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# **MEMBER'S GUIDE**

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THE CHURCH OF  
**Jesus**<sup>®</sup>  
**Christ**

**Produced by the Church Education Committee**

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# **1 Ordinances and Practices of The Church**

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## 1.1 Ordinances and Practices and Their Purposes

Ordinances in The Church of Jesus Christ are authoritative commands, customs, and procedures that help us better understand and appreciate Jesus Christ and what He has done for us. Some were instituted by Christ, taught by the apostles, and practiced by the Early Church, but all are based on and supported by scripture.

The following is a list of ordinances that the Church practices:

- Baptism
- Laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost
- Communion
- Feet washing
- Blessing of children
- Anointing the sick / laying on of hands for the weak in spirit
- Consecrating of oil and other articles set aside for sacred use
- Ordinations of ministers, teachers, deacons, and deaconesses

### 1.1.1 Objectives of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Define "ordinance," as pertaining to the Church, state how and when ordinances became a part of the Church, and state their purpose.
  - Name the ordinances of the Church.
  - Know why they are practiced and the mechanics of performing them as pertinent to a member.
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## 1.2 Baptism

Baptism is the ordinance a person participates in to become a member of The Church of Jesus Christ. The five steps of salvation are: faith, repentance, baptism, bestowal of the Holy Ghost, and living righteously. The ministry of the Church baptizes by immersion in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for the remission of sins. Christ was without sin, but He was baptized to set the example. Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River.

### 1.2.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Christ, the only one who was perfect, set the example. Matthew 3:15. 2 Nephi 31:5-12
  - Day of Pentecost and the spirit of baptism. Acts 2:38-47
  - The Law of Moses was fulfilled with the coming of Christ. Galatians 3:21-29
  - Nicodemus and the commandment that we must be born again. John 3:1-7
  - Alma baptized in the waters of Mormon. Mosiah 18:8-17
  - Buried with Christ by baptism into death. Romans 6:3-14
  - Faith and Doctrine, Article 10
  - Mode of baptism. 3 Nephi 11:21-38
  - Why baptism is essential. Matthew 3:11-17
  - Why baptism is performed in an open body of water. Mosiah 18:8-17. Matthew 3:13-17. Mark 1:9-11
  - Baptisms performed in other faiths are not recognized in The Church of Jesus Christ. Acts 19:1-7
-

### 1.2.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain why baptism is necessary to become a member of the Church and what two steps precede it.
  - State who instituted baptism as an ordinance of the Church and what it represents.
  - Cite scriptural examples of baptism performed prior to Christ's baptism.
  - Explain why the Church performs baptisms in open water.
  - Explain who has the authority to perform a baptism.
  - Explain why a person must be baptized by the priesthood of the Church to enjoy the privileges of membership and participate in the ordinances (even if they have been previously baptized in another church).
-

## 1.3 Laying on of Hands for the Reception of the Holy Ghost

Laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost is the fourth step in receiving salvation. When Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, the heavens opened up and the Spirit of God (Holy Ghost) descended upon Him in the form of a dove. Jesus commands all who are baptized in His name to receive the Holy Ghost.

### 1.3.1 Supporting Scriptures and References

- Holy Ghost descended on Jesus after His baptism. Matthew 3:16
- Method of bestowing the Holy Ghost. 3 Nephi 18:37; Moroni 2:1-3
- Holy Ghost given on the Day of Pentecost. Acts 2:1-13
- Christ and the Holy Ghost. 2 Nephi 31:7-14
- Paul at Ephesus. Acts 19:1-8

### 1.3.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- State what the Holy Ghost is.
  - Explain the need for bestowing the Holy Ghost.
  - Describe the role the Holy Ghost plays in an individual's life.
  - Describe how to recognize the Holy Ghost working within him or her.
  - Name the three steps that precede the bestowal of the Holy Ghost.
-

## 1.4 Communion

Communion, or the Lord's Supper (sometimes referred to as sacrament), should be observed with due respect. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ are offered the Lord's Supper every first day of the week- the bread as Christ's body and the wine as His blood- in commemoration of His death and suffering. Jesus Christ commanded that we observe this ordinance. While in the promised land (the Americas), Jesus commanded His disciples to give communion to the people of His Church – those who believe and are baptized in His name. Through Holy Communion, we remember Christ's death and resurrection, and His atonement for sins. We become one with Him and our brothers and sisters in Christ. One must not partake of the Lord's Supper unworthily.

### 1.4.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Christ spoke to the apostles regarding communion. Matthew 26: 26-29; Luke 22:19-20
- Christ spoke to the twelve disciples in the land of America regarding who should and who should not receive communion. 3 Nephi 18:1-11, 28-30
- Passing of bread and wine. Moroni 4 and 5
- Becoming one in the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:16-17
- Paul's teachings on communion. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

### 1.4.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain the significance of communion.
  - Describe how it is administered and to whom.
  - Explain why the Church offers communion to its baptized members only.
  - Explain why The Church of Jesus Christ uses bread and wine for communion.
  - Explain what the bread and the wine represent.
  - State the importance of taking communion (sacrament) worthily. (Mormon 9:29)
  - Identify instances when a baptized member should refrain from taking communion.
-



## 1.5 Feet Washing

Feet washing is truly a beautiful and humbling ordinance of the Church that was instituted by our Lord and Savior. It is the duty of every member to participate in all feet washing services. The Church holds a feet washing service at least once within a three-month period. Christ taught that we would have no part with Him if we do not wash each other's feet. He set the example, and like baptism, we follow His commandments. The ordinance promotes humility, unity, equality, and a re-dedication of our spiritual life (similar to baptism). Christ said to the apostles after washing their feet, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," John 13:17. Participating in feet washing truly generates love between the brothers and sisters. It is a wonderful and powerful ordinance to experience.

### 1.5.1 Supporting Scripture and References

- Christ washed the apostles' feet. John 13:1-17
- Saints participating in feet washing. 1 Timothy 5:10

### 1.5.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- State the significance in the example of Christ washing the apostles' feet.
  - Explain why members of the Church observe the ordinance of feet washing.
  - Describe the feet washing process.
  - State the feelings he or she has experienced during the ordinance of feet washing.
-

## 1.6 Blessing of Children

Jesus Christ blessed children in Judaea and in the promised land (the Americas). Jesus took the children one by one, and prayed for them. The Church practices the blessing of children as well. By having their children blessed, hopefully parents are professing that they will raise them in the fear and admonition of the Lord.

During the blessing prayer, a request is made for the Lord to protect, guide, and provide for the child, with the hope that, when the child reaches the age of understanding, he or she will have a desire to partake of the redemption offered through Jesus Christ and His plan of salvation. In The Book of Mormon, the Spirit of God instructed Mormon, "...little children are whole...are not capable of committing sin..." and therefore do not need to be baptized (Moroni 8:8). They are covered by the atoning blood of Christ. Only when sin is understood can someone repent of it. Thus, children are alive in Christ.

### 1.6.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Jesus blessed children in Jerusalem. Mark 10:13-16
- Jesus blessed children in America. 3 Nephi 17:11-25
- Children have no need of baptism. Mosiah 3:16, Mosiah 15:25, Moroni 8

### 1.6.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain why children are blessed in The Church of Jesus Christ versus being baptized.
  - Describe the parents' responsibility with their child's spiritual development.
  - Explain why little children are alive in Christ.
-

## 1.7 Anointing the Sick / Laying on of Hands for the Weak in Spirit

Anointing of the sick with oil that has been blessed, is an ordinance that is for the purpose of receiving the gift of healing, one of the many spiritual gifts the Lord has promised His Church. An afflicted person has the opportunity to call for an elder of the Church, to ask him to pray, anointing his head with oil, and calling upon the Lord on his behalf.

Laying on of hands for the weak in Spirit is an ordinance where an individual is given the opportunity to call on the ministry to pray for spiritual help or guidance. When praying for a person who is weak in Spirit, the elder does not anoint the head with oil. The elder laying his hands upon the person's head and calls upon God to give the individual spiritual strength.

As a general rule, physical afflictions are addressed by anointing with oil, and spiritual afflictions are attended to by the laying on of hands. There are times, however, when the root of the affliction is not clear. In such instances, anointing with oil is considered appropriate.

An elder may anoint a handkerchief with oil and send it to an individual who lives a great distance from the elder, because he cannot anoint in person. The person who receives the anointed handkerchief, should place the handkerchief on the afflicted body part. The handkerchief does not transform into a sacred item that can be used over and over. The handkerchief should not be passed from one person to another. If another individual needs to be anointed, and no elder is available, a new handkerchief can be anointed for him. We should not lose focus from where the healing power comes. Acts 19:12 states, "So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

### 1.7.1 Supporting Scriptures – Anointing

- Apostles anoint the sick and they are healed. Mark 6:13
- What to do when you are sick. James 5:13-15
- Prayer and anointing for the sick . Mormon 9:24-25

### 1.7.2 Supporting Scriptures – Laying on of hands

- Calling on the Spirit for help. Ephesians 6:18
- Spirit makes intercession for us. Romans 8:26
- Paul prays for Timothy that the Spirit will be stirred in him. 2 Timothy 1:6

### 1.7.3 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain the difference between laying on of hands for spiritual strength versus for the reception of the Holy Ghost after baptism.
  - Explain the differences between anointing with oil and the laying on of hands without the use of oil.
  - Explain how an elder can administer to an afflicted person's needs when he is unable to anoint in person.
-

## 1.8 Consecration of Oil and Other Objects to be Set Apart for Sacred Use

Consecration of items is the setting aside of articles for use in the Lord's service. The Church sets aside certain items to be used for a specific purpose such as: oil that has been blessed for the purposes of anointing or ordinations; cloths, decanters, glasses and napkins for communion; and basins and towels for feet washing. The items are consecrated by the ministry through prayer and are retained by deacons and deaconesses to be used for their intended purposes. This does not mean that these items become sacred, but it does mean they should not be used as everyday items. For example, communion cloths must be used when setting the communion table only and not to wipe a dirty table. Worn sacrament items shall be discarded and not used for any other purpose.

### 1.8.1 Supporting Scriptures and References

- Description of oil that has been blessed and its use. Exodus 29:7, 30:22-33
- History of Moses anointing objects for sacred use. Numbers 7:1
- Deaconess Manual. Page 9

### 1.8.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain the intent and purpose for consecrating objects that are used when performing ordinances.
  - Explain how these objects are consecrated in The Church of Jesus Christ.
  - Explain the value that should be placed upon these objects.
-

## 1.9 Ordinations of Apostles, Evangelists, Elders, Teachers, Deacons, and Deaconesses

The ordained offices of The Church of Jesus Christ include twelve apostles, seventy evangelists, elders, teachers, deacons, and deaconesses. Each of these, except deaconess, is mentioned, specifically in the scriptures. The ordination of a woman into the role of deaconess is derived from examples in the scriptures, the most notable of which are Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2), Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:26, Rom. 16:3), and Euodias and Syntyche (Philippians 4:2-3).

As in times past, God continues to reveal His will to His people from time to time through the gifts of the Spirit, knowledge, and wisdom. At this time, the call to officially ordain someone into the office of prophet has not yet been given, nor does the current priesthood believe a prophet or prophetess is required to lead the Church. The Quorum of Twelve Apostles provides spiritual leadership for The Church of Jesus Christ.

### 1.9.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Why ministers are ordained and whose priesthood it is. Alma 13 and Hebrews 7
- Method of ordinations. Moroni 3
- Calling and ordination of teachers. 1 Corinthians 12:28. Ephesians 4:11
- Callings and ordination of deacons and deaconesses. Acts 6:1-8 and Romans 16:1-2
  - Refer to the Teacher's Manual for significant historical documentation regarding the Church's position on having the office of Deaconess. Pages 22-23

### 1.9.2 Other Ordained Officers' Supporting Scriptures and References

- Matthew 10
- Mark 3:14
- Luke 10
- Acts 14:23
- Ephesians 4:11
- Philippians 1:1
- 1 Timothy 3:8, 3:13
- Titus 1:5
- Jacob 1:18
- Alma 23:4
- Helaman 3:25

### 1.9.3 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain why men and women are called into ordained offices.
  - Name the ordained offices.
  - Describe the major duties of the ordained offices.
  - Describe the method of ordination.
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## **2 History of The Church Of Jesus Christ**

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## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter concentrates on three major events of the Church's history. Section 2.2 tells how the Church was originally set up by Jesus. Section 2.3 covers the apostasy or departure from the gospel of Christ, which resulted in the withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, the priesthood authority, and spiritual gifts from the Church. Without these essential elements, the church could not truly be called Christ's. Section 2.4 covers the restoration of the gospel, the return of the Holy Spirit, priesthood authority, and spiritual gifts, the reestablishment of Christ's Church, and the current work of the Church.

### 2.1.1 Goals of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Define the words apostasy and restoration and tell how they relate to the gospel of Jesus Christ.
  - Describe in a sentence or two when the Church was originally set up, why the priesthood authority was taken away, and how the priesthood authority was returned.
  - Recall basic facts about the Church's establishment, the apostasy and restoration of the gospel, and the re-establishment of the Church.
  - Defend, using the scriptures, that the priesthood authority was removed by God and subsequently returned.
-

## 2.2 Establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ

Jesus, Himself, set up and instituted a visible and real organization while He lived on the earth. This organization was both a spiritual and physical vehicle that would be used to call men and women to repentance, provide spiritual strength to His followers, fellowship for its members, etc. The Church was set up to have ordained officers serving in various functions, manifestations of spiritual gifts, and specific ordinances (see Chapter 1). Several scriptures support these findings as listed in the sections below.

### 2.2.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Upon this rock, I will build my church...
  - Matthew 16:15-19
  - 3 Nephi 27:7- 20
- The calling of the Apostles and Disciples and their commission
  - Matthew 10
  - Matthew 28:18-20
  - Mark 16:15-16
  - 3 Nephi 11:21
  - 3 Nephi 18
  - 3 Nephi 19:4, 20-23, 28-29
  - 3 Nephi 27:21-29
  - 3 Nephi 28:16-18,23
- The calling of the Evangelists and their commission
  - Luke 10:1-20
- The calling of Elders
  - Titus 1:5-9
- A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, ...
  - John 13:34-35
- Christ's sermons
  - Matthew 5,6 and 7
  - 3 Nephi 12,13, and 14
- Spiritual gifts and blessings
  - Matthew 10:7-8
  - Mark 16:17-18
  - Luke 9:2
  - Hebrews 2:4

3 Nephi 28:19-22

4 Nephi 5

- The calling of Deacons and other officials  
Acts 6
- Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular  
1 Corinthians 12:27-31
- ...ye are God's husbandry; ye are God's building...  
1 Corinthians 3:9-16
- The establishment of the Church in the Western Hemisphere  
3 Nephi 11  
3 Nephi 26:17-21  
4 Nephi
- The establishment of the Church in other parts of the world  
3 Nephi 16: 1-3

### 2.2.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- State when and where Jesus established His Church.
  - Describe the type of organization that was set up (i.e., physical, or spiritual).
  - Recall basic facts about the Church's establishment.
  - Conclude that Jesus established His Church while He was on the Earth.
-

## 2.3 Apostasy from the Gospel of Jesus Christ

According to Webster's Dictionary, apostasy is defined as "the forsaking or abandonment of what one has hitherto professed or adhered to as faith, principle, or party." This term is used here to describe how the commandments of Christ regarding His doctrine, including those pertaining to the ordinances, were forsaken or abandoned at some point in time. This section details what happened and when.

Many prophecies recorded in the scriptures foretold of an apostasy that would occur and that false teachings would be introduced into the Church; some specifically stated that the laws and ordinances would be changed. As a result of the apostasy many gospel truths were perverted, which led many into grievous errors in faith and practice. In many instances, superstition arose and various changes were made in doctrine and the organization of the Church. Some of the changes that began to take place were the following:

- Self-denial and bodily torture (*Book of Sermons*. Sermon 11, "Unauthorized Alterations." Page 80.)
- Belief that there was no relationship between body and soul (Loc. cit.)
- Baptism: immersion changed to sprinkling and/or pouring, limiting performance to twice/yearly, imposing a preparation course upon the candidate prior to baptism, performing exorcism (Ibid. pages 80-81.)
- Blessing of Infants: prayer changed to baptism (Ibid. page 81.)
- Laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost: discontinued
- Communion: bread and wine changed to wafers and water/juice, bread and wine which *represent* the body and blood of Christ was taught to *become* the body and blood of Christ (Op. cit., page 81.)
- Feet washing: discontinued or practiced among priesthood only
- Structure and order: Apostles, Evangelists, Elders, Teachers, and Deacons became Subdeacons, Acolytes, Ostlers, Readers, and Copiates (Op. cit., page 83.)
- Pilgrimages to tombs of martyrs became an outward form of religious devotion. (Op. cit., page 82.)
- Adoration of images, pictures, and effigies became part of Christian worship (Loc. cit., page 82.)

As changes were implemented, spiritual gifts began to cease. Against such changes Jesus and holy men of God had warned the Church. An example is 2 John 1:9, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God."

