believe

by A. B. Phillips

PERHAPS YOU HAVE WONDERED, as have thousands of others, Who are the Latter Day Saints, and what do they believe?

If I desired to know what you believe, you would doubtless prefer that I inquire of you or your minister, instead of from some minister or other person who might be unfriendly to your faith. To learn from the Saints what they believe is therefore applying the Golden Rule in justice to all. To decide a matter before one is informed from an authoritative source is not in accordance with fairness and justice. Solomon declared an eternal truth when he said:

He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.—Proverbs 18: 13.

ERROR COSTS MORE THAN TRUTH

Through ignorance the message of Christ was rejected and he was crucified. The Jews made the fatal mistake of asking their rabbis and scribes only, instead of inquiring of Jesus what he taught. Through ignorance and prejudice Paul persecuted the saints. Error and ignorance have led to untold misery, super-

stition, and disappointment in every age. Knowledge of the truth has led to progress, prosperity, uprightness, brotherhood, and salvation. It is gain, and not loss, to investigate and learn the truth. It is so important that Jesus said:

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.—John 18: 37.

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.

The glorious truths of the gospel, as taught in the New Testament, have been the teachings of the Latter Day Saints from the beginning of their existence, a century ago. Their message is important to the people of today; it deals with vital issues now confronting the world, and offers a solution to the greatest spiritual, social, and economic problems of the age.

RESTORATION MOVEMENT STARTED

The Latter Day Saint movement arose from a belief that there had been a departure from the New Testament faith, and that the ancient faith must be restored. The apostasy from the primitive faith consisted of a series of errors that were added from time to time and which were taught in the name of the Christian religion.

During the Reformation, various attempts were made to reform the church. Thus many churches

arose which taught conflicting doctrines and caused great religious confusion. But none of them restored the simplicity and purity of the faith as it was in the New Testament age. Neither could they do so, for the faith was of God, divinely revealed, and manifested in power; therefore only God could cause it to be restored.

ANCIENT APOSTASY FORETOLD

Leading religious denominations admit, though they disagree as to what heresies were taught or who the apostates were, there was an apostasy from the ancient faith. Protestants usually agree that the Roman Catholics departed from the faith, and Roman Catholics declare that the Protestants were the apostates. Of more importance, perhaps, is the fact that the Scriptures predicted that the apostasy would occur. Jesus and Paul said:

From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.
—Matthew 11: 12.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.
—II Timothy 4: 3, 4.

Other Scriptures also foretold the apostasy and some of the false teachings that would be introduced, and specifically stated that the divine laws and ordinances would be changed.

SPIRITUAL DARKNESS IN THE APOSTASY

As a result of the apostasy many gospel truths were perverted or abandoned, and misguided people were often led into grievous errors of faith and practice. Some thought they could be saved by faith without works. Some said sprinkling would answer for baptism, and others declared that no ordinance was required. Many claimed that infants not baptized or sprinkled would burn forever in hell, while others denied the existence of hell. Darkness ensued.

In many instances superstition arose, and various changes were made in doctrine and church organization. The apostolic and prophetic offices ceased, as did also the spiritual gifts which anciently endowed the church. The six fundamental principles of the gospel (Hebrews 6: 1, 2) were perverted or disregarded, and many errors of belief and practice were added in the name of religion. Against such changes Jesus and others had warned the church:

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.—Matthew 15: 9.

Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.—I Timothy 4: 16.

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God.—II John 9.

HOW THE GOSPEL WAS RESTORED

In the year 1820 several prominent churches in a New York State community held a revival meeting, at the close of which the ministers disputed hotly,

each declaring his church to be right and the others wrong. This caused great excitement among the people.

Among those who were greatly disturbed by these conflicting claims was a youth about fifteen years old, named Joseph Smith. Being deeply stirred in his desire to obey the gospel, and not knowing which church to join, he began to search the Scriptures. Thus he was led to read the following verse:

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.

