

soever should repent and obey would know, by the gift of the Holy Ghost, that the message which they brought was true.

As the result of this message many thousands of people have been gathered out from the various nations where the gospel has been preached and brought to Zion, the place designated by the Lord as the gathering place of Latter-day Israel. The desert has been made glad because of them, and has been converted into fruitful fields. Springs of living water have broken out to moisten the thirsty land, and cities have sprung up where before was only desolation and wilderness. Music and the voices of children are heard in the streets where silence had reigned supreme.

It is the Lord our God, through his Only Begotten Son, who has done it. To him be the praise and glory forever.

We exhort our brethren and sisters of the Church, wherever they may be, to remain steadfast in their faith. Hold fast to the word of the Lord, which is the iron rod that will lead us to the Tree of Life.

To the people of the world we appeal to come unto Christ, through whom redemption cometh to all those who take upon them his name, and keep the commandments which he has given. We bear witness that the fulness of his gospel has been restored, that his Church is established, and will continue to spread until peace shall prevail among men, and his kingdom come and his will be done upon earth as it is done in heaven. O Lord, hasten that glorious day.

HEBER J. GRANT,
ANTHONY W. IVINS,
CHARLES W. NIBLEY,

First Presidency.

God bless you. Amen.

PRESIDENT ANTHONY W. IVINS

I sincerely desire, my brethren and sisters, during the few moments of time that I may occupy, that I may have the benefit of your faith, exercised in my behalf. I appreciate fully the responsibility which I assume, as I stand here professing to teach the doctrines of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

THE ADVICE OF GAMALIEL

The scripture which I am about to read I have often quoted before, but it appears so appropriate to the subject which I desire briefly to discuss that it will bear repetition. The apostles who had been chosen by our Lord had been imprisoned by those who were opposed to the doctrines which they taught, and had been arraigned before the Jewish high priests, by whom they were accused of violating the law. When opportunity was granted them to speak in their own behalf, Peter stood up and said:

"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree.

"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

"When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them,

"Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; and said unto them:

"Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. * * *

"For if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it."

NORWAY DECIDES THE "MORMONS" ARE NOT CHRISTIANS

During the past ninety-six years the restored gospel of Christ has been preached in both the old and the new world without serious governmental opposition, or objection on the part of the people at large.

From the time of its introduction into the Scandinavian, and other countries of Europe, people who appear to have been prepared for the gospel before they heard it have joyfully accepted the message which the elders of the Church have carried to them, and the converts who have been gathered out from among those nations have become a pillar of strength to the Church.

To our surprise and regret the friendly relations which have so long existed have recently become greatly disturbed, because of the fact that our missionaries have been refused admittance to Norway, where, before, they had enjoyed the privileges accorded to other religious organizations. Upon inquiry regarding the reason for this changed attitude we were informed that representatives of the Christian churches of the country, in convention assembled, had passed resolutions to the effect that the "Mormon" Church is not a Christian organization, and consequently we were not entitled to the privileges, and protection under the law which we have hitherto enjoyed.

Our protest against this ruling was answered by the statement that the only means by which it could be modified would be for a conference of churches to assemble, and officially declare that the jury which, without having given us an opportunity to be heard in our own behalf, had decided that we were guilty, must meet and reverse the decision which they had rendered, a court before which we could expect no more of justice than was accorded the Redeemer of the world, when arraigned before the Jewish Sanhedrin.

A CONVENTION OF CHURCHES IN THIS LAND DECLARES US UNCHRISTIAN

From the published account of the proceedings of the general assembly of a convention of representatives of one of the great churches of our own country, held during the year just passed, I quote as follows:

"The American Islam. Thus has the 'Mormon' area often been characterized. It is an apt figure of speech. Those who live and labor in the atmosphere of this Islam of America, know what it means to go up against a stone wall, with scarcely ever feeling it give a little. The 'Mormon' has, to date, been far more zealous to convert the Christian, than the Christian has to convert him."

Islamism, as you are aware, is the religion of Mohammed. In one respect it is a good religion, for it at least teaches faith in, and service to a living God, the God of Abraham, but it does not recognize Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of the world, or as the Son of God.

From the foregoing, my brethren and sisters, you will observe that the Church of which you are members is declared, both in the old world, and here in our own country, to be an un-Christian organization, and as a consequence you are declared to be not Christians.

