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The Purpose and the Mission of the Church

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Abstract: The Kingdom of God Defined—"Mormonism" Defined—The Mission of the Church—The Plan of Life Restored—Our Mission is to Save—The Gospel Message—We are as Leaven—Man Insignificant Compared to Cause—Where the Gospel Spirit Leads—The Fruits of True Religion—Latter-day Saints Possess the Spirit of Salvation—May Israel Flourish—The Work of the Lord Will Grow—The Kingdom of God to Continue—Zion Established to Remain—The Progress of God's Work Cannot be Stopped—Divinity of the Gospel—The Gospel All Comprehensive—Let Your Light Shine—No Cause for Worry—The Gospel a Shield from Terror—The Gospel Trumpet—What Church Leaders Advocate—Our Message one of Love—Whence? Whither?—Latter-day Saints are Law-Abiding

CHAPTER VI

The Purpose and the Mission of the Church

THE KINGDOM OF GOD DEFINED. What I mean by the kingdom of God is the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, over which the son of God presides, and not man. That is what I mean. I mean the kingdom of which Christ is the King and not man. If any man object to Christ, the Son of God, being King of Israel, let him object, and go to hell just as quick as he please.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1906, p. 9.

“MORMONISM” DEFINED. I desire to say that “Mormonism,” as it is called, is still, as always, nothing more and nothing less than the power of God unto salvation, unto every soul that will receive it honestly and will obey it. I say to you, my brethren, sisters and friends, that all Latter-day Saints, wherever you find them, provided they are true to their name, to their calling and to their understanding of the gospel, are people who stand for truth and for honor, for virtue and for purity of life, for honesty in business and in religion; people who stand for God and for his righteousness, for God’s truth and his work in the earth, which aims for the salvation of the children of men, for their salvation from the evils of the world, from the pernicious habits of wicked men and from all those things that degrade, dishonor or destroy; or tend to lessen the vitality and life, the honor and godliness among the people of the earth.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1910, p. 5.

THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH. Our mission has been to save men. We have been laboring all these eighty-odd years of the Church to bring men to a knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ, to bring them to repentance, to obe-

dience to the requirements of God's law. We have been striving to save men from error, to persuade them to turn away from evil and to learn to do good. Now if our enemies will only charge us with doing this, all right; and if they wish to oppose us for doing this, that is their business; but when they charge us with doing that which we have not done, believing that which we do not believe, practicing that which we have never practiced, then I pity them. I pity them because they are doing it in ignorance, or because they are wilfully disposed to misrepresent the truth.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1912, pp. 3, 4.

THE PLAN OF LIFE RESTORED. It is the plan of life that the Almighty has restored to man in the latter days for the salvation of the souls of men, not only in the world to come, but in our present life, for the Lord has instituted his work that his people may enjoy the blessings of this life to the utmost; that they should be saved in this present life, as well as in the life to come, that they should lay the foundation here for immunity from sin and all its effects and consequences, that they may obtain an inheritance in the kingdom of God beyond this vale of tears. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God unto salvation, and it is absolutely necessary for every man and woman in the Church of Christ to work righteousness, to observe the laws of God, and keep the commandments that he has given, in order that they may avail themselves of the power of God unto salvation in this life.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1907, p. 2.

OUR MISSION IS TO SAVE. Our mission is to save, to preserve from evil, to exalt mankind, to bring light and truth into the world, to prevail upon the people of the earth to walk righteously before God, and to honor him in their lives and with the first fruits of all their substance and increase, that their barns may be filled with plenty and, figuratively speaking, that "their presses may burst out with new wine."—*Apr. C. R.*, 1907, p. 118.

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE. I rejoice exceedingly in the truth. I thank God every day of my life for his mercy and kindness, and loving care and protection that has been extended to all his people, and for the many manifestations of his peculiar mercy and blessings that have been extended unto us throughout all the length and breadth of the land and through all the years since the organization of the Church, on the 6th of April, 1830.

The Lord, about that time, or soon after, decreed a decree which he said his people should realize, that they should begin from that very hour to prevail over all their enemies, and, inasmuch as they continued to be faithful in keeping his laws he had given unto them, it was decreed that they should prevail until all enemies were subdued—not subdued by violence, nor the spirit of contention nor of warfare, but subdued by the power of eternal truth, by the majesty and power of Almighty God, but by the increased power of the righteous and of the upright covenanted people of God—should be magnified and increased, until the world shall bow and acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ, and that there is a people preparing for his coming in power and glory to the earth again.

We carry to the world the olive branch of peace. We present to the world the law of God, the word of the Lord, the truth, as it has been revealed in the latter day for the redemption of the dead and for the salvation of the living. We bear no malice or evil toward the children of men. The spirit of forgiveness pervades the hearts of the Saints of God, and they do not cherish a desire or feeling of revenge toward their enemies or those who hurt or molest them or seek to make them afraid; but on the contrary, the Spirit of the Lord has possession of their spirits, of their souls, and of their thoughts; they forgive all men, and they carry no malice in their hearts toward any, no matter what they have done. They say in their hearts, let God judge between

us and our enemies, and as for us, we forgive them, and we bear no malice toward any.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1902, p. 2.

