

ers and loving neighbors, helped my mother and her five remaining children face the problems of economic depression and wars and the many worldly influences and daily challenges with which each of us must cope. His life in many ways touched scores of others in similar circumstances.

To me he was the epitome of the "pure religion" described in the epistle of James: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27).

In these challenging times, dear brothers and sisters, the need to "minister unto the least of these" of our Father's children is so great (see Matthew 25:40). How much we need the gifts of discernment and wisdom and charity to know how to really reach down and lift up our brothers and sisters to higher ground.

## Elder Russell M. Nelson

Today I would like to speak about a name. We are all pleased when our names are pronounced and spelled correctly. Sometimes a nickname is used instead of the real name. But a nickname may offend either the one named or the parents who gave the name.

The name of which I shall speak is not a personal name, yet the same principles apply. I refer to a name given by the Lord:

"Thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" (D&C 115:4).

Note carefully the language of the Lord. He did not say, "Thus shall my church be *named*." He said, "Thus shall my church be *called*." Years ago members were cautioned by the Brethren, who wrote, "We feel that some may be misled by the too frequent use of the term 'Mormon Church'" (*Member-Missionary Class, Instructor's Guide* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982], p. 2). Before any other name is considered to be a legitimate substitute, the thoughtful person

I pray that day by day we will strive more diligently to be about our Father's business (see Luke 2:49); to love and serve our fellowmen by feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and comforting those that mourn (see Matthew 25:37-39); to hold up the hands that hang down and strengthen the feeble knees (see D&C 81:5); to believe and live the Savior's doctrine; and to follow after Him and put first in our lives the things of His kingdom. And for this I humbly pray, in the holy name of Jesus Christ, amen.

### President Monson

Elder Richard P. Lindsay of the Seventy has spoken to us.

It will now be our opportunity to hear from Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Council of the Twelve Apostles.

might reverently consider the feelings of the Heavenly Parent who bestowed that name.

Surely every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord is precious. So each word in this name must be important—divinely designated for a reason. If we study the key words in that name, we can better understand the name's full significance.

### Saints

The last word in the title is *Saints*. I smile when I remember a comment made after my call to the Quorum of the Twelve. A doctor friend relayed a report made at a professional meeting that "Dr. Nelson was no longer practicing cardiac surgery because his church had made him 'a saint.'"

Such a comment was not only amusing but revealing. It evidenced unfamiliarity with the language of the Bible, in which the word *saint* is used much more frequently than is the term *Christian*.

The word *Christian* appears in only three verses of the King James Version

of the Bible. One verse describes the historical fact that "disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26); another quotes a sarcastic nonbeliever, King Agrippa (see Acts 26:28); and the third indicates that one known as "a Christian" must be prepared to suffer (1 Peter 4:16).

In contrast, the term *saint* (or *saints*) appears in thirty-six verses of the Old Testament and in sixty-two verses of the New Testament.

Paul addressed an epistle "to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 1:1).

To recent converts there he said, "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19; see also Ephesians 3:17-19).

In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul used the word *saint* at least once in every chapter.

Despite its use in ninety-eight verses of the Bible, the term *saint* is still not well understood. Some mistakenly think that it implies beatification or perfection. Not so! A saint is a believer in Christ and knows of His perfect love. The giving saint shares in a true spirit of that love, and the receiving saint accepts in a true spirit of gratitude. A saint serves others, knowing that the more one serves, the greater the opportunity for the Spirit to sanctify and purify.

A saint is tolerant and is attentive to the pleadings of other human beings, not only to spoken messages but to unspoken messages as well. A saint is different from an individual whose response to a concern might be a selfish "What do I care" attitude. A real saint responds, "What? I do care!" *Do* is an action verb, and it becomes the driving force in the reply of one who will care for another in need (see 1 Corinthians 12:25-27; 2 Corinthians 7:12).

A saint "refrain[s] from idleness" (Alma 38:12) and seeks learning by study and also by faith. Education not only helps in communication with others, it enables one to discern truth from error,

particularly through studying the scriptures (see D&C 88:118).

A saint is honest and kind, paying financial obligations promptly and fully, treating others as she or he would want to be treated (see Matthew 7:12; 3 Nephi 14:12; D&C 112:11).

A saint is an honorable citizen, knowing that the very country which provides opportunity and protection deserves support, including prompt payment of taxes and personal participation in its legal political process (see D&C 134:5).

A saint resolves any differences with others honorably and peacefully and is constant in courtesy—even in traffic at the rush hour.

A saint shuns that which is unclean or degrading and avoids excess even of that which is good.

Perhaps above all, a saint is reverent. Reverence for the Lord, for the earth He created, for leaders, for the dignity of others, for the law, for the sanctity of life, and for chapels and other buildings are all evidences of saintly attitudes (see Leviticus 19:30; D&C 107:4; 134:7).

A reverent saint loves the Lord and gives highest priority to keeping His commandments. Daily prayer, periodic fasting, and payment of tithes and offerings are privileges important to a faithful saint.

Finally, a saint is one who receives the gifts of the Spirit that God has promised to all His faithful sons and daughters (see Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:17-18).

## Latter-day

The term *latter-day* is an expression especially difficult for translators who labor in languages in which there is not a good equivalent term. Some translations may suggest *last day*.