BOTH DECLARATIONS INEXCUSABLE AND UNTRUE

Had statements such as those been made ninety-six years ago, soon after the organization of the Church, when means of obtaining information was limited, and the history and accomplishments of the Church were before it, and not behind, there might have been some reason for the exercise of charity towards the persons responsible for the publication of such statements to the people of the world, but now, after the lapse of nearly a century, after the doctrines of the Church have been expounded to the people of all civilized countries, after millions of publications setting forth the doctrines of the Church have been distributed, such statements can only be regarded as the result of either inexcusable ignorance or wilful desire to deceive the people, by statements which are known to be untrue.

WHAT CONSTITUTES A CHRISTIAN?

The situation suggests the question: What constitutes a Christian Church, a Christian community or individual, and by what rule, or tribunal is a question of such vital importance to be decided?

I suppose the general answer would be: A Christian is one who professes faith in, and follows the teachings of Christ, and that a body of people, organized as a worshiping assembly, professing faith in the Redeemer, would be regarded as a Christian church.

During the earliest history of the Primitive Church its members were not referred to as Christians, but as brethren, disciples or saints. It was at Antioch, as I remember, about ten years after the crucifixion, that the followers of the Redeemer were first called Christians, a name applied to them in derision, or contempt which they accepted very much as we have accepted the name "Mormon," because we accept the Book of Mormon as a divine revelation from the Lord.

The first use of the word church, applied to the followers of Christ, so far as I am aware, was by the Redeemer himself when he declared to Peter that upon the rock of revelation he would build his Church, and that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, a very significant statement, a plain declaration that revelation is the foundation upon which the Church must rest.

We are told that the apostles, as they traveled from place to place,

preaching to the people, ordained elders in every church, and after commending the converted members to the Lord passed on to other fields. Thus the entire body of converts became known as the Church of Christ, he being declared to be its head, the Church being subject to him in all things.

THE ANSWER GIVEN IN THE WORDS OF OUR LORD AND HIS DISCIPLES

I know of no better authority on the question than the words of our Lord, and those of his disciples, who followed after him.

Before an organization could be formed which could be designated as a church, it was necessary that converts be made to the divinity of the Redeemer, and the importance of the message which he brought to the people of the world. His doctrine, or as he taught, the doctrine of his Father who sent him, as he expounded it in his memorable sermon on the mount, teaches us the manner of life we should lead in order that we may be worthy to be called Christians.

He taught us to overcome the evil habits of the world, its pride and selfishness, becoming humble in spirit, and promised that by so doing we should inherit the blessings of the earth. He taught us that we are to be peace-makers, if we are to become the children of God. That our example should be such that others seeing our good works, would be led to glorify the name of our Father who is in heaven. That, as we hope for mercy, we should be merciful. That we should not sit in judgment upon others, for by the judgment with which we judge, so shall we be judged. That we should not seek to exalt ourselves, for he who exalteth himself shall be abased. That we should be charitable, but admonishing us that if we give alms to be seen of men, for our own glory, it availeth us nothing.

His entire doctrine was one which requires that men withdraw from the ambition, selfishness and strife of the world, and dedicate themselves to the service of the Lord, and their fellow men, and he covenanted that if they will do so the necessary temporal blessings shall be conferred upon them, as a reward for righteousness.

He declared another doctrine of great importance in that remarkable discourse, that not all who say Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who doeth the will of our Father who is in heaven.

Therefore he said, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house upon a rock. And the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And he who heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon sand, and the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell, for it was founded upon sand, and great was the fall of it.

The acceptance of these first principles of the gospel were indispensable, but not sufficient to entitle one to be called a Christian. He must manifest his faith by accepting the ordinance of baptism, an ordinance which was administered to the Redeemer himself by John the Baptist, an ordinance without which our Lord declared a man cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.

Nor was baptism alone sufficient. John declared that his baptism was with water for the remission of sin, but that one who would come after him would baptize with fire and the Holy Ghost.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH DEFINED

When Paul came to Ephesus he found certain disciples and asked if they had received the Holy Ghost. They answered we have not so much as heard that there be any Holy Ghost. Unto what then were you baptized, he asked, and they replied unto John's baptism. They were then baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid his hands upon them they received the Holy Ghost.

Those who believed, and subjected themselves to the administration of these simple first ordinances of the Church became Christians. They had manifested their faith in Christ, in his divinity, his death, and above all his resurrection from the grave by being buried in the water of baptism, in similitude of his death, and coming up from it with their sins washed away, born to newness of life, as he arose to newness of life, with his glorified, resurrected body.

