

the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19.)

May we get the vision of more than 3 1/2 million member missionaries bringing souls into the kingdom of God and feeling the joy and happiness that comes from missionary work.

The Restored Gospel

And again, to all seekers of truth: A new life-style awaits those who accept the restored gospel and let it work in their lives; truly they will find the answer to their question, "What is the purpose of life?" We encourage you to investigate "Mormonism"—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

My brothers and sisters, we are engaged in building the kingdom of God. I bear you my witness that God the Father and His Son Jesus Christ did ap-

pear to the Prophet Joseph Smith, that God lives, and that Jesus is the Christ. The gospel in its fulness has been restored through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and it is our privilege and responsibility to share it with others. Joseph Smith was a great prophet, and we have a great prophet at the head of the Church today, our beloved President Spencer W. Kimball.

Let us increase our effectiveness in missionary work in order that the kingdom of God may go forth at an accelerated rate, so that the kingdom of heaven may come. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Quorum of the Twelve will now speak to us. He will be followed by Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Quorum of the Twelve.

Elder Delbert L. Stapley

My brothers and sisters and friends, the following statement is sometimes voiced by well-intentioned and sincere individuals: "You go to your church; I'll go to mine; but let us walk together." However, can people really walk together if they don't agree on the basic teachings of the doctrines of Christ? Do all Christian churches teach the true gospel and its principles and also have the authority to administer the saving ordinances which will guide and exalt their members in God's heavenly kingdom?

"Strait is the gate . . ."

Jesus taught: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. 7:13-14.)

Does that statement by the Savior suggest there are many ways to heaven? Many people do accept man's philosophy that "all roads lead to God," but it is a philosophy inconsistent with the teachings of our Lord.

There is no logic or reason to the proposition that inconsistent teachings and differing doctrines can bring about the same results. If truth comes from one source—God—how can it be so diversely taught?

Truth

We know that all truth *does* emanate from God and is therefore unchangeable, consistent, and unified.

Consequently, not all Christian churches with their dissimilar teachings can provide a fulness of truth. My intent is to assert with testimony and persuasion of scripture the reasons there can be only one Lord, one acceptable faith, one baptism, and one true church. Then if any of you are convinced you are mistaken in your present beliefs, you should have the courage to investigate and the faith to change and follow the true path Christ has outlined that assures one's eternal happiness.

When Jesus walked this earth among men, He proclaimed to His disciples: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6.) He proclaimed that the doctrines He taught were given to Him by His Father. He took no credit Himself—only that He was doing what the Father had given Him to do. "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth." (John 5:20.)

"I and my Father are one," said the Savior. (John 10:30.) This statement does not mean they are one person, but that Jesus and His Father are one in purpose.

To hear and accept Jesus is to hear and accept His Father. Their teachings and objectives are identical. The doctrine of salvation is the same for all of God's progeny. Jesus prayed in His intercessory prayer to His Father concerning those who complied with His doctrines and ordinances: "And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, *even as we are one.*" (John 17:22; italics added.)

Christ organized His Church

To proclaim this doctrine of the Father and the Son, Jesus established His church on the earth. There were then, as there are today, many versions of truth represented by different religious denominations. The Savior didn't choose any of the churches established by man, either when He

ministered on earth or in these latter days. He organized His own church with prophets and apostles, with a gospel plan of salvation and exaltation. It was the Church of Jesus Christ.

Jesus recognized that the various sects did not have a fulness of truth and did not possess the authority to administer the ordinances of salvation. When many religious leaders became offended by His teachings, Jesus then proclaimed most of His doctrines by using parables. These made clear to the spiritually attuned person that there was to be only "one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:16.)

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

"But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

"To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

"And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." (John 10:1-5.)

One fold, one shepherd

When this parable was not fully understood, Jesus plainly explained it by saying:

"I am the door of the sheep. . . .

"If any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. . . .

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

"But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth." (John 10:7, 9, 11-12.)

The testimony that Jesus is the

Good Shepherd was a figure of speech familiar to those accustomed to the pastoral conditions of Palestine. Jesus knew His hearers were acquainted with the prophecy that a shepherd had been promised the children of Israel. David, the shepherd boy who became king, wrote the beautiful Twenty-third Psalm that begins: "The Lord is my shepherd." Isaiah prophesied that when God would come down, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm." (Isa. 40:11.) There was no mistaking what Jesus meant. He was their Lord—the promised Messiah!

By likening false teachers and pastors to thieves and hirelings whose concern was for money rather than the flock, Jesus repudiated all pretenders. A stronger indictment could not be imagined! Then to make His point so clear that no one could misunderstand, He stated: "There shall be one fold, and one shepherd." (John 10:16.)

He did not recognize then, nor has He recognized since, a multiplicity of folds or shepherds.

Unity of doctrine and ordinances

After Jesus put his apostles in charge of the Church anciently, they preached the same unity of doctrine and practiced the same ordinances which Jesus had given them. These apostles were not self-appointed servants, for Jesus said to them: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." (John 15:16.)

They were authorized ministers called to teach and officiate in the saving ordinances of the gospel. Jesus had conferred the priesthood authority on them. As long as they remained on the earth, functioning under the authority Jesus gave them, unity of doctrine and uniformity of the ordinances prevailed. The gospel message, which they were commanded to take to all the world, was the same to everyone everywhere.

People were not taught different gospels and then given a choice. There was only one plan for all.

Because of the universality of these requirements for salvation, the apostle Paul wrote: "There is . . . one Lord, one faith, one baptism." (Eph. 4:4-5.) On another occasion he wrote: "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. 1:8.)

