

## ARE MORMONS CHRISTIANS?

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### CHAPTER 1—THE MORMON PROBLEM

We—the Mormons—are a peculiar people.

There is no question about this. We admit it frankly and freely; indeed, we rejoice and glory in the very things that set us apart from many sincere and devout people.

There is a Mormon problem in the world today—a problem that will never be solved until the opposing parties communicate freely and make intelligent choices upon the matters involved.

These two statements—that Mormons are a peculiar people, and that they create an unparalleled problem in the realm of religion—may well be the religious understatements of our age. We shall approach these issues openly, frankly, and fairly.

We know we differ widely from the general run of Christians. If such were not the case we would still have membership in our old churches, and we would never have departed from the faith of our fathers to find a new way of life in the Latter-day Saint fold.

We know that in many respects our feelings and views are almost identical with those of Christians generally, but that in other respects we are poles apart. These differences are such that it does not really surprise us to learn that there are those who go so far as to classify us as part of a lunatic fringe which runs counter to all that is decent and all that is part of the traditional Christian heritage.

As a matter of fact there are some perfectly obvious reasons why many people oppose both our religious views and the way of life that grows out of them. We uphold their right so to choose and hope they will respect us in our right to select the course of our own choosing.

But notwithstanding the views and pressures of the world, we believe what we believe, worship as we worship, and live as we live, without any intention to change. It is only fair to say that we do not intend to forget our doctrine, nor to forsake our standards. It is not our purpose to fit more congenially into many of the ways of life and worship that are common in the so-called Christian world.

Every Mormon knows that the doctrinal differences between us and our fellowmen are so radical that the Latter-day Saints are now, have always been, and no doubt always will be, the center of religious controversy.

From our standpoint this is all to the good. It certainly alerts devout people to the fact that there are some wondrous religious claims which are outside the bounds of all the usual creedal concepts. And many people, seeing the fruits of these doctrines in the lives of

their Latter-day Saint friends, are led to investigate the restored gospel and to cast their lot with the Latter-day Saints.

Every Mormon also knows that we, as a people, do not fit into the mainstream of that Christianity which now is. We are neither Catholic nor Protestant. We have added books of holy scripture, and our whole system of religion sets us apart from other believing people.

Many people envy our unity; emulate our family-centered way of life; admire our volunteer missionary system; and speak highly of our self-reliance and welfare program. But they are appalled—even shocked—at our theology.

Having in mind our theology and our way of life, pious and sincere people often ask: “Are Mormons Christians?”

Others with deep religious convictions of their own are bold to announce: “Mormons are not Christians:” Along with this sobering pronouncement they often declare that Mormonism is a false religion and that the Mormon Church is a cult which is in no way qualified for membership in the Christian fold.

Mormons themselves believe they are Christians and claim to have the only pure and perfect form of Christianity now found on earth. And they find it somewhat disturbing that anyone would question their Christian standing, a verity which to them is axiomatic.

It is not amiss to ask why anyone would seek to exclude from the Christian fold a body of worshippers who profess a sincere belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. Rightly or wrongly Mormons feel that attempts to identify them as non-Christians stem from the same source and spirit that led to the persecutions and mobbings and martyrdoms of the past.

Persecution is always the heritage of the faithful. Our latter day history is akin to that of the early Christians who, opposed by evil forces, laid down their lives in their Redeemer’s Cause. In our day the blood of our martyred prophets, spilt by acts of venom and violence, has been added to the blood of all the martyrs under the altar seen by John.

Not a small part of the persecutions heaped upon us today is an attempt to deny to us the Christian name and to claim that Mormonism is a pagan and heathenish religion.

Many of those who now oppose us choose to do so under a banner that acclaims: “Mormons are not Christians; their doctrines are false; and their Church is a cult. Therefore, shun them, oppose them, do all you can to destroy their Church, their religion, and their way of worship.”

Under the circumstances it seems to be the course of wisdom to meet the problem head on.

If we Mormons are not Christians, at least we are entitled to the same respect and freedom of worship that is freely offered to those who follow the Jewish or Islamic way. Indeed, most of the inhabitants of the earth do not accept Jesus Christ as their Savior.

It is not our observation that those who oppose us with fiery zeal have any interest in declaiming against Jews or Mohammedans, or Buddhists. Why the great campaigns against us? Is there any greater need to reclaim a Mormon from paganism than there is a Buddhist? Aren't there enough "unsaved" persons in the world without specializing in those who already profess a deep and sincere belief in the Lord God of the Bible and in his Only Begotten Son?

All of the churches of Christendom have their differences, doctrinal and otherwise. If it were not so there would be one church only. If the Catholics, Lutherans, Angelicans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists and all the rest are acceptable Christian churches, why exclude the Mormons? Is there something evil in our case in being different? Should we not be treated as other Christians are?

But if our Christianity is a new and improved and purified system of religion that exceeds and excels all others, should not devout people everywhere seek the added light and knowledge that will bring them greater joy and happiness in this life and in the life to come?

Truly, there is a Mormon problem, and surely there should be enough light and truth in the world today to solve that problem for all honest truth seekers.

We know that reaching the right solution will not be easy for one very good and sufficient reason. That reason—and it must be stated openly and temperately as we begin our investigation—that reason is the one-true-Church concept.