WE ARE AS LEAVEN. While it may be said, and it is in a measure true, that we are but a handful in comparison with our fellow men in the world, yet we may be compared with the leaven of which the Savior spoke, that will eventually leaven the whole world. We have ample assurance of the fulfilment of this thought in the growth and development of the cause from its incipency until the present, for it has steadily and increasingly progressed and developed in the earth, from a mere half dozen of men, seventy-nine years ago, until today the members of the Church may be numbered by the hundreds of thousands.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1909, p. 2.

MAN INSIGNIFICANT COMPARED TO CAUSE. We are learning the great truth that man is insignificant in his individually, in comparison to the mighty cause which involves the salvation of the children of men, living and dead, and those who will yet live in the earth. Men must set aside their own prejudices, their own personal desires, wishes and preferences, and pay deference to the great cause of truth that is spreading abroad in the world.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1909, p. 2.

WHERE THE GOSPEL SPIRIT LEADS. The spirit of the gospel leads men to righteousness; to love their fellow men and to labor for their salvation and exaltation; it inspires them to do good and not evil, to avoid even the appearance of sin, much more to avoid sin itself. This is indeed the spirit of the gospel, which is the spirit of this latter-day work, and also the spirit that possesses those who have embraced it; and the aim and purpose of this work is the salvation, the exaltation, and the eternal happiness of man, both in this life and in the life to come.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1909, p. 4.

THE FRUITS OF TRUE RELIGION. The fruits of the Spirit of God—the fruits of the spirit of true religion—are

peace and love, virtue and honesty, and integrity, and fidelity to every virtue known in the law of God,—while the spirit of the world is vicious. Read the 5th chapter of Galatians and there you will discover the difference between the fruits of the Spirit of God and the fruits of the spirit of the world. That is one of the great and chief differences between “Mormonism,” so called, and the theology of the world. If “Mormonism” is anything at all more than other religions, it is that it is practical, that the results of obedience to it are practical, that it makes good men better men, and that it takes even bad men and makes good ones of them. That is what “Mormonism” will do, if we will only permit it to do it, if we will bow to its mandates and adopt its precepts in our lives, it will make us the sons and the daughters of God, worthy eventually to dwell in the presence of the Almighty in the heavens.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1905, p. 86.

LATTER-DAY SAINTS POSSESS THE SPIRIT OF SALVATION. The Latter-day Saints possess the spirit of salvation, and not the spirit of destruction; the spirit of life, not the spirit of death; the spirit of peace, not the spirit of disunion; the spirit of love for their fellow beings, not the spirit of hate. And for the enjoyment of this spirit by the Saints of the Most High, we all have great cause to render praise and thanksgiving to him who has so ordered it, and has given to us humility to receive that measure of his Spirit which inclines our hearts to good and not to evil.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1905, p. 2.

MAY ISRAEL FLOURISH. May Israel flourish upon the hills and rejoice upon the mountains, and assemble together unto the place which God has appointed, and there prosper, multiply and replenish the earth, and thence spread abroad throughout the land; for the time will come when we will find it necessary to fulfil the purposes of the Almighty by occupying the land of Zion in all parts of it. We are not destined to be confined to the valleys of the mountains.

Zion is destined to grow, and the time will come when we will cry aloud, more than we do today, "Give us room that we may dwell!"—*Apr. C. R.*, 1907, p. 118.

THE WORK OF THE LORD WILL GROW. The kingdom of God and the work of the Lord will spread more and more; it will progress more rapidly in the world in the future than it has done in the past. The Lord has said it, and the Spirit beareth record; and I bear testimony to this, for I do know that it is true.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1909, p. 7.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD TO CONTINUE. The kingdom of God is here to grow, to spread abroad, to take root in the earth, and to abide where the Lord has planted it by his own power and by his own word in the earth, nevermore to be destroyed nor to cease, but to continue until the purposes of the Almighty shall be accomplished, every whit that has been spoken of it by the mouths of the holy prophets since the world began.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1902, p. 2.

ZION ESTABLISHED TO REMAIN. Zion is established in the midst of the earth to remain. It is God Almighty's work, which he himself, by his own wisdom, and not by the wisdom of man, has restored to the earth in the latter days, and he has established it upon principles of truth and righteousness, of purity of life and revelation from God, that it can no more be thrown down nor left to another people, so long as the majority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will abide in their covenants with the Lord and keep themselves pure and unspotted from the world, as all members of the Church should keep themselves. Then it will be as God has decreed, perpetual and eternal, until his will is accomplished and his purposes fulfilled among the children of men. No people can ever prosper and flourish very long unless they abide in God's truth. There is nothing, no individuality, no combined influence among men, that can prevail over the truth. The truth is mighty and it will prevail. It may be slow in the consummation of its purpose, in

the accomplishment of the work that it has to do, but it is and will be sure; for the truth cannot and will not fail, for the Lord Almighty is behind it. It is his work, and he will see to it that it is accomplished. The kingdom is the Lord's, and the Lord is capable of taking care of it. He has always taken care of it. I want to say to you that there never was a time since the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, when a man led the Church, not for one moment. It was not so in the days of Joseph; it was not so in the days of Brigham Young; it has not been so since; it never will be so. The direction of this work among the people of the world will never be left to men. It is God's work, let me tell you, and I hope you will put it down in your memoranda, and do not forget that it is the Almighty that is going to do this work, and consummate it, and not man. No man shall have the honor of doing it, nor has any man ever had the power to do it of himself. It is God's work. If it had been the work of man, we would have been like the rest of the world, and it would not have been true of us that God had chosen us out of the world, but we would be a part of it, and "Hail fellow, well met," with it; but it is true that God has chosen us out of the world; therefore we are not of it; therefore they hate us and they will fight us and say all manner of evil against us falsely, as they have ever done from the beginning. And they will continue to seek the destruction of the Latter-day Saints, and to feel towards us in the future, as they have felt in the past. Now, don't you forget it, my brothers and sisters. When you go home, if you have not been in the habit of doing it, or if you have neglected your duty, when you go home today or to your homes in distant settlements, carry this injunction with you: Go into your secret chambers—go into your prayer-rooms—and there by yourselves or with your family gathered around you, bow your knees before God Almighty in praise and in thanksgiving to him for his merciful prov-