The Church's priesthood interprets the scriptures in Revelation 11:3 and 12:6 as the period of time, 1260 years, during which the priesthood authority was removed from the Church.

### 2.3.1 Old Testament Scriptures on the Apostasy

- Earth defiled for breaking the covenant and curse devours it (Isaiah 24:5-6).
  - Deep sleep poured out on all (Isaiah 29:9-10).
  - The heavens clothed in blackness and sackcloth (Isaiah 50:3).
-

- Darkness over the earth and gross darkness over the people (Isaiah 60:2).
- The flock wanders and is scattered since the shepherds do not search for or feed them (Ezekiel 34:6-8).
- The holy ordinances are done away with and destroyed (Daniel 8:11-13).
- Man has left God, even though God has not changed; if man returns to God, God will return to them; but they question how to return (Malachi 3:6-7).

### 2.3.2 New Testament Scriptures on the Apostasy

- Jesus said that He must work during the day, for when the night comes no man can work. (John 9:4).
- Paul warned the ministry in Ephesus that after he leaves false teachers will come in and even some of the ministry will fall away. Both the false teachers and fallen elders will try to lead away members after them. (Acts 20:28-30).
- Paul reminded the Thessalonians about a falling away before Christ returns (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8).
- Paul predicted an apostasy from the gospel and gave examples of such (1 Timothy 4:1-3).
- Paul told of a time in the future when the people would not continue in sound doctrine but would follow their own desires; they would turn away from the truth and follow myths or legends (2 Timothy 4:3-4).
- Peter gave a very similar message as Paul's in Acts 20. (2 Peter 2:1-3).
- Length of the absence of priesthood authority: 1260 days or years (Revelation 11:3).
- Prophecy of a falling away of the Church, where the woman represents the Church, the dragon represents the Roman Empire, and the child represents the priesthood authority (Revelation 12).
- Prophecy of the dominion of an apostate church (Revelation 13:4-9).

### 2.3.3 Book of Mormon Scriptures on the Apostasy

- Plain and precious parts of the gospel and many covenants were removed from the book of the Lamb of God which caused the Gentiles to stumble (1 Nephi 13:24-29).
- Describes spiritual stumbling of the Gentiles (2 Nephi 26:1, 6-15).
- Departure from the teachings of Christ, the demise of the Church, and the formation of apostate churches in the land of the Americas (4 Nephi 24- 49).

#### Reference

Cadman, W.H. Book of Sermons. Monongahela, PA. The Church of Jesus Christ. 1963.

### 2.3.4 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Define the term apostasy in the context of church history.

- List several ways in which the gospel of Christ was changed.
  - Describe how an apostasy affected the church of Christ in Jerusalem and in the Americas.
  - Conclude that an apostasy did take place, based on world history and scripture.
-

## 2.4 Restoration of the Gospel and Global Establishment of the Church

Just as there are prophecies that foretold of a falling away, there are many prophecies that foretold of a restoration of the gospel, the priesthood authority, spiritual gifts, and the reestablishment of the Church, as well as, foretell of the Lord's work in the latter days-preparing for the gathering of Israel and Gentiles from all nations and the second coming of Jesus Christ.

### 2.4.1 Old Testament Scriptures on the Global Establishment of the Church

- Prophecy of growth of the kingdom of God in the last days (Isaiah 2:1-5).
- God sets up His Church as an ensign for all nations and for the gathering of Israel (Isaiah 11:12).
- Prophecy of the restoration of the gospel (Isaiah 29:14-24).
- Prophecy of the gospel spreading throughout the world (Isaiah 62:10-12).
- Prophecy of God's power in establishing His kingdom and the expanse of it (Daniel 2:44).
- Prophecy of establishment of God's kingdom (Micah 4:1).

### 2.4.2 New Testament Scriptures on the Restoration

- John's vision, "...another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel..." (Revelation 14:6-7).

### 2.4.3 Book of Mormon Scriptures on the Restoration

- Return of plain and precious parts of the gospel through the Nephites' records and other books to come forth by the power of the Lamb to establish the truth of the gospel of Christ (1 Nephi 13:32-42).
- Declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ among the remnant of Lehi, restoring them to a knowledge of their ancestors and of Jesus Christ (2 Nephi 30:2-6).
- "Jews which are scattered also shall begin to believe in Christ; and they shall begin to gather..." , "the Lord God shall commence his work among all nations...to bring about the restoration of his people..." (2 Nephi 30:7-8).
- Destruction of the wicked and the earth is full of the knowledge of the Lord (2 Nephi 30:9-18).

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2.4.4 Historical Perspective on Restoring the Gospel and Re-establishing the Church

- God moved on the hearts of the Gentiles to discover and inhabit the promised land of America. He established the Gentiles as a free nation, where liberties and human rights were exercised. A land where religious freedom would exist. (1 Nephi 13:12-20).
  - God answered the prayer of a young man, Joseph Smith, Jr. who asked Him to reveal His Church. God visited Joseph by voice and through a vision, telling him to hear the words of Christ and to join none of the churches of his day. God revealed to Joseph on subsequent occasions that he would do a great work for Him.
  - God revealed the existence of ancient sacred records, which were buried in the earth. These records contained the plain and precious parts of the gospel of Jesus Christ and many covenants that were removed from the sacred manuscripts of the Jews.
  - God delivered the ancient records on Sept. 22, 1827 to Joseph Smith, Jr. and gave power to translate the writings on these ancient records (1829) and the manuscript was published in 1829-1830 as *The Book of Mormon*.
  - God restored the priesthood authority through Joseph Smith, Jr. and Oliver Cowdery. They prayed for the restoration of God's authority on May 15, 1829. They were visited by an angel who bestowed the priesthood authority upon them.
  - God began to form His church through Smith and Cowdery, who baptized each other on April 6, 1830. Smith, Cowdery and other converts organized into a church, ordaining officers and performing the ordinances. Spiritual gifts were restored to the Church.
  - Satan tried to destroy the Church. Joseph Smith, Jr. received false revelations. Smith was murdered in 1844. Several leaders emerged claiming succession to lead the Church, Sidney Rigdon and Brigham Young, among others. The leadership of the Church was divided, and each went their separate ways, forming separate churches.
  - God prepared another man to lead His Church. William Bickerton heard the gospel preached in 1845 by Sidney Rigdon, was baptized, and was eventually ordained into the ministry and Quorum of Seventy.
  - Rigdon and Bickerton developed differences. God revealed to Bickerton that Rigdon was not being led by the Holy Spirit in decisions he was making. These revelations came to pass; the Church under Rigdon dissolved.
  - God revealed to William Bickerton in a vision that he was being called to lead the Church.
  - On July 2, 1862, a group of saints met in fasting and prayer, and on July 5, the same group commenced a four-day conference to discuss organizing into a church. God demonstrated His gifts and power to this group of believers and on July 6, the gifts of tongues and interpretation was given that signs would follow the believers. Baptisms and testimonies took place. On July 7, the spirit of anointing occurred. The gift of tongues was spoken to "Set apart.... and ordain the Twelve..." Twelve men were ordained as apostles. More of the word of the Lord came forth to confirm God's pleasure.
-



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Cadman, W.H. A History of The Church of Jesus Christ. Monongahela, PA. The Church of Jesus Christ. 1945. (Chapter 1)

Watson, Robert A. A History of The Church of Jesus Christ Volume 2. Monongahela, PA. The Church of Jesus Christ. 2002. (Pages 23-38)

2.4.5 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain what parts of the gospel were restored through The Book of Mormon.
- Share some points of Christ's gospel and commandments stated in greater clarity in The Book of Mormon as compared to the Bible.
- Explain how The Church of Jesus Christ was re-established.
- Conclude that as Christ established His Church while on the earth, so did He re-establish it.
- Answer basic questions about the restored gospel and re-established Church.
- Conclude that the process of restoring the gospel commenced prior to the return of the true words of Christ and His many covenants (The Book of Mormon). With the discovery, translating, and publishing of The Book of Mormon the gospel was restored in fullness. God's word will continue to be restored and gathered into one with the coming forth of other records by the Lord, to remove the stumbling blocks and to deliver the true way of salvation (2 Nephi 29:14).

The Church was re-established to deliver the true and full gospel of Jesus Christ and to continue the work of the Lord:

- to fulfill the commission that Jesus gave to the original twelve apostles
- to take the true and full gospel of Christ to the remnant of Joseph and throughout all the world
- to restore the house of Israel to the knowledge of their ancestors and to the knowledge of Jesus the Christ, thus fulfilling the promises of God to their forefathers.

The Church of Jesus Christ will one day be established on the face of the entire earth.

### **3 Duties of Members**

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This chapter provides a very brief overview of subject matter that is crucial and sacred to a believer's walk with Christ. A chapter could be written on each of the subjects covered here to emphasize the importance of each duty. Spiritual growth and maturity will develop over time as an individual seeks daily to walk with Christ, to study His word, pray, and counsel with the Holy Spirit.

### 3.1 Love of God

The most important goal for every member of The Church of Jesus Christ is to possess the love of God. As a person develops in the Spirit of Christ, the love of God he or she possesses will help the individual become more righteous, and more united in Spirit with other members of the Church. As each member increases in the love of God, raising his or her level of righteousness, and becoming more united, the Church will experience blessings and the gifts of the Spirit as God has promised.

#### 3.1.1 Supporting Scriptures

The Two Great Commandments

- Matthew 22:37-40 and John 13:34-35

The transformation from natural man to saint

- Mosiah 3:19

#### 3.1.2 Objective

The member will:

- Discuss the meaning and application of Matthew 22:37, 39 and John 13:34.
  - State the value or benefits of growing in the love of God personally and for the Church.
  - Express the change of heart that he or she has recognized since obeying the Gospel.
  - Discuss and identify steps to continue to grow in love.
  - Give testimony of the love of God.
  - Define what it means to be a "saint," and why that term is used to describe a member of the church.
-

## 3.2 Daily Prayer Life

Prayer is the way a person communicates with God. Several scriptures instruct to pray to the Father in the name of Jesus. One of these scriptures is John 14:13, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

Jesus is the advocate, and the only way for man to be in the presence of God. This comes through His sacrifice on Calvary. Prayer allows a person to talk to God one on one. Through prayer, a person can express his or her innermost thoughts and desires.

Prayer is not a one-way expression of wants. It's a dialogue. God speaks to individuals when they pray. Similar to face-to-face conversations, one should take time to listen to God while in prayer. God communicates in many ways by the Holy Spirit – through a thought, a verse of scripture, audible voice, or through a change in circumstance, to name a few. He calms fear and sends His peace. Sometimes a person must patiently wait for an answer. Prayer should be continuous, not just talking to God, but also listening.

Why is prayer important? It's one of the major ways to be strong in the Spirit. Being strong in the Spirit is linked with continuous and fervent prayer. A person who is filled with the Spirit is most likely talking and listening to God. Jesus warned about being subject to temptation and being led away by Satan if not found watching and praying always. Prayer keeps the Father's protection close at hand.

When reading scriptural accounts of individuals, such as Moses, Samson, Elijah, etc., one may think, "These people were super-spiritual. My prayers could never be answered as theirs were." Read the description of Elijah as found in James 5:17-18, "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

In the preceding verses of the same chapter, James 5:13-16, James instructs to pray when suffering, when cheerful, when sick, having sinned, and for one another. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Prayer should be a vital part of a person's life, and God is pleased when an individual prays according to His will.

### 3.2.1 How to Pray

No one is better qualified to instruct about prayer than Jesus. It is recorded that Jesus taught the Jews, in Palestine, and the people of Nephi, in the promised land (Americas), how to pray in Matthew 6:5-15 and 3 Nephi 13:5-15. He instructed not to bring attention, when praying in public. Rather, He directed people to go into their "closets" and pray alone. What an individual prays in private will be rewarded openly. Jesus desired communication that was uninterrupted and free from distraction. A person should identify his or her "closet," wherever that is, and use it as much as possible. That is where one will have the best communication with God.

Also, one should never use vain repetitions - repeating the same words over and over again. Prayer should be meaningful and to the point.

---

### 3.2.2 When, Where, and Why to Pray

When a person prays, he or she must ask and seek for things that are right before God, praying in the name of Jesus. When one prays with this desire in heart, the Holy Ghost leads the prayer and guides the person to pray as Jesus instructed. Without the Holy Ghost's direction, prayer cannot be fervent or effectual.

One should pray because Jesus instructs to and exemplifies it in His life. There really is no better reason to pray than this. Reasons to pray are to know the will of God personally, to seek opportunities to lead others to the Lord, or to prosper and have his or her needs met.

God desires a person to experience the blessing of seeing prayers answered, such as witnessing a loved one receiving salvation, perhaps a divine healing, or a wonderful provision. But one must first ask. Jehoshaphat, after praying to God for deliverance, sent out singers before the army to sing praises to God. They sang while their enemies attacked each other (2 Chronicles 20:20-25). Jehoshaphat understood what it meant to present his petition to God with thanksgiving.

### 3.2.3 Supporting Scriptures

- Matthew 7:7-8
- Luke 18:1
- Philippians 4:6
- 1 Peter 5:7
- 3 Nephi 27:5,7
- 3 Nephi 18:15
- 3 Nephi 18: 16
- 3 Nephi 18:19
- 3 Nephi 18:21
- 3 Nephi 18:22-23

### 3.2.4 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
  - State the relationship between prayer and the Holy Spirit.
  - Explain why prayer should be offered in the name of Jesus.
  - Describe what prayer should and should not be.
  - Name some reasons to pray.
  - Discuss how to pray.
  - Explain how to listen for God's reply.
  - Discuss ways to pray without ceasing, being active in his or her communication with the Lord daily.
-

### 3.3 Fasting and Prayer

A member of The Church of Jesus Christ should strive to fast and pray often. Fasting and prayer is a dedicated time of self-denial, while seeking to be filled with the Spirit of God. Fasting and prayer on a regular basis fosters a closer relationship with God, increases humility, faith, and joy, comforts his or her spirit, and produces purity and holiness of heart. Fasting and prayer can result in more of the manifestations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

#### 3.3.1 Supporting Scriptures

The results of and purposes for fasting and prayer

- 2 Samuel 12:16
- 2 Chronicles 20:3-4, 14-17
- Ezra 8:21
- Nehemiah 1:4-11
- Jonah 3:5-10
- Esther 4:15-16
- Daniel 9:2-6
- Daniel 6:18--22
- Mark 9:17-29
- 1 Corinthians 7:5
- Enos 1:4
- Mosiah 27:22-23
- Helaman 3:35
- 3 Nephi 13:16-18

#### 3.3.2 Objective

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
  - Discuss several purposes for or benefits of fasting and prayer.
  - Discuss how to fast and pray.
  - Identify personal reasons to fast and pray.
  - Set goals for fasting and prayer.
  - Plan and attend scheduled fasting and prayer meetings.
  - Share the results of fasting and prayer.
-

### 3.4 Attending Church Services and Activities

Scriptures state that the saints of God should gather together for numerous reasons, including to: receive the blessings of God, receive instruction, partake of communion, gain inspiration, and support church functions. Sunday services are especially important because they provide the opportunity to: worship God, partake of communion, pray, testify of God's goodness, and praise Him. Many reasons exist why members are unable to attend every service and activity (E.g., afflictions, incapacitations, living great distances from church, job conflicts, transportation, etc.) but every effort should be made to attend every service as much as possible. Attendance and participation in midweek meetings and auxiliary meetings of the Church - Sunday school, Missionary Benevolent Association (M.B.A.), and the Ladies' Uplift Circle - is also important. Attendance and participation fosters growth in scriptural knowledge and increases love and unity among members. All family members are encouraged to attend services.

#### 3.4.1 Supporting Scriptures

Meet often

- Hebrews 10: 22-25
- 3 Nephi 18:22
- Moroni 6:4-6, 9

#### 3.4.2 Objective

The member will:

- State the importance and benefits of attending church services and activities – personally, to his or her children, and to the Church.
  - Discuss the importance or benefit of taking an active role in the services or activities – personally, to his or her children, and to the Church.
  - Commit to attending as many church services and activities as possible.
-

### 3.5 Reading Scripture and Church Literature

A member of The Church of Jesus Christ should strive to grow in wisdom and knowledge and righteousness, and thereby becoming more like Christ. One way to strive is to read God's word, the Holy Bible (King James Version) and The Book of Mormon. Through reading scripture, a member will become in tune to things important to God, and His plan for his or her life.

Developing a routine of reading scripture and church literature is a good habit to create. The Church of Jesus Christ has a vast amount of literature to encourage and support a person in his or her life's journey. This literature can be obtained on the Church web site.