As he read the Scripture the Spirit of the Lord confirmed its truth, and he decided to ask God for light. Alone in a neighboring forest he prayed fervently to God for promised wisdom, and to know which of the churches he should join. While thus engaged, a heavenly personage appeared and told him not to join any of them, for their creeds were wrong, and they taught the doctrines and commandments of men.

Among other instructions and items of light given to him at this time and subsequently, he was informed that in due time he should be a chosen instrument in restoring the church and the fullness of the gospel as it was in New Testament days. In the course of years this promise was fulfilled, the Lord's church being restored with the same organization and teachings that marked it in the time of the ancient apostles.

ERROR IN THE CREEDS

At the time the heavenly messenger informed Joseph Smith that the creeds were wrong, one of the creeds taught that infants who died without baptism must suffer the torments of a never-ending hell. Since then this erroneous teaching and other grave errors have been abandoned or revised. Another error assumed that both the just and unjust are to be resurrected at the last day in a general resurrection. It was also taught that men are justified by faith alone, no works being required. Such teaching is a presumptuous contradiction of the Apostle James, who states clearly that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only (James 2: 24).

In making various creed revisions since that day, the churches have admitted that the creeds were wrong. It must therefore be acknowledged that the angel bore to Joseph Smith a message of truth not then recognized by existing denominations.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST RESTORED

As has been noted, the Reformation did not restore the church as it existed in ancient time. Rather, in fulfillment of prophecy, some of which will be mentioned later, God himself proceeded to restore the gospel and the church through men whom he chose for this purpose.

By revelation the doctrine of Christ was made plain, and men were called of God as in days of old to go forth and proclaim the restored gospel as it was taught by the ancient apostles.

The church was also organized according to the New Testament pattern, with apostles, the seventy, and other officers which were in the ancient church. This was done by divine direction to those who had been called of God to do that work.

THE RESTORATION FORETOLD IN SCRIPTURE

Many prophecies of the Bible foretold the restoration of the Lord's work in the latter days; a few of them are here presented. They show that the gospel would again be brought forth, that this should be accomplished by an angel from heaven, and that this work should be preparatory to the second coming of Jesus Christ.

When the disciples asked Jesus for a sign of his coming and the end of the world, he gave them the following sign:

And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.—Matthew 24: 14.

These prophetic words declare in substance that the coming kingdom of Christ is to be announced to all people in the latter days prior to his second coming. The restored gospel was to be a preparatory message, and the following text shows that it should be brought by an angel:

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.—Malachi 3: 1.

The verses following this text clearly show that it refers to the second coming of the Savior, when he shall sit in judgment as King of kings and Lord of lords. The coming of an angel to Joseph Smith with the gospel restoration was therefore in fulfillment of the Scriptures. This great Restoration was also seen in vision by the Apostle John:

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.—Revelation 14: 6, 7.

THE LATTER-DAY DISPENSATION

The age of the restored gospel was chosen by the Lord as the time of preparation for his glorious appearing. It was also declared to be the time when his people should be gathered together, and by righteousness prepared to receive him. It is therefore called the dispensation of the fullness of times, of which Paul declares Christ informed them:

That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather *together* in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.—Ephesians 1: 10.

By means of the restored gospel message the Lord will call upon the honest in heart throughout the world to prepare for the coming of Christ—the bridegroom—that his church may be arrayed as a chosen bride. Of this wonderful event John says:

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the lamb.—Revelation 19: 8, 9.

THE NAME OF THE CHURCH

The restored church is not the church of man, but the church of Jesus Christ. It therefore bears his name. Only the Lord has the right to name his church, and he gave it his own name because it belongs to him. In the Scriptures it is sometimes called his bride, or wife (Revelation 21: 9). As a lawful wife takes the name of her husband, so does Christ's church take his name.

The early saints at Antioch were called Christians by their enemies, as a nickname of reproach. But wicked persecutors have no right to name the Lord's church, nor has the church a right to accept any name not given of the Lord by whom they have been "bought with a price" (I Corinthians 7: 23).

Paul calls the church "the general assembly and church of the firstborn" (Hebrews 12: 23). He also says:

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.—Ephesians 3: 14, 15.

