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We are living in a rapidly changing world. The old is giving way to the new. We have new thoughts and feelings, new ways of doing and living. So rapid are the changes that many of us are more or less dazed and in danger of being swept off our feet. In a sense there is a confusion of tongues—certainly a confusion of plans, teachings, remedies, panaceas and whatnots. Some people are beginning to lose their anchorage and drift out into tempestuous seas without chart or rudder. In thus speaking I have in mind tendencies of the times, exhibited by many people. To what extent our people are affected by these things I do not know. I would like to believe that all of us deeply cherish our heritage of truth and stand immovable for the fundamental principles and doctrines that have characterized our Church from the beginning.

TIME CANNOT CHANGE FUNDAMENTALS

Fourteen months ago I was asked by a very intelligent lady in London what the characteristic doctrines of Mormonism are. I recited some of the Articles of Faith. Her reply was that most of these could not be characteristic for she knew non-Mormons who believed many, if not all, of these Articles, though, she admitted, there might be some differences in detail. I answered we certainly have some major characteristic beliefs. What are they, do you say? They constitute the chief features of our message to the world. And however rapid the changes of the times in this or in future generations these major characteristics will always remain fundamentals in our religious faith. Time cannot change or efface them. What are some of these?

THE FIRST VISION A REALITY

The first one that I shall name is a belief in the divinity of Joseph Smith's call to set up Christ's authorized Church in this dispensation. We believe in the reality of his first great vision, wherein he saw the Father and the Son, heard their voices, and received messages from them. In this miraculous vision he learned that these two heavenly Beings are separate and distinct personalities in whose form man is made, thus confirming the teaching of Genesis that God created man in his own image.

From that moment Joseph's ideas relative to the persons of the Father and the Son were correct and definite, and he taught them with convincing certainty, thus restoring to the world long lost precious truths. Their persons are limited in form to the bodies they occupy and are not diffused as an essence or shapeless entities throughout the immensity of space. They are real, living, glorified Personages. They had actually answered his earnest but simple prayer. He knew that they lived, for he had both seen and heard them. This definite knowledge of the personality of God had been lost to the world and with it a solid basis upon which faith could be built.

RESURRECTED BEINGS APPEAR

But further exceedingly important knowledge was later given to the Prophet. The Angel Moroni appeared to him. Who was Moroni? A tangible, resurrected personage who had lived upon the American continent about fourteen hundred years before. Moroni could be resurrected because Christ had previously been resurrected, breaking the bonds of death and thus achieving a victory over the grave not only for himself but for all the human family. The reality of a bodily resurrection is a fact which became known to the youthful Prophet.

This knowledge was made doubly certain when the resurrected John the Baptist appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery May 15, 1829, and ordained them to the Aaronic priesthood. Both of these young men thus learned that tangible, resurrected beings live in the heavens.

The Baptist came as a messenger from God in answer to fervent prayer. Knowledge is obtained by various means, one of which is by the exercise of faith resulting in divine revelation. So the Prophet Joseph became wiser than all the learned divines of his day, getting abundant absolute knowledge from God through the visitations of several heavenly personages, including the Father and the Son, and also through numerous revelations. His knowledge was pure truth, for he was taught from on high. His teachings were therefore free from false notions.

AUTHORITY RESTORED

Upon him and Oliver was bestowed the holy Priesthood through the laying on of hands of qualified personages sent from the throne of God. Thus the authority to act for and in the name of Christ was again restored to the earth and the Prophet was commissioned to set up Christ's own Church. He energetically went about doing this work. Now while there had been teachers and reformers before Joseph's day who were doubtless more or less inspired, getting glimpses of gospel truths, none of them had received the Priesthood. Hence while their work and sacrifices were necessary to establish religious tolerance sufficient for the coming of the Prophet, none of them could organize Christ's Church, due to a lack of authority. This is a vital point and one on which we cannot compromise.

We are willing to bless any non-Mormon man or organization for the good he or it may do. But this must not imply that we are ready to grant that what is done by any others, however great the good, is accomplished in the authority of the Priesthood. In fact we hold otherwise. Priesthood is a characteristic of Christ's Church and of none other.