One church, one authorized ministry, one orthodox gospel doctrine, and one Holy Ghost characterized the church of Jesus Christ in His time. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." (1 Cor. 14:33.) Thus God's revelation to leaders of the Church of Jesus Christ was reasonable, consistent, and unified.

Apostacy

It was only after the death of Christ's apostles that revelation ceased. The pure doctrines Christ taught became diluted with the philosophy of the world, and profane innovations appeared in the ordinances of the church. Eventually, that which had once been clear and understandable became mythical and confusing. Confusion is the field where Satan operates to deceive and lead mankind astray. Jesus and His apostles predicted a "falling away" (see 2 Thess. 2:1-4), which did occur, and Christianity entered a long night of darkness.

Today a multiplicity of churches and doctrines abound, all claiming one source. Such a claim, of course, defies reason and contradicts the teachings and pattern established by Jesus Christ. A sincere seeker for truth must ask: "Which, if any, of the varying Christian groups is right?" For guidance, the apostle James gave this counsel: "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." (James 1:5.) If you sincerely put this promise to the test in seeking light and truth, you will be rewarded.

Moroni's challenge

Moroni, a Book of Mormon prophet, outlines a simple way to know the authenticity of the gospel of Christ. He exhorted: "And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

"And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things." (Moro. 10:4-5.)

Since it is clear that Jesus was one with His Father and that they accepted only one fold, or church, it is essential for every seeker after truth to recognize the hallmarks of the true church. The Church of Jesus Christ in any age bears certain identifying characteristics.

Christ's True Church

In the true Church of Jesus Christ you will find leaders who can trace their priesthood authority line directly back to the Lord Jesus Christ.

You will find in His church the same officers ministering among men: namely, prophets, apostles, bishops, seventies, elders, priests, teachers, and deacons. The Church will be directed on earth by a prophet of God.

The major mission of the Church is to "teach [the gospel to] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28:19.)

The same gifts of the Spirit which prevailed in the church at the time of Jesus are prevalent today. Some of these gifts are: revelation, healing, miracles, prophecy, and many others—as found in First Corinthians, twelfth

chapter; Doctrine and Covenants, forty-sixth section; and in the tenth chapter of Moroni in the Book of Mormon. Charity—the pure love of Christ—will be in evidence among its membership.

The same power which Jesus gave to His apostles that "whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18) will also be in the true church today. There are ordinances and blessings bestowed by an authorized ministry to church members. These covenants and obligations, if entered into and obeyed, apply not just for this life, but for all eternity.

Individual responsibility

Every individual in the Lord's church is entitled to the sure knowledge, received by personal revelation through the Holy Ghost, that the Church is true. Personal revelation to the individual is the strength of the Church of Jesus Christ in any age.

We must learn the truth for a surety and not merely suppose we are right. It is our responsibility to know—and by the aid of the scriptures and the Holy Ghost one can know without any doubt.

One cannot prayerfully study the scriptures without gaining the knowledge and testimony that there is only one way to exaltation. The scriptures point the way very clearly. It must be God's way and not man's way, for God has said: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." (Isa. 55:8.)

A special witness

As an authorized servant and special witness of Jesus Christ in this day, I humbly bear witness that the Church of Jesus Christ is on the earth today. This Church bears all of the identifying marks I have mentioned. Presiding under the direction of Jesus Christ

stands a living prophet. His name is Spencer W. Kimball, President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

We declare that the Church of Jesus Christ has been restored in our time. His original church was lost to the earth by apostasy. Through Joseph Smith, the founding prophet called of God in this modern dispensation, new revelation has come forth from God that has restored the original doctrines and ordinances which belong to the Church of Jesus Christ.

Carrying the message of the Restoration to all nations who permit the restored church entrance, approximately 25,000 missionaries, elders and young women, are called to serve voluntarily, eighteen months for the young women, and two years for the young men.

Our president, Spencer W. Kimball, has stated that our objective is to bring the gospel to all the world. "We invite all to heed the message of the Latter-day Saint missionaries. No message you will ever hear will have greater impact for good in your lives, both here in mortality and in the hereafter.

"The rewards are priceless for those honest in heart who seek the truth." (ENSIGN, May 1976, p. 7.)

Eternal families

A powerful inducement to investigate the claim of The Church of Jesus

Christ of Latter-day Saints is the consideration of your most precious possession—your family. We give promise to you that when you are obedient to specific ordinances performed in the sacred temples of God, your loved ones may be united together eternally. As you investigate our claim, you will discover how these blessings can come to you.

We cannot secure the blessings God has promised without keeping His laws and His commandments. These we must learn and faithfully obey if we are to gain the celestial kingdom.

Investigate His Church

I bear my solemn witness to you that there is one true shepherd—our Lord Jesus Christ—one faith, one baptism, and only one church of Christ. I urge all who listen to the voice of the Good Shepherd to investigate the message of His church today and gain a personal witness of its truthfulness. I humbly bear my testimony to the truthfulness of these things and beseech all of you to gain that personal witness, and do so in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

President Marion G. Romney

Elder Delbert L. Stapley of the Council of the Twelve has just spoken to us. We shall now hear from Elder Howard W. Hunter of the Council of the Twelve.

Elder Howard W. Hunter

Not long ago I attended a stake conference that was not far away, and by hurrying I was able to get home early enough on Sunday afternoon to have the privilege of attending the sacrament service in our own home ward.

Throughout the Church all around the world, thousands and thousands of families attend sacrament meeting on the day of rest—the Lord's day—most of them led by the priesthood bearer of the home, whose responsibility it is to