WHY CALLED LATTER DAY SAINTS

In the Bible the people of God are commonly called saints. This name is employed nearly a hundred times, and Paul in his epistles calls them saints.

God not only gave this name to his people, but the Apostle Jude says the faith was "delivered unto the saints." It is the divinely authorized name for members of the church.

Prophecies show that we are living in the "latter days," the age when the church should be restored. The saints of today are therefore latter-day saints.

SOME DEPARTED FROM THE FAITH

The restored church was first organized in 1830, in New York state, and later colonized at Kirtland, Ohio, Nauvoo, Illinois, and other places. For fourteen years it grew rapidly, and numbered many thousands. In 1844 Joseph Smith, Prophet and President of the church, was shot and killed by a mob, some of whom were disguised, causing consternation among the Saints. At this time the church was called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

Taking advantage of the Prophet's death, certain men arose in the church aspiring for leadership who attempted to introduce polygamy and other false doctrines. For a time the church was disrupted. Some left the faith and accepted the errors of polygamy, sealings, and other heresies, being led by Brigham Young and his associates to Utah, where they formed a church with the same name. Their practices brought much reproach on the Saints, for many did not know there was a difference between them and the true church.

In great distress, the church asked God for direction, and by revelation it was directed to reorganize according to the divine pattern followed in 1830. The word "Reorganized" was prefixed to the name of the church, thus distinguishing it from all others.

FALSE LEADERS REJECTED

The Saints who remained true to the faith proclaimed against the heresies of Brigham Young and other false leaders, and the church in its General Conference voted to reject them and their pretensions. It declared that their assumptions were "in violation of the law of God, and consequently we disclaim all connection and fellowship with them."

From that time onward those who departed from the faith have been denied fellowship in the church, except those who by repentance and reformation of life have manifested a sincere desire for forgiveness.

OUR CLAIMS UPHELD IN COURT

This departure from the faith made it necessary in the course of time to bring suit in the civil court to establish the right of the church to the temple in Kirtland, Ohio, which the church built in the days of Joseph Smith. The decision of the court rendered by Judge Sherman, states:

That the church in Utah, the Defendant of which John Taylor (Brigham Young's successor) is president, has materially and largely departed from the faith, doctrines, laws, ordinances and usages of said original Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter Day Saints, and has incorporated into its system of faith the doctrines of celestial marriage and a plurality of wives, and the doctrine of Adam-god worship, contrary to the laws and constitution of said original church.

And the Court do further find that the Plaintiff, the Re-organized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, is the True and Lawful continuation of, and successor to the said original Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, organized in 1830, and is entitled in law to all its rights and property.

In another action had in the United States Circuit Court in Western Missouri, the court in its decision states regarding polygamy:

It was never promulgated, taught, nor recognized as a doctrine of the church prior to the assumption of Brigham Young.—*Decision*, page 26.

ADMISSIONS BY UTAH CHURCH LEADERS

Brigham Young himself admitted that polygamy was no part of the original faith but was adopted by him and associates in Utah. In 1869 he said to Senator Trumbull:

As for our institutions, we know we are right, and polygamy, which you object to, was not originally a part of our system, but was adopted by us as a necessity, after we came here.—From *Daily Alta Californian*, July 16, 1869.

George Q. Cannon, Young's associate, admitted in their own publication:

Joseph and Hyrum Smith were slain in Carthage jail, and hundreds of persons were persecuted to the death previous to the church having any knowledge of this doctrine.—*Journal of Discourses*, Volume 14, page 166.

Wilford Woodruff, a successor of Young, testified under oath in the Temple Lot Case, concerning the church in the time of Joseph Smith:

There was no other rule of marriage acknowledged by the church except what is found in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, the 1835 edition.—*Abstract of Evidence*, page 303.

The Doctrine and Covenants, referred to in the preceding quotation, is one of the Standard Books of the church and contains revelations of God and instruction received by the church. The rule of marriage found in the 1835 edition and in all later editions, except editions issued by followers of Brigham Young since 1876, is as follows:

We declare that we believe that one man should have one wife; and one woman but one husband, except in case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again.—Page 251, 1835 edition; page 306, 1954 edition.