We believe and we testify that, after a long night of spiritual darkness, the Lord God has restored the fulness of his everlasting gospel to man on earth. We have that gospel, administer it through his Church, and because of it have power to gain greater glory in the world to come than can be won in any other way.

This, then, is the reason we do not account it a strange thing that others—not as yet fully informed—should oppose us, even as the saints of old were opposed in their day.

But if by chance our claims are true, should not every seeker of eternal wisdom make an honest and impartial investigation?

Let us update the question asked by Nathanael when he first heard of Jesus of Nazareth: "Can there any good thing come out of Mormonism?" And let us give the perfect reply of Philip: "Come and see." (John 1:46.)

Come, then, and let us reason together.

## CHAPTER 2—WHAT IS A MORMON?

There are two questions which must be answered, either now or later, by every person who seeks to be saved in the kingdom of God. They are: What Is a Christian, and What Is a Mormon.

Strange as it may seem to those who do not understand the restored gospel, neither of these questions stands alone. They are companion issues; they are intertwined with each other; and an understanding of one is essential to an understanding of the other.

Before we can determine whether Mormons are Christians we must come to a clear understanding of what a Mormon is. This is a field in which the waters of inquiry have been muddied and in which conflicting views abound.

There are many definitions of a Mormon. No two of them are in complete agreement, and some of them are poles apart. Let us note at least these differing but widely held views:

—Mormons are members of a non-Christian church which is outside the pale of saving grace. It is true they claim to be Christians, and they use the language of Christianity, but the words mean different things to them. They do not believe in the Christ of the Bible. They must be reclaimed or they will be forever lost.

—Mormons are a cult; perhaps they are Christian, it really doesn't matter; whatever their status they are a small and insignificant group of people with peculiar, even bizarre doctrines. They worship Joseph Smith (or is it Adam?) rather than the Christian God, and they have such strange notions as that the family unit will continue in the life to come and that men themselves will be exalted.

—Mormons are members of one of the lesser Christian churches. Their numbers include many prominent people and they are renown for their way of life, their self-reliance, their clean living their family-centered philosophy. But their theology is far from the mainstream of Christianity. Imitate their way of life if you will, but avoid their doctrine as you would a plague.

—Mormons are Christians in the same way that all Catholics and Protestants are; they believe in Christ; the Bible is their chief book of scripture; they simply have their own interpretation of the scriptures, as all churches do. Why worry about them? If their beliefs differ from the Lutherans or Baptists, what of it?

—Mormons, being neither Catholic nor Protestant, are in a category by themselves; theirs is a Restored Church; they have received the ancient Christianity by modern revelation. They have the everlasting gospel which is the power to save men. They are members of the one true Church which administers that gospel and hence are the only people who have Christianity in its fulness and perfection.

Knowing of these conflicting definitions, we are frank to say: Others are entitled to view us as they choose. They are free to describe us, our religion, our way of life, our theology, our doctrine, in any way they like. That is their privilege.

But whether their conclusions are true or false is quite another matter. Every inquiring person will have to decide for himself what definition to accept. And in the end a just God—the God of truth—will sit in judgment on all men. Then, in that day, truth alone will prevail.

We think it not unreasonable to suppose that fair minded people will grant us the privilege to tell who we are, what we worship, the nature of the Church we belong to, and what our doctrine is. Our answer to the Mormon identity is along the following lines:

In the true and proper sense of the word—

There are no Mormons;

There is no Mormonism; and

There is no Mormon Church.

These are simply names devised by men; they did not come down from heaven; and, in truth and reality, they designate neither the people, nor the doctrines, nor the Church to which they are applied.

There are now on earth a great many virtuous and noble souls who qualify as and are in fact the saints of the Most High; they are the Lord's people, the sheep of his pasture, the elect of God. They are the Latter-day Saints; and they believe and live and are as the saints of former days once were.

Among other things the Lord's people in these last days have a volume of holy scripture comparable to the Bible. It is called the *Book of Mormon*. This holy record is an account of God's dealings with the ancient inhabitants of the Americas. It is another testament of Jesus Christ; it contains, as does the Bible, the fulness of the gospel; and it was brought to light by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Mormon was in fact an ancient American prophet who was instrumental in preparing the prophetic word in the book that bears his name. It is of course a common practice to call groups of believers after some distinctive doctrine or feature of their religion. People thus designate the Latter-day Saints by the name Mormon.

Our way of worship, the doctrines of salvation espoused by us, our whole system of religion, has become known as Mormonism. And the Church itself is called the Mormon Church. It is, in the minds of people, as though they were speaking of Lutherans,

Lutheranism, and the Lutheran Church, although in this latter case the appellations are more accurate.

These man-made names, often mouthed in derisive tones, are now fixed in the public mind, are known to apply to us, and receive accordingly a certain credence and respect from us. We respond to them and know what is meant when they are used. In our minds they have taken on a certain dignity and respect because of what they represent.

As Mormons we know we are a people apart; we are different from other believers in modern Christendom; we are a peculiar people, a people bent on overcoming the world and obtaining faith like the ancients.

As to our doctrine, our way of life, our religion, though called Mormonism, it is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in its everlasting fulness. It is the eternal plan of salvation given of God to men in all ages when he has had a people on earth. It is the power of God that saves and exalts. It is the religion of Adam, the way of worship of Abraham, the body of faith and doctrine and testimony that filled the hearts of Peter and Paul. It is pure religion and undefiled. It is the doctrine, the power and faith, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ by whom salvation comes.