Then came the climax, when, by laying on of hands by those in authority the Holy Ghost was conferred upon the baptized believer: The Holy Ghost, which takes of the things of the Father and manifests them unto man, which bears witness of the Father and the Son, not in a voice audible to our ordinary sense of hearing, but at the same time more potent and convincing than any words the human voice can utter; the Holy Ghost which leads us into all truth and is an unfailing source of strength, wisdom and knowledge so long as we permit ourselves to be guided by its unerring counsels.

Such a person became a Christian, and an association of such people became a Christian church.

That a church may be brought into existence and endure it must be properly organized, with officers to preside over it and direct the conduct of its affairs, and these our Lord provided through the Twelve Apostles whom he chose, and the quorums of the lesser priesthood with their helps in government, an organization complete in every detail, conferring upon the men chosen the keys of authority which belong to the priesthood, and which authorize them to act in the direction of the affairs of the Church.

That any group of persons may associate themselves together as a worshipping assembly, and call themselves a church is conceded, and they are at liberty to choose any name they may desire by which their organization shall be known. For all the good which such an organ-

ization may accomplish the Lord will give them credit, and they will be rewarded for their efforts to establish faith in the hearts of people, I believe far beyond their expectations, for everything that is good, and persuadeth men to do good, cometh from God. The Latter-day Saints wish all people who are thus striving God-speed.

CALAMITIES THAT FOLLOWED

After the crucifixion of the Redeemer, and the death of the apostles whom he had chosen, all of whom suffered violent death because of their faith, with the exception of John the Revelator, many different religious sects came into existence, numbers of them professing Christianity, but teaching doctrines at variance with those taught by the Redeemer and his disciples.

Prior to his crucifixion, our Lord plainly outlined to his disciples that the time was approaching when he would be offered up, when he would leave them, but promised that at a future time he would return and consummate the work which he had commenced. Upon one occasion, as he sat on the Mount of Olives, his disciples came to him and asked when these things should be, and what would be the sign of his coming and of the end of the world.

The Redeemer outlined the conditions which would prevail at the time when he would come in glory, in the clouds of heaven, with such detail and accuracy that one who lives at the present time may read as he runs, and know that he lives in the day to which Christ referred. Read the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, my brethren and sisters, if you desire to know more of the tremendous importance of the dispensation in which you live.

Upon this occasion he said to his disciples: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." For there shall be false Christs and false prophets, who if it were possible would deceive the very elect. And they shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and you shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake, and, most important of all, this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, as a witness unto all people, and then shall the end come.

The Prophet Isaiah says: "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied and spoiled."

THE REASON FOR APOSTASY AND CALAMITIES

Why are these dire calamities decreed? The prophet makes the reason clear, it is because both priest and people have transgressed the law of the Lord, changed the ordinances of his Church and broken the everlasting covenant. Our Lord gave us the key by which we may know the voice of the good Shepherd when this time of confusion and

distress is upon us. When his disciples asked him whither they should go, or look, he replied: "Wheresoever the carcase is there will the eagles be gathered together," and, wherever the true Church of Christ is, there will the fruits of his gospel be manifested in the lives of the people.

WHY THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS IS A CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a Christian Church in the fullest sense of the word, the declarations of the so-called Christian churches of the world to the contrary notwithstanding. In its establishment and accomplishments the words of the Redeemer, and the declarations of the prophets who lived before and after him are fulfilled. In justification of this declaration permit me to make the following statement, briefly, because a subject of such tremendous importance can only be touched upon in one brief discourse.

BRIEF STORY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH

One hundred seven years ago, Joseph Smith, at the time in his fifteenth year, lived with his parents at Manchester, in the state of New York. While a great religious revival was being held in the neighborhood he found himself in doubt as to which of the contending sects he should join, for there was great rivalry among them in their efforts to secure converts.

Profoundly religious he had never conceived the idea that all were wrong, neither could he believe that all were right, because of the great difference in doctrine and organization which existed. Familiar with the scriptures he knew that the Lord had promised wisdom to all who lacked it, if they would go to him in faith, and believing that the question which he was not able to decide would be answered by the Lord, he retired to the woods and engaged in earnest prayer.

While thus occupied a vision was unfolded in which he saw two glorious personages, whose brightness and glory, he says, defied all description. One of these personages, pointing to the other, said: "This is my beloved Son, hear him."