THE PROPHET'S SUCCESSOR

No one should have been misled by would-be leaders, for the Lord had spoken to the church as early as 1831 and directed that the Prophet's successor should be appointed through him. This revelation was the accepted law of the church, and in harmony with it the Prophet designated his oldest son, also named Joseph, who was solemnly set apart by the laying on of hands, and was publicly proclaimed to the church as his father's successor.

As this son was but a boy at the time of the Prophet's death, it was some years later, at the official

Conference of 1860, that he was installed as president and prophet of the church. At that time he solemnly declared:

I came not here of myself, but by the influence of the Spirit. For some time past I have received manifestations pointing to the position which I am about to assume.

I wish to say that I have come here not to be dictated by any man or set of men. I have come in obedience to a power not my own, and shall be dictated by the power that sent me. —*Church History*, Volume 3, page 247.

At this Conference the Spirit of God was poured out upon the Saints in wonderful power, and witnessed to the call of Joseph Smith III as the divinely appointed successor of his father. He continued in this office until his death in 1914, being a man greatly beloved and respected by the Saints and many others.

His son, Frederick M. Smith, succeeded him as president and prophet of the church, having been called by revelation to that office. Under his leadership many constructive developments marked the progress of the church. In 1946, Israel A. Smith became president and prophet—after the death of Frederick M. Smith.

WHAT THE RESTORATION RESTORED

The leading features of the Restoration are of remarkable interest. From it has come angelic ministration and revelation from God. To the church God speaks today as he did in ancient times. While men were teaching that he would never again reveal

himself to man, God sent his angel with the Restoration message. The Scriptures declare that by revelation man may know God:

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.—John 17:3.

All things are delivered unto me of my Father; 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.—Matthew 11:27.

By revelation man may also know the things of God. This is the office of the Holy Spirit, which Jesus promised should guide his people into all truth:

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.—John 14:26.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.—John 16:13.

AN ANCIENT SACRED RECORD

As a part of the Restoration through Joseph Smith, a sacred record of the ancient Americans was obtained and translated by him. It shows that the American Indians are descendants of the Israelitish tribe of Joseph, some of whom came to this continent about six hundred years before the time of Christ. Various structures and great cities were built by them, many ruins of which still exist.

These ancients were once righteous and were blessed of God, who caused their history to be kept for many centuries. A condensed copy of this history was later made by one of their leaders named Mormon, and was therefore called the Book of Mormon, being obtained and published under that title by Joseph Smith.

Some have supposed this book to be the origin of the church, and have mistakenly called the Saints "Mormons." Others have thought that the Book of Mormon was accepted by the Saints as a substitute for the Bible, but this is not the case.

Because Brigham Young and his followers practiced polygamy, some people have supposed that the Book of Mormon teaches that doctrine. Anyone who cares to examine it, however, will learn otherwise, for the Book of Mormon forbids polygamy in most emphatic terms. It declares:

Behold, David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was abominable before me, saith the Lord, wherefore, thus saith the Lord, I have led this people forth out of the land of Jerusalem, by the power of mine arm, that I might raise up unto me a righteous branch from the fruit of the loins of Joseph. Wherefore, I, the Lord God, will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old. Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none: For I, the Lord God, delighteth in the chastity of women.—Book of Mormon, Jacob 2: 33-36, Authorized Edition.

This ancient record is of high ethical merit, and its moral teachings are untarnished and of a lofty

character. In doctrine it is in accord with and supports the Bible, and its spiritual tone is everywhere in harmony with it. Copies of the work may be obtained from Herald Publishing House, Independence, Missouri.

THE PRIESTHOOD RESTORED

A divine religion must be based upon divine authority. When this divine authority is committed to men it is called priesthood. God has always been represented by the priesthood on earth, except when men by rejecting him have forfeited the right to divine guidance.

There are two divisions of the priesthood in the church, the Melchisedec and the Aaronic. The priesthood offices are filled by men called and authorized of God to teach and to administer the ordinances of the church.