It is true that scriptures foretell the final days of the earth's temporal existence as a telestial sphere. The earth will then be renewed and receive its paradisiacal, or terrestrial, glory (see Articles of Faith 1:10). Ultimately, the earth will become celestialized (see Revelation 21:1; D&C 77:1; 88:25-26). But its *last days* must be preceded by its *latter days*!

We live in those latter days, and they are really remarkable. The Lord's Spirit is being poured out upon all inhabitants of the earth, precisely as the Prophet Joel foretold. His prophecy was of such significance that the angel Moroni reaffirmed it to the Prophet Joseph Smith (see Joel 2:28-32; Joseph Smith—History 1:41).

For millennia, methods of farming, travel, and communication were largely unchanged from ancient techniques. Developments since the birth of Joseph Smith, however, have risen in remarkable contrast.

Joseph Smith had long been foreordained as God's prophet for the restoration of the gospel in the fulness of times (see 2 Nephi 3:7-15). Twenty-five years after his birth, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was officially organized.

Later in that same century, the telegraph was developed, the Atlantic Ocean was first crossed by a steamship, and the telephone, the automobile, and motion pictures were invented.

The twentieth century has been even more extraordinary. Farming has become mechanized.

Modern transportation allows travel to nearly any destination in the world within a day or two.

Computers have been developed that allow the Church to serve living members and to organize information relative to progenitors who live on the other side of the veil. People throughout the world, once little concerned with family history, now search for roots of their ancestral heritage using technologies unavailable a century ago.

Long-distance telephone, telefax, radio, television, and satellite communications have become routine. In these latter days it is possible for the word of the Lord to be broadcast from world headquarters of His Church and heard in the most remote areas of the globe.

The divine promise is being fulfilled that this restored gospel "shall be preached unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (D&C 133:37).

Political changes have occurred recently in many countries. Previous restrictions of personal liberties have been relieved. The shell of spiritual confinement has been shattered. Swelling shouts of freedom fill the air. Surely the hand of the Lord is apparent. He said, "I will hasten my work in its time" (D&C 88:73), and that time of hastening is now.

### Jesus Christ

By divine directive, the title of the Church bears the sacred name of Jesus Christ, whose church this is (see D&C 115:3-4). He so decreed more than once. Nearly two thousand years ago, the Lord said,

"Ye shall *call* the church in my name; . . .

"And how be it my church save it be *called* in my name?" (3 Nephi 27:7-8; italics added).

We worship God the Eternal Father in the name of His Son by the power of the Holy Ghost. We know the premortal Jesus to be Jehovah, God of the Old Testament. We know Him to be "the chief corner stone" upon which the organization of His church is based (Ephesians 2:20). We know Him to be the Rock from whom revelation comes to His authorized agents (see 1 Corinthians 10:4; Helaman 5:12) and to all who worthily seek Him (see D&C 88:63).

We know that He came into the world to do the will of His Father, who sent Him (see 3 Nephi 27:13). His divine mission was to effect the Atonement, which was to break the bands of death and enable us to receive immortality and eternal life.

The living Lord's divine mission still continues. One day we will stand before Him in judgment. He has foretold that event:

"Whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world" (27:16).

We revere the name of Jesus Christ. He is our risen Redeemer.

## The Church

The first two words of the name the Lord chose for His earthly organization are *The Church*.

Note that the article *The* begins with a capital letter. This is an important part of the title, for the Church is the official organization of baptized believers who have taken upon themselves the name of Christ (see D&C 10:67-69; 18:21-25).

The foundation of the Church is the reality that God is our Father and that His Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ, is the Savior of the world. The witness and inspiration of the Holy Ghost confirm those realities.

The Church is the way by which the Master accomplishes His work and bestows His glory. Its ordinances and related covenants are the crowning rewards of our membership. While many organizations can offer fellowship and fine instruction, only His church can provide baptism, confirmation, ordination, the sacrament, patriarchal blessings, and the ordinances of the temple—all bestowed by authorized priesthood power. That power is destined to bless *all* children of our Heavenly Father, regardless of their nationality:

"The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth" (D&C 65:2; see also Daniel 2:37-45; D&C 109:72).

Admission into His church is by baptism. This sacred ordinance is reserved only for children after they reach the age of accountability and for adults who are truly converted, prepared, and worthy to pass this scriptural test:

"Ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light;

"Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times and

in all things, and in all places that ye may be in" (Mosiah 18:8-9).

Through the ordinance of baptism, we take upon ourselves the name of the Lord and covenant to be saints in these latter days. We covenant to live by the doctrines of the Church as recorded in sacred scriptures and as revealed to prophets, ancient and modern.

"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" (Articles of Faith 1:9).

These revelations include fundamental truths essential to our everlasting happiness and joy. They teach of priorities with eternal potential such as love of God, family, mother, father, children, and home; self-mastery; care of the poor and needy; service; and thoughtful consideration for others.

This church, established under the direction of Almighty God, fulfills promises made in biblical times. It is part of the "restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It has been restored and given a name by the Lord Himself.

He issued this solemn warning: "Let all men beware how they take my name in their lips" (D&C 63:61). "Remember," He added, "that that which cometh from above is sacred, and must be spoken with care" (D&C 63:64). Therefore, just as we revere His holy name, we likewise revere the name that He decreed for His church.

As members of His church, we are privileged to participate in its divine destiny. May we so honor Him who declared, "Thus shall my church be called . . . The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," I pray in the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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The chorus sang "O Divine Redeemer" without announcement.

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