THE BOOK OF MORMON A PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Another outstanding characteristic of our Faith is a belief in the divine authenticity of the Book of Mormon. I have many times said this book is perhaps the best physical evidence we can offer to the world of the divinity of the Prophet's call. With us this sacred volume is the

most remarkable book in print today. It came forth through the miraculous manifestation of God's power. This claim is made for no other book in the English language. And though the Book of Mormon has been ridiculed and various hypotheses advanced to explain it, none of these has stood the test of investigation, hence has gone into discard. The truth is the Book perhaps stands more unimpeachable today than it has ever stood before. Further, countless thousands who have read the Book in the way suggested in the 10th chapter of Moroni have solemnly testified that they know the Book is of divine origin. God revealed this truth to them. There was no other way for them to get a testimony of its divinity.

FAITH A GIFT

The truth of this sacred Book is another fact that admits of no compromise. Yet we do not quarrel with honest doubters who do not believe in the divinity of this Book. But we are sorry for their unbelief, recognizing that faith is a gift of God, withheld from everyone who does not fulfil the conditions necessary to have faith. The Prophet Joseph tells us in section 130, Doctrine and Covenants: "There is a law irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated. And when we obtain any blessing from God it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated." This states a great law that applies not only to the spiritual world but to the material world as well. Should we not be very grateful to our Father that he has given us faith to believe? Not boastfully but very humbly and in deep gratitude we accept the gift of faith as a special favor of the God we worship.

GOPSEL TEACHES UNIVERSAL SALVATION

Another very important and highly distinguishing feature of Mormonism is the doctrine of the universality of the plan of salvation—the saving and redeeming power of Jesus Christ. The fact that the doctrine of salvation for the dead is a part of Mormonism is a powerful evidence that Joseph Smith was called of God and commissioned to restore to earth the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its plainness and fulness. Among all the scholars and teachers of religion in this and past generations, where can you find outside of this Church any one who understood or understands the significance of the Apostle Paul's question, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all"? Or, of Peter's statement, "For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."

During the winter of 1935-36 there was a series of weekly addresses on religion delivered in London over the radio. Most of the addresses were printed in the *Listener*, a weekly magazine published by the British Broadcasting Corporation. The magazine printed letters in its forum columns commenting on the addresses. Many of the letters declared Christianity, as the reverend doctors taught it, could not be true for it pictured

God as wholly unjust and unfair. To be saved, a confession of Christ in this life was necessary, the preachers taught. Yet the vast majority of the human family now dead, and many millions of people now living had never even heard the name of Jesus Christ. Why, the writers asked, should all of these be damned through no fault of their own? Can there be a loving and just God who would do a thing so manifestly unfair and monstrous as this? No! the letter writers said.

But the glorious doctrine of salvation for the dead makes everything clear. It reveals God's all-comprehending love for his children, and shows him to be a wise, just and merciful Father. But the Christian ministry knew nothing of this beautiful doctrine. Where did Joseph Smith learn it? From his divine teachers and the revelations of God. There was no other source from which he could have learned it. Of this wonderful doctrine he knew more than the rest of all the world combined. Was he a prophet of God? Who can make an open-minded, thorough study of the character and teachings of the Prophet and deny his divine inspiration?

God is the Father of the spirits of all men. Not one of them will be denied the privilege of accepting of their Savior, Jesus Christ. Every one born into mortality will have a chance to hear the Gospel in this life or in the life to come—in the spirit world beyond the grave. Death is only a separation of the spirit and the body. The latter returns to dust and the former to the spirit world to await the time when it will reunite with the body, for the resurrection will be universal and will eventually come to every one born into mortality—unto both the just and the unjust. Not one will be denied. How beautiful and marvelous the plan!

ACTIVITY IN THE SPIRIT WORLD

In the spirit world there is great activity. The Elders of this Church who have gone thither are very busy preaching to those who once lived in mortality. Even during the brief period when the body of Jesus lay in the tomb the Master was not idle. "Today," he said to the thief dying nearby on a cross, "shalt thou be with me in paradise"—a place in the spirit world, but not heaven as we commonly understand the term. The Apostle Peter gives us light on this point when he wrote of Christ's whereabouts while his body lay in the tomb: "He went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

Is it not probable that very many more of God's children are today hearing and accepting the Gospel in the spirit world than they are doing here on earth? During the year 1935 ten thousand names were sent to our temples from Germany for ordinance work. And all our temples are busily engaged in doing vicarious work for the dead. This work will continue with an ever-increasing rate. More and more temples will be built and will be kept fully employed. The great doctrine of salvation for the dead is one of the most outstanding and characteristic of Mormonism and helps to stamp Joseph Smith as the greatest prophet who ever

lived on earth, excepting only Jesus Christ himself. Will the world not yet say there is no exaggeration in this statement? Very likely. For the world, at the moment indifferent to any religious propaganda, will show an increasing interest in the message of Mormonism. This is not said in boasting. It is only an indication of what will surely come.

