

are serving in the restored Church. It would be exceedingly difficult to present a better introduction to the gospel message than those presented by the Prophet in the Wentworth letter.

Salvation defined

The Articles of Faith define salvation and introduce a plan by which mankind may be saved and brought back into God's presence. The problem of salvation, as you know, has split Christianity into many sects. Salvation means continuous progress and growth. The third Article of Faith is a concise explanation of its meaning: "We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel." There is nothing shallow or narrow in universal salvation, through the grace of Christ. Man must progress according to law. He must be obedient under the law and strive step by step to obtain the reward. In this striving, free agency is paramount, and all necessary ordinances must be complied with.

Revelation

I read article 9: "We believe all that God has revealed, all that He does now reveal, and we believe that He will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the Kingdom of God." Revelation is the rock upon which the true Church is founded. It is the source of Christ's gospel. It is the rock referred to by Jesus Christ when he said to Peter, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell

shall not prevail against it." (Matt. 16:17-18.)

The prophets, ancient and modern, drank deeply from the fountainhead. By doing so they were refreshed and satisfied. Ralph Waldo Emerson is reported to have said, "We ought to have a religion of revelation to use, and not the history of one."

True index to beliefs

In summary may I say: For more than a century the Church has strictly followed the Articles of Faith. There has never been a revision of, an amendment to, or a deviation from these declarations of belief. They are true and will stand forever. It is well to remember that the Church has forged ahead for more than 138 years. Regardless of persecution, mobbings, drivings, and the hostility from many sources, the work has moved forward. It has never faced a setback. The gospel of Jesus Christ is consistent and reasonable. Its aim and mission is to give every individual a chance to accept or reject it. The gospel message will be heard by all of God's children, whether living or dead.

I testify, brethren and sisters, that the 13 Articles of Faith are true and that they are an index to the beliefs of the Latter-day Saints. May we believe them, and may we introduce into our lives the saving principles of life and salvation, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Alvin R. Dyer

Elder Alma Sonne, Assistant to the Twelve, has just spoken to us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy will now address us.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie

Of the First Council of the Seventy

For a text I take these words, written by Paul, inspired by the Holy Ghost: ". . . our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. . . ." (1 Thess. 1:5.)

The word and the power

Thus, the gospel had by the Saints of old included, first, the word, that is, the doctrines, principles, and laws, the statutes and judgments of the Lord,

which if a man obey, he shall surely live everlastingly; and it included, second, the power, the saving grace, the gifts of the Spirit, the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and that abundant testimony in which true Saints so delight.

Paul also said that these things—the word and the power, which taken together comprise the true gospel—that these things were “the gospel of God, . . . Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord”; that of this “gospel of Christ” he was “not ashamed, . . . for,” said he, “it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” (Rom. 1:1, 3, 16.)

That is, God himself, the Father of us all, created the gospel; it is his plan of salvation through which all his spirit children, Christ included, have power to progress and become like him; it is the plan announced by the Father in the councils of eternity when he asked whom he should send to be the Redeemer, to put into full force the terms and conditions of his gospel; it is the plan of which Christ became the chief advocate, first in preexistence and then again in mortality, thereby gaining the distinction of having the very “gospel of God” itself named after him, named “the gospel of Christ.”

This gospel is thus the plan and system of the Gods whereby believing men may be saved, and its chief characteristic is power: power to do all things necessary for the benefit and blessing of God’s children in this life, power to save them in eternal glory in the life to come.

Only one gospel

That there is and can be only one gospel, one plan of salvation, is as self-evident as any truth known to man. There may be imitations, many systems or plans purporting to lead men to God, many claims that the gospel is here or there; there may be voices crying, “Lo, here is Christ,” or “Lo, there”; but truth, pure diamond truth, that truth which is the gospel of God concerning his Son, is and can be only one thing; and our interest and concern should center in the truth; in the Father’s plan, and in his plan only; in keeping his statutes and judgments,

and his statutes and judgments only; in doing his will, and his will only. Jesus said: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 7:21.)