<https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/media/books/>

A few examples of recommended reading:

- A History of The Church of Jesus Christ, by W.H. Cadman
- A History of The Church of Jesus Christ, Volume 2
- My Life with Christ, by Rocco V. Biscotti
- My Testimony, by Ishmael D'Amico
- The Gospel Blog, <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/media/blog/>
- The Gospel News, <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/media/gospel-news/>

#### 3.5.1 Supporting Scriptures

The importance of studying scripture

- 2 Timothy 2:15
- John 5:39
- Romans 15:4
- 1 Nephi 19: 22-23
- 2 Nephi 9:1
- Mosiah 1:4-5
- Alma 33:14
- 3 Nephi 10:14

#### 3.5.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Discuss several benefits of reading the scriptures.
  - Discuss how to approach reading the scriptures.
  - Commit to reading scripture (create a schedule)
  - Select pieces of church literature to read.
  - Meet with an ordained teacher or elder to discuss scripture or church literature.
-



### 3.6 Striving for Unity

The Lord gave His Church a goal - to become one in Christ. Unity is important among members of the Church, and between an individual and the Holy Spirit. Through unity, relationships with a spouse, parents, children, employer, co-workers, etc. will be enhanced. When unified in Christ, a person will enjoy the fellowship of the saints and receive the blessings and gifts of the Spirit as promised by the Lord. As the saints of God grow in unity, Satan loses his ability to divide and conquer God's people.

#### 3.6.1 Supporting Scriptures

##### Unity in Christ

- Romans 12:5
- Galatians 3:26-29
- Ephesians 4:11-16, 23-24
- 4 Nephi 1-18

##### Unity in Family

- 1 Nephi 8:12
- 2 Nephi 25:23-26
- Mosiah 4:14-15
- Alma 43:45-47
- 3 Nephi 18:21

##### Unity in Marriage

- Genesis 2:23-24
- Ecclesiastes 9:9
- Mark 10: 6-9
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- 1 Corinthians 7:1-5

#### 3.6.2 Objective

##### The member will:

- Discuss what it means to be united in Christ.
- Describe the characteristics of a united family and how it would function.
- Discuss how unity occurs in a relationship between a man and a woman.
- Describe the characteristics of unity within the Church.
- Discuss how unity benefits the Church.
- Discuss how he or she can develop unity with the saints of God.
- Discuss what he or she can do to promote unity in personal and familial relationships.

### 3.7 Donating to the Church

As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ, it is our responsibility as directed in scripture to 'give back to God' from our heart. The Church believes that giving cannot and should not be forced but that tithing (the practice of giving a tenth part (10%) of one's income) is encouraged as directed in scripture. We also recognize that everyone may not be able to achieve this initially, but that over time, each member will be able to increase their donation. Additional Q&As on this topic can be found on the Church website [Donate](#) page.

You can donate by giving directly to the Financial Secretary of your local branch or mission or you may do so by using this link to the Donation page on the Church website: [Donate](#)

#### 3.7.1 Supporting Scriptures

Offerings to God

- Exodus 25:2
- Deuteronomy 16:17

Tithing

- Leviticus 27: 30-32
- Malachi 3: 8-10
- Alma 13:14-15

#### 3.7.2 Objective

The member will:

- Discuss the attitude toward giving that a member should display.
  - Explain how donations support the Church.
  - Explain the Church's paradigm for distributing funds.
  - Determine the percentage of his or her income to donate to the Lord.
  - Discuss the process for giving a donation in the branch.
  - Discuss the frequency for donating that his/her branch advocates.
  - Create a plan of how to increase his or her donation until giving ten percent.
-

### 3.8 Testimony

Testimony is a time during a service when individuals are given the opportunity to express praise, thanksgiving, or honor to God. A person should speak from the Spirit within his or her heart. Testimonies should be concise and brief, considering all who would like to testify.

Testimony should be uplifting and confirming of faith to the believer. A testimony can tell the joy of receiving salvation, an answered prayer, a divine intervention, a person's love for the Lord, appreciation for the relevant message in the sermon, repentance, a desire to be baptized, etc.

Some individuals may be uncomfortable speaking in public. A person should realize that he or she is among people who are loving and caring, and who are interested in hearing of the Lord's blessings. This individual is encouraged to sincerely pray for God to produce a desire to testify that will overcome his or her fears.

Testimony may also be given outside of a church service. It is the opportunity a person takes to tell or demonstrate to others his/her relationship with Jesus Christ, of Jesus living in his or her heart, of the joy found in serving Him, and to tell others that they can have this too.

#### 3.8.1 Supporting Scriptures

The importance of testifying

- Psalm 111:1
- Acts 20:21,24
- Ephesians 5:20
- Alma 26:14-16
- 3 Nephi 12:2

#### 3.8.2 Objective

The member will:

- Describe the elements of a testimony.
  - Give examples of what is not appropriate testimony.
  - Discuss how often a person should testify.
  - Explain what can be done to overcome the fear of testimony.
  - Reflect daily on the goodness of God in his or her life.
  - Pray for an inspired testimony.
  - Come to church with a desire to testify.
  - Be willing to testify when prompted by the Spirit of God.
-

### 3.9 Missionary Work

The commission of Jesus Christ to the disciples in His day was to "...teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:19-20). This is the primary mission of the Church today, but it doesn't stop with the ministry.

Missionary work is every member's responsibility. Members can participate in many ways, playing an important role in bringing the gospel of salvation to others and instructing them to live within the commandments of God. Missionary work is demonstrating true love for the welfare of another individual's soul.

Missionary work can include: guiding children in the Lord's teachings, teaching Sunday School, M.B.A., Ladies Circle, or midweek classes, inviting someone to church, giving a pertinent testimony, attending to a person's needs, supporting someone who is troubled or grieving, praying with someone, encouraging belief and faith in God, instructing and encouraging a person in righteousness, living the word of God, standing up for what is right and true, and a number of other actions that may appear to be small deeds. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

#### 3.9.1 Supporting Scriptures

The importance of missionary work

- Matthew 25:14-45
- Matthew 28: 18-20
- Acts 8:4
- Mosiah 4:16,26-27
- Mosiah 28:6-8

#### 3.9.2 Objective

The member will:

- Discuss what it means to be a missionary.
- List various ways to participate in missionary work.
- Explain how he or she can prepare to be a missionary.
- Pray to be a blessing to others.
- Look for opportunities to shine the light of Christ.
- Perceive the needs of others and assist as able.
- Encourage others to believe in God and exercise faith.
- Consider opportunities to share the testimony of Jesus Christ.

## **4 The Book of Mormon**

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## 4.1 Introduction

The Book of Mormon is an account written by the hand of Mormon, and finished by his son Moroni. It is a history of the ancient inhabitants of the American continent and God's dealings with them. Also included is an account of Christ's appearance after His crucifixion and ascension into heaven.

This chapter will explain who The Book of Mormon is about, the parts that comprise it, how it was translated and by whom, the authenticity of the book, and its value to the world.

### 4.1.1 Moroni's Introduction

At the beginning of the book, the last writer, Moroni, who compiled and edited the writings of many who came before him, included an introduction of the work. It reads as follows:

*Wherefore, it is an abridgement of the record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites – written to the Lamanites who are a remnant of the House of Israel and also to Jew and Gentile. Written by way of commandment, and also by the Spirit of Prophecy and of Revelation. Written and sealed up, and hid up unto the Lord that they might not be destroyed. To come forth by the gift and power of God unto the interpretation thereof. Sealed by the hand of Moroni, and hid up unto the Lord, to come forth in due time by way of Gentile – the interpretation thereof by the gift of God.*

*An abridgement taken from the Book of Ether also, which is a record of the people of Jared, who were scattered at the time the Lord confounded the language of the people, when they were building a tower to get to heaven. Which is to show unto the remnant of the House of Israel what great things the Lord had done for their fathers; and that they many know the covenants of the Lord, that they are not cast off forever. And also of the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations. And now, if there are faults they are the mistakes of men, wherefore, condemn not the things of God, that ye may be found spotless at the judgment seat of Christ.*

### 4.1.2 Goals of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Describe the contents of The Book of Mormon in general terms.
  - Explain how The Book of Mormon came to be.
  - Explain the personal relevance of the Book of Mormon.
  - Defend The Book of Mormon as God's word.
-

## 4.2 Who are the People in The Book of Mormon?

In his introduction, Moroni explained that the book contained the history of the people of Nephi, also called Nephites; the Lamanites; and the people of Jared, also called Jaredites. Here is a brief explanation of who these people were.

### 4.2.1 Jaredites

The term Jaredites included the friends and families of a man named Jared and his brother, who lived at the time of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). When God confounded the language of the people, the brother of Jared, who was a man highly favored by the Lord, asked that the language of his family and friends would not be confused. God revealed himself unto the brother of Jared as Jesus Christ who was to come to earth, and allowed him to view all the earth's inhabitants from the beginning of time unto the end. He was commanded to write the things which he had seen and to seal them up to be revealed in God's due time. God led the brother of Jared and his family and friends to the land of promise, known to us today as the American continents. Once there, they populated the land north of where Lehi and his family, who would arrive much later, would settle. Over a period of close to 2,000 years, they became an evil people and forsook the Lord and His commandments. Their entire civilization, consisting of millions of people, was annihilated in a civil war. Ether, the last prophet who engraved the history of the Jaredite people on plates of gold, hid the plates on which he wrote, as well as the interpreters, in a manner that they would be found in the future (Ether 3:13-28 and 15:33).

### Nephites and Lamanites

Approximately 600 years before the birth of Christ, God instructed a prophet living in Jerusalem by the name of Lehi, a descendant of Joseph (one of the twelve sons of Jacob), to take his family and depart from that city. God forewarned him that Jerusalem would be destroyed due to iniquity, which it was, by the Babylonians. Eventually, God brought Lehi and his family, along with a handful of other people, to what is now called the Americas via a ship, and established the gospel of Jesus Christ among them. After the death of Lehi, the group split into two. Two of Lehi's sons, Nephi and Sam, and those who wanted to serve the Lord, became the Nephites. Two of Nephi's other brothers, Laman and Lemuel, along with those that did not want to serve the Lord, became the Lamanites. The Book of Mormon is primarily a history of these two peoples, dealing chiefly with the Nephites since they were the faithful ones who kept the records. After a time, the Nephites encountered another group of Israelites God had brought there, the people of Zarahemla, and they united with the Nephites.

At the time of Jesus's crucifixion, as recorded in The Book of Mormon, there was a major destruction upon the land of the Americas. Jesus visited the survivors after His resurrection, and He ministered unto them and established His Church among them. They united as one people and had all things in common for almost four (4) generations. However over time the people divided, and began calling themselves Nephites and Lamanites, only this time, neither of the two followed the commandments of God. Not long afterward, as a result of ongoing wars, those who called themselves Nephites were entirely destroyed.

The Church of Jesus Christ believes that today's Native American population includes the descendants of the people whose history is given in The Book of Mormon. It also believes that, as a remnant of the House of Israel, these descendants will inherit the promises the Lord made in His covenants to their forefathers.

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#### 4.2.2 Goals of this Section

After completing this section, the member will be able to describe the principal groups of people in The Book of Mormon.

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### 4.3 Formation of The Book of Mormon

The Book of Mormon was compiled from translating records which were engraved on metal plates. It is stated in the book that while engraving the plates was difficult, the writers knew their records would last. Had they kept them on paper or skins, their writings would have been destroyed after so long a time due to natural degeneration. This section details the various sets of plates that were compiled to make up the book and where they each fall within it.

#### 4.3.1 Plates Used to Compile The Book of Mormon

As Moroni states in his introduction, he and his father made an abridgement of the records kept for over 1,000 years by their people. There were three (3) sets of plates that the information came from:

- The Plates of Nephi
  - Large – Included primarily the secular history of the people
  - Small – Sacred history
- Plates of Mormon – Segments providing a continuation of the history
- Plates of Ether – History of the Jaredites

Another set of plates that the people possessed were the plates of brass. These were originally kept by a man named Laban in Jerusalem, and contained primarily the first five (5) books of what we now call the Bible along with the writings of the prophets up through and including Jeremiah. Lehi and his family brought these with them to the promised land.

#### 4.3.2 The Plates that Make up the Books in The Book of Mormon

The books in The Book of Mormon come from the following plates:

- First six (6) books (1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom, and Omni) - Taken from the small plates of Nephi
- Words of Mormon - Inserted by Mormon between the books of Omni and Mosiah, The book provides an explanation of the previous records and a preface for the following records.
- Mosiah, Alma, Helaman, 3 Nephi, 4 Nephi, and Mormon - An abridgement of the large plates of Nephi
- Remainder of the book (Ether and Moroni) - Engraved by Moroni, including a fragment of the history of the Jaredites

#### 4.3.3 General Timeline

The Book of Mormon covers a period from roughly 2200 BC to 421 AD. When Moroni was finished writing, he buried the plates along with the interpreters and several sacred implements in a hill known as Cumorah sometime thereafter (Moroni 10:2; Ether 4:3, 5).

#### 4.3.4 Scriptural References

- 1 Nephi 6  
Nephi explains why the genealogy of his father is not being recorded on these plates.
- 1 Nephi 9  
Nephi explains why he has two sets of plates.
- Words of Mormon verses 3-6  
Mormon explains which source material he is using for his record.
- Ether 1:2  
Moroni states that the book of Ether is an abridgement taken from the 24 plates found by Limhi's people (Mosiah 8:9).

#### 4.3.5 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- List the different sets of plates used to create The Book of Mormon.
  - Name the books that were written on the small plates of Nephi.
  - Name the books that were written on the large plates of Nephi.
  - Describe the distinction between the small plates and large plates of Nephi.
  - State the name of the book that was engraved on 24 gold plates.
  - Explain why plates were used versus paper or skins.
-

## 4.4 Testimony of Joseph Smith, Jr.

Joseph Smith, Jr. was used by God to translate the plates, which were written in a modified form of the Egyptian language, into English. The following is taken from his testimony.

### 4.4.1 Joseph's Testimony

Joseph Smith, Jr., was born December 23, 1805 at Sharon, Windsor County, Vermont, USA. When he was about ten years old his father and the family moved to Palmyra, New York, and later moved to Manchester, a town not far from Palmyra. Soon after this, he says there arose an unusual excitement on the subject of religion in the community... He was young, but still his mind was capable of detecting the spirit of strife and confusion that existed with the various denominations of his day and being so young, he felt that it was impossible for him to decide which of the different churches were right, so he joined none of them.

His mind was naturally stirred and while reading his Bible one day, he read in James 1:5, "*If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him*". He said that never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to him. After much reflection on the matter, he went to the woods alone and bowed to God in prayer, for he lacked wisdom and needed it badly... Suddenly a light shone down on him, and a personage appeared whose glory was beyond expression, and a voice spoke unto him saying, "*This is my beloved Son; hear ye Him*." The young man's object in prayer was that he might be given wisdom to decide which of the churches he should join. The voice that spoke told him not to join any of them, for their creeds were an abomination in God's sight. This was in the year 1820. Joseph stated the following:

*I continued to pursue my common vocation in life until the 21<sup>st</sup> of September 1823...*

*...On the evening of... 21<sup>st</sup> of September... I betook myself to prayer and supplication to Almighty God for forgiveness of all my sins... While I was thus in the act of calling upon God, I discovered a light appearing in my room, which continued to increase until the room was lighter than at noonday, when immediately a personage appeared at my bedside, standing in the air... Not only was his robe exceedingly white but his whole person was glorious beyond description and his countenance truly like lightning. The room was exceedingly light but not so very bright as immediately around his person.*

*He called me by name and said unto me that he was a messenger sent from the presence of God...and that his name was Moroni, that God had a work for me to do... He said there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, giving an account of the former inhabitants of this continent and the source from whence they sprang. He also said that the fullness of the everlasting gospel was contained in it as delivered by the Savior to the ancient inhabitants, also, that there were two stones in silver bows... deposited with the plates, and the possession and use of these stones were what constituted Seers in ancient or former times and that God had prepared them for the purpose of translating the book...*

*In September of 1827, the heavenly messenger delivered the plates to me, and by the gift and power of God they were translated into English. This was presented to the world in 1830 as The Book of Mormon.*

---

#### 4.4.2 Objectives

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- State why God told Joseph not to join any of the existing churches of the time.
- State two facts about the gold plates that the personage communicated to Joseph.
- Discuss Joseph's testimony and cite the key spiritual events in this period of his life.
- Discuss and share a personal experience of God speaking or delivering a message through His scriptures.
- Discuss how to foster this type of revelation for his or her spiritual development.

Resources:

*The Book of Mormon*. Monongahela, Pennsylvania. The Church of Jesus Christ. © 2001  
Bucci, Timothy Dom. *Apostasy and Restoration*. Youngstown, Ohio. The United Printing Co.

NOTE: Be sensitive and aware that historical accounts vary on the identity of the heavenly messenger that visited Joseph Smith.

---

## 4.5 Translation of the Plates

Joseph Smith, Jr. began translating the plates on April 12, 1828. By June 14, he had finished the first 116 pages. The following are testimonies of different events that took place during the translation.