And the Church, the so-called Mormon Church, what is it? It is the kingdom of God on earth, the one place where salvation is found. It is “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth.” (D&C 1:30.) It is Christ’s Church; he organized it; he restored it; he gave it power and honor and dignity; he calls its ministers; and it represents him on earth. It is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and it corresponds in all essential respects to the same Church of the same Lord in all ages past.

It is these three definitions—of Mormons, of Mormonism, and of the Mormon Church—that cause us all our problems with our Christian friends in other churches. Implicit in them is what we may with propriety call the one-true-Church concept. That is the real issue and problem.

It is a natural, almost to be expected fact that sincere believers in all churches would oppose our declaration that there is and can be only one true Church on earth. All churches can be false but only one can be true.

The real issue is not whether we are Christian or non-Christian; that is only a smoke screen. The real issue is whether there was a universal falling away from the ancient word, followed by a restoration of the gospel in modern times.

The real issue is whether the gospel of salvation has been restored to earth and is now offered to men through The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The real issue is whether the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith in the Spring of 1820; whether angelic ministrants came from the courts of glory bringing priesthood

and keys; whether the true doctrines of the gospel have been restored in their purity and perfection; whether there are now apostles and prophets on earth; whether the Latter-day Saints, and they only, have power to seal men up unto eternal life.

The chief reason we as a people are opposed by representatives of other churches is that the Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith in the Spring of 1820. Next to this stands the reality that our system of religion is the everlasting gospel, God's one and only plan of eternal salvation for all his children of all nations and kingdoms. And finally, opposition is ours because the work succeeds and an army of converts continue to rally round the restored gospel standard.

In the First Vision—that grand theophany which itself is the most transcendent event that has occurred on earth since the Risen Lord burst the bands of death—the Lord's future prophet learned that all churches were wrong; that the creeds of Christendom were an abomination in the Lord's sight; that the professors of religion were all corrupt; that they drew near to the Lord with their lips, but their hearts were far from him; and that they taught for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. There is no room for compromise here.

In the restoration of the everlasting gospel we find the axe laid at the root of sectarianism. Again there is no room for compromise. If the gospel has come again, thus outdating and negating all existing churches and religions, all men must accept the new order or lose their hope of salvation.

And if the great latter-day work succeeds, such stands as a witness of the appearance of the Father and the Son to Joseph Smith and of the restoration of their saving powers through his instrumentality.

The so-called Mormon problem, arising out of the one-true-Church concept, is more serious now than it has ever been, and it will continue to plague modern Christendom, with increasing force, until the Second Coming. The message is the same, the doctrines have no changed, but the influence of the Church has increased. The restored kingdom is rolling forward, and success is attending its divine labors. Converts by the millions are forsaking other churches and are using their time, talents, and means to build up the latter-day Zion. The plight of many professors of religion is not much different than that of the silversmiths of Macedonia who, because of Paul's preaching, could no longer sell their shrines and images of Diana. As with their ancient counterparts, the craft of these modern ministers is in danger; their source of livelihood is slipping away; their disciples, the sheep of their folds, are joining what they esteem to be a cult of the worst sort. Indeed, the crowning blow in the eyes of the churches of Christendom is that our missionaries go, not alone to pagans, but to Christians who are already assumed by their shepherds to be safely folded in the sheep cote of that Lord whom they suppose is their Shepherd.

Thus, it is today with the Latter-day Saints as it was with the Former-day Saints. Those who accepted Christ and his gospel anciently were said to belong to "the sect of the

Nazarenes,” and their leaders were persecuted as “pestilent” fellows who sowed “sedition among all the Jews throughout the world.” (Acts 24:5.) Their “sect” was “everywhere . . . spoken against.” (Acts 28:22.) In our day it is “the sect of the Mormons” that is everywhere derided and whose prophets are persecuted and whose doctrines are maligned.

Through the years every device has been used to thwart the growth of the true Church and to destroy the faith of its adherents. In the early days of the dispensation the saints were mobbed and beaten, driven and slain, their lands and property and houses of worship confiscated, and their homes and cities burned. Present laws and social circumstances are strong deterrents to this type of oppression. Instead the disciples of doubt and the ministers of hatred twist and pervert our history and attack our doctrines. Chief among these assaults is the one that chants with all the fervor of Demetrius and the silversmiths, not “Great is Diana of the Ephesians” (Acts 19:21-41), but a modern revised version—“Mormons are not Christians: Mormons are not Christians:”

Of course, who is and who is not a Christian is a matter of definition. Men have it in their power to give to pure Christianity the name Mormonism and to say that Mormonism is paganism.

It is foolish if not futile to talk of the truths of heaven and the realities of life without clearly defining our terms. We have defined the usages of the term Mormon, and will now turn to what is meant by Christian.

### CHAPTER 3—WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

Before we can answer the question, “Are Mormons Christians,” we must know what a Christian is.

It is easy to define a Mormon, but hard to define a Christian. A Mormon is what a Mormon is, and he alone can tell what he believes, and who he worships, and why he chooses the restored gospel to guide his footsteps.