idence that has been over you and over all his people from the inception of this work down to the present. Remember that it is the gift of God to man, that it is his power and his guiding influence that has accomplished what we see has been accomplished. It has not been done by the wisdom of men. It is proper we should give honor to those who have been instrumental in bringing to pass much righteousness. They are instruments in God's hand, and we should not ignore that they are such instruments, and we should honor them as such; but when we undertake to give them the honor for accomplishing this work and take the honor from God who qualified the men to do the work, we are doing injustice to God. We are robbing him of the honor that rightfully belongs to him, and giving it to men who are only instrumental in the hands of God in accomplishing his purposes.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1905, pp. 5, 6.

THE PROGRESS OF GOD'S WORK CANNOT BE STOPPED. Now, we are thankful to the Lord that we are counted worthy to be taken notice of by the devil. I would fear very much for our safety if we had fallen into a condition where the devil ceased to be concerned about us. So long as the Spirit of the Lord is enjoyed by you, so long as you are living your religion and keeping the commandments of the Lord, walking uprightly before him, I assure you that the adversary of souls will not rest easy; he will be discontented with you, will find fault with you, and he will arraign you before his bar; but that will not hurt you very much if you will just keep on doing right. You do not need to worry in the least, the Lord will take care of you and bless you, he will also take care of his servants, and will bless them and help them to accomplish his purposes; and all the powers of darkness combined in earth and in hell cannot prevent it. They may take men's lives; they may slay and destroy, if they will; but they cannot destroy the purposes of God nor stop the progress of his work. He has stretched

forth his hand to accomplish his purposes, and the arm of flesh cannot stay it. He will cut his work short in righteousness, and will hasten his purposes in his own time. It is only necessary to try with our might to keep pace with the onward progress of the word of the Lord, then God will preserve and protect us, and will prepare the way before us, that we shall live and multiply and replenish the earth, and always do his will; which may God grant.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1905, pp. 5, 6.

DIVINITY OF THE GOSPEL. Somewhat unexpectedly I am called to stand before you, but I do so with pleasure, as I have a testimony to bear to the work we are engaged in; and it gives me pleasure when an opportunity is afforded to give expression to my feelings in relation to that work. That we have the gospel and have enjoyed its blessings, and that the ordinances of the gospel have been administered to us as Latter-day Saints, there are thousands of witnesses in this territory and in many places in the world. The testimony of the truth of this work is not confined to one or to a few; but there are thousands who can declare that they know it is true, because it has been revealed to them.

We as a people are increasing in numbers, and the Lord Almighty is increasing his blessings upon us, and the people are expanding in their understanding and in the knowledge of the truth. I feel grateful to my heavenly Father that I have been permitted to live in this generation, and have been permitted to become acquainted, somewhat, with the principles of the gospel. I am thankful that I have had the privilege of having a testimony of its truth, and that I am permitted to stand here and elsewhere to bear my testimony to the truth that the gospel has been restored to man.

I have traveled somewhat among the nations preaching the gospel, and have seen something of the conditions of the world, and to a certain extent have become acquainted with the feelings of men, and with the religions of the world. I

am aware that the gospel, as revealed in the Bible, cannot be found in the world; the ordinances of that gospel are not administered in any church except the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. If we make ourselves acquainted with the tenets of the religious world we shall find that they have not the gospel nor its ordinances; they have a form of godliness, and I have no doubt, are as sincere as we who have obeyed the gospel as revealed from heaven in these days. But they are devoid of the knowledge which we possess, and it is from the fact that they deny the source by which they might receive this knowledge—namely, revelation from Jesus Christ. In their minds they have closed up the heavens; they declare that God has revealed all that is necessary, that the canon of scripture is full, and that no more will be revealed. Believing thus, they close up the avenue of light and intelligence from heaven; and this will continue so long as they continue in their present course of unbelief. They will not listen to the testimony of men who tell them that the Lord lives and that he is able to reveal his will to man today, as ever. They will not heed this testimony, consequently they close the door of light and revelation. They cannot advance, nor learn the ways of God nor walk in his paths.

We testify that the barriers which separated man from God have been overcome, that the Lord has again communicated his will to man. "But," says one, "how shall we become acquainted with these things? How can we know that you are not deceived?" To all such we say, repent of your sins in all sincerity, then go forth and be baptized, and have hands laid upon you for the gift of the Holy Ghost, and the Spirit will bear record to you of the truth of our testimony, and you will become witnesses of it as we are, and will be able to stand forth boldly and testify to the world as we do. This was the path pointed out by Peter and the apostles on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit of the Lord Almighty

rested upon them with great power to the convincing of the hearts of the people who cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And 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." This was the counsel given them, and inasmuch as they obeyed it, they were entitled to the testimony of the Holy Spirit which would bring peace and happiness, reveal to them their duties, and enable them to understand their relationship to God.

