

## ELDER JAMES E. TALMAGE

They call us "Mormons." The Church to which we belong is known as the "Mormon Church." The gospel which is committed to the Church is called "Mormonism." These names, pseudonyms as they are, have been fastened upon us. We do not resent the titles, but we must not forget that they are false names, as thus applied. Nicknames they were; and where the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is known in the world to one by its proper name, it has been heard of by hundreds as the "Mormon Church." The possibility of error, misunderstanding, false conception, through this application of the term "Mormon" should not be forgotten. The Lutheran Church is named after a great man, and those who chose to follow his banner called themselves "Lutherans." So in many other instances have sects and denominations been named after men; but this is not the Church of Mormon, nor the Church of Joseph Smith, nor of Brigham Young, nor of any other man save only that Man who was the Son of the Living God, He who was and is Jesus the Christ.

## WHOSE CHURCH IS IT?

The compound name-title given to the Church has drawn questions and has aroused thought in the minds of those who are not of us: *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*. You will remember that after Christ had established his Church among the aboriginal peoples of this continent, when he appeared as a resurrected Being amongst them, after he had chosen and ordained twelve men to direct the affairs of the Church, there was some little disputation as to the name the Church should bear, and the Twelve, remembering the Lord's gracious promise that when they would call upon him, united in heart and purpose, they would be sure of a hearing, fasted and prayed, and He appeared again amongst them there in their council meeting in bodily presence and asked them what they would. They said, "Lord, we will that thou wouldst tell us the name whereby we shall call this Church." His answer, as we may render it in modern style of speech, was to this effect: Why should there be any question on so simple a matter as that? Whose church is it? Is it the church of Moses? If so, call it, of course, by the name of Moses; or if it be the church of any other man, then call it by his name, but if it be my Church, as ye say, and it is, then call it by my name.

## THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

When this restored church was organized in 1830, ninety-two years ago yesterday, it was named the Church of Jesus Christ; but afterward, by special revelation through the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Lord himself gave the extended name and said: "For thus shall my Church be called in the last days, even the Church of Jesus Christ

of Latter-day Saints." Many of us content ourselves with the assumption that this addition was made to avoid confusion with the Church of Jesus Christ as it had existed in earlier days, the primitive Church as we call it; and I agree with that as being a good purpose well served. Nevertheless, to me there is a deeper meaning. This is in one sense, and that an all-comprehending sense, the Church of Jesus Christ. It was organized by his commandment. Its doctrines are his doctrines. The salvation it preaches is the salvation which he made possible; but as an organization among men, as a body of human beings it is likewise the Church of the Latter-day Saints, and to this body constituting the organization is committed certain authority and to such are given certain privileges coupled with commensurate responsibilities. It is a self-perpetuating organization, all its affairs being carried on by men who are duly called under the inspiration or by direct revelation from the Lord who stands at its head.

#### PRONE TO USE "MORMON" TOO FREELY

The Church, therefore, is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and while I say we do not resent the term "Mormon," I am inclined to think that we Latter-day Saints, as we call ourselves, and rightly too, are prone to use the term "Mormon" a little too freely. I have been impressed by comments made to me, orally and by letter, by men of thought, theologians and scripture students, telling of the impression made upon them when they first considered the name "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" and expressing surprise that we use the term "Mormon" among ourselves, as we do, so freely. I have thought of this matter many times, extending through many years, but "Mormon" is a common name with us. If we will only remember that it is used because others know us thereby and because it is shorter, and because we are used to it, there may be no reason for strong objection; and there is a little excuse, perhaps, if not of justification, for I remember that the Lord has made plain that the holy Priesthood, which we are told is after the order of the Son of God, has been and is called the Melchizedek Priesthood to avoid the too frequent repetition of the sacred Name, and I would rather hear the Church spoken of as the "Mormon Church" if we understand the sense in which the term is used, than to hear the name of Jesus Christ used loosely, or with contempt, and perhaps with feelings that are even more sinful.

#### ATTEMPTS OF SMALL SECTS TO USE NICKNAME

By the way, now that the term "Mormon," thus fastened upon us, has become commonly current, I note that because of the esteem in which the Church is held by many who know us as we are and yet are not of us, attempts have been made by certain small sects to

claim it. You know there are a number of small, aberrant, and abnormal denominations who profess to believe in this little thing that the Prophet Joseph said or did, or to accept that part of the revelations which God gave to him though they reject many of the revelations from the Lord given through that same prophet, and in years past they have made manifest their detestation of the term "Mormon." Their advertisements in the papers used to be coupled with an explanatory line "Not Mormon," and now I think I am not saying too much when I affirm that they are trying to purloin that nickname and apply it to themselves. They want to be called "Mormons." But the world who gave us the nickname have given us letters patent assuring our right, our exclusive right to it. Whether we want to use it or not is another matter.

#### THE REAL MEANING OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

But I pray you consider what the real name means—"The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints." We can understand, easily, what "Latter-day" means—modern day, this day; but what does the word "Saint" mean? By derivation, by acceptance, and by the best authority in the language, it means directly, used as an adjective, "holy," and when used as a noun, "a holy one;" and we, therefore, profess to be a body of holy men, holy women. We proclaim ourselves in the name of Jesus Christ to be the holy ones of the last days, a significant proclamation, blasphemous in the extreme if it be not justified. But that name was given us of God. We do not apologize for it, nor do we preach the doctrines of the gospel, committed to the Church to be preached, in any apologetic manner. We preach in simplicity, in humility, but not by way of apology. I agree, from my own observation, with the attitude assumed by many, referred to and described so tersely by Elder McKay. We have no apology to offer for our name nor for our membership in the Church, nor for our scriptures that have been given by revelation through the prophets of the Lord unto the people.