But Christians come in many patterns; they believe divergent doctrines; and their ways of worship conflict with each other. Every Christian church has its own doctrine, its own ordinances, its own form of religion. And the general tone and tenor of Christian worship in all churches varies from age to age.

There are many definitions of Christianity. In fairness we must list many of them and ask ourselves in each instance whether the Latter-day Saints fall within its scope and meaning.

#### 1. Christianity in a General Sense.



Generally speaking Christianity consists of the whole body of Christian believers. By believers is meant those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ; who rely on his merits and mercies and grace to gain salvation; who believe he atoned for the sins of the world and was in fact the Son of God.

In a larger sense believers even include those who do not believe in the divine Sonship but who accept Jesus as a great prophet and teacher only.

Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and members of various other religions, which are not Christ centered, are not included in the Christian fold even though they recognize Jesus as a great prophet or teacher.

Latter-day Saints believe in Christ, accept him as their Savior, and believe that as the Lord Omnipotent he came into the world to work out the infinite and eternal atonement.

## 2. New Testament Christianity.

Most Christians believe that Christianity had its beginning in New Testament times and was first taught by Jesus and his apostles. This view sets up the Christianity of that day as the perfect standard and system of religion.

We should, therefore, compare the New Testament way of worship with that which prevails in modern Christendom. The essential identifying characteristics of the New Testament Church are six in number:

### (a) The Name of the Church.

Anciently the Lord's people were commanded to do all that they did in the name of Christ; to take his name upon them in the waters of baptism; to believe in their hearts that his is the only name given under heaven whereby man may be saved. Thus the Church was called in his name and the baptized converts, being thereby cleansed from sin, were called saints.

### (b) Authority in the Ministry.

In the Lord's Church his ministers hold both priesthood and keys. These are the delegations of authority that enable men to act in the place and stead of their Lord.

Priesthood is the power and authority of God delegated to man on earth to act in all things for the salvation of men. In New Testament times the Lord's ministers held the Aaronic and Melchizedek Priesthoods.

Keys are the right and power to preside over and govern the Church and to bind and loose on earth and in heaven. Peter and the ancient apostles held these powers.

(c) Church Organization.

Apostles and prophets always preside over and govern the Church. Other officers include evangelists, elders, priests, bishops, deacons, and so forth. Such was the church organization in primitive times.

(d) Gospel Ordinances.

These include: baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; the laying on of hands for the receipt of the gift of the Holy Ghost; baptism for the dead; the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and priesthood ordinations. Is it amiss to ask in what church all of these ordinances are found today?

(e) Doctrines of the Kingdom.

True doctrines and revealed theology are the foundation on which the gospel rests. Unless men believe and conform to sound doctrine they cannot be saved. No man can be saved in ignorance of God and his laws, and men are saved no faster than they gain knowledge of Christ and the plan of salvation. Where there is true doctrine men can be saved; where false doctrine reigns there is no salvation.

The saints in New Testament times worshipped a God in whose image man is made, one who sent his Son to reveal the Father, one who is the express image of the person of the Resurrected Son. They accepted Christ as the Redeemer who came to ransom men from the temporal and spiritual death brought into the world by the fall of Adam. And they enjoyed the near constant companionship of the Holy Spirit. These ancient saints knew that salvation is available through faith, repentance, baptism, receiving the Holy Ghost, and then working the works of righteousness. They practiced celestial marriage, rejoiced in the hope of eternal life, and sought to become perfect even as their Father in heaven is perfect. That is, they sought as joint-heirs with Christ to gain all power on earth and in heaven and to become as God is.

They knew they were the spirit children of God; that they were being tried and tested in this mortal probation; that they must crucify the old man of sin and live as new men in Christ; that the faithful in Christ would at death rest in paradise; that all men would be resurrected, judged, and assigned a place in the kingdoms that are prepared; and that, except for those who sell their souls to Satan, all will go to a celestial, terrestrial, or telestial kingdom, there to live everlastingly. They knew that after their day dire and evil apostasy would ravage the saints and that darkness would then cover the earth; that there would be a glorious day of restoration when the gospel would be given again by angelic ministrations; that Israel would be gathered into the restored fold; that temples would be built for the salvation of the living and the dead; and that the Lord Jesus would come again to reign personally upon the earth in Millennial splendor.

That these and a host of other like doctrines have little or no resemblance to those that prevail in the churches of Christendom today is as obvious as that the sun shines. But let us praise God for his goodness and grace and rejoice that he in his infinite wisdom, and for the love that he has for his children, has restored a knowledge of them all, in wondrous beauty and perfection, in these last days.

(f) Gifts of the Spirit.

Gifts, signs, miracles—these are the final and conclusive proof that a church is true and a people are the Lord's. If those who call themselves saints heal the sick and raise the dead; if they stop the mouths of lions and quench the violence of fire; if they have the gift of prophecy and the spirit of revelation; if signs and gifts abound among them—who will dare say they are not the Lord's people? Can men do these things by their own power? Surely if the Father manifests his own works in a church that church is his.

3. Post New Testament Christianity.

Sad as it is to say it, New Testament Christianity died a slow and agonizing death, as a new Christianity, the Christianity of the world was born.

After the death of the apostles, as foretold by them, men forsook the truth, lost the faith, and set up churches of their own. They lost the blessed gospel and no longer possessed the pure Christianity of Peter and Paul.