If we look at the condition of the world today, we must come to the conclusion that peace is not likely soon to be established on the earth. There is nothing among the nations that tends to peace. Even among the religious societies the tendency is not to peace and union. They do not bring men to a knowledge of God; they do not possess the "one God, one faith, one baptism, and one hope of their calling" that are spoken of in the Scriptures. Every man has gone according to his own notions, independent of revelations, and hence, confusion and division exist; their churches are broken up, and they are quarreling and contending with each other. And as it is in the religious, so it is in the political world; they are all divided, and the more energy they put forth to make proselytes, the greater are their contentions, and the further they go from the mark. This is the condition they have been in, and the course they have been pursuing for almost eighteen hundred years, until today they have become so divided that I think it would puzzle anyone to tell how many religious denominations there are in Christendom. There are thousands, too, who, in consequence of the strife and contention among the religious sects, have become entirely sceptical respecting religion of every kind, and they have concluded that there is no God; at any rate, that there is no God among "Christians"—that all religionists are fanatics and are deceived. The sectarian systems

of religion are calculated to lead men of reflection and intelligence into scepticism, to cause them to deny all interference of God with men and their affairs, and to deny even his right to interfere.

The Lord Almighty is the Creator of the earth, he is the Father of all our spirits. He has the right to dictate what we shall do, and it is our duty to obey, and to walk according to his requirements. This is natural, and perfectly easy to be comprehended. The gospel has been restored to the earth, and the priesthood again established, and both are enjoyed by this people; but those unacquainted with the workings of the gospel and the priesthood look upon us with wonder, and are astonished at the union that exists in our midst. We move as a man, almost; we hearken to the voice of our leader; we are united in our faith and in our works. The world can not understand this, and they behold it with wonder.

Let me tell my brethren and friends that this is one of the effects of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We have become united in our faith by one baptism; we know that Jesus Christ lives, we know that he is our Savior and Redeemer; we have a testimony of this, independent of any written books, and we testify of these things to the world. This unison in the midst of the people called Latter-day Saints, and their prosperity, are hard for a great many to understand. I have, however, heard it said, that we boast that we are not so wealthy as our neighbors. But when our circumstances, and the condition of our country when we came here are considered, I think this statement cannot be sustained. When we came here we were penniless, and we have not had the advantage of wealth or commerce to help to enrich us, but all we possess, is the result of our own physical labor and the blessing of God. We have labored under great disadvantages in freighting our goods and machinery over these vast plains, and besides this we have had a barren

soil and drouth to contend with, and when all these things are considered, I think we have been prospered more than any other people. And as it has been in the past so will it be in the future—we will increase, and extend our borders, for this is the work of God; we are his people, and he will continue to bless us as he has done hitherto.

Our business is to learn our duties one towards another and towards our leaders. This is a lesson that we seem rather slow to learn. But it should be with us: when our leaders speak it is for us to obey; when they direct, we should go; when they call, we should follow. Not as beings who are enslaved or in thralldom; we should not obey blindly, as instruments or tools. No Latter-day Saint acts in this manner; no man or woman who has embraced the gospel has ever acted in this way; but on the contrary men and women have felt to listen cheerfully to the counsels of the servants of God as far as they were able to comprehend them. The difficulty is not in getting the Latter-day Saints to do right, but in getting them to comprehend what is right. We have obeyed the counsels of our leaders because we have known they have been inspired by the Holy Spirit and because we positively have known that their counsels have been given for our good. We do know and have always known that our leaders have been inspired with wisdom superior to that which we possess. For this reason we take hold of everything they present to us for the good of Zion.

We are engaged in the great latter-day work of preaching the gospel to the nations, gathering the poor, and building up Zion upon the earth. We are working for the triumph of righteousness, for the subjugation of sin and the errors of the age in which we live. It is a great and glorious work. We believe it is right to love God with all our hearts, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We believe it is wrong to lie, steal, commit adultery, or do any act forbidden by the gospel of Christ. We believe in all the teachings of the

Savior and in everything that is good and moral, and calculated to exalt mankind or to ameliorate their condition, to unite them in doing good. These are among the principles of the gospel, and these principles have been taught to us from the commencement of our career as members of this Church. These principles are carried out among us to an extent not to be found among any other people. We do not believe in worshiping God or being religious on the Sabbath day only; but we believe it is as necessary to be religious on Monday, Tuesday and every day in the week, as it is on the Sabbath day; we believe that it is necessary to do to our neighbors as we would they should do unto us, during the week as it is on the Sabbath. In short, we believe it is necessary to live our religion every day in the week, every hour in the day, and every moment. Believing and acting thus, we become strengthened in our faith, the Spirit of God increases within us, we advance in knowledge, and we are better able to defend the cause we are engaged in.

To be a true representative of this cause a man must live faithful to the light that he has; he must be pure, virtuous and upright. If he comes short of this he is not a fair representative of this work. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the perfect law of liberty. It is calculated to lead man to the highest state of glory, and to exalt him in the presence of our heavenly Father, "with whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning." If there is any folly to be seen in the midst of this people, it is the folly and weakness of man, and is not because of any failing or lack in the plan of salvation. The gospel is perfect in its organization. It is for us to learn the gospel, and to become acquainted with the principles of truth, to humble ourselves before God that we may bring ourselves into subjection to his laws, and be continually willing to listen to the counsels of those whom the Lord has appointed to guide us.