When some of his converts departed from the perfect system he had taught them, Paul said, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel.” Then lest other plans be dignified by even so much as the use of the term “gospel,” he hastened to add, “Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.”

Having thus shown that there is only one gospel with saving power, the ancient apostle issued this inspired decree: “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” (Gal. 1:6-8.)

The word of God

Now let us reason together in the light of these scriptural truths. There are obviously two essential identifying characteristics of the true gospel. It must contain the word of God, the truths of heaven, the doctrines of salvation; and it must also possess power, the power of God, the power to benefit men in this life and to exalt them in the next.

In a purely intellectual sense any church can claim to have the word of the gospel. They can say: “We believe the Bible; we accept Christ as our personal Savior; we believe in his grace and goodness and rely on his promises.” They can even say: “We believe the Book of Mormon, which contains the fullness of the everlasting gospel; we accept Joseph Smith as a prophet of God; we are numbered with the Saints of latter-days.”

But the issue is not belief only; it is not acceptance of the word alone. Rather it is a matter of having the power of the priesthood and of enjoying the gift of the Holy Ghost. Of course the Book of Mormon contains the fullness of the everlasting gospel, meaning it is a record of God’s dealings

with a people who had the fullness of saving truth. In the same sense the Bible contains the fullness of the gospel, meaning that it also recounts Deity's dealings with a righteous people who worked out their salvation.

The power of God

The issue is not what men purport to believe; it is whether, having believed the truth, they also get the power of God into their lives. Salvation does not come by reading about religion, by learning that holy men in former days had spiritual experiences. It is not found through research in musty archives; it does not spring forth as the result of intellectual dialogues about religious matters. Salvation is born of obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel; salvation comes to those who obey the statutes and judgments of that God who created it and ordained the laws whereby it might be gained.

Salvation comes by getting Christ into our hearts today, by being born again, by becoming new creatures of the Holy Ghost, by receiving personal revelation, by exercising the gifts of the Spirit, by having the power of God manifest in our lives.

Signs follow believers

Jesus sent his apostles forth to preach the same gospel he had taught them, with this promise: "Signs shall follow them that believe." (Mark 16:17.) In other words, when men believe the true word of the gospel, then God begins to manifest his power in their lives. They begin to enjoy the gifts of the Spirit, to work miracles, and to have those spiritual experiences which always and everlastingly attend true believers.

And, we might well ask, if a gospel does not have power to heal the sick, raise the dead, and work miracles in this life, why would anyone suppose it had power to cleanse a sin-laden soul or to raise a man to an inheritance of eternal life in the presence of God?

God has spoken today

Now we are bold to proclaim that that God who is no respecter of per-

sons, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever, has spoken again in our day—paying his respects to those systems of religion which have "a form of godliness," but "deny the power thereof" (Joseph Smith 2:19), and restoring again both the word and the power of his gospel.

We announce that God, according to the promises, has sent his angel to restore the fullness of the ancient gospel, which gospel is now found in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The word of that gospel is now written in the new revelations which have come from heaven; and as rapidly as the true believers conform their lives to the new and everlasting truths involved, the power of the gospel is manifest in their lives.

Gospel written in lives

In the final analysis, the gospel of God is written, not in the dead letters of scriptural records, but in the lives of the Saints. It is not written with pen and ink on paper of man's making, but with acts and deeds in the book of life of each believing and obedient person. It is engraved in the flesh and bones and sinews of those who live a celestial law, which is the law of the gospel. It is there to be read by others, first, by those who, seeing the good works of the Saints, shall respond by glorifying our Father in heaven, and finally by the Great Judge to whom every man's life is an open book.

And now, paraphrasing Paul, I say with perfect conviction, and knowing whereof I speak, that the gospel of God concerning his Son, the very gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord, has come to the Latter-day Saints, not in word only but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much testimony.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Alvin R. Dyer

Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the First Council of Seventy has just spoken to us.

The congregation and choir will now join in singing, "Oh Say, What Is Truth?", conducted by Jay E. Welch.