Perilous times came upon the primitive Church. As men departed “from the faith,” they gave heed “to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and many other evil things. (1 Timothy 4:1-3.)

As the dark night of apostasy covered the earth men became “lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” (2 Timothy 4:1-5.)

Christianity no longer operated in their lives; theirs was now only “a form of godliness”; this “form of godliness” was a new and different Christianity—a post New Testament Christianity, a Christianity that has undergone marked changes in doctrine, in organization, in power, and in ways of worship. It has little resemblance to the pattern from which it was formed.

The simple and unadorned worship of apostolic Christianity was swallowed up in an ocean of liturgy, sacramental forms, and worldly philosophies. The primitive apostolic church changed from its pure form into a Graeco-Roman substitute. Revelation ceased, miracles were no more, angels no longer ministered to men, and the Holy Ghost, who

will not dwell in an unclean tabernacle, withdrew. In all history there has never been a transition so clear, a change so radical, nor a line of demarcation so marked as when apostolic Christianity became the Christianity of the world. The new order was one of worldliness in which apostolic simplicity died and the liturgical and ceremonial splendor of another kind of Christianity was born.

#### 4. Historical Christianity.

Christianity is not only a way of belief and a way of worship, it is a way of life. Religion is read in the lives of believers and worshippers.

If men live as becometh saints, there is no crime, no evil, no war. There are no envyings and strifes and tumults and whoredoms and lyings and murders and lasciviousness. All these are replaced by righteousness and peace.

The whole history of Christianity during the long night of apostate darkness is one of war and blood and desolation; of schisms, heresy, and inquisitions; of proselyting by the sword and enforcing orthodoxy by civil power.

If Christianity is what it claims to be and has the power to change the lives of men, it has either failed or never been tried.

#### 5. Creedal Christianity.

If there is such a thing as setting forth the great and eternal verities which men must believe to gain eternal life (in the view of those so professing) such is accomplished in the three great creeds of Christendom.

For more than a millennium and a half all of the major Christian churches, both Catholic and Protestant alike, have accepted without reservation and without qualification the doctrines set forth in them.

These creeds—the Apostles, the Nicene, and the Athenasian—set forth the doctrine of the Trinity; describe the relationship of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; show their oneness and equality and incomprehensible natures; and tell how they are to be worshipped. They identify the Godhead as a three-in-one spirit essence that fills the immensity of space.

“Whosoever will be saved,” says the Athenasian Creed, “before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholick Faith [meaning, the Universal Faith]. Which faith except every one do keep whole and undefiled: without doubt he shall perish everlastingly And the Catholick Faith is this: That we worship one god in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity,” and so forth.

By way of conclusion the creed says: “This is the Catholick Faith: which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved.”

That is to say: Christianity consists in believing and accepting the creeds and worshipping as they prescribe.

If this is the definition of Christianity, and there are many yet among us who accept it as such, then we are frank to say: Latter-day Saints are not Christians. Rather, we are bold to proclaim that the “Personage”—the Lord Jesus Christ himself—who addressed Joseph Smith in the First Vision “said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight.” (Joseph Smith—History 1:19.)

#### 6. Modern Christianity.

Dictionaries define modern Christianity as, “The religion derived from Jesus Christ, based on the Bible as sacred scripture, and professed by Eastern, Roman Catholic, and Protestant bodies.”

We suppose the intention of such definitions is to include the Latter-day Saints in the Christian fold. Properly speaking, however, we are not a Protestant body, but a restored Church, all of which simply bespeaks the inadequacy of the definition.

#### 7. Theological Christianity.

Novel and foolish definitions of Christianity can be created at will by the simple expedient of saying that no one is a Christian unless he believes this or that interpretation of the scriptures.

This is an approach commonly used by many who oppose the Latter-day Saints. They say we do not believe in the Christ of the Bible because we do not believe in salvation by grace alone and without works; or because we do not believe that men are justified by faith alone without more; or because we do not believe man may become as his Maker; and so on through the whole realm of theological differences.

These kinds of definitions need to be identified and exposed, but they are not worthy of any extended consideration. They are private definitions often created to further some aim or purpose of their creator.

#### 8. Mormon Christianity.

Would it be amiss at this point in our investigation to define the Christianity of the Latter-day Saints?

Their Christianity is true Christianity. It is the religion, the way of worship, and the way of life of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the gospel of God, his Father, which Christ adopted, espoused, and put into full operation through his atoning sacrifice. It is the faith and belief and manner of living of those who believe in Christ and who pattern their lives

after his life. It is the plan of divine and eternal salvation revealed from heaven and proclaimed and administered by the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh.

Fallen men become Christians by accepting Christ, by taking his name upon them, by being adopted into his family, by receiving him as their new Father, by being born again, by becoming the sons and daughters of Jesus Christ by faith. Christ is the Savior, and those who come unto him and partake of his salvation are Christians. They are his disciples, his apostles, his saints, the ones whom he will own before the Father in that great day when all men will be judged and awarded their places in the kingdoms that are prepared.

True Christianity is saving Christianity; it includes all of the words of eternal life that ever have been or ever will be revealed. It is God-given, heaven-approved, and saint-received. It is a divine boon possessed by those and those only who worship the Father in spirit and in truth and in the name of Jesus Christ. In the very nature of things it is found in the Lord's true Church and nowhere else.