### 4.5.1 The Story of Professor Anthon

When the first 116 pages were completed (which were taken from the large plates of Nephi), Martin Harris, who was Joseph's scribe at the time, took a few of the characters which he had drawn up from the plates to Professor Charles Anthon, a gentleman celebrated for his literary attainments, for his review. Upon inspection, the professor concluded the characters were the most correct translation of Egyptian that he had seen and gave Harris a certificate of authenticity. As Harris was leaving, Mr. Anthon called him back and asked him how Joseph Smith, Jr. had learned the location of these gold plates. He said an angel of God revealed it unto him. With that, the professor asked for the certificate and he tore it into pieces, saying there was no such thing as administering angels. He asked Harris to bring the actual plates to see them, but Harris said he could not, as some were sealed. The Professor replied, "I cannot read a sealed book."

### 4.5.2 The Story of the 116 Pages Lost

After the event with Professor Anthon, Martin pleaded with Joseph to give him the 116 pages of manuscript to show to some family members. In the hands of Martin, the 116 pages were either lost or stolen. The Lord told Joseph not to retranslate the 116 pages but to continue the translation by starting with the small plates of Nephi. On April 7, 1829, Oliver Cowdery became Joseph Smith's new scribe and the translation continued. The translation was completed by July 1, 1829.

### 4.5.3 The Interpreters

The interpreters were passed down with the plates from writer to writer and eventually buried with the plates. Joseph used interpreters, by the power of God, to translate the reformed Egyptian writings into the English language.

See Mosiah 8:13-18, Mosiah 28:11-20, Mormon 9:32-34, Ether 3: 21-28, and Ether 4: 1-7

### 4.5.4 Objective

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Discuss the meaning and relevance of Isaiah 29:11-14 for this time period.
- State some of the difficulties encountered during the translation of the plates.
- Describe the appearance of the interpreters as identified in The Book of Mormon.
- Discuss the scriptures pertaining to the interpreters and relate their usefulness for the work that Joseph was commanded to do.
- Be aware that there are differences of opinions, depending on the source of the account, regarding the type of interpreters Joseph Smith, Jr. used when translating the plates.

### 4.5.5 References

Lovalvo, V. James. *It is Written Truth Shall Spring out of the Earth*. MID-CAL PUBLISHERS. Fresno, California.1980. Pages 210-214.

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## 4.6 Authenticity of The Book of Mormon

On what does the Church base the authenticity of The Book of Mormon? There are several Biblical scriptures that prophesied the record coming forth in the latter days. Three are listed below.

### 4.6.1 Ezekiel 37:15-20

*The Word of the Lord came unto me saying, moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, for Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions; then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: and join them one to another into one stick, and they shall become one in thine hand. And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes.*

What is Ezekiel saying here? At the time this was written, most records were kept on scrolls, called sticks. The Lord tells Ezekiel there is one stick, or record, for Judah. The Church interprets this to mean the writings in the Holy Bible, as we know it today. This is known because of the history it contains, since after the fall of Jerusalem it follows only the Jews. The other record was to be of Joseph. Lehi was a descendant of Joseph. The Church regards The Book of Mormon as the “stick of Joseph.”

### 4.6.2 Isaiah 29:11-14

*And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, read this, I pray thee; and he saith, I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men; Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.*

The Church believes this prophecy was fulfilled by Joseph Smith, Jr. (“him that is not learned”) and Professor Anthon (“one that is learned”). Joseph, living on his family’s farm in upstate New York, was not an educated man by the world’s standards. He did not have much schooling. Professor Anthon, obviously, was a highly educated person. Joseph was willing to believe what the Lord had shown him. The professor, on the other hand, did not believe in administering angels.

#### 4.6.3 Psalms 85:11

*Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.*

In his psalm, David prophesied of truth coming out of the earth. As previously stated, the plates were found buried in the ground and they contained the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### 4.6.4 Objective

After completing this section, the member will discuss the prophetic Biblical scriptures and their relevance to The Book of Mormon.

---

## 4.7 The Testimony of the Three Witnesses and the Testimony of the Eight Witnesses

In addition to the Biblical scriptures stated above, there were eleven other witnesses to the existence and authenticity of the plates. They formally testified about the plates and their words provide further evidence that the ancient records were in fact real. Their accounts, which can be found in the front of The Book of Mormon, read as follows:

### 4.7.1 The Testimony of Three Witnesses

*Be it Known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, their brethren, and also of the people of Jared, who came from the tower of which hath been spoken. And we also know that they have been translated by the gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us; wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true. And we also testify that we have seen the engravings which are upon the plates; and they have been shown unto us by the power of God, and not of man. And we declare with words of soberness, that an angel of God came down from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes, that we beheld and saw the plates, and the engravings thereon; and we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld and bear record that these things are true. And it is marvelous in our eyes. Nevertheless, the voice of the Lord commanded us that we should bear record of it; wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony of these things. And we know that if we are faithful in Christ, we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen.*

- Oliver Cowdery
- David Whitmer
- Martin Harris

### 4.7.2 The Testimony of Eight Witnesses

*Be it Known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come: That Joseph Smith, Jr., the translator of this work, has shown unto us the plates of which hath been spoken, which have the appearance of gold; and as many of the leaves as the said Smith has translated we did handle with our hands; and we also saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work, and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen and hefted, and know of a surety that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen. And we lie not, God bearing witness of it.*

- Christian Whitmer
- Peter Whitmer, Jr.
- Hiram Page
- Hyrum Smith
- Jacob Whitmer
- John Whitmer
- Joseph Smith, Sr.
- Samuel H. Smith



## 4.8 The Value of The Book of Mormon

The Church upholds The Book of Mormon as the word of God and equal to the Holy Bible. Its value to the Church lies in the fact that it restored many “plain and precious things” (1 Nephi 13:29) of Christ’s doctrine that were removed from the book of the Lamb of God as it went through the scrutiny of various councils throughout time to reform and shape the religious practices of the day, such things as the mode of baptism, administering communion, ordaining elders, etc.

The Book of Mormon provides the Church with valuable information regarding God’s dealings with the house of Israel on the American continents and His promises to them in the future. It details Christ’s appearance to the people in the Americas, how He blessed and taught them, and established His Church among them.

The coming forth of The Book of Mormon reveals God’s “wise purposes” (1 Nephi 19:3) to reveal and re-establish His truth; which would allow all to secure their salvation through the merits of Jesus the Christ and through obedience to His commandments. The Book of Mormon provides a clearer vision of the role of the Church to prepare itself as the bride of Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:7-8).

### 4.8.1 Objective:

After completing this section, the member will be able to:

- Discuss the validity of the testimony of a witness.
  - Read and discuss the primary accounts of David Whitmer and Martin Harris.
  - Identify and discuss the value of The Book of Mormon. (Also, read words of Moroni on page 4-2).
  - Reiterate the value of The Book of Mormon to the Church.
  - State the personal value The Book of Mormon holds for himself/herself.
-

## **5 Future Religious Events and Expectations**

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## 5.1 Overview

This chapter contains information concerning several future events and expectations identified within the scriptures. The order in which they are listed is not meant to imply that they will occur in a particular sequence.

### 5.1.1 Goals of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Demonstrate familiarity and knowledge of future events and expectations.
  - Discuss scriptural references relating to each event or expectation.
  - Identify certain future events in which he or she may play a role to assist in the fulfillment of said events.
  - Identify the role of the Church in the fulfillment of some future event(s).
-

## 5.2 The Choice Seer

The choice seer will come forth in the latter days and be used to bring forth and convince the descendants of Joseph (Jacob's son) of the truth of God's words and covenants that He had made with their forefathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). He will be from the lineage of Joseph, and his father's name will be Joseph.

Joseph, Jacob's son, who lived in Egypt during the time of widespread famine, delivered his father from perishing when he invited him to come to Egypt to live. Likewise, God spared a remnant of Joseph's lineage from perishing in Jerusalem when He brought Lehi's family to the promised land.

The choice seer will be like Joseph of Egypt in bringing salvation to his people. The choice seer, endowed with great power from God, will convince many of the word of God, which would have already gone out among them. The choice seer will have a spokesman, as did Moses, who will also be from the lineage of Joseph. Those who hear his words and are willing to obey the commandments of Christ shall be numbered among the covenant people of God.

### 5.2.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Genesis 17:2-8
- Genesis 46:1-7
- Genesis 47:1-12
- 1 Nephi 10:2-3,13-14
- 2 Nephi 3:4-21, 24
- 2 Nephi 30:1-2
- 3 Nephi 21:9-10
- Ether 13:7,8

### 5.2.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
  - State the main points of the everlasting covenant that God made with Abraham.
  - Describe the role of the choice seer.
  - Name one or two ancestors of the choice seer.
  - Tell when the prophecy in Ether 13:7, 8 was fulfilled or will be fulfilled.
-

### 5.3 The Restoring of God's Truth and Knowledge to the House of Israel

God restored truth and knowledge on the earth in the latter days with the coming forth and translation of the Nephite and Jaredite records, which was published as The Book of Mormon. The contents of The Book of Mormon restored the true points of Christ's doctrine and revealed more of God's covenants with the tribes of Israel (which were removed from the book of the Lamb of God during the Early Church era, 1 Nephi 13:26).

It is through The Book of Mormon that one learns of the origin and identity of the tribes of Israel who live in what is now called the Americas. It informs the reader that the descendants of Joseph (Jacob's son) came out from Jerusalem and that they are descendants of the Jews. The Book of Mormon writers proclaimed that their people worshiped God's Son, Jesus Christ, and that His Church was established in the Americas hundreds of years prior to His birth.

This restoration of truth and knowledge came to the Gentiles first, in the latter days, which precipitated the restoring and organizing of The Church of Jesus Christ. The Church has begun to restore this knowledge to the house of Israel by developing relationships with Native Peoples in North, Central and South America, teaching them the true points of Christ's gospel and of the covenants of God to their people. The Church has baptized many Native People and has churches established in several countries in the Western Hemisphere to serve their spiritual needs.

In the future, a choice seer will be given great power from God to convince a great many of the Native People of the word of God that was brought to them. It will be a day of rejoicing as more people receive the truth and are convinced of it.

The Jews living upon the face of the earth and who are scattered among all nations shall begin to believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, also. God will do a great work in gathering the remaining descendants of Jacob into their lands of heritage and imparting the gospel of His Son to them.

The priesthood of The Church of Jesus Christ is commissioned to teach the gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost and teaching them to observe all of the commandments of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). In fulfilling this commission, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, which include the tribes of Israel, will have an opportunity to believe on Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and receive the salvation that He offers.

#### 5.3.1 Supporting Scriptures

- 1 Nephi 13:40-41
  - 1 Nephi 14:7
  - 2 Nephi 28:27-30
  - 2 Nephi 29:1-3, 8,11,14
  - 2 Nephi 30:3-18
  - Mosiah 15:28-31
  - Mosiah 16:1-2
  - 3 Nephi 5:23-26
  - 3 Nephi 21:1-7
-

### 5.3.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss supporting scriptures.
  - Identify: the Gentiles, descendants of Joseph, other tribes of Israel, house of Israel.
  - Relate the circumstances when the truth and knowledge of God were restored on the earth.
  - Explain how the restoration of truth and knowledge benefited the followers of Christ.
  - Identify the sign that was given to indicate that the work to fulfill God's covenant to Israel had begun.
  - Identify who has yet to have the truth and knowledge of God imparted unto them.
  - Explain one or more result(s) of the gospel spreading upon the whole earth.
  - Name a few ways that he or she can assist to restore truth and knowledge to the descendants of Joseph and/or to all people.
  - State the Church's role in restoring truth and knowledge to the descendants of Joseph and to all nations.
  - Describe the benefits that the gospel of Jesus Christ offers to people of all races.
-

## 5.4 The Peaceful Reign (Zion)

The Church believes in the fulfillment and ultimate establishment of the kingdom of God on the earth while men are still in the flesh. This period of time is referred to as the peaceful reign (Zion).

Numerous scriptures in the Bible and Book of Mormon overwhelmingly confirm that God's kingdom on earth will be established and that a peaceful reign will exist with Eden-like conditions. It is described as a period of time when peace shall exist among men, among the animals, and between humans and animals. Jesus Christ will reign in His kingdom on earth and will be in the midst among them. It is a place where the righteous in Christ shall dwell.

### 5.4.1 Supporting Scriptures

- 2 Nephi 21:6-10, 30:10-18
- 3 Nephi 21:22-29
- Isaiah 2:1-5
- Isaiah 11:1-10
- Isaiah 51:3
- Isaiah 65:20-22,25
- Joel 2:3
- Micah 4:1-4

### 5.4.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
  - Make a list of key aspects of the kingdom of God on earth.
  - State the changes that will take place in the animal kingdom.
  - Name who will reside in Zion.
  - Describe his or her role in assisting to establish Zion (3 Nephi 21:26-29).
-

## 5.5 The New Jerusalem

As God's latter day prophecies are fulfilled, the gathering of Israel under Christ is foretold. The scriptures tell us that the promises to Israel as they come to Christ are extended also to Gentiles who come to Christ – “the first shall be last, and the last shall be first.” We read of the building of the New Jerusalem. With the cleansing of the earth, a New Jerusalem will be built upon the continents of the Americas by believers in Christ of the tribe of Joseph of Israel, assisted by believing Gentiles, to serve as a place of gathering. Christ will appear and the power of heaven will be manifested. The rebuilding of the Jerusalem of old as a holy city is also prophesied. After the first heaven and first earth have passed away, a holy city - the New Jerusalem - will descend from heaven upon the new earth.

### 5.5.1 Supporting Scriptures

#### New Jerusalem

- 3 Nephi 20:22
- 3 Nephi 21:23-29
- Ether 13:2-12
- Revelation 21
- Revelation 22

#### Former Jerusalem

- 3 Nephi 20:29-46
- Ether 13:5

### 5.5.2 Objectives

#### The member will:

- Tell the purposes that the New and former Jerusalem's will serve.
-



## 5.6 The Gathering of the House of Israel

The gathering of the house of Israel is a major theme of prophecy throughout the scriptures and refers to the faithful commitment that God has to fulfill the covenants that He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He promised to these men that He would preserve a remnant of their descendants so that one day, after dwelling for many generations in unbelief, the true gospel of Jesus Christ would be presented to them.

A gathering will occur as the descendants of Israel leave the nations that they inhabit to return to their lands of heritage. These will be those who have heard the gospel of Christ preached and who have exercised belief and faith on Jesus Christ. God will fulfill His covenants to their forefathers and redeem the righteous branches of the house of Israel.

### 5.6.1 Supporting Scriptures

- 1 Nephi 14:8,10,12,14,17
- 2 Nephi 3:5
- 2 Nephi 25:16-18, 21-29
- 2 Nephi 30:7-10
- Isaiah 11:12
- Jeremiah 32:37-42

### 5.6.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
  - Explain why God has exercised longsuffering toward the house of Israel.
  - Name two events that will precede the gathering of the house of Israel.
  - Explain what will be used to convince the house of Israel that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah.
-

## 5.7 The Second Coming of Christ

The second coming of Christ is the event referred to in John 14:2-3, where Jesus tells His disciples *in my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Paul writes that the sound of the trumpet of God and the shout of the archangel will mark His coming, and the righteous, both dead and alive, will be caught up in an immortal state to meet the Lord in the air. Acts 1:11 also states that Jesus will return a second time. As believers continue to gaze into heaven, two angels ask them "...why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

### 5.7.1 Supporting Scriptures

- See Above
- Matthew 24:3-31

### 5.7.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
-

## 5.8 The Mark of the Beast

The mark of the beast, as presented in the book of Revelation, is described as a physical mark imprinted upon the forehead or right hand of individuals. Without this mark it will be impossible to buy or sell, suggesting that some sort of economic and/or political controls will be imposed upon the people of the world. The mark is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred, threescore and six - 666. The saints of God are warned not to accept such a mark.

### 5.8.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Revelation 13:10-18
- Revelation 14:1-13
- 1 Nephi 13:24-29
- 1 Nephi 14:20-22,23,27

### 5.8.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
  - Know of this future event.
  - Name the prophet who saw and prophesied of events relating to the end of the world.
  - Explain why some prophecies in the Bible are not easy to understand.
  - Discuss what he or she should do during times of tribulation.
  - State the promises of God to the saints.
-

## 5.9 The Battle of Armageddon

The Battle of Armageddon is the final battle between good and evil, when the forces of Christ defeat the forces of Satan, and Satan is cast into hell for eternity.

### 5.9.2 Supporting Scriptures

- Revelation 16:12-16,
- Revelation 20:7-10

### 5.9.3 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the scriptures.
  - Know of this future event.
  - Explain the outcome of the Battle of Armageddon for Satan.
-

## 5.10 The One Thousand Year Binding of Satan

In the book of Revelation we read of a period of one thousand years where Satan will be bound and powerless. After the thousand years are over, Satan will be loosed for a short season.

### 5.10.2 Supporting Scriptures

- Rev. 20:1-3
-

## 5.11 The Hereafter

What happens to the body and soul of an individual when life on earth is finished? The scriptures tell us that the soul lives forever and returns to God to be consigned to – paradise or outer darkness. The soul of the redeemed will be assigned to a state of happiness, rest and peace, while the soul of the wicked will be assigned to a state of weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth. The body of flesh and bones goes into the grave temporarily, waiting to resurrect in an incorruptible state and to be reunited with the soul. At some point a resurrection will occur wherein the body and soul will reunite to stand before the judgment bar of God.