The Person referred to told Joseph that he should join none of the existing churches, that all were wrong, that they drew near him with their lips, but their hearts were removed far from him, and they taught for doctrine the commandments of men.

Nothing of importance occurred in the life of Joseph Smith, except that he was persecuted and ridiculed because he maintained that he had seen this vision, until three years later, when, while engaged in prayer in his bed room, Joseph says that a light began to appear, which increased in brilliancy until the room was brighter than at noon-day, when a personage appeared at his bedside, clothed in a robe of exquisite whiteness.

This personage said that he was a messenger sent from the

presence of God, and that his name was Moroni, that the Lord had a great work for Joseph to do, and that his name should be known for both good and evil among all nations, that among some it would be held in honor, and among others in reproach. He also told him that there was a book deposited, written upon gold plates, containing the history of the ancient inhabitants of this continent, and that it also contained the fulness of the everlasting gospel, as it was delivered by the Savior to them, and that there was also deposited the Urim and Thummim, by means of which the characters engraven on the plates could be translated. This was the Book of Mormon, which was later delivered to Joseph Smith, translated by him and first published to the world in 1830.

While engaged in the work of translation, assisted by Oliver Cowdery, Joseph observed the importance which attached to the ordinance of baptism, and desiring greater light he and Oliver went to a secluded spot, on the bank of the Susquehanna River, and engaged in prayer. While thus occupied they bear witness that a messenger from heaven descended in a cloud of light, and laying his hands upon their heads said: "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins, and this shall never be taken again from the earth, until the sons of Levi do offer again an offering unto the Lord in righteousness."

This messenger told them that he was John the Baptist, that he acted under instruction from Peter, James and John. That the Aaronic Priesthood, which he had conferred had not the power to lay on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, but that the keys of the Melchizedek Priesthood would be later conferred upon them. This latter priesthood was conferred upon Joseph and Oliver at a later date under the hands of Peter, James and John, who ordained them to the Apostleship, and committed to them the keys of the kingdom, and of the Gospel Dispensation of the Fulness of Times.

It is upon this authority that the Church assumes to speak and act in the name of the Lord.

THE CHURCH NOT A FACTION, BUT THE RESTORED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Church is not a protestant faction which has broken away from the mother church, or from any other religious body. It is the Church of Christ, our Lord, restored to earth as he and the prophets declared it should be, restored for the purpose of gathering the outcasts of Israel, that the way may be prepared for the coming of the Redeemer of the world, and the consummation of the purposes of the Lord, in so far as they pertain to the present generation of mankind, who occupy the small portion of the universe, which we call the world.

WE DO NOT BELIEVE IT, SAY OBJECTORS

Yes, says the objector, if this story were true your authority would

be sufficient, but we do not believe it. We do not believe that Joseph Smith, in vision, saw and communed with the Father and Son. We do not believe that heavenly messengers visited him, nor that the keys of the Priesthood were conferred upon him by John the Baptist, nor by Peter, James and John. These men died more than a thousand years ago, and the dead do not return to visit the living. Visions and the visitation of angels have long since been done away with, there are no such things in the age in which we live, Joseph Smith was either a visionary dreamer, and these imaginings were the result of a disordered mind, or else he was a wilful impostor.

Neither did the people believe the words of the Redeemer of the world. They declared him to be an impostor, a disturber of the peace, that he was guilty of sedition, and was a blasphemer, because he declared himself to be the Son of God, and it was upon these and other similar charges that he was condemned to death upon the cross. The people did not believe that Moses and Elias appeared to Peter, James and John, at the time of the transfiguration of the Redeemer, they had long been dead, and could not return.

Nor did they believe Paul when he declared to King Agrippa and Festus, that as he journeyed toward Damascus, at noon day a light brighter than the sun descended from heaven which caused him, and those who were with him to fall to the earth. That a voice called to him declaring that it was Jesus of Nazareth who spoke, telling him to arise, and stand upon his feet, and said: "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness" to the people, especially to the Gentiles, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God." The Redeemer had been crucified, declared dead, and Festus, who could not understand how he could appear to anyone, cried out: "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." But Paul answered, "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness."