What should it mean to you and me, to be thus called a holy man, a holy woman? As thus applied, the term does not mean that the one who bears it is necessarily without weakness or devoid of blemish. An authorized usage of the term "holy" is that it shall apply to anyone or anything that is authoritatively appointed and set apart for exclusive service in the cause of God, and such we profess to be, set apart amongst men and nations as the people of God. However, all peoples and all nations may be one with us and may thus be set apart, if they only will, and so become entitled to bear that distinguishing name.

#### GREAT POWER IN CHURCH REGARDLESS OF NUMBER

There is power in a name given of God, and there is power in

this Church. You know it, we all know it, though our numbers be few. One of our speakers referred to the total membership of the Church as constituting a handful as compared with the people of the world, the human population at this time. The expression was apt; but I pray you let us not forget that the Lord does not reckon strength in terms of the numbers of men. You know a certain king of old, the king of Israel, was rebuked because he wanted to number Israel and find out over how many people he ruled. Why should he not have known that though they were one one-thousandth part as many as he hoped, with the Lord on their side they could vanquish the world, if so directed. The success of this Church, as an organization among men, does not depend wholly upon numbers.

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Let me illustrate, showing that other people recognize the fact. Some time ago it was my privilege to be in consultation with a man of letters, who was a directing editor of two large newspapers in Boston. He inquired into some phases of our Church history, asked me many questions in an investigative manner, and he put this inquiry to me: "What is the membership of your Church?" This was long ago, a few years ago, before the last census was taken. I said: "Approximately five hundred thousand." "Oh," he said, "I don't mean here in New England, or in this section only. I want the total membership." "I have told you, sir." He leaned back in his chair; then he said, "Do you tell me, in all earnestness, that the great "Mormon" Church numbers only approximately half a million?" "I do." Again he leaned back and, after a moment's thought, rose as the Spirit of the Lord gave him utterance, and bore testimony to the power of God in these simple words: "Surely, the hand of God is in it."

We are not a big Church, but we are a great one—the greatest on the face of the earth. I say it without apology, without qualification. Between bigness and greatness there is a fundamental difference.

Again, in the city of Baltimore I was once talking with the editor of one of the leading papers. I had been announced to speak in the city. He explained to me—this was during the war season—that space was precious in their papers, that the force of reporters had been cut down, and perhaps they could not cover the meeting as they would otherwise have been pleased to do. In a casual way he said: "How many have you in your congregation here in Baltimore?" I was able to answer him promptly and accurately, for shortly before my interview with him I had been in consultation with the conference president. I gave the number—as I remember it, it was twenty-nine. "Twenty-nine," I replied. He started in his chair—"Twenty-nine what?" "Twenty-nine souls," said I, "most of them children." He said: "Are you in earnest? Are they all you have?" I said, "Yes;

and if you wish I can give you the names and the addresses. We have the complete roll and record of our members here." His answer was: "We will send a reporter. You shall have all the space you want."

#### NOT DISAPPOINTED IN SMALL NUMBERS

Do you see, that such men recognize the fact that there is something more in the Church than mere numbers? I call to mind the prediction of the ancient Nephite prophet—no, the prediction of the living God, given through his prophet, that in these days, in the very dispensation in which this book, the Book of Mormon, should come forth out of the earth, the Church of the Lamb should be found in many lands, all over the earth, but that their numbers would be few; so we are not disappointed. We expect to be few; for, of the whole human family there are few who are willing to recognize the truth, very few. I read with deep emotion that declaration recorded in the seventy-sixth section of the Doctrine and Covenants that the inhabitants of the Celestial world, kingdom or glory, whichever you like, the lowest of the kingdoms of glory, were seen to be as innumerable as the stars in heaven or the grains of sand upon the seashore. We are started on the high journey along that straight and narrow path that has been referred to, leading to the Celestial kingdom of the Lord our God. Let us sanctify ourselves, as becomes holy ones, that there be no blemish upon our sacred name and title. I pray in the name of Him who gave the Church its designation, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Claire Gosling sang a sacred solo entitled, "Abide with me."

#### ELDER STEPHEN L. RICHARDS

##### A REVOLTING CRIME

Two months ago a prominent business man of this city sat in his home, eating his evening meal, with his family surrounding him. Without warning, there entered his home two masked men. Upon their entrance they commanded him to raise his hands, and thereafter, immediately, this man was shot to death. The crime cast a pall of horror and of gloom over this entire community.

##### CRITICISM OF THE POLICE OFFICERS AND THE LAW

Following the first effects there came a reaction in the form of indignation and rather severe criticism of the municipal and police authorities for the crime which had been committed. A delegation of business men, representative of clubs and associations to which the deceased belonged, waited upon the police and civic departments of the city, voicing something in the nature of criticism for what was alleged to be inefficiency on the part of that department and its inability to forestall such terrible disasters as that which had