The scriptures indicate that there is more than one resurrection, and they may occur at different points in time. A resurrection occurred at the time of Christ's resurrection wherein many of the dead were seen walking amongst the living. The prophet Abinadi listed several categories of people who will come forth in the first resurrection (Mosiah 15:21-26). In the book of Revelation, John described those partaking in the "first" resurrection as the "...souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands..."

After the incorruptible body and soul are reunited, the individual will appear before the throne of God to be judged of his or her works – whether they were good (those who accepted the grace of Christ) or evil (those who rejected Christ's redemption). Pending on the mercies of Christ or the justice of God, the immortal body and soul will be received into heaven or hell for eternity.

### 5.11.1 Supporting Scriptures

- Matthew 27:52-53
- John 14:2, 3
- Romans 14:10-12
- Revelation 20:4, 5, 11-15
- Mosiah 15:21-26
- Alma 40:4-14, 23-26
- Alma 41:1-7
- Alma 42:22-24
- Helaman 14:15-18, 25
- 3 Nephi 23:9-11
- Moroni 10:34

### 5.11.2 Objectives

The member will:

- Read and discuss the supporting scriptures.
- Explain what happens to the body and soul at the time of death.

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- Define the term resurrection as described in the scriptures.
  - Identify who will rise in the first resurrection and who will not.
  - Explain why it was necessary for Christ to die and resurrect.
  - Explain the determining factor(s) for the final consignment of an individual to heaven or hell.
-

## **6 The Bible**

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## 6.1 What Is the Bible and Its Purpose for Mankind?

What is the Bible to you? The Bible has different meanings to different people. In The Church of Jesus Christ, the Bible is regarded as:

- The sacred book or collection of 66 books, inspired by God and providing guidelines for belief and behavior, to bring us to life with God; and that life is found only in and through Jesus Christ;
- The word of God (2 Timothy 3:16);
- The authoritative revelation of truths about God;
- The revelation of God's eternal plan for the Universe and His people;
- An account of the creation, God's relationship with mankind, the plan of redemption/salvation through His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, and eternal life;
- A history of God's relationship with our first parents, Adam and Eve, examples of godly and ungodly people, God's chosen people and followers of Christ;
- A book of instruction (1 Corinthians 10:11);
- A book of history and prophecy.
- The Church of Jesus Christ deems The Book of Mormon and the Bible equally as the word of God.

### 6.1.1 Goals of this Section

After reading this section, the member will be able to:

- Recall at least three ways the Bible is regarded in the Church.
  - Explain what the Bible means to him/her.
-

## 6.2 Why Is It Called the Holy Bible?

In ancient times, words and manuscripts were written on papyrus reed, which was also known as “biblos”. This name was then applied to all sacred writings, and came to be known as the Bible, which actually means the “little books”. Animal skins, in the form of scrolls, were used later for this purpose, being sturdier, more resilient, and longer lasting. In 1947, approximately 800 scrolls and fragments of scrolls were found in eleven caves near Qumran on the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, which have come to be known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. (Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary, page 339.) Many of them contained scriptures from the Bible. The Dead Sea Scrolls pushed back the date of the earliest Biblical manuscripts to before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century B.C. They help to validate the accurate transmittal of scriptural text and provide information regarding times leading up to the coming of Jesus Christ into the world.

The word “holy” indicates something that is considered sacred or divine. Based on how the Bible describes itself, and our understanding of it, the Bible is often referred to as the “Holy Bible.”

In scripture, the Bible is also referred to as:

- |                    |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Holy Scriptures | Romans 1:2       |
| 2. Word of truth   | James 1:18       |
| 3. Word of God     | Hebrews 4:12     |
| 4. Law of the Lord | Psalms 1:2       |
| 5. Word of life    | Philippians 2:16 |

The Bible is compared to:

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. A lamp / light      | Psalms 119:105   |
| 2. Fire                | Jeremiah 5:14    |
| 3. Fire / hammer       | Jeremiah 23:29   |
| 4. Seeds               | Matthew 13:18-23 |
| 5. Sword of the Spirit | Ephesians 6:17   |
| 6. Stick of Judah      | Ezekiel 37:16    |

### 6.2.1 Goals of this Section

After reading this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain how the Bible was named.
- Recall three terms that are commonly used when referring to the Bible.
- Recall three things to which the Bible is compared.
- Explain two facts about the Dead Sea Scrolls.

## 6.3 How Was the Bible Written?

The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years, by forty different authors, whose writings all agree on the same message.

The text of the Bible was written under:

### 1. **Inspiration**

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

### 2. **Revelation**

- 1 Corinthians 2:10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

### 3. **Illumination**

- 1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.
- Matthew 16:17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

### 4. **Eyewitness Reporting**

- Peter 1:16 For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

#### 6.3.1 Goal of this Section

After reading this section, the member will be able to:

- Recall the ways the Spirit of God influenced the writers of the Bible.
-

## 6.4 Major Divisions

The Bible consists of 66 books and is divided into two major divisions, the Old and the New Testaments. There are many definitions of the word “testament”, including “settlement”, “treaty” and “covenant” both in Hebrew and in Greek, and the most appropriate definition appears to be “covenant”. The old covenant is the one sealed at Mount Sinai in the days of Moses. By this covenant, the living and true God, who had delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, promised to bless them as His special people. They were also to worship Him alone as their one true God, and to accept His law as their rule for life (Exodus 19:3 24:3-8).(Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary page 183).

The new covenant was announced by Jesus as He spoke to His disciples in the upper room in Jerusalem, the night before His death. When He gave them a cup of wine to drink, Jesus declared that this symbolized “the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25).

Between the times of Moses and Jesus, the prophet Jeremiah foresaw a day when God would make a new covenant with His people (Jeremiah 31:33).

Jeremiah 31:33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

### 6.4.1 Old Testament

The books of the Old Testament were written over a period of about 1,000 years in the Hebrew language, except for a few selected passages, which were written in Aramaic. The Old Testament tells of the preparation that was made for Christ’s coming. The major sections of the Old Testament include:

#### The Five Books of Moses (Pentateuch) or the Law

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Genesis	Creation and the establishment of the covenant relationship	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Moses
Exodus	Deliverance of the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt	
Leviticus	The ceremonial law	
Numbers	Wandering of God’s people in the wilderness	
Deuteronomy	The second giving of the law by Moses before the people occupy the promised land	

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Books about the History of Israel

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Joshua	The conquest and division of the promised land	Traditionally attributed to Joshua himself, except for the final five verses (24:29-33), which describes Joshua's death and legacy
Judges	A series of judges or military leaders rescue the nation of Israel	Unknown: some suggest the prophet Samuel
Ruth	The beautiful story of God's love and care	Not Stated: some suggest Samuel
1 Samuel	The early history of Israel, including the reigns of Saul and David	Not stated. Samuel himself was likely involved, though some of the history of 1 Samuel occurs after the prophet's death
2 Samuel		Unknown. The events of the book take place after Samuel's death. Some suggest Abiathar the priest (15:35)
1 Kings 2 Kings	A political history of Israel, focusing on the reigns of selected kings from the time of Solomon to the captivity of the Jewish people by Babylonia	Unknown; one early tradition claimed Jeremiah wrote 1 and 2 Kings
1 Chronicles 2 Chronicles	A religious history of Israel, covering the same period as 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Ezra the priest
Ezra	The return of the Jewish people from captivity in Babylon	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Ezra the priest (7:11)
Nehemiah	The rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem after the exiles returned from Babylon	"The words of Nehemiah" (1:1) through Jewish tradition says those words were put on paper by Ezra
Esther	God's care of his people under Gentile rule	Not stated but perhaps Ezra or Nehemiah

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Books of Wisdom

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Job	An examination of the problems of evil and human suffering	Not stated
Psalms	The song book or hymnal of ancient Israel	Various, with nearly half attributed to King David. Other names noted include Solomon, Moses, Asaph, Ethan, and the sons of Korah. Many psalms don't mention an author
Proverbs	Wise sayings and observations designed to develop proper attitudes and behavior	Primarily Solomon (1:1), with sections attributed to "the wise" (22:17), Agur (30:1), and King Lemuel (31:1). Little is known of the latter two
Ecclesiastes	A philosophical description of the emptiness of life without God	Not stated but probably Solomon. The author is identified as "the son of David" (1:1) and king over Israel in Jerusalem (1:12) and he says he had "more wisdom than all they that have been before me (1:16)
Song of Solomon	A love song portraying the beauty of a human love relationship as a symbol of divine love	Solomon (1:1), though some wonder if the song "of Solomon" is like the psalms "of David", which could mean they are by, for, or about him

Books of the Major Prophets

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Isaiah	The outstanding prophesy of condemnation and Messianic consolation	Isaiah, son of Amoz (1:1)
Jeremiah	A message of judgment against Judah's moral and spiritual decay	Jeremiah (1:1) with the assistance of Baruch, a scribe (36:4)
Lamentations	Five poems of lament over fallen Jerusalem	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Jeremiah
Ezekiel	A prophesy of judgment during the Babylonian captivity	Ezekiel, a priest (1:1-3)
Daniel	Accounts of Daniel and other Hebrews in captivity, and prophecies about the end times	Likely Daniel, though some question this. Chapters 7-12 are written in the first person ("I Daniel," 7:15), though the first six chapters are in the third person, "Then Daniel answered," 2:14.

Books of the Minor Prophets

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Hosea	A message of Israel's condemnation followed by God's forgiveness	Probably Hosea himself, though the text is in both the first and third person
Joel	A prediction of foreign invasion as a form of judgment by God	Joel, son of Pethuel (1:1). Little else is known about him
Amos	Pronouncements of judgment against the nations, especially Israel	Amos, a shepherd from Tekoa, near Bethlehem (1:1)
Obadiah	A book prophesying the destruction of Edom	Obadiah (1:1), perhaps a person by that name or an unnamed prophet for whom "Obadiah" (meaning "servant of God") is a title
Jonah	A story about a reluctant prophet who led Nineveh to repentance	Unclear; the story is Jonah's but is written in the third person
Micah	A prediction of judgment and a promise of Messianic restoration	"The word of the Lord that came to Micah the Morasthite" (1:1). Micah either wrote the prophecies or dictated them to another
Nahum	A prophecy of the destruction of Nineveh	"The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite" (1:1). Nahum either wrote the prophecies or dictated them to another
Habakkuk	A prophet who questioned God and praised His approaching judgment against Judah	Habakkuk (1:1)
Zephaniah	A prediction of destructive judgment followed by a tremendous blessing	Zephaniah (1:1)
Haggai	After the return from Babylonia, a call to rebuild the temple	Haggai (1:1)
Zechariah	A Messianic prophecy calling for the completion of construction on the temple	Zechariah, son of Berechiah (1:1); some believe a second, unnamed writer contributed (Chapters 9-14)
Malachi	A prophecy of destruction followed by Messianic blessing	Malachi (1:1), meaning "my messenger". No other details are given

6.4.2 New Testament

The New Testament was written over a period of about 60 years. The original language in which it was written was Greek. This portion of the Bible tells of Christ's coming, His life and ministry, and the growth of the Early Church. The New Testament concludes with Jesus revealing to John the ultimate kingship of Jesus Christ and the glorious future for the saints of God. The major sections of the New Testament include:

The Gospels

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Matthew	Christ presented as the fulfillment of Old Testament Messianic prophesy	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Matthew, a tax collector (9:9). Matthew is also known as Levi (Mark 2:14)
Mark	Probably the earliest of the gospels, focusing on Christ's ministry	Not stated but traditionally attributed to John Mark, a missionary companion of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 12:25) and an associate of Peter (1 Peter 5:13)
Luke	Fullest biography of Christ, focusing on His perfection and ministry of salvation	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Luke, a Gentile physician (Colossians 4:14) and a missionary companion of the apostle Paul (2 Timothy 4:11)
John	The most symbolic gospel, which presents Christ as the divine Son of God	Not stated but traditionally attributed to John, the "disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 21:7), brother of James and son of Zebedee (Matthew 4:21)

History of the Early Church

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Acts (of the Apostles)	A history of the expansion of the Early Church	Not stated but traditionally attributed to Luke, a Gentile physician (Colossians 4:14), a missionary companion of the apostle Paul (2 Timothy 4:11), and the author of the Gospel of Luke



Epistles (Letters) of the Apostle Paul addressed to specific congregations or individuals

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Romans	An explanation of the Christian faith for both Jews and Gentiles, addressed to the church at Rome	Paul (1:1), with the secretarial assistance of Tertius (16:22)
1 Corinthians	Instructions to the church at Corinth dealing with problems among Christians	Paul, with the assistance of Sosthenes (1:1)
2 Corinthians	Paul's defense and explanation of his apostleship	Paul, with Timothy's assistance (1:1)
Galatians	An account of the necessity of justification by faith rather than works	Paul (1:1)
Ephesians	A letter to the church at Ephesus explaining the believer's position in Christ	Paul (1:1)
Philippians	A prediction of judgment and a promise of Messianic restoration.	Paul, along with Timothy (1:1)
Colossians	An account of the supremacy of Christ, written to the church at Colossae	Paul, along with Timothy (1:1)
1 and 2 Thessalonians	Instructions to the church at Thessalonica about the coming of the Lord	Paul, along with Silvanus (Silas) and Timothy (1:1)
1 and 2 Timothy	Manuals of leadership for the young pastor at Ephesus	Paul (1:1)
Titus	A manual of Christian conduct for church leaders, written to a young pastor on Crete	Paul (1:1)
Philemon	An appeal for Christian unity and forgiveness for a runaway slave	Paul (1:1)

General Epistles (Letters)

<b>Book</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Author</b>
Hebrews	A presentation of Jesus Christ as high priest, addressed to Jewish believers	Not stated. Luke, Barnabas, Paul, and Apollos have been suggested
James	Practical instructions for applied Christianity	James (1:1), probably a brother of Jesus (see Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3)
1 Peter	Encouragement and comfort from Peter to suffering Christians	Peter (1:1), with the assistance of Silvanus (Silas) (5:12)
2 Peter	Peter's warning against false teachers	Peter (1:1)
1 John	John's reminder of the full humanity of Christ	John
2 John	John's letter of encouragement and approval	John per church tradition. The author is identified only as "the elder" (1:1)
3 John	John's personal note of appreciation to Gaius	The Apostle John per church tradition. The author is identified only as "the elder" (1:1)
Jude	A strong warning against false teachers	Jude (1:1), possibly Jesus' half-brother (see Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3)
Revelation	An encouraging prophesy of the final days and God's ultimate triumph	John (1:1), probably the apostle

### 6.4.3 Goals of this Section

After reading this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain the difference between the Old and the New Testaments.
- Recall the five major sections of the Old Testament.
- Recall the four major sections of the New Testament.
- Name the languages in which the Bible was originally written.

## 6.5 Bible Versions and Translations

The Bible was written across a period of several centuries in the languages of Hebrew and Aramaic (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament). With the changing of nations and cultures across the centuries, these original writings have been translated many times to make the Bible available in different languages. Many versions of the Bible have been written and published over the past 2,200 years, but the King James Bible remains the only authorized and approved version used by The Church of Jesus Christ. The reason for this is twofold: 1) the King James Version of the Bible is the most reliable and accurate translation of the original texts, especially where elements of faith and doctrine are concerned; and 2) the priesthood prefers that everyone use the same version of the Bible to ensure uniformity throughout the Church, and avoid the confusion that would be caused by using multiple versions of the Bible (especially when conducting classes and when preaching).

### 6.5.1 The King James Version

In 1603, King James I of England convened a conference to settle some disputes in the Church of England. From this conference, authorization was received to begin work on an English translation of the Bible which became known as the *Authorized*, or *King James Version (KJV)*.

A group of 47 scholars were divided into six teams and were given the task of preparing a new version of the Bible. Three teams were responsible for working on the Old Testament, two teams worked on the New Testament, and one team reviewed the Apocrypha, a group of books written during a time of turmoil in Jewish history, from about 190 B.C. to about 210 A.D. This last group of books was not included in the Bible.

The primary document used for revision was the 1602 edition of the Bishops' Bible, but the teams had access to other versions as well as texts in the original biblical languages. After the task was completed, the final draft was reviewed by a committee of 12, and the King James Version of the Bible was published in 1611. There was some resistance to the King James Version of the Bible at first, but it soon gained acceptance and has become "The Bible" of choice for most of the English-speaking world for almost four centuries. (Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary page 204).