Revelation from God ceased with the apostasy, leaving uninspired men without priesthood authority, who taught many errors and introduced forms and ceremonies contrary to the gospel.

At the beginning of the latter-day Restoration an angel of God restored the priesthood, conferring upon Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery first the Aaronic and later the Melchisedec priesthood. Of the first event they testify:

While we were thus employed, praying, and calling upon the Lord, a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and having laid his hands upon us, he ordained us, saying unto us, "Upon you, my fellow servants, in the name

of Messiah, I confer the priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion, for the remission of sins; and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness."—Joseph Smith, *Church History*, Volume 1, pages 34, 35.

On a sudden, as from the midst of eternity, the voice of the Redeemer space peace to us, while the vail was parted and the angel of God came down clothed with glory, and delivered the anxiously looked for message, and the keys of the gospel of repentance! . . .

I shall not attempt to paint to you the feelings of this heart, nor the majestic beauty and glory which surrounded us on this occasion; but you will believe me when I say, that earth, nor men, with the eloquence of time, cannot begin to clothe language in as interesting and sublime a manner as this holy personage.—Oliver Cowdery, *Ibid.*, pages 37, 38.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS RESTORED

On being divinely commissioned to preach the gospel and administer its ordinances, the ministry of the Restoration declared the message with power, and before long hundreds who obeyed the gospel bore witness that it was the work of God.

With the preaching of the gospel in its fullness came the witness of the Holy Spirit and the manifestation of the spiritual gifts promised in the Scriptures. Many received the gifts of prophecy and tongues, the interpretation of tongues, and the visitation of angels. Many were also healed of various diseases. Prophecy and other gifts were enjoyed as promised in the New Testament, which says:

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; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues.—I Corinthians 12: 7-10.

And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 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.—Mark 16: 17, 18.

Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues.—I Corinthians 14: 39.

Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy. For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries. But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.—I Corinthians 14: 1.

A RESTORED CHURCH ORGANIZED

In the New Testament church the divine law required that only those who were called of God should be ordained to the ministry or priesthood. In the course of time failure to heed this law enabled false teachers to obtain the ministry, the result being that many errors and heresies crept into the church. Paul and others had warned the Saints against these false teachers (see II Timothy 4: 3; II Peter 2: 1), and had insisted that those to be ordained must be divinely called:

And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.—Hebrews 5: 4.

And how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?—Romans 10: 14, 15.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.—John 15: 16.

Not only were the ministry of the New Testament church called of God, but each one was ordained to a stated office. The ministry of that day included apostles, prophets, evangelists, bishops, seventy, elders, priests, pastors, teachers, and deacons. During the apostasy some of these offices ceased, and men invented the fiction that they were not needed in the church.

In the restored church these offices were again established by command of God. It thus became the only church on earth organized according to the New Testament pattern, and the only one with the offices of apostle, prophet, seventy, teacher, and others, as ordained ministers called of God. God set these offices in his church, and he has never authorized their discontinuance. This is shown in the Scriptures:

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

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.—Ephesians 4: 11, 12.

For other officers mentioned in the New Testament; and the instances and nature of their appointment, see the following texts: Luke 10: 1; Acts 13: 2; 14: 14; 14: 23; Philippians 1: 1; I Peter 2: 5.

After stating that Christ placed these officers in his church, Paul does not leave us in doubt as to how long they would be needed in order to serve the divine purpose:

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—Ephesians 4: 13.

GOSPEL PRINCIPLES RESTORED

All great truths are founded on certain basic principles. This is true of the science of arithmetic, which is founded on such principles as notation, numeration, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. The religion of Christ is the science of right living, and is based on principles affecting life here and hereafter. In the following text these principles are shown in italics, as named by Paul:

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of *repentance* from dead works, and of *faith* toward God, of the doctrine of *baptisms*, and of *laying on of hands*, and of *resurrection* of the dead, and of *eternal judgment*. And this will we do, if God permit.—Hebrews 6: 1-3.