#### 9. True Christianity.

Amid all the conflicting claims and definitions, how can we identify the true Christianity?

It is with Christians as it is with prophets: "Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matthew 7:16.) Signs always follow those who believe. Miracles and healings and gifts of the Spirit abound among the Lord's people.

And above all pure religion makes pure people; they live by higher standards; they overcome the world; they live as becometh saints. Such a simple thing as abstaining from tea, coffee, tobacco, and liquor illustrates the point.

#### 10. Restored Christianity.

In the goodness and grace of God we now have that which once was. He has restored the knowledge of God and of salvation. Once again we know that salvation is in Christ and his atoning sacrifice. The same gospel had of old is again on earth. The Church of Jesus Christ, the very kingdom of God on earth, the same organization presided over by Peter, James, and John in their day exists anew. And all these things are in Mormon hands and in Mormon minds and in Mormon hearts. We have not yet perfected our way of life and worship, far from it, but we believe in Christ and know his laws and strive to walk in his paths. To the extent we do so we shall become Christians both in name and in deed.

#### 11. Ancient Christianity.

Christ is eternal, the same yesterday, today, and forever. So also is the gospel; it is the everlasting gospel, the message of the ages, the same eternal plan by which salvation is offered to all men in all ages. The laws and ordinances of the gospel never change and are

revealed to the Lord's people in all ages as rapidly and as fully as they are able to receive them.

Hence: Adam was the first Christian. He worshipped the Father in the name of the Son, and he and Eve and all their righteous seed rejoiced in the joy of their promised redemption through Jesus Christ. And so it was with Enoch and Noah and the saints who were before the flood; and with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and all the ancient patriarchs; and with Moses and all Israel; and with the Jaredites and Nephites and many civilizations of which we have no knowledge—all were Christians, all had Christianity, all believed the gospel and were heirs of its blessings.

The prevailing view is that there was a pre-Christian age before the mortal ministry of our Lord and that the Christian era, so-called, had its beginning with him. This is false. In reality there probably were more true Christians on earth, many times over, before the coming of Christ than there have been since.

## 12. Christianity of the Future.

What lies ahead for Christianity? We can safely foretell that the shackles of the past will be loosed more than they have been. More light, new discoveries, higher levels of education will weaken the over-all grasp of the great Christian denominations on the minds of men. Roman Catholicism is a pattern. Its hold on the minds of men is far from what it once was.

But at the same time, as the end draws nearer and the true Church grows in power and influence, ill will and bigotry will increase. There is in the offing a greater polarization of men, a few assembling round the standard of good, great hosts rallying under the banner of evil. Through it all the true saints will stand the test and come off triumphant.

In the eternal sense it does not matter what men think as to who is or who is not a Christian. What counts is how the Lord feels about the matter. There are Christians on earth and Christians in heaven. Those who become his kind of Christians on earth will reign with him as Christians in heaven.

After the warfare of this present age is over, and when we reach the end of the world, those who have been true and faithful will abide the day and live as Millennial Christians on the new earth. And finally, the faithful in Christ will sit down with him as Eternal Christians in the kingdom of his Father, there to have fellowship with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Christians of all ages.

## CHAPTER 4—THE ETERNAL CHRIST

There are those who say we do not believe in the same Jesus Christ in whom they believe. As to this we cannot say for we are authorities only on what we believe and not what is in the hearts and minds of others whether Christian or pagan.

As far as we are concerned, however, there is only one Christ and he is the Christ of the Bible. We believe in him. We are clear in our minds and as certain in our souls that he was born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea; that he was the Son of God; and that he was crucified for the sins of the world—we are as clear and as certain as it is possible to be.

May we now in words of soberness declare his goodness and grace, his divine Sonship, his infinite and eternal atonement. May we testify of what he has done in ages past, what he is now doing in this day of grace, and what he will yet do in the ages and eons that are yet to be.

### 1. Christ—the Creator.

There is a God in heaven—an infinite and eternal being who is the Father of us all. He created us in his own image, and he is the Father of spirits.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Firstborn. He came forth as the heir and offspring of the Father. As Paul said, he “is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.” (Colossians 1:15.) Along with all his spirit brethren he was endowed with agency and subject to law.

By obedience, by righteousness, through faith, over long ages and eons, this Firstborn of the Father, our Elder brother, advanced and progressed until he became like unto God in power, in might, in dominion, and in intelligence. He became and was “the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity.” (Mosiah 3:5.)

Then it was that he, under the Father, became the Creator of worlds without number. He is the one “by whom” God “made the worlds.” (Hebrews 1:2.) “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.” (John 1:3.)

Then it was in that primeval day, that the Father ordained and established the plan of salvation—called the gospel of God—whereby all his spirit children, Christ included, would be able to gain mortal bodies, to live in a probationary estate, to die, to be raised in immortal glory, and, if true and faithful in all things, to gain the same glorious exaltation enjoyed by the Father himself.

And then it was that the one who was beloved and chosen of the Father was foreordained to be the Savior and Redeemer, to be “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8), to be the one whose atoning sacrifice would put into full operation all of the terms and conditions of the Father’s great and eternal plan.

### 2. Christ—the God of Our Fathers.

There is one God and Father of us all, one eternal plan of salvation, one way back to heaven. And Jesus Christ is the name given by the Father whereby men may be saved.