### 6.5.2 Goals of this Section

After reading this section, the member will be able to:

- Explain why the English language King James Version is the only authorized and approved Bible for use in The Church of Jesus Christ.
  - Briefly explain how the King James Version of the Bible came into being.
-

## **7 Personal Conduct**

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## 7.1 Life as a Saint

Each member of the Church is expected to act like a saint of God. What exactly does that mean, and how is it done? This chapter will provide guidance and advice on how to be a saint. However, this is an extremely personal topic. The situations and examples given will be general in nature and will aim to point one in the right direction. The decision on how to live life will not be made by anyone other than the individual who is strongly encouraged to seek guidance from the Spirit of God.

### Goals of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Discuss what it means to be a saint.
  - Discuss the importance of being a saint 24/7.
  - Read and discuss scriptures on becoming Christ-like.
  - Explain how to follow the Spirit of God.
  - Apply faith in decision making.
  - Develop his/her character in light of God's will.
-

## 7.2 How Does a Saint Act?

It's easy to become confused about what it means to be a Christian. People who confess to be Christians can vary in their walk and talk. Christians may give conflicting advice when asked their opinions on issues regarding morals and values. Some people set high standards while others appear less strict, yet both confess to love God. After whom should one pattern his or her life? Where and how does one begin to act like a saint? Are these questions difficult to answer? Should they be?

There are three (3) main ways to always ensure one is acting like a saint of God. First, prayerfully seek to follow the Holy Ghost's direction. To do this, it is useful to recognize God's voice. Secondly, prayerfully read and study the scriptures and devote time to prayer or fasting and prayer. Both are ways to absorb more of the character of God and to invite the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, and direct one's life. Finally, be willing to submit one's will to God's will. If one does these things in every situation, he or she will live the life of a saint.

### 7.2.1 Developing Character

How should one develop his or her character? Look at the following chapters to help answer this question.

- Read and discuss 1 Corinthians, chapter 13 and Moroni 7:44-48.
  - Explain the essence of charity in one's walk as a saint.
  - Explain how one can develop charity.
- Read and discuss Colossians, chapter 3
  - List the traits and behaviors that a saint is advised to avoid.
  - List the traits and behaviors that a saint is advised to have.
  - Describe the family relationships of a household of faith, verses 18-21.
  - Describe desirable relationships within the workplace, verses 23-25.
  - Explain how one can become successful developing a saintly character, vs. 2, 10, 14-17, 23.

### *Be Congruent*

One of the Church's values is congruence. Being congruent basically means to act in a way that matches one's beliefs. When a person makes the choice to follow Jesus Christ and His teachings, his or her actions should reflect that choice. There are many examples in the scriptures of Jesus instructing people to live in accordance with His teachings. One such example is the account of Mary and Martha. When Jesus came to their house, Martha was flustered trying to make sure everything was ready to be served. Mary, meanwhile, sat at Jesus's feet listening to Him. Martha entreated Jesus to ask Mary to help her, but He replied that Mary was doing the right thing by listening to Him intently (Luke 10:38-42). While Martha believed that Jesus was the Son of God, she placed the natural affairs of life above the spiritual, in this situation. Listening to Jesus should have taken precedence and would have demonstrated what was truly important to her.

- Identify what takes precedence over spiritual things in your life.
- Identify what changes to make to demonstrate that God comes first.

- Evaluate the frequency and intent of scripture reading, prayers, and acts of kindness and determine what steps for improvement may be taken.

*Remember what God Hates*

There are seven (7) things God hates according to Proverbs 6:16-20:

1. A proud look
  2. A lying tongue
  3. Hands that shed innocent blood
  4. A heart that devises wicked imaginations
  5. Feet that run quickly to mischief
  6. False witness
  7. He that causes discord among the people of the Church
- Read and discuss the seven things that God hates.
  - Recognize that there are many sinful acts that displease the Lord beyond these seven
  - Romans 12:4, 2 Nephi 9:49, Alma 13:12

**7.2.2 Follow the Holy Ghost**

Following baptism, in The Church of Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost is confirmed upon an individual. Christ told His apostles that He would send the Comforter, after His ascension, to abide with them. This occurred on the Day of Pentecost and continues to this day when someone is confirmed.

The Holy Ghost is the Spirit of truth and testifies of Christ. The Holy Ghost teaches a person all that he or she needs to know, leading, guiding, and directing on the path of righteousness. The Holy Ghost is like a compass. While the Holy Ghost will show an individual the way to go, the Holy Ghost will never force a person to obey. God gives every man the power of free will. When a person asks, the Holy Ghost will lead him or her on the right path. If one does not ask, the Holy Ghost cannot lead. The Holy Ghost is God's Spirit speaking or communicating to an individual.

*Look Inward. Ask These Questions of Anything That You May Say Or Do:*

Asking these questions will aid in following the Holy Ghost:

- Am I honoring God or pleasing Him?
- Am I obeying God?
- Am I in line with what I know to be God's will?
- Am I creating the kind of character and spiritual life that glorifies God/Christ?
- Am I identifying with Christ's followers?
- Will I stand the test of God's eyes and holiness at the judgment bar of Christ?
- Is my prayer life fervent and effectual?
- Am I reading and studying and assimilating God's word?

Remember that "...whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him." (Colossians 3:17)

*Supporting Scriptures*

- 1 Corinthians 2:14-16

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

- Galatians 2:20

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

- 2 Nephi 31:16-17, 20-21 (summarized)

Follow the example of Christ, press forward and remain steadfast.

**7.2.3 Take Action and Nurture the Seed of Faith**

A decision needs to be made. It happens every day, sometimes multiple times a day. Maybe it is a small one like, "Should I go out with my friends this Friday night?," or a large one like, "Where should I go to college?" "Is this the right job for me?" "Who should I marry?"

Are there differences in these examples that determine whether or not to bring it before God? Regardless of whether the decision seems small or big, a saint should use the same logic every time a decision is to be made. That logic is to (a) pray to God for wisdom or direction, (b) listen for His response, and (c) act on His response. Faith plays the role of knowing that God can help and will lead one to make the right choice. Faith is believing and doing what God communicates even when one does not understand why. Humans cannot see into the future, so if God's Spirit leads in a direction which is not clear, it requires reliance on faith. Be confident that exercising faith will always be rewarded with the right choice. Remember that while there are choices that will have short or long term effects (i.e., going out with friends on Friday night may only affect the next day, whereas who to marry will affect the rest of one's life), God wants everyone to make the right choice every time. No decision is too big or too small for Him. Recognize that making a bad decision may have long term consequences. God desires everyone to go to Him in prayer, listen to His direction through the Holy Ghost, and act on faith. If this is done for every decision, one will always make the right choice, which will please God and produce good results.

*Supporting Scriptures*

- Spiritual growth likened unto a seed planted and nurtured. Alma 32:27-43
- Exercise faith through prayer. Alma 34:16-28, 39-41
  - Learned – Word of God
  - Received – Experienced
  - Heard – Exhortation
  - Seen – Witnessed



- Do – Obey
- "...think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you." Philippians 4:6-9
  - True
  - Honest
  - Just
  - Pure
  - Lovely
  - Good report
  - Virtue
  - Praise
- Possess the fruits of the spirit. Galatians 5:22-25
  - Love
  - Joy
  - Peace
  - Longsuffering
  - Gentleness
  - Goodness
  - Faith
  - Meekness
  - Temperance

#### 7.2.4 Sacrifice

The scriptures talk about sacrificing for God. What does that mean? Basically, it is when one completely lets go of what one wants, for what God wants. Sacrifice demonstrates love, respect, and trust. One is giving up control and allowing God to be first.

- "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Romans 12:1
- Christ's question to Peter, as it is to us, is "...lovest thou me more than these?" John 21:15-19

### 7.2.5 Can It be Done?

Words are easy to say, but often difficult to put into practice. Why? A powerful adversary, the enemy of one's soul exists, and rest assured, he will present temptations. If he did it to Christ, he will do it to anyone! Do not be afraid. One can maintain control of what one says and does because of the indwelling of Christ! He will give an individual the strength and ability to do so. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," Philippians 4:13. Sometimes it will be harder to resist than other times. However, God will provide the strength needed when He is sought. He will always respond through the power of the Holy Ghost. However, an individual must decide to whom he or she will yield. God will not let one down, but one must be willing to yield to Him. Yes, it can be done! What happens if one does not yield to God? Then, he or she has yielded to Satan. Be sure to quickly and sincerely repent when this is recognized, and God will forgive.

### 7.2.6 An Example of Acting Like a Saint

Discuss a decision that needs to be made and walk through a faith-based approach toward addressing it.

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### 7.3 You Are Changed

After a person is baptized and receives the gift of the Holy Ghost, a change takes place within. You are given the heart and mind of Christ. You are transformed from someone who was self-willed – who had not made a commitment to obey Christ - to someone who is willing to submit to God's will. Through the baptism of water and fire, you have been cleansed of every sin! You are a new creature! The joy of the Lord is within! The Holy Ghost is dwelling within you! You are not the same person.

#### 7.3.1 Can This Change Go Unnoticed?

Others should know or be able to detect that there is something different about a person who serves the Lord. One's speech, attitude, and behavior should be Christ-like, and not that of the world. People may wonder, "This person is different in a good way." They may be direct in asking, or they may silently observe. What will your life say about you? What will it say about the Lord? How will you handle rebuff or criticism? How will you stand? Will others be drawn to you because they want what you have?

#### *Supporting Scriptures*

- "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:11
  - Reckon...think...count on it...turn it over in your mind until you REALLY believe it.
  - This you must do. A dead man is the most unbothered person you can imagine. (Dead to sin, alive to God)
- "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:10
- "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven..." Matthew 5:11-12
- "Ye are the salt of the earth..." Matthew 5:13
- "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." Mathew 5:14-16.
- "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth ..." Romans 1:16

#### 7.3.2 You Are Being Watched

Once a person has made the choice to follow Jesus, he or she becomes a living example of Christ. One must realize that others may be observing and taking note. That is why it is important to remember that you are being watched all the time. Romans 14:13 states, "Let us not therefore judge one another anymore: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." Consider living your life so that you will not be a stumbling block, but instead a steppingstone to a better way of life.

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*Scriptural Examples*

**Bad Examples**

- A. David. 2 Samuel 11: 2-4, 12:9-14 (Killing of Uriah)
- B. Jonah. Jonah 1-4
- C. Nephites. Jacob 2:34-35 (Jacob's renunciation)
- D. Church lifted up in pride. Alma 4:8-12

**Good Examples**

- A. Four sons of Mosiah. Alma 17:11-12
  - B. Alma toward his son, Shiblon. Alma 38:11-15
  - "Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6
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## **8 The Law and Order**

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## 8.1 The Law and Order of The Church

The Law and Order document represents the application and framework by which the Church directs, regulates, and sets order to its operation. The Law and Order is supplemented by Actions of General Conference which are compiled and issued periodically by the general church secretariat (along with conference minutes). Many of the laws have been revised to regulations and guidelines. When a law, regulation, or guideline is changed, the *Supplement to the Law and Order*, issued by the secretary, includes the changes along with reference to the original.

We see from the Bible that God sets governments and leadership as important elements in an orderly formation of the Kingdom of God as represented in the Church on earth.

1 Corinthians 12:28, And God hath set some in the church: first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracle workers, then those with gifts of healing, helpers, administrators, and those with diversity of tongues.

The Church of Jesus Christ comprises branches and missions in North America and throughout the world on several continents. In order to provide unity and consistency in administration of the many aspects within the organization and to provide guidance to the membership in aspects of daily living, the Quorum of Twelve Apostles and the general ministry continually monitors the Law and Order to assure integrity within the Bible and Book of Mormon in context within the respective cultures where the Church is established.

### 8.1.1 The Purpose and Use of the Law and Order of The Church of Jesus Christ

The Law and Order document is included in the Minister's Manual of the Church. The ministry is responsible to provide information, direction, and guidance to the membership, as appropriate, when applicable circumstances and occasions arise. Newly adopted revisions to the Law and Order are published in the General Conference Minutes.

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## 8.2 How Did The Law and Order Come About?

The Law and Order was published in 1925, and republished several times including 1952, 1978 and 1999, and has been incorporated into the Minister's Manual of The Church of Jesus Christ. The Quorum of Twelve Apostles and the general priesthood have worked diligently in recent years to review the elements of the Law and Order to assure application of regulations and guidelines in line with God's word.

A system to develop new laws and change existing laws has been developed. The need for a change to the Law and Order may originate at different levels and venues including branch business or elders' meetings; region or general (national/international) church conferences; or in the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. These changes are then referred to the appropriate conference where they are read and placed in the minutes for study and consideration by the ministry. Any action, whether it is acceptance or rejection, will be accomplished at the following conference. The reason for this time lag is to prevent an unwise or hastily enacted law from passing. If deemed an emergency, the president and his counselors may act immediately for any proposed change to be considered by the general priesthood.

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### 8.3 Parts of The Law and Order

The Law and Order is broken into two (2) main parts: Topics and Appendices. They are as listed below.

#### 8.3.1 Topics

In the Law and Order, there are currently over 20 Topics. These may be combined into the following categories:

- **The Priesthood:** Apostles; Evangelists; and Elders
- **Procedures:** Operating General Church Business Conferences; Dreams, Revelations and Experiences; Appeals; and Order of Annual Branch Business and Organization Meeting (general outline).
- **Committees:** Missionary Operating Committee; Music Committee; Balloting Committee; General Church Board of Trustees; General Church Finance Committee.
- **Duties of Officers:** Elected Officers (general church level); Elected Officers (region level); and Branch (local) Officers.
- **Regulations:** Regulations Governing the Church; General Church Conference Regulations; Regulations Governing Regions; Rules and Regulations Governing Branches; and other regulations pertaining to the priesthood.
- **Organization of the Church:** the General(national/international) Church; Regions; Branches and Missions (local congregations).
- **Auxiliaries:** Ladies Uplift Circle, Missionary Benevolent Association, and Sunday school.

#### 8.3.2 Appendices

In the Law and Order, there are currently three (3) appendices. They are as follows:

- **Appendix I:** The Church of Jesus Christ Bylaws and Guidelines for Processing Appeals for Law of Offense, Marriage, Remarriage, Divorce, Separation and Annulment
- **Appendix II:** Ministerial Support Procedure
- **Appendix III:** Procedure for Proposals

#### 8.3.3 Supplements

Currently, the Law and Order has been supplemented by a compilation of all revisions reported to and accepted by the general church conference since the last published Law and Order. The *Supplement to the Law and Order* is maintained up to date by the general church secretariat and is included with the distribution of the general church conference minutes whenever an update is made.

#### 8.3.4 Objectives:

The member will:

- State what the Law and Order represents and its purpose.
- Identify who to approach for guidance on Church procedures, regulations, and organizational structure.



## **9 Our Beliefs**

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## 9.1 Introduction of Beliefs and the Faith and Doctrine

The beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ are articulated in the *Faith and Doctrine* of the Church. For simplicity, a brief statement of our beliefs has been extracted and appears below. The same brief statements along with references to scripture and to the Articles of the *Faith and Doctrine* may be accessed via the Church website: <http://www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org/what-we-believe/>

The beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ are consistent with the scriptures and are in accordance with the New Testament Church as established by Jesus Christ. Listed below is a series of basic beliefs of the Church, with the full *Faith and Doctrine* in the section afterward.

### 9.1.1 Goals of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Articulate his or her beliefs.
-

## 9.2 Beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ

### 9.2.1 Belief 1

We believe in God: The Father, Jesus Christ – His Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### 9.2.2 Belief 2

We believe the Church, as established by Jesus Christ, has ordained officers consistent with the scriptures; that the believers possess the signs promised to them; and that this Church/Kingdom will remain upon the earth until the end of time.

### 9.2.3 Belief 3

We believe the Bible and the Book of Mormon to be Holy Scriptures telling of God's relationship with the human family. These two scriptures jointly convey God's dealings and plan for mankind.

### 9.2.4 Belief 4

We believe that divine inspiration is an indispensable qualification for the preaching of the Gospel.

### 9.2.5 Belief 5

We believe that The Church of Jesus Christ is patterned exactly as is represented in the scriptures including the following ordinances and practices:

- Baptism by immersion
- Laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost
- Lord's Supper
- Feet washing
- Anointing the sick with oil and praying over them
- Ordaining all spiritual Church Officers
- Blessing of children

### 9.2.6 Belief 6

We believe obedience to the Gospel is necessary to obtain salvation by taking the following actions:

- Believe and have faith that Jesus Christ is the risen Savior of the world.
  - Repent of your sins with a desire to sin no more.
  - Be baptized by immersion in water for a remission of sins.
  - Receive the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands.
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- Live righteously, remain faithful, and endure to the end of your life.

9.2.7 Belief 7

We believe that the Lord God continues to reveal His will through the power of the Holy Ghost.

9.2.8 Belief 8

We believe that the resurrection of Jesus Christ established resurrection for all mankind.

9.2.9 Belief 9

We believe that marriage between a man and a woman is a holy institution.

9.2.10 Belief 10

We believe that many pure and precious tenets of Christ were eventually changed in the early centuries of The Church of Jesus Christ, and that God restored the Gospel of Christ in its fullness.

9.2.11 Belief 11

We believe that God has promised many blessings to all who love and serve Him and that He will remember His covenants to the House of Israel.