We know that God has spoken; we testify of this. We stand as witnesses to the world that this is true. We ask no odds of any man, community or nation on the face of the earth, in relation to these things. We bear a fearless testimony that they are true. We also bear testimony that Brigham Young is a prophet of the living God, and that he has the revelations of Jesus Christ; that he has guided this people by the power of revelation from the time he became their leader until the present, and he has never failed in his duty or mission. He has been faithful before God, and faithful to this people. We bear this testimony to the world. We fear not, neither do we heed their scorn, contempt, or sneers. We are used to it. We have seen it and heard it, and have become inured to it. We know that the One in whom we trust is God, for it has been revealed to us. We are not in the dark, neither have we obtained our knowledge from any man, synod or collection of men, but through the revelation of Jesus. If there be any who doubt us, let them repent of their sins. Is there any harm in your forsaking your follies and evils, and in bowing in humility before God for his Spirit, and in obedience to the words of the Savior, being baptized for the remission of sins, and having hands laid upon you for the gift of the Holy Ghost, that you may have a witness for yourselves of the truth of the words we speak to you? Do this humbly and honestly, and as sure as the Lord lives, I promise to you that you will receive the testimony of this work for yourselves, and will know it as all the Latter-day Saints know it. This is the promise; it is sure and steadfast. It is something tangible; it is in the power of every man to prove for himself whether we speak the truth or whether we lie. We do not come as deceivers or imposters before the world; we do not come with the intention to deceive, but we come with the plain, simple truth, and leave it to the world to test it and get a knowledge

for themselves. It is the right of every soul that lives—the high, low, rich, poor, great and small, to have this testimony for themselves inasmuch as they will obey the gospel.

Jesus in ancient times sent his disciples forth to preach the gospel to every creature, saying they that believed and were baptized should be saved, but they that believed not should be damned. And said he, “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.” These are the promises made anciently, and there are thousands in this territory and in this congregation who can bear testimony that they have realized the fulfilment of these promises in this day. The healing of the sick among us has become so common that it is apparently but little thought of. We have also seen the lame made to walk, and the blind to receive their sight, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak. These things we have seen done by the power of God and not by the cunning or wisdom of men; we know that these signs do follow the preaching of the gospel. Yet these testimonies of its truth are but poor and weak when compared with the whisperings of the still small voice of the Spirit of God. The latter is a testimony that none who enjoy it can deny; it cannot be overcome, for it brings conviction to the heart that cannot be reasoned away or disproved, whether it can be accounted for on philosophical principles or not. This testimony comes from God and convinces all to whom it is given in spite of themselves, and is worth more to me than any sign or gift beside, because it gives peace and happiness, contentment and quiet to my soul. It assures me that God lives, and if I am faithful I shall obtain the blessings of the celestial kingdom.

Is this unscriptural or contrary to reason or to any revealed truth? No, it is in compliance with and in cor-

roboration of all revealed truth known to man. The Lord Almighty lives, and he operates by the power of his Spirit over the hearts of the children of men and holds the nations of the earth in his hands. He created the earth upon which we dwell, and its treasures are his; and he will do with us according as we merit. As we are faithful or unfaithful, so will the Almighty deal with us, for we are his children, and we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

We have a glorious destiny before us; we are engaged in a glorious work. It is worth all our attention, it is worth our lives and everything the Lord has put into our possession, and then ten thousand times more. Indeed there is no comparison, it is all in all, it is incomparable. It is all that is and all that ever will be. The gospel is salvation, and without it there is nothing worth having. We came naked into the world and shall go hence the same. If we were to accumulate half the world, it would avail us nothing so far as prolonging life here, or securing eternal life hereafter. But the gospel teaches men to be humble, faithful, honest and righteous before the Lord and with each other, and in proportion as its principles are carried out so will peace and righteousness extend and be established on the earth, and sin, contention, bloodshed and corruption of all kinds cease to exist, and the earth become purified and be made a fit abode for heavenly beings; and for the Lord our God to come and dwell upon, which he will do during the Millennium.

The principles of the gospel which the Lord has revealed in these days will lead us to eternal life. This is what we are after; what we were created for; what the earth was created for. The reason that we are here is that we may overcome every folly and prepare ourselves for eternal life in the future. I do not think that a principle of salvation is available only as it can be applied in our lives. For instance, if there is a principle calculated in its nature to save me from the penalty of any crime, it will avail me nothing

unless I act upon it this moment. If I do this and continue to do so, I act upon the principle of salvation, and I am secure from the penalty of that crime and will be forever, so long as I abide by that principle or law. It is just so with the principles of the gospel—they are a benefit or not, just as they are or are not applied in our lives.

Then let us be faithful and humble; let us live the religion of Christ, put away our follies and sins and the weaknesses of the flesh, and cleave to God and his truth with undivided hearts, and with full determination to fight the good fight of faith and continue steadfast to the end, which may God grant us power to do is my prayer in the name of Jesus. Amen.—Discourse, Nov. 15, 1868, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 12, pp. 326-332, 1869.