THE LAST DISPENSATION

Now, among other things the Prophet Joseph taught was that he inaugurated the last dispensation, the dispensation of the fulness of times; that God had set up his Church for the last time; that it would not be taken away or given to another people. These ideas, like salvation for the dead and many others, were not Joseph's. They did not originate with him. They came through messengers and revelations from heaven; and therein lies their vast implications.

INSPIRATION CONTINUES WITH LEADERS OF THE CHURCH

The Prophet and his brother, the Patriarch, were martyred. Their enemies hoped and believed that the Church would fall with its leaders. How greatly they were disappointed. They had forgotten that new strength to a religious cause always springs from the blood of its martyrs. Brigham Young, the rightful successor to Joseph, became the new prophet and leader. The Church was not born to die. God had so spoken. It should continue and grow until it filled the whole earth. The mantle of Joseph had fallen upon Brigham and in turn successively upon John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith and Heber J. Grant, where it now rests. In his turn each of these was sustained by Jesus Christ and the faithful members of his Church as prophet, seer and revelator and as president of the Church. Faithfully and to the very best of all his strength each of these brethren has served in the position to which God and the Church membership called him. The single purpose of each one has been to guide the Church as Christ directs through inspiration and to function for the good of the people. President Grant is faithful and loyal to this purpose. Can any faithful member of the Church point to one single thing that President Grant has said or done that is not in harmony with this lofty purpose?

A WARNING OF DANGERS AHEAD

Brethren and sisters, the times through which we have been passing have indeed been trying to most of our people. And I am sorry that trying times are still ahead. The sure word of prophecy and the signs of the times do not permit me to believe otherwise. We shall not have the peace and security we so greatly desire until we repent of our sins, turn to the Lord in real sincerity, and deal righteously with all men in all our relations with them.

In conclusion I want to call attention to the fact that many winds of doctrine—social, economic, political—are blowing among the people. Individuals, ambitious for position and power, employing all kinds of propa-

ganda, are and will continue to be busy among the people to win their support. Such things are not new. They have long existed and have been particularly prominent in periods of great distress and chaos. And they are especially dangerous in countries ruled by democratic forms of government. The dictatorships of Europe were born of the distresses of the people. Orderly government in these countries was secured at the price of individual liberty. There the state is everything, the individual only the tiniest cog in a gigantic machine.

Dangers ominously threaten in this great country of ours. Our government had one great test—the Civil War of the sixties. It will have other tests. But it will triumph so long as the people remain true to their heritage and maintain the ideals of liberty and justice set up by the fathers of our country.

DIVINE GUIDANCE NECESSARY

What would I have the Latter-day Saints do? Just this: Remain calm; do not be carried away by prejudiced and emotional appeals. Use your intelligence and try to be wise in all things. Carefully and prayerfully consider and study every new proposition. Look for the real motives behind propaganda and agitators. Make yourselves worthy of and seek for divine guidance in all of your affairs. Keep your eyes upon God's prophet, the head of the Church, and be faithful and true to the covenants you have made with one another and with God. There is safety in doing these things. May the Lord give all of us wisdom and strength to do them, I pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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Brethren and sisters, I am grateful beyond my power to express for the privilege that is mine in standing before you to bear my testimony to the divinity of this great and mighty work. I appreciate the things that have been said to us by the Presidency of our Church and those who have spoken to us during this Conference. There is absolutely no question as to the truth that has been presented to us here this day.

I believe with all my soul that if you and I can follow the instructions that have been given to us, we will come nearer to our Heavenly Father.

I believe also that if we pray more earnestly day by day, we will receive the spirit of light, and of wisdom, and also that sustaining power to uphold and support those who have been placed in authority to lead and direct the affairs of the Church in this day and time.

I believe with all my soul in that quality of prayer that brings us in close contact with our Heavenly Father. May I say there is a believing faith; there is also a knowing faith. Perhaps we should differentiate between the two. This knowing faith comes to us through our devotion to God our Eternal Father as we approach him, not only in our family prayers, but in the silent hours of life when we come to him alone, when we unfold what is in our hearts and invite him into our confidence, and