The Scriptures elsewhere explain these principles in detail, as the foundation to be laid by all believers in Christ before they can go on unto perfection, to

which God has called them. After the apostasy these principles became greatly perverted and misunderstood, but through the gospel of restoration their true significance is made clear. Through revelation, a comprehensive interpretation of the Scriptures became possible.

The Principle of Faith

Faith is the divine impelling force of good works. It not only moves its possessor to believe aright but to do right. A faith that does not move one to obey God is a dead faith and a dead faith is worthless. By a living faith man may commune with God and receive of his Spirit, which guides into all truth. A living faith leads to righteousness, and thus to salvation through Christ. This principle is explained in the following texts:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.—Romans 10: 17.

But 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.

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?—James 2: 19, 20.

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.—James 2: 26.

Meaning of Repentance

The restored gospel teaches that repentance is more than sorrow for sins committed. It is sorrow plus a

reformation of character in conformity with the law of God. True repentance prompts the sinner to make all possible restitution for his trespasses. Until one turns from sin to righteousness, he has not fully repented. The meaning of this important principle is here set forth:

That they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.—Acts 26: 20.

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.—Luke 13: 3.

When he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.—Hebrews 12: 17.

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.—II Corinthians 7: 10.

Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house.—Luke 19: 8, 9.

The Doctrine of Baptisms

Perhaps more mistakes have been made concerning baptism than any other church ordinance. To the restored church the Lord made clear that this sacred rite is by immersion, and must be performed by one having divine authority. Faith and repentance are required of those who desire baptism, hence the baptism of infants is described as “solemn mockery before God.” Infants are incapable of faith, and have committed no sin.

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is promised to those who obey the gospel, hence it may be noted that the plural term, *baptisms*, is used by Paul in

Hebrews 6: 2. The following Scriptures explain various features of the subject:

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: 19.

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.—Acts 2: 38.

Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.—John 20: 23.

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.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3: 5.

Laying on of Hands

This holy ordinance is for the baptized believer, that he may receive the promised gift of the Holy Ghost. It is also used to ordain to the ministry such as are called of God, and to confer spiritual blessings, including the blessing of little children who are not old enough to be baptized. By the laying on of hands also many sick are healed, this being one of the promises of the gospel. The following texts show the various uses of this rite:

Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.—Acts 8: 17.

And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.—Acts 19: 6.

Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.—I Timothy 4: 14.

And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.—Acts 13: 3.

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.—Matthew 19: 14, 15.

They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.—Mark 16: 18.

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.

The Resurrection of the Dead

In the restoration of the gospel many teachings were made clear which had been held in error by the sects of the time. Different views had been taught concerning the resurrection, some holding that only believers in Christ would be raised from the dead, others teaching that all the dead would be raised at the same time.

The restored church showed that there would be more than one resurrection, and that the righteous would be raised before the rest of the dead should come forth. That both the good and the evil shall come forth from the dead is shown by the following texts:

For the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that

have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.—John 5: 28, 29.

And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.—Acts 24: 15.

Not only do the Scriptures teach that all shall be resurrected, but they also show that the first resurrection is for the righteous, and that the rest of the dead shall rise in a later resurrection. Of this we read:

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.—Revelation 20: 6.

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.—I Thessalonians 4: 16.

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.—I Corinthians 15: 22, 23.

I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.—Revelation 20: 4, 5.

Eternal Judgment

So many errors were taught concerning eternal judgment, that it is impossible to mention all of them here. Instead of teaching that God takes pleas-

ure in tormenting those who have not known him, the Restoration pointed out from the Scriptures that his creatures will be judged justly, and rewarded or punished according to the degree of good or evil they have done. That all will be judged according to their works is stated in the following Scriptures:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.—II Corinthians 5: 10.

And every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor.—I Corinthians 3: 8.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.—Galatians 6: 7.

The Scriptures also tell us that the punishment of the sinner will be in degree according to the record of his deeds:

And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes.—Luke 12: 47, 48.

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.—Revelation 20: 12.

But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.—Matthew 12: 36.

From these and other texts it may be seen that the rewards given the faithful will be in proportion to their faithfulness, and that the punishments meted

out to the wicked will be in proportion to their wickedness. Thus will the judgments of God be administered in justice and equity upon all.