THE GOSPEL ALL COMPREHENSIVE. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ embraces all the laws and ordinances necessary for the salvation of man. Paul declared it to be the “power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” No man can be saved in opposition to its saving ordinances, but must receive each ordinance in the spirit of humility and faith. Technically, the term “gospel” signifies “good news,” and is said to be taken from, or founded on, the annunciation of the angel who appeared to the shepherds at the time of the Savior’s birth, declaring, “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.”

In the theological sense, the gospel means more than just the tidings of good news with accompanying joy to the souls of men, for it embraces every principle of eternal truth. There is no fundamental principle, or truth, anywhere in the universe, that is not embraced in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and it is not confined to the simple first principles, such as faith in God, repentance from sin, baptism for the remission of sins and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, although these are absolutely essential to salvation and exaltation in the kingdom of God.

The laws known to man as the "laws of nature," by which the earth and all things on it are governed, as well as the laws which prevail throughout the entire universe, by which the heavenly bodies are controlled and to which they are obedient in all things, are all circumscribed and included in the gospel. Every natural law or scientific principle that man has truly discovered, but which was always known to God, is a part of the gospel truth. There never was and never will be any conflict between truth revealed by the Lord to his servants, the prophets, and truth revealed by him to the scientist, who makes his discoveries through his research and study.

There is a great deal that is taught in the religions of the world as gospel truth that the Lord never did reveal, and which is not in harmony with revealed religion. There is also much that is taught in the world of science that the Lord never did reveal, which is in conflict with the truth. A great deal that man has put forth as scientific theory is founded in error and therefore cannot prevail. The conflict between religion and science is founded in error and therefore cannot prevail. The conflict between religion and science is due to the fact that there are many ideas advanced in false forms of religion and false conclusions reached by men of science. Truth and error can never agree; but truth, no matter where it is found, is consistent and will always harmonize with every other truth. The Lord has stated it as follows:

"For intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light; mercy hath compassion on mercy, and claimeth her own."—Doc. and Cov. 88:40.

The Lord has revealed that man was formed in his image and that we are his offspring. This is a glorious gospel truth. Anything that we may be taught, whether in false forms of religion or in the field of science in conflict

with this great truth cannot endure, for it is error. It may be cherished for a season and seem to prevail, as many falsehoods have done in the past when put forth as truth, but the time will come when all theories, ideas and opinions which are not in harmony with that which the Lord has declared, must come to an end; for that which remains and will endure and abide forever, will be the truth, even the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 51, pp. 164, 165, March, 1916.

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE. Christ, teaching his disciples, called attention to the importance of their position and place in the world. Though poor and despised of men, yet he told them they were the salt of the earth, the light of the world.

Then he encouraged them to effort and achievement by showing them that their exalted position would avail them little, unless they made proper use of their high callings.

These conditions and instructions apply admirably to the Latter-day Saints, who are indeed the salt of the earth, and in whom is vested the gospel light of the world; who, as the apostle said of the Former-day Saints, are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of him who called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.

But all this availeth little or nothing, unless the Saints consider themselves of some consequence, and let their light shine, collectively and individually; unless they are model in their behavior, honest, zealous in the spread of truth, tolerant of their neighbors, "having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

One fault to be avoided by the Saints, young and old, is the tendency to live on borrowed light, with their own hidden under a bushel; to permit the savor of their salt of knowl-

edge to be lost; and the light within them to be reflected, rather than original.

Every Saint should not only have the light within himself, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but his light should so shine that it may be clearly perceived by others.

Men and women should become settled in the truth, and founded in the knowledge of the gospel, depending upon no person for borrowed or reflected light, but trusting only upon the Holy Spirit, who is ever the same, shining forever and testifying to the individual and the priesthood, who live in harmony with the laws of the gospel, of the glory and the will of the Father. They will then have light everlasting, which cannot be obscured. By its shining in their lives, they shall cause others to glorify God; and by their well-doing put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, and show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvelous light.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 8, pp. 60-62, 1904-5.

NO CAUSE FOR WORRY. The Saints and their leaders have redeemed the waste places, founded Christian homes, churches, and schools; established industries—because of the very nature of their necessities. Why should they not be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their toil, and why be sneered at and condemned for their energy and enterprise, and especially by men who prove themselves to be hypocrites and liars, who live on what others have produced? Are the Saints to be condemned because they have appropriated the land, paid for it by hard labor, cultivated and made the best out of it by their united strength, under the inspired direction of wise leaders? It will be noted that it is not the people who are complaining, for they have been assisted in many ways to better themselves by such leaders; but it is the ministers, who have no interest whatever, either in our material or spiritual advancement. And then again,

are such leaders to be condemned because they have directed and led the way in these things? Had they not done so, whence would our enterprises, our temporal salvation, have come? Never by the help of sectarian ministers, that much is true, at least.

No; young man, you need not be troubled over ministerial accusations against this people, nor over what the people of the world say against us. I have no fears for the Church from these sources, but I confess I have fears when our young men begin to weaken, and to take sides against their fathers; to profess to think that the priesthood is selfish and self-seeking; to follow lies and accusations rather than plain truth; to join in derision against the leaders of the Saints, and to laugh when unfriendly editors and ministers hold them up to ridicule. I fear, when young men deny the truth and follow falsehood; when they become self-sufficient, unvirtuous, worldly and proud; when the sterling qualities of their fathers are derided by them; when they seek the plaudits of men of the world, rather than the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

There is no genuine truth in the arraignment of the Church and her officers by the ministers, but much to you, young men, in the way you look upon it, and in your acts and decisions. Especially, without careful consideration, should you pay no attention to the accusation of ministers, to whom with force the sentiment of Emerson applies: "We want men and women who shall renovate life and our social state, but we see that most natures are insolvent—cannot satisfy their own wants, have an ambition out of all proportion to their practical force, and so do lean and beg day and night continually."