His is the only name given under heaven—either now, or in ages past, or in eternities yet unborn—whereby salvation comes.

There is one everlasting gospel, one Mediator between God and men, one alone who came to reconcile fallen men to their Maker. “God was in Christ,” Paul said, “reconciling the world unto himself.” (2 Corinthians 5:19.) All men in all ages are saved by the same power, the same laws, the same Savior. And that Savior is Christ.

It is written: “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Hebrews 13:8.) He is the Lord Jehovah; he is the Great I Am; and beside him there is no Savior.

He is the God of Adam and of Enoch and of Noah and of all the Saints who were before the flood.

He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and of all Israel. He is the Holy One of Israel, the God of all the prophets of all the ages. It was by faith in his name that they performed all their mighty works.

He was the God of the Jaredites and the Israelites and the Nephites. Moses, “esteeming the reproach of Christ greater than riches than the treasures in Egypt” (Hebrews 11:26), chose to follow him.

He is the one who parted the Red Sea at Moses’ word, who stopped the sun and the moon when Joshua spoke, who raised from death the widow’s son because Elijah desired it.

All of the prophets, all of the patriarchs, all of the ancient saints worshipped the Father in his holy name and in no other way. “We knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming,” says one of the great Book of Mormon prophets, “and not only we ourselves had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us. Behold they believed in Christ and worshiped the Father in his name, and also we worship the Father in his name.” (Jacob 4:4-5.)

All true believers, all of the faithful from Adam to this hour, all those who through faith have wrought righteousness and gained salvation—all, without exception, have taken upon themselves his name and have followed him with full purpose of heart.

He is our God and he is the God of our fathers!

### 3. Christ—the Promised Messiah.

For four thousand long years—from the day Adam was cast out of Eden to the day John baptized at Bethabara—all of the prophets and all of the saints looked forward to the coming of the Messiah.

They talked and taught of Christ; they preached and prophesied of Christ; they centered their lives and all of their hopes in the promise of his coming.

They knew that as God's Son he would be born of a virgin, that he would work out the infinite and eternal atonement, that immortality and eternal life would come by him.

All of their doctrine, all of their ordinances, all of their worship linked his name with that of the Father himself.

The whole law of Moses, with all its types and shadows, testified of the one who would come to save his people.

More than two thousand years before his mortal birth, the Christian Redeemer revealed himself to the Brother of Jared on this wise: "The veil was taken from off the eyes of the brother of Jared, and he saw the finger of the Lord; and it was as the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood." In amazement the ancient prophet said: "I knew not that the Lord had flesh and blood." But the Lord said: "I shall take upon me flesh and blood. . . Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ . . . In me shall all mankind have life, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters." They shall be the true Christians, because they bear the name of Christ. "Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; . . . and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh." (Ether 3:6-16.)

#### 4. Christ—in the Days of His Flesh.

"Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Timothy 3:16.)

The mystery of godliness; the Lord Omnipotent makes flesh his tabernacle; a God is born into mortality: What wonders the Lord hath wrought:

Our Blessed Lord—the Eternal Christ, the Creator of all things from the beginning—was born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea. God was his Father, and he was the Son of God, the Only Begotten in the flesh.

From his mortal mother he inherited the power of mortality, the power to die; from his immortal Father he inherited the power of immortality, the power to live. And it was this dual nature that enabled him to work out the infinite and eternal atonement.

"Though he were a Son," Paul tells us, "yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author [that is, cause] of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." (Hebrews 5:8-9.) And as Paul says yet again: He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made

in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Philippians 2:7-8.) He came into the world to die, and die he did, that all others having died might live as he lived also.

In the days of his flesh he lived a perfect life, conforming to the will of the Father in all things. No taint of sin touched his life; he remained while a mortal as he had been in the days before—the Holy One of Israel.

He preached the gospel, spake as never man spake before or since, and stands for all time as the Master Teacher of the ages. He organized his Church, called others to the ministry, and saved all those whom his Father had given him out of the world.

His miracles have no equal. He healed lepers, opened blind eyes, straightened withered limbs, and raised the dead. And after all this he was rejected of men, spit upon, scourged, crowned with thorns, condemned by evil men, and crucified between two thieves. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

#### 5. Christ—the Atoning One.

We preach “Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” nothing more and nothing less. With Paul we profess “not to know any thing” else. (1 Corinthians 2:2.) But with Paul we also know that interwoven with this message of a crucified Lord are all of the doctrines of the gospel which we also preach as did Paul.

Why do we preach Christ crucified? Because the infinite and eternal atonement, commenced and in large measure accomplished in Gethsemane, was climaxed and concluded on the cross. Jesus, in agony beyond compare, sweat great drops of blood in Gethsemane as he bore, in a way incomprehensible to us, the sins of all men on conditions of repentance.

Then, again, during the last three hours of his life, as his bruised and pierced body hung on the cross of Calvary, he suffered anew all the agonies of Gethsemane. “I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me, he said. “And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross.” (3 Nephi 27:13-14.)

Salvation is in Christ. Through his atoning sacrifice he put all of the terms and conditions of his Father’s great and eternal plan into full operation. Without the atonement the purposes of God would have been frustrated, and the whole purpose of our creation and of our mortal probation would fade away into nothingness. Without the atonement there would be no immortality, no eternal life—nothing that blesses and benefits mankind. Truly, “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 3:11.)