THE GOSPEL TEACHES STEWARDSHIP

According to the restored gospel, Jesus desires men to manifest in this life the love and brotherhood which will characterize his coming kingdom. All men come into this world to occupy before God as stewards over that which they lawfully possess and use, and are accountable to him for the use they make of their possessions, whether of talents or temporal goods. In the day of judgment God will demand of them this accounting.

This is the divine law of spiritual, social, and economic justice, which will enable man to work in harmony with the prayer taught by Jesus: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." It exalts the common welfare, and not self, as a motive of human endeavor. This sublime teaching runs like a golden thread through all the fabric of God's message to man:

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.—Matthew 22: 37-40.

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.—Matthew 7: 12.

Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.—Matthew 6: 12.

Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.—Luke 6: 27, 28.

But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?—I John 3: 17.

We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.—Romans 15: 1.

Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.—Galatians 6: 2.

How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.—Luke 16: 2.

THE BUILDING OF ZION

In order that his people may better co-operate for the common welfare, God has in various ages provided that they should gather together, so far as practicable, and thus seek to build a community where the spirit of brotherhood may be operative in temporal as well as spiritual affairs. So in these latter days the task of the church includes the building of Zion, which means the building up of righteousness in the lives of the Saints, that they may more fully live the gospel in the daily deeds of life.

To those who perceive in this message the old-time gospel of Christ, and who desire to help onward the work of God, we extend an invitation to join with us in seeking to promote his kingdom on earth. The divine call is to all who will seek to build up the kingdom of God, that his will may be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

The Orthodox Church

According to Webster, the word "orthodox" means:

1. Sound in opinion or doctrine, especially in religious doctrine; hence, holding the Christian faith; believing the doctrines taught in the Scriptures.

The Latter Day Saints are orthodox by this test. They hold the following doctrines, which are clearly taught in the Scriptures:

We believe in God the Father, Christ his Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the name of whom believers are to be baptized. (See Matthew 28: 19.)

We believe in the six fundamental principles of Christ's doctrine, named by Paul as faith, repentance, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. (See Hebrews 6: 1, 2.)

We believe in the spiritual gifts promised in the Scriptures, which are to be enjoyed by the believer through faith. (See Mark 16: 16-18; I Corinthians 12: 1-11.)

We believe that God reveals himself to his people by the Holy Spirit as promised by Christ. (See Acts 2: 1-18; Matthew 11: 27; Revelation 19: 10.)

We believe only those called of God are authorized to represent him and perform his sacred ordinances. (See John 1: 6; 3: 34; 15: 16; 20: 21; Romans 10: 14; Hebrews 5: 4.)

We believe there is but one true faith and gospel with power to save the repentant believer. (See James 1: 17; Acts 10: 34; John 7: 16; 17: 3; Ephesians 4: 5.)

We believe the true church belongs to Christ as his bride and is named of him. (See Romans 12: 5; I Corinthians 12: 27; Ephesians 1: 22; 3: 15; Colossians 1: 18; Hebrews 3: 3; 12: 23; Revelation 21: 2, 9.)

We believe God provided for a church organization having apostles, prophets, the seventy, evangelists, pastors, teachers, bishops, elders, and deacons—a constituted priesthood to teach and represent him on earth. (See I Corinthians 12: 28; Luke

10: 1; Acts 14: 23; Ephesians 4: 11; Philippians 1: 1; I Peter 2: 5.)

We believe in the second coming of Christ to reign over his Saints on the new earth. (See Matthew 5: 5; 6: 9; 16: 27; Acts 1: 10; Daniel 7: 27; Revelation 5: 10; 20: 6.)

We believe marriage is ordained of God, and that he forbids more than one living companion in wedlock. (See Malachi 2: 14-16; Matthew 19: 9.)

We believe God is owner of all things, and requires all men as stewards to use their talents and resources for others rather than for self. (See Deuteronomy 10: 14; Galatians 5: 14; 6: 2; Matthew 5: 44; 6: 33; 7: 12; 22: 37-40.)

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