9.2.12 Belief 12

We believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ to occur at the end of the world – with the First Resurrection – and that He will wed His Bride, The Church, and gather unto Himself all the righteous.

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### 9.3 The *Faith and Doctrine* of The Church of Jesus Christ

Our faith is based exclusively on the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Because of our belief in the Book of Mormon, we have at times been mistakenly referred to as a faction broken away from the Utah Mormons. We do, therefore, declare that we are entirely a distinct and separate church, without affiliations to any other church or groups of the restoration movement; nor are we affiliated with any other religious group of people or church, regardless of their denomination.

This work was originally compiled by Brothers Wm. Cadman, J. K. Armbrust, and W. D. Wright, and printed by order of the Church in 1897.

It is our wish that whosoever reads the contents of this pamphlet will do so with sincerity of mind and heart, to the end that, having read the same, they shall have received some light and knowledge of the basic principles upon which The Church of Jesus Christ is founded.

It is the prayer of The Church of Jesus Christ, also, that someday the honest of heart and the seekers of truth of all faiths and denominations will be united in one fold, under one shepherd.

#### 9.3.1 Articles of Faith

1. We believe in God, the eternal Father, and His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. These three are the great and matchless power that rules all things visible and invisible, for it is of Him and through Him that we receive all things both for this life and that which is to come.
  
2. We believe in God, the Father, to be a personage of glory (Eph. 1:17; I Nephi 1:8). The Son is the express image of the Father, and He was with the Father before the foundation of the world. In the fullness of time, He came from the bosom of the Father, was born of the Virgin Mary (according to the scriptures) became man, and suffered and died for the sins of the whole world. On the third day He rose again and brought about the resurrection (according to the scriptures) and ascended up on high to sit at the right hand of God. Principalities and powers are subject to Him "Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature; For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him shall all fullness dwell" (Colossians 1:15-19). We believe, also, that He will come again the second time to judge both the living and the dead according to the scriptures (Acts 1:11; Matt. 24:30,36).

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We believe the Holy Ghost to be:

- A. The mind of the Father and of the Son. Bible: I Cor. 2:16
- B. The unseen power and glory which emanates from God and can, at His will, manifest itself in various forms. Bible: Matt. 3:16 Book of Mormon: I Nephi 11:11
- C. The witness of God. Bible: I John 5:6 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 11:35-36, III Nephi 28:11
- D. The gift of God. Bible: Acts 2:38, John 14:26 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 19:13
- E. Pure and holy, just, and good, omnipresent, full of light and knowledge, and a discerner of thoughts and intents of mankind.

3. We believe in the Church or Kingdom as set up by the Saviour to be sufficient for life and salvation for all people.

Ref. Bible: I Cor. 12:28, Eph. 4:1-16, Matt. 28:18-20 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 27:7-11

4. We believe that the New Testament scriptures contain a true description of that Church or Kingdom as established by our Saviour at Jerusalem, and that no principle or doctrine inconsistent therewith ought to be practiced or respected, or any principle or doctrine consistent therewith rejected.

5. We believe The Church of Jesus Christ in this age (to be worthy of the name) must be molded substantially and minutely after the pattern left us by Christ. The scriptures bear witness that its officers consist of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (all inspired) for the work of the ministry, for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come into the unity of the faith, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Ref. Bible: I Cor. 12:28, Eph. 4:13, Titus 1:5 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 27:1-11

6. We believe that mankind will be punished only for their own actual transgressions and not for the sins of our first parents, as is clearly implied by the Savior in representing little children to be heirs of the Kingdom. "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).

Ref. Bible: Eph. 2:15-16, Col. 2:14, I Peter 2:24, Isa. 53:5 Book of Mormon: Alma 40:21, Mormon 9:12-13

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7. We believe that divine inspiration is an indispensable qualification for preaching the Gospel. General information about the world is advantageous to man when properly used. Theological education is good only when spiritually correct; such instruction, however, is not absolutely requisite to teach the Word of God. Furthermore, formal schooling or practical training which fosters the belief that inspiration and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are unnecessary in the ministry of Christ's Gospel is erroneous and harmful (see II Tim. 3). Moreover, we believe in preaching the Gospel without purse or scrip according to the Saviour's instructions: ". . . freely ye have received, freely give" (Matt. 10:8). The language is of supreme importance as containing the full force of both Christ's authority and example.

Ref. Bible: Luke 10:21, Gal. 1:12, Eph. 3:3, I Cor. 2

8. We believe that all men must obey the Gospel before they can be saved.

Ref. Bible: Mark 16:16, St. John 3:5, Acts 2:38, Acts 10 Book of Mormon: II Nephi 9:23-24.

9. We believe the first principle of action required in the Gospel is belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, the once crucified and now risen Redeemer. The second is repentance, which signifies nothing more or less than feeling a Godly sorrow for our sins with a fixed determination to sin no more. The third is baptism by immersion in water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for the remission of sins. The fourth is the laying-on-of-hands in the name of Jesus Christ, for the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Ref. Bible: Acts 2:38, Acts 19:2-7, Acts 8:17, Gal. 3:27, Col. 2:12, I Peter 3:21 Book of Mormon: Mosiah 18:8-17, III Nephi 18:36-38, Moroni 2

10. We believe in being buried with Christ by baptism, and planted together in the likeness of His death, and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and that we should walk in the newness of life. Let not sin, therefore, reign in your mortal body; being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. Therefore, yield ye yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead.

Ref. Bible: St. John 3:5, Rom. 6:3-13, Col. 2:12 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 11:23-27

11. We believe in the promises of the Saviour as they are written in Mark 16:15-18. "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."

Ref. Bible: I Cor. 12:1-12 Book of Mormon: Moroni 10:8-25

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12. We believe in partaking of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week, the bread as His body and the wine as His blood, in commemoration of His death and His suffering.

Ref. Bible: Matt. 26:26-28, Mark 14:22-24, I Cor. 10:16-17 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 18:1-9, Moroni 4 and 5

13. We believe in the washing of feet as an ordinance instituted by our Lord and Saviour to be observed in the Church. We further believe it to be our duty to attend to that ordinance at least once within each three months.

Ref. Bible: St. John 13:1-17

14. We believe in saluting the brethren with a holy kiss.

Ref. Bible: Rom. 16:16, I Cor. 16:20, II Cor. 13:12, I Thes. 5:26, I Peter 5:14

15. We believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ as recorded in the scriptures, which was a victory over the power of death and a reintroduction of the principle of continuous or eternal existence; that this principle of continuous existence was not only attained for Himself but for all Adam's race, the wicked as well as the righteous, by which the former will be accountable for their conduct during this life and receive due punishment. Also, that the latter may be duly rewarded for their righteousness or good conduct. We also believe that the righteous that lived previous to the days of Jesus Christ expected their resurrection through, and as a direct result of, Christ's resurrection; also, that there was a general resurrection of the righteous that lived before the days of Christ (in the flesh) immediately following Christ's resurrection. The scriptures inform us, ". . . and many bodies of the saints which slept arose . . . And appeared unto many." A few moments of reflection by a person acquainted in a reasonable degree with the principles of God's divine justice will force him to conclude that God could not grant this great privilege of the resurrection to some (at that time) and deny it to others, who were equally worthy and expectant, and deprive them of the enjoyment of the benefits of Christ's resurrection until a period still beyond our day when Christ will come again. We believe, also, in a future resurrection of those that die after Christ, according to the scriptures.

Ref. Bible: Matt. 27:52-54 Book of Mormon: Alma 40, II Nephi 9:4-22, III Nephi 23:9-11

16. We believe in observing all things whatsoever the Lord has commanded us, and on those conditions He has promised to be with us always, even to the end of the world.

Ref. Bible: Matt. 28:20 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 12:19-20, III Nephi 27:6-22

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17. We believe there has been a gross and widespread apostasy among men from the true order and doctrine of the early Church as set up by the Saviour. Few scriptural subjects are treated more extensively in the Sacred Word, and to make anything like a comprehensive statement of the matter would be an extensive task. We refer the reader to several very pointed passages on the subject.

Ref. Bible: Isa. 24:5-6, Acts 20:29-30, II Thes. 2, I Tim. 4, II Tim. 3 and 4, II Peter 2. Book of Mormon: IV Nephi 1:24-49

18. We believe that this apostasy from the true Gospel was so widespread, complete, and general, that man himself was utterly unable to provide a remedy, and we recognize all efforts of reformation as utter failures to reproduce even a faint resemblance of the duties and privileges of the ancient saints or the order and excellence of the ancient Church as established by the Saviour. We will further state that we know of no scripture that in the least degree intimates that a reformation of the Gospel and Church of Christ ever would take place from the aforesaid apostate condition. The scriptures however, do foretell a restoration of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the latter ages of time, in the hour of God's judgments. "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: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." We should all remember that in the time of John, there is no doubt of the true Gospel then existing, and that he saw in visions occurrences of future times. It necessarily follows, then, that this scripture foretells the restoration of the Gospel by an angel, calling back mankind from erroneous religion to worship of the true God and announcing the hour of God's judgments, reminding people that worship, a god without body, parts or passions of the necessity of contrasting him, with that God, who is the author of this vast creation. The next angel that John mentions declares that Babylon is fallen and thereby clearly locating the period of these occurrences.

Ref. Bible: Rev. 14:6-7

19. We believe that the fullness of the Gospel shall soon be taken from the Gentiles because of their iniquity; and they will be punished for their disobedience. Moreover, God will remember His covenants to the House of Israel and bring them to a knowledge of the fullness of the Gospel.

Ref. Book of Mormon: III Nephi 16:10-11

- A. We believe in the restoration of Israel as it is spoken of by the prophets; and that God will use man as His instrument for its accomplishment in this age, as He did in ages past. We believe, also, that in order to bring about these events, God must and will reveal His will to man as He did in days of old. (Bible: Ezek. 34:11-16; Book of Mormon: III Nephi 20, III Nephi 21: 14-21)
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- B. We believe that God will employ this church for that purpose. "Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, He that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock" (Jer. 31:10). "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks" (Jer. 16:16).
- C. We believe, also, that blindness in part is happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so, all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob" (Rom. 11:25-26).
- D. We believe that the aborigines, or Indians, upon this hemisphere are a part of Israel, descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph, and that this land of America is theirs by an original God-given right. Also, that it is the land referred to by Jacob as a land given of God to Jacob and of Jacob and Joseph. Also, that it is the land referred to by Moses when blessing the children of Israel before his departure from them, as the land of Joseph. It is the land referred to by Ezekiel and Isaiah, where the [little stone of Daniel] will smite the image at the feet and bring about the wonderful results by him described. (Bible: Gen. 49:22-26, Deu. 33:13-17, Ezek. 37:25, Isa. 33:17-21, Dan. 2:34-35)

20. We believe the Word of God, wherein He says, "I have written to him [Ephraim] the great things of my law, but they were counted as a strange thing." We also believe that the Book of Mormon is that strange thing, or the great things of God's law to Ephraim; also, that it contains a true record of the Gospel of Christ as given to the tribe of Joseph by Christ, in person, after His resurrection, whom He recognized as the sheep of whom He spake that had to hear His voice and become one fold and have one shepherd.

Ref. Bible: Hosea 8:12, St. John 10:16 Book of Mormon: III Nephi 15:16-24, III Nephi 16:1-3

21. We believe that the Book of Mormon is the book spoken of by the Prophet Isaiah, and also the book that Ezekiel refers to in his book as the stick of Joseph in the hand of Ephraim.

Ref. Bible: Isa. 29, Ezek. 37:16-19 Book of Mormon: II Nephi 27:6-22, II Nephi 29:6-8

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22. We would just state, that the Book of Mormon has been shamefully misrepresented, and we desire every lover of truth to read it for themselves, as they cannot afford to rely on common report concerning any matter connected with their soul's salvation. We hereby assure all men that it teaches nothing contrary to purity and sound doctrine and is a history of the dealings of God with the aborigines of this land. It also contains a vast amount of prophetic matter of unlimited importance bearing upon the future. It is impossible for lovers of truth and virtue, who are reasonably free from prejudice, to carefully peruse its contents without experiencing delight and satisfaction; or for persons who are soaked in greed, hypocrisy, and sensuality to read this book without being maddened by its stinging reproaches of their character and conduct. It affords cold comfort for polygamists or bigamists. Jacob, the ancient prophet of the Lord of this land, writes as follows: "Wherefore, I the Lord God will not suffer that this people shall do like unto them of old [meaning David and Solomon with their many wives]. Wherefore, my brethren hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have it save be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For I, the Lord, delighteth in the chastity of women, and whoredoms are an abomination before me: Thus saith the Lord of Hosts." This is not the only instance, by any means, where polygamy is condemned in the Book of Mormon. The Almighty commanded Lehi, when He brought him to this land, positively against the practice of polygamy. Old King Noah was condemned by Abinadi for the same offense. Riplakish is also condemned in the Book of Ether for the same abomination. Therefore, we believe that a man shall have only one wife and a woman but one husband, and base our faith especially upon the Book of Mormon in this particular.

Ref. Book of Mormon: Jacob 2:23-28, Mosiah 11, Ether 10:5

23. We believe in the fulfillment and ultimate establishment of the Kingdom of God on the earth while men are still in the flesh. We refer to this period of time as the Peaceful Reign, which shall precede the Millennium, or Thousand Years with Christ.

Ref. Bible: Isa. 2:1-5, Isa. 35, Isa 51:3, Isa. 55, Isa. 65:18-25, Hosea 2:18-19, Job 5:22-25, Ezek. 34:25-26 Book of Mormon: I Nephi 22:4-28, III Nephi 20:22, III Nephi 21:23-29, Ether 13:4-12

24. We believe in the second coming of Christ; that He shall appear in glory at the end of the world, which takes place immediately following the conclusion of the Peaceful Reign. At this time, He will wed His Bride (the Church) to gather unto Himself all the righteous to dwell with Him for a thousand years (the Millennium), and then for all eternity.

Ref. Bible: Matt. 24:36-42, Luke 17:23-37, Acts 1:11, I Thes. 4:17, Rev. 19:7-9, Acts 3:20-21  
Book of Mormon: III Nephi 28:7-8

25. We believe in continuous divine revelation. Such revelations are consistent with the Holy Scriptures. The Lord reveals Himself through the Holy Ghost in dreams, visions, signs, gifts, and His Word. God speaks when, where, and through whomever He chooses.

Ref. Bible: I Cor. 12:3-11, Joel 2:28 Book of Mormon: Alma 9:21, II Nephi 26:13, II Nephi 29, Moroni 10:8-24, Mormon 9:7-8

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**OUR BELIEFS**

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26. We believe that marriage between man and woman is a holy institution. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24). We believe that a man shall have one wife and a wife but one husband, except when death takes one of the parties, in which case the survivor is at liberty to remarry.

Finally, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report; and everything virtuous, praise-worthy and upright, we seek after, looking forward to the recompense of reward.

Ref. *Bible*: Phil 4:8

Finally, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report; and everything virtuous, praise-worthy, and upright, we seek after, looking forward to the recompense of reward.

Ref. Bible: Phil 4:8

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## **10 New Life in Christ**

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## 10.1 New Life in Christ

When a man (or woman) repents of his sins and gives his heart to Jesus, his soul is delivered from hell. He becomes aware of God. He receives a new heart (Alma 5:6-7). He becomes a new creature in Christ. He becomes a saint of the Most High God. When you accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, did you realize the impact of this most important decision of your life? *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things become new.”* (2 Corinthians 5:17) and Alma 5:7

### 10.1.1 Goals

The new member will:

- Discuss how to mature in Christ, and will recognize that maturation depends upon the priority and attention given to his/her relationship with the Lord.
- Recognize a personal change of heart as a result of giving his/her life to Christ.
- Describe the essence of the Holy Ghost and its operations.
- Identify challenges that may thwart spiritual development personally, and discuss ways to overcome them.
- Discuss what it means to be Christ-like and describe mindsets and behaviors toward achieving it.
- Recall five actions to obtain eternal salvation and discuss the importance of enduring in Christ.

### 10.1.2 What Can I Expect?

You can be assured that Christ will be with you always, and that He will never abandon you. Jesus made this promise to all who would follow Him, *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”* (John 6:37) Your life will become more meaningful as you abide in Him.

Know that the enemy of your soul (Satan) wants you for himself. He will come at you as a “roaring lion”: *“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”* (1 Peter 5:8) Know that he is very cunning. Know that he may cause you to question your decision to serve God. Know that he may make you question yourself, causing you to experience anxiety, uncertainty, and doubt. Know that you will experience trials, tribulations, and temptations in life.

Other challenges you may face include:

- Difficulty breaking old habits
- Acquiring new undesirable habits
- Changes in relationships with family and friends
- Pursuing a new lifestyle

You will, however, overcome these adversities and challenges with two new weapons you received: Faith in Christ and the Holy Ghost.