I say that nothing can bring peace to our young men in this world save the triumphs of the principles of truth which have been revealed of God to the Latter-day Saints, for our doctrines are the practical precepts of the gospel of

Jesus Christ, and to behold its triumph should be the overpowering ambition and desire of every righteous soul. This is spiritual salvation which includes the temporal. Seek to know the worth thereof, and let these men's ravings be put under your feet. Remember that "when a man lives with God his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn." The Saints and their leaders strive diligently to this end.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 7, p. 303, February, 1904.

THE GOSPEL A SHIELD FROM TERROR. We hear about living in perilous times. We are in perilous times, but I do not feel the pangs of that terror. It is not upon me. I propose to live so that it will not rest upon me. I propose to live so that I shall be immune from the perils of the world, if it be possible for me to so live, by obedience to the commandments of God and to his laws revealed for my guidance. No matter what may come to me, if I am only in the line of my duty, if I am in fellowship with God, if I am worthy of the fellowship of my brethren, if I can stand spotless before the world, without blemish, without transgression of the laws of God, what does it matter to me what may happen to me? I am always ready, if I am in this frame of understanding mind and conduct. It does not matter at all. Therefore I borrow no trouble nor feel the pangs of fear.

The Lord's hand is over all, and therein I acknowledge his hand. Not that men are at war, not that nations are trying to destroy nations, not that men are plotting against the liberties of their fellow creatures, not in those respects at all; but God's hand is not shortened. He will control the results that will follow. He will overrule them in a way that you and I, today, do not comprehend, or do not foresee, for ultimate good. He foresees the end as he foresaw that war should come upon all the nations of the world, and as the Prophet has declared it would. The Lord knew it would come. Why? Because he knew what the world was doing.

He knew the trend of the spirit of men and of nations. He knew what the results would be, in time. He knew when the time would be, and the results that would be manifest, and so he declared it by the voice of his servants, the prophets; and now we see the fulfilment of the predictions made by the servants of God, as they were inspired to utter them, when they declared that the time would come to pass when war would be poured out upon all nations—not to fulfil the purposes of God, but the purposes of the nations of the earth in consequence of their wickedness. It may be a very difficult thing for me with the range of words that I possess, to express my thoughts and to explain my full intent; but I repeat to you that the Lord God Almighty is not pleased, nor was it his purpose or design, or intent, to fore-ordain the condition that the world is in today; nor did he do so. He foresaw what would come, by the conduct of men, by their departure from the Truth, by their lack of the love of God, and by the course that they should pursue, inimical to the well-being of his children. He foresaw what would be, but he had given them their agency, under which they are bringing it to pass. The results of it, eventually, will be overruled for the good of those who shall live after, not for the good of those who shall destroy themselves because of their wicked propensities and crimes.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 20, page 827, July, 1917.

THE GOSPEL TRUMPET. If we are in the line of our duty, we are engaged in a great and glorious cause. It is very essential to our individual welfare that every man and every woman who has entered into the covenants of the gospel, through repentance and baptism, should feel that as individuals it is their bounden duty to use their intelligence, and the agency which the Lord has given them, for the promotion of the interests of Zion and the establishment of her cause in the earth.

It matters not how devout, honest, or sincere we might

be in the profession of our faith in God, or in the system of religion we might have adopted, and which we believe to be the everlasting gospel, without repentance and baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost, which constitute the new birth, we are not of the family of Christ, but are aliens, estranged from God and his laws, and in this fallen condition we shall remain, whether in the body or in the spirit, for time and for eternity, unless we render obedience to the plan devised in the heavens for the redemption and salvation of the human family.

The Latter-day Saints may say, we were taught this doctrine by the elders in our native lands, and we believed it and repented of our sins, and were baptized, and we received the gift of the Holy Ghost, which was a testimony to us that we had done the will of the Father, and since then our testimonies have often been confirmed through the manifestations of the power of God, and the renewal of his Spirit in our hearts. Why, therefore, say they, is it necessary to refer to these things now? We perhaps forget, in consequence of the things of time, which so tempt our fallen nature, that having been born anew, which is the putting away of the old man sin, and putting on of the man Christ Jesus, we have become soldiers of the Cross, having enlisted under the banner of Jehovah for time and for eternity, and that we have entered into the most solemn covenants to serve God and to contend earnestly for the establishment of the principles of truth and righteousness on this earth continually while we live.

In referring to the subject of baptism as essential to salvation, it may be asked by some, what would become of those who heard not the gospel and who therefore had not the opportunity of being baptized, claiming as we do that the gospel was taken from the earth in consequence of its being rejected when proclaimed by Jesus and his apostles? I would say to such, that God has made ample provision for all his

children, both the ignorant and the learned; those who have not had the gospel preached to them in the flesh, will hear it in the spirit, for all must have the plan of salvation presented to them for their acceptance or rejection before they can become amenable to the law.

In connection with this work is that spoken of concerning Elijah the prophet; namely, "The turning of the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children," which if not done the whole earth will be smitten with a curse.