WE BEAR WITNESS OF THE RESTORATION

So do we in soberness and truth bear witness to the people of the world today, to king and subject, to patrician and plebeian, to rich and poor, to Christian and heathen; that Joseph Smith was divinely called to be the instrument in the hands of the Lord in the restoration of the gospel of Christ; that the keys of the Priesthood were conferred upon him as has been stated, and have come down through his successors to the present. Another thing to which we bear witness is that all men may know the truth of the testimony which we bear by asking the Lord for it in faith. It is not by the words of men that you have been converted, my brethren and sisters, but by the gift of the Holy Ghost, which has borne witness of the truth of these things, and this great congregation of people would arise and testify to the truth of what I say if requested to do so.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

We believe in the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary, and that the Child born at Bethlehem of Judea was in very deed the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father in the flesh. That he is our advocate with the Father, the medium through which we reach the throne of grace.

The foundation of the Church is laid in God the Eternal Father, his Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost, which constitute the Godhead. No person can become a member of the Church until he has taken upon him the name of Christ, and entered into the covenant that he is willing to serve him, and keep the commandments which he has given, to the best of his ability. He must accept the ordinance of baptism, which is administered in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in other words he must accept Christ as the Redeemer of the world, without reservation.

The members of the Church meet together once each week and partake of the sacrament in remembrance of the body and blood of our Lord. Every ordinance of the Church, every act performed, is administered in the name of Christ.

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE BOOK OF MORMON, SAY OBJECTORS

But, says the objector, you accept the Book of Mormon as a revelation from God, thus bringing a new Bible into use when there can be but one Bible, and this we cannot accept. Even if such a record were to be brought forth, would the Lord undertake to accomplish it through the medium of an unlearned young man, when we have many profound scholars among us?

Our reply to that objection is, he did choose Joseph Smith to accomplish it, and that should be sufficient answer. It is the same question asked regarding the Redeemer: "Is not this the carpenter's Son? is not his mother called Mary?" and are not his brothers and sisters all with us, whence hath this man all of these things?

Why do Christian people reject the Book of Mormon? It is the strongest corroborative evidence of the truth of the Bible, and the divine mission of the Redeemer that exists in the world, and should be welcomed by all Christian people. It is of special value to America, and particularly to the people of the United States. It is the Holy Scripture of the American continent, and it outlines the establishment and destiny of our nation, asserting that our government was established by inspiration from the God of the land, whom it declares is Jesus Christ, and warns us that if we turn from him, and cease longer to recognize and serve him, his protection will be withdrawn, and the great promises which he made in regard to our destiny will be of no effect.

ALL THE "MORMONS" ASK IS PERMISSION TO BELIEVE AS THEY CHOOSE

The Latter-day Saints recognize and appreciate the great work accomplished by the Christian churches of the world since the Reforma-

tion, in breaking down kingcraft, and priestcraft, thus preparing the way for the establishment of free government, freedom of worship, and the coming of our Lord Jesus.

When brought before the Jewish high priests, Peter speaking for the Twelve declared that God had sent his Son to bring salvation to Israel. Hearing this truth they took council to slay them.

So it is with us today. The world says if you will renounce this fable regarding visions and heavenly visitations to Joseph Smith, we will accept you as Christian people. Like Peter and Paul we answer: This we can never do, because it is the truth, and the experiences of the past teach us that it is dangerous to ignore the truth.

All that we ask is to be permitted to believe as we choose, and we grant all men this privilege. We ask the people of the world to rely upon the words of Gamaliel, which have been quoted, for they are as true today as they were when uttered. If this work is of men it will come to naught, but if it is of God you cannot overthrow it. Like the primitive church, being defamed we entreat, being ridiculed we revile not; being persecuted we patiently submit, knowing that error must eventually yield to truth, and that time is the friend of innocence. We submit our cause to the Lord, our God, to whom be glory and praise and honor, through Jesus Christ, his Son. Amen.

The choir sang an anthem, "O blessed be the Lord," with music by B. Cecil Gates, and the solo by Delores Seal.

Closing prayer was offered by Elder Joseph B. Keeler, of Provo. The conference adjourned until 2 o'clock.

AFTERNOON SESSION

At 2 o'clock the congregation was asked by President Heber J. Grant, who presided, to sing with the choir the hymn, "How firm a foundation, ye Saints of the Lord." The hymn was sung with spirit and earnestness.

Elder Winslow Farr Smith, president of the Ensign stake of Zion, offered the opening prayer.

The choir sang the hymn, "An angel from on high," the duets being sung by Mrs. Alfred W. Davis and Hyrum Christensen, with sympathetic interpretation.

PRESIDENT CHARLES W. NIBLEY

I read from the twenty-fourth chapter of Luke, beginning at the first verse:

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them.