- **Faith in Christ:** When you were baptized, you allowed Christ to enter your body and dwell within you. You now live by the faith of the Son of God who loved you and gave His life for you. *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)*

*“And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.”(Helaman 5:12)*

- **The Holy Ghost:** When Jesus spoke to His disciples about His impending death, He promised to not leave them defenseless, but would send the Holy Ghost, or *Comforter*, in His stead who *“shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26)* Immediately before ascending to heaven, Jesus again promised His disciples that they would receive the power to continue the Lord’s work through the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8). This is the same spirit foretold by the prophet Joel, *“And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit.” (Joel 2:28-29)*

The Holy Ghost is:

- A. The mind of the Father and of the Son: *Bible:* 1 Corinthians 2:16
- B. The unseen power and glory which emanates from God and can, at His will, manifest itself in various forms: *Bible:* Matthew 3:16; *Book of Mormon:* 1 Nephi 11:11
- C. The witness of God: *Bible:* John 15:26; 1 John 5:6; *Book of Mormon:* 3 Nephi 11:35-36; 3 Nephi 28:11
- D. The gift of God: *Bible:* Acts 2:38; John 14:26; *Book of Mormon:* 3 Nephi 19:13

As you continue your New Life in Christ, you will experience changes that will help you become more Christ-like. You will:

- Develop a deeper love for all
- Exercise patience
- Learn how to forgive
- Deepen your faith
- Seek the companionship of the Lord Jesus Christ
- Resist temptation
- Despise evil
- Experience joy (true happiness)

### 10.1.3 What the Lord Requires / Expects

You may ask, "What does God expect or require of me?" You are expected to be more *Christ-like*. You may think you have to be perfect, because Christ said, "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*" (Matthew 5:48). We know, and the Lord knows, that as much as we would like to be perfect, we are human, imperfect beings and sinners subject to failure. The important thing to remember is that we are **perfect in Christ**.

The Lord made it very easy to follow Him:

- Follow His commandments (Matthew 22:37-39): "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.*"
- Bring a sacrifice of a broken heart and a contrite spirit (Psalm 51:17): "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*" (3 Nephi 9:20): "*And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit.*" When Jesus came, He did away with the Law of Moses and the myriad of sacrifices it required. No longer did man have to make tangible offerings (sin, burnt, trespass, peace, meat, grain, etc.) to the Lord. The sacrifice Jesus requires of man is a subdued heart and a grieving/penitent spirit.
- Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly (Micah 6:8): The prophet Micah knew 600 to 700 years before Christ was born, what the Lord required and expected. "*He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*"

### 10.1.4 Am I Assured Salvation?

Now that you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ, you are guaranteed salvation. (True/False)

You will be able to live in the kingdom of God forever. (True/False)

You have partaken of the salvation of Christ through faith, repentance, baptism, and the reception of the Holy Ghost, but there is one more important step to include to obtain salvation: you must also *endure*:

(Matthew 24:13) – "*But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*"

(Mormon 9:27-28)- "*...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him. Be wise in the days of your probation...*"



#### 10.1.5 Conclusion

Now that you have begun a new life in Christ, you are on the greatest journey of your life - your walk with the Lord. You began this walk by exercising faith, repenting, being baptized, and having hands laid on you for the reception of the Holy Ghost. You experienced a change in your heart, and now have assurance that God will be with you always. You will experience challenges, but you are equipped with weapons to meet them: your *Faith in Christ*; and the *Holy Ghost*. As you allow the Lord to mold and shape you, you will become more Christ-like. As you follow His commandments and endure in the faith of Jesus Christ, you will receive salvation and be welcomed into the kingdom of God forever!

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## **11 Church Literature and Resources**

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## 11.1 Introduction

Since the early days of the Church, many pamphlets and brochures have been printed primarily for the edification of the members and for informational purposes for visitors and friends. Printed literature of the Church deals with multiple subjects, including doctrine, personal interpretation of scripture, church history, and personal testimonies. The literature published by The Church of Jesus Christ can be used by members for supplemental knowledge of its history and faith, and to learn of God's work in the lives of others.

While there is a substantial listing of materials to read and learn from, the ministry of the Church encourages all members to give priority and focus upon daily reading and study of the Holy Bible and The Book of Mormon. "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth," 2 Timothy 2.15. In this context, a few items are recommended to consider initially, as supplemental reading with the advice of your branch ministry.

In recent years, the Church has switched from printing hard copies to electronic formats.

**Church Books and Publications:** <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/media/books/>.

It is recommended to use this sight as a source for the publications listed below, as well as other books, pamphlets, and resources. If a publication cannot be found online, you may ask your branch librarian if a hard copy exists. If you'd like to order a physical copy of any of the assets available on the Online Bookstore, please reach out to [printhouse@thechurchofjesuschrist.org](mailto:printhouse@thechurchofjesuschrist.org).

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## 11.2 Literature Examples

The following sections contain some examples of the Church's printed literature. You are encouraged to prayerfully investigate these and any other pamphlets the Church has published. Note that the Church recognizes only the Holy Bible and The Book of Mormon as the divinely inspired word of God. Pamphlets containing scriptural interpretation may be the opinions of the writers, and should be evaluated in that context.

### 11.2.1 A Brief History of The Church of Jesus Christ

- Compiled by Brothers Charles Ashton, Alma Cadman and W. H. Cadman

The contents of this pamphlet briefly explain the origin of the Church. In this convenient, easy to understand pamphlet, the writers cover the history of the Church from the death of Joseph Smith, Jr. to William Bickerton and the eventual establishment and organization of the Church in 1862. It stresses the important role William Bickerton played in the growth of the Church. It also details how, by the revelation of God, The Church of Jesus Christ was restored again as Christ had established it originally.

### 11.2.2 Faith and Doctrine

- Originally compiled by Brothers William Cadman, J.L. Armbrust, and W.D. Wright in 1897 (Last printing in 1977)

This pamphlet contains 26 articles of the Faith and Doctrine of The Church of Jesus Christ.

### 11.2.3 The Church's Divine Commission

- Compiled by Brother Robert Watson and edited by the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

This pamphlet is dedicated to explaining the Church's primary commission. It details God's revelations to the Church commanding it to spread His gospel to all people, and especially to the house of Israel.

### 11.2.4 History of The Church of Jesus Christ-Volumes I and II

These two books contain important historical information of the establishment and growth of the Church from the time of the restoration of the gospel through the mid-twentieth century. Included are wonderful experiences and testimonies of individuals from the branches and missions within the

regions of the Church and the worldwide missionary efforts.

### 11.2.5 Questions and Answers

- Compiled by Brother Joseph Calabrese in co-operation with Brothers Robert Watson and V. James Lovalvo

The contents of this pamphlet consist of questions inquiring into the faith, doctrine, and beliefs of the Church, together with their origins and backgrounds. The questions originate from around the world and cover a 10-year period of time. The ones listed represent those most frequently asked of non-members. Many of the questions were asked hundreds of times by many different people, independently of each other. Therefore, they were considered to be of utmost importance to those observers of the Church. The answers are taken from letters that were direct responses to the inquiries.

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS NO LONGER IN PRINT. We recommend that you inquire of your branch ministry and/or the branch librarian to determine if a copy is available of this resource.

### 11.2.6 The Gospel News

- <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/media/gospel-news/>

The Gospel News is the monthly newspaper of The Church of Jesus Christ. Here, you'll find messages from Church leadership, updates on Church events, and recurring columns to inspire and encourage.

Founded in 1938, The Gospel News has a rich history.

It used to be the primary news outlet for Church members to communicate with one another about local updates, blessings, and testimonies. (*Scroll down, and you'll find every single one of those precious back issues.*) Now, this Church newspaper remains a source of spiritual nourishment and uplift.

### 11.2.7 Electronic Resources

The Church has several electronic literary resources as listed below:

- <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/>- The official site for The Church of Jesus Christ  
 This site presents a variety of information and resources for all members including the leadership, GMBA, Ladies Uplift Circle, events calendar, and educational resources. Daily devotionals are posted for inspiration and guidance. The Holy Bible, Book of Mormon and faith-based lesson plans are available through the site.
- Flock Note - [Sign Up](#) [Submission Form](#)  
 The Church Leadership has commissioned this online form to help the saints communicate with each other regarding news like prayer requests, praise reports, baptisms, ordinations, baby blessings, weddings and death notices.
- <http://www.first-voices.org/> - The First Voices Journal  
 Sponsored by the Native American Outreach Committee of the Church - for and about Native Americans / First Nations People

This is a site dedicated to Native American Peoples to inform them of their identity as descendants of Abraham, to introduce them to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to share future hopes and expectations regarding the fulfillment of God's covenants to them. These messages are communicated through power point presentations, articles and journals. The site also contains links to additional sites and book reviews that may be of interest to Native American Peoples and others, as well.

- <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/media/blog/> - The Gospel Blog  
This site is dedicated to members of the Church to share daily inspirational messages and experiences of the manifestations of the power of God and His Spirit in their lives. It is a forum to discuss topics and post comments.

Current articles may be found on the home page of the Church's web site. Past blog entries can be accessed by browsing through the archives on the sidebar of the home page. Members may also subscribe to the blog and have articles sent directly to their e-mail inbox.

- <https://thechurchofjesuschrist.org/connect/youth-gmba/students/> - The Student Support Program

The Student Support Program (SSP) is a social network for high school and college-age youth of the Church. Its primary goal is to support young members who are geographically isolated from their peers, but the organization welcomes anyone in this age bracket that would like to participate. Primary activities include publishing monthly articles on youth-centered topics and hosting video chats online where young people discuss scripture, build friendships, and seek advice from their peers. The SSP website contains links to over 40 past SSP articles to be used as resources for youth seminars or MBA classes, as well as links to sermons and lessons for those who cannot attend a local Sunday service.

To sign up for the SSP, or to browse the available resources click the link above.

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## **12 A Unique Church**

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## 12.1 Introduction

**“Did this ever happen to you?”** It is a Sunday morning your family is getting ready to go to Church. Your next-door neighbor, who is getting ready to mow his lawn, comes up to you and says, “I see you go to church every Sunday and Wednesday. What church do you attend?” You tell him you are a member of The Church of Jesus Christ, and give him the location. He then asks you, “What kind of church is it?” **How would you answer him?**

The Church of Jesus Christ is a unique church. Because we acknowledge an apostasy and restoration of the gospel of Christ, you could answer your neighbor's question by stating the Church is a restoration church. However, there are other restoration churches, and even though we share some history with those churches, our organization is different. In most cases, the term “restoration church” will not be meaningful without a great deal of additional explanation.

Some might be tempted to say the Church is non-denominational, because they don't know how to categorize it, but this is incorrect. For one thing, it avoids the main point of being unique. The term implies no identification at all.

A good response for the neighbor would be to explain that the Church is modeled after the church established by Jesus Christ in the New Testament. This may be all you need to say. Unless a person shows an interest and asks specific questions, simple answers are best.

## 12.2 Goals of this Chapter

After completing this chapter, the member will be able to:

- Give a proper response when asked, “What kind of church is The Church of Jesus Christ?”
  - Discuss and describe five aspects of The Church of Jesus Christ that make it a unique church.
-



## 12.2 What Makes The Church of Jesus Christ Unique?

As mentioned above, The Church of Jesus Christ is truly unique. Several elements that make the Church unique include:

- **Priesthood Authority** – One component that makes The Church of Jesus Christ unique is priesthood authority, as was demonstrated throughout the scriptures.

In The Book of Mormon: Jesus gave His twelve disciples power and authority to baptize (3 Nephi 12:1); Alma baptized Helam “having authority from the Almighty God” (Mosiah 18:13); “Alma, having authority from God, ordained priests” (Mosiah 18:18); and in Alma 5:3, Alma proclaimed that his father Alma, high priest over the church of God, was given power and authority from God to establish a church.

In the Bible: Jesus gave His twelve apostles power over unclean spirits as He sent them out, two by two, to spread His gospel (Mark 6:7). This same power and authority was given to apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors, “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12); and in (Matthew 28:18-20) Jesus announced to His eleven disciples that, “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

The Church believes that it received priesthood authority after the ancient Nephite and Jaredite records (The Book of Mormon) were translated, which restored the gospel of Christ on the earth. Joseph Smith, Jr. and Oliver Cowdery prayed for the restoration of the priesthood authority and on May 15, 1829, an angel visited them, stating, “I am thy fellow servant,” and “upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer this priesthood and this authority, which shall remain on the earth...”

Priesthood authority was given to William Bickerton and others at a church conference held in July of 1862 when the gift of tongues was spoken, and the interpretation was given to “Set apart and ordain the twelve...”

Evidence that the priesthood possesses authority rests in the Church being founded on the gospel of Christ and the presence of the “works of the Father” within the Church (Acts 2:41-43, 3 Nephi 27:10 and 29:5-7), consisting of the manifestation of Spiritual gifts and the power of the Holy Ghost.

- **Washing of Feet** – The washing of feet was an ordinance instituted by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (John 13:1-17). Christ set the example by washing the feet of His disciples, illustrating the importance of humility and service in His followers. The washing of feet is practiced among members in the Church today.
- **Blessing of Children** – The blessing of a child consists of a prayer offered by an ordained elder to petition God’s protection and blessing. Any child, who is not of the age to be held responsible for their thoughts and actions, may be blessed in The Church of Jesus Christ. In The Book of Mormon, Jesus commanded parents to bring their children to Him, and He blessed them one by one (3 Nephi 17:11-25). In the New Testament, Jesus insisted that young children be brought to Him, instructing that men and women must become like little children to enter into the kingdom of heaven. He then took them in His arms and blessed them (Mark 10:13-16). The Church practices blessing of children today.

- **The Peaceful Reign (Zion)** – This refers to a peaceful condition as well as the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth while men are in the flesh (2 Nephi 21:6-10, 30:10-18, Isaiah 2:1-5, 11:1-10, Micah 4:1-4). The Church believes in the fulfillment of these scriptures.
- **Law of Offense** – The law of offense is the practice where individuals forgive and reconcile differences, restoring love and fellowship with one another. Jesus Christ eloquently explains the law of offense in Matthew 18:15-20. Unity is the goal for which to strive - unity with God and with each other. There is strength in unity. Division and strife are tools Satan uses to divide, conquer, and weaken the Church. The law of offense is practiced in the Church today.
- **Unpaid Ministry** – Ministers in The Church of Jesus Christ are not paid. They do not receive their livelihood from preaching the gospel. In Matthew 10:8, Jesus instructs His disciples to preach and perform their ministerial duties without compensation, “freely ye have received, freely give”. In The Book of Mormon, God commands men to labor out of love for the souls of mankind (2 Nephi 26:29-31).

Ministers are not required to have ministerial degrees, but are encouraged to prayerfully read and study the scriptures, and rely on the Holy Ghost for understanding and proper interpretation. Jesus chose and ordained ordinary men such as fishermen and tax collectors to be his disciples (Mark 3:13-15).

- **Divine Commission** – The priesthood of Christ was given the commission, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19-20). This is sometimes referred to as the “great commission.”

In addition to the above, the priesthood of The Church of Jesus Christ has been given a special commission, which is known to us as the “divine commission.” This commission gives them the responsibility to preach the pure gospel of Christ to the descendants of Joseph, one of the twelve tribes of Israel, as recorded in the Holy Bible and The Book of Mormon. In The Book of Mormon the descendants of Joseph are known as *Nephites* and *Lamanites*. They are often referred to as *the seed of Joseph*. From the writings in The Book of Mormon, the Church has learned that the descendants of Joseph are living upon the American continents. The *seed of Joseph* are the “other sheep” referred to in the Bible (John 10:16), and also specifically mentioned in The Book of Mormon (3 Nephi 15:21). Restoring the people of Joseph to the knowledge of Christ will commence the work of restoring the other tribes of Israel. The Church is engaged in this work today.

- **The Choice Seer** – The Book of Mormon foretells of a choice seer who will come forth to bring the descendants of Joseph to the knowledge of the covenants which God made with their fathers (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), and to convince them of the word of God (2 Nephi 3:4-16,18-21,24).

- **Laying on of Hands for the Weak in Spirit** – In the Church of Jesus Christ, one has the opportunity to have hands laid upon him by the elders when he feels discouraged or weak in spirit. In Ephesians 6:18, Paul reminds us we can always call on the Spirit for help, and in Romans 8:26, he states that the Spirit can help us in our weakness, and even though we may not know what to pray, the Spirit makes intercessions for us and knows our needs. Finally, in 2 Timothy 1:6, Paul tells Timothy (and us) to "...stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands."

### 12.3 Other Attributes of The Church of Jesus Christ that make It Unique

The attributes mentioned above are considered the major qualities that make The Church of Jesus Christ truly unique. There are, however, many underlying beliefs and values, which are equally important, that are associated with The Church of Jesus Christ. These include:

- The desire to keep the gospel pure
  - The love of God possessed by brothers and sisters in Christ
  - Belief that the tribes of Israel will recognize Jesus Christ as the Messiah
  - Belief that the remaining tribes of Israel will be gathered to their promised lands
  - Other records will come forth testifying of Jesus Christ and His gospel
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