The kingdom of God must be erected upon the principles which Christ has revealed, upon the foundation of eternal truth; Jesus himself being the chief corner-stone. These holy and sublime principles must be observed and honored in our lives, in order that we may obtain an exaltation with the sanctified in the kingdom of God.

The beauty of these principles is that they are true, and the satisfaction derived from their adoption is the knowledge which we receive convincing us of this fact. We have not believed a fable, neither are we cherishing a cunningly devised scheme, but we have been inducted into the truth, having Christ for our head, who is our forerunner, our great High Priest and King.

The Holy Ghost is a personage who acts in Christ's stead. Just before the risen Redeemer left the earth he commanded his disciples to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high. They did so, and agreeable to promise, the Comforter came whilst they were met together, filling their hearts with unspeakable joy, insomuch that they spake in tongues and prophesied; and the inspiring influence of this holy Being accompanied them in all their ministerial duties, enabling them to perform the great mission in which they had been called by the Savior.

I know that God lives and that he has revealed himself.

I know that the Holy Ghost has been conferred upon the children of men, and that the gospel has been restored to the inhabitants of the earth in its fulness. I know that the Holy Priesthood, which is the power of God delegated to man, has been restored to the earth. I do know that God has delivered his people and that he will continue to deliver us and lead us on in his own peculiar way from conquest to conquest, from victory to victory, until truth and righteousness gain the ascendancy in this his earth, inasmuch as we remain true to him and to one another.

It is the fool who has said in his heart, "There is no God," and it would indeed be a weak and foolish mind that would rest satisfied without knowing beyond a doubt the Author and Source of his religion, when the opportunity of ascertaining the fact is extended to him.

I know the fruits of my religion are good, they are flavored with the sweets of heaven, and they impart health and life to the soul, and I know that God, the Creator of heaven and earth, is its author. No man need wonder whether this be really true or not, for all may know for themselves; all may partake of the fruit of the vine and eat and live; all may drink of the eternal spring, and thirst no more. These things I declare to you to be true and faithful. I have been acquainted with them from my youth, and I have felt their influence from my childhood. I have seen the effect of their opposite, and I know whereof I speak. I cannot deny these things, neither can any man who has ever known them, although he may apostatize from the Church, except he deny himself and his God.

The man who embraces what is called "Mormonism," but which is really the gospel of the Son of God, and lives according to its precepts, will never lie nor steal; he will not dishonor his parents nor despise his poorer brethren; he will never, no never, speak against the Lord's anointed nor be ashamed to own his God, to whom he owes homage and

gratitude now and forever; he will never do a dishonorable act, nor fail to acknowledge God in all things, neither will he refuse to render implicit obedience to the revelations of God which are applicable to him. It is true, man may err in judgment, he may be wanting in many things because of his fallen nature, but the system of salvation is perfect. Jesus the Only Begotten of the Father, in whom there is no blemish, is its author; he is the standard to all the world, and will be forever. He had power to lay down his life and take it up again, and if we keep inviolate the covenants of the gospel, remaining faithful and true to the end, we too, in his name and through his redeeming blood, will have power in due time to resurrect these our bodies after they shall have been committed to the earth.—April 8, 1876, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 18, pp. 271-277, 1877.

WHAT CHURCH LEADERS ADVOCATE. We wish to advocate the principle of unity, the love of God and neighbor, the love of a purpose that is great, ennobling, good in itself, and calculated to exalt man and bring him nearer to the likeness of the Son of God.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 21, p. 98, December, 1917.

OUR MESSAGE ONE OF LOVE. We bring a message of love. We wish to show how much we love you, and to find out how much you love us in return.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. 21, p. 98, December, 1917.

WHENCE? WHITHER? We want to know where we came from, and where we are going? Where did we come from? From God. Our spirits existed before they came to this world. They were in the councils of the heavens before the foundations of the earth were laid. We were there. We sang together with the heavenly hosts for joy when the foundations of the earth were laid, and when the plan of our existence upon this earth and redemption were mapped out. We were there; we were interested, and we took a part in this great preparation. We were unquestionably present in

those councils when that wonderful circumstance occurred when Satan offered himself as a savior of the world if he could but receive the honor and the glory of the Father for doing it. But Jesus said, "Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever." Wherefore, because Satan rebelled against God, and sought to destroy the agency of man, the Father rejected him and he was cast out, but Jesus was accepted. We were, no doubt, there, and took a part in all those scenes, we were vitally concerned in the carrying out of these great plans and purposes, we understood them, and it was for our sakes they were decreed, and are to be consummated. These spirits have been coming to this earth to take upon them tabernacles, that they might become like unto Jesus Christ, being "formed in his likeness and image," from the morn of creation until now, and will continue until the winding up scene, until the spirits who were destined to come to this world shall have come and accomplished their mission in the flesh.—*Deseret Weekly News*, 1884, Vol. 33, p. 130.

LATTER-DAY SAINTS ARE LAW-ABIDING. I wish to enter here my avowal that the people called Latter-day Saints, as has been often repeated from this stand, are the most law-abiding, the most peaceable, long-suffering and patient people that can today be found within the confines of this republic, and perhaps anywhere else upon the face of the earth; and we intend to continue to be law-abiding so far as the constitutional law of the land is concerned; and we expect to meet the consequences of our obedience to the laws and commandments of God like men. These are my sentiments briefly expressed, upon this subject.—*Deseret Weekly News*, 1882, Vol. 31, p. 226.