#### 6. Christ—the Resurrection and the Life.

The Christian Christ is not a dead and dying Savior, but a living Risen Lord. He died that we might die to sin; and he lives that we, having come forth in a newness of life here, might go on to eternal life hereafter. Surely the message of Him who died that we might live is one of a glorious resurrection, a resurrection with a celestial body, a body that can stand the glory of the celestial kingdom.

Christ is the firstfruits from the dead. As he came forth in immortality so shall all rise from the dead, every man in his own order. The mere fact of resurrection will save all men, the sons of perdition only excepted, from death, hell, the devil, and endless torment. The sons of perdition, even after their resurrection, remain as though there had been no redemption. But those whose privilege it will be to come forth in the resurrection of life shall be raised, not alone in immortality, but unto eternal life.

#### 7. Christ—Today's Messiah.

Need we point out that salvation is in Christ now as it has always been. Our Lord, the Blessed Jesus, is the Everlasting Savior.

Others may look back to a dead Christ who was known to them of old. We look to a living Savior who leads his people today as he did anciently.

Others may rejoice in a people who had the gospel in ancient days and who worked miracles and gained salvation. We glory in a gospel that now is and rejoice that the same gifts of the Spirit enjoyed by the ancients are now ours.

As it was with the Former-day Saints, so it is with the Latter-day Saints. "We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ." (2 Nephi 2:25.) And he speaks to us, and visits us, and reveals his mind and will to us as literally and as plainly as he did to his people in days of old.

Christ lives; he is a living Savior; once again his face is seen and his voice is heard. A soul is just as precious in his sight now as it ever was. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and he is no respecter of persons. All who will may know him now as did they of old.

#### 8. Christ—the Eternal King.

Our Lord, the Blessed Jesus, the Everlasting Savior, the God of the saints of all the ages, shall soon come to live and reign on earth for a thousand years.

He shall come with ten thousands of his saints, in all the glory of his Father's kingdom, to destroy the wicked and to bless the righteous. As our beloved brother Paul has said: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8.)

Then, when all things are accomplished, according to the divine will, all of the saints of all the ages shall gain celestial rest in the presence of God and Christ, in a heavenly and eternal kingdom, to go no more out.

## CHAPTER 5—THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST

Conversations such as the following are quite common: “You Mormons are not Christians,” someone says.

“Of course we are Christians,” comes the reply, “we believe in Christ; why the very name of the Church is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And our Book of Mormon, a volume of holy scripture like the Bible, tells of Christ’s ministry in America after his resurrection. This book is in fact a new witness for Christ.”

In answer we are told: “But you do not believe in the same Christ we do; you do not believe in the Christ of the Bible.”

Conversations of this sort crystallize what is really involved in the claim that Mormons are not Christians. The issue is not whether we believe in Christ. Rather, it is whether we interpret his doctrine in the same way others do. It is whether salvation comes in the way some say it does or in the way we teach.

As everyone knows the Catholics and Lutherans and Baptists all differ in their views as to how to gain salvation through Christ and his atonement. There is no reality in the whole realm of religion that is as well known as that all churches do not believe the same doctrines. If they did there would only be one church.

Whether doctrinal differences among those who believe in Christ are a sufficient reason to deny any church a place in the Christian fold is quite another thing. It is a matter we will be pleased to leave in the hands of the generality of Christian believers and of that Judge whose judgments are just.

When others say we do not believe in the Christ of the Bible what they mean is that we do not believe in salvation by grace alone and without works, that we do not believe men are saved by the blood of Christ, provided only that they confess the Lord Jesus with their lips. They mean that we believe salvation comes, through the atonement, to those only who obey the laws and ordinances of the gospel. The issue is whether we must work out our salvation or whether it comes as a free gift without reference to anything we can do.

In fairness to all and lest there be any misunderstanding on anyone’s part, let us take up the issue of Christian grace; let us state our relationship to Christ, to the salvation that he offers, and to the doctrine that comes from him.

There is in fact no mystery about the doctrine of Christian grace. It is set forth as plainly and as clearly as any of the doctrines of salvation. The scriptural teachings are explicit,

and no one needs to be confused or to follow some false will-o'-wisp unless he chooses to do so. Grace—wondrous grace, amazing grace, infinite grace, the grace of God—consists of three things. It is his mercy, his love, and his condescension. And it is manifest in all that he has done, or does now, or ever will do for his children.

To understand how and in what way the grace of God showers blessings upon the true saints, and upon all men without reference to their beliefs or works, we must know what the plan of salvation is. All men are the spirit children of God. We lived in his presence and saw his face before the foundations of the world were laid. He, as a glorified, perfected, and exalted being, is our Father. He ordained and established the way and the means and the laws whereby we might advance and progress and become like him. This system, ordained of him, is the plan of salvation. It consists of three great and eternal verities:

1. The creation of the earth and of all forms of life, man included, in his pristine, perfect, and paradisiacal form, to dwell on the earth;
2. The fall of man and of all forms of life and of the earth itself, through which temporal and spiritual death came into the world; and
3. The redemption of all things through the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereby all men are raised in immortality while those who believe and obey also gain eternal life.

Each of these infinitely great verities—the creation, the fall, and the atonement—and all that appertains to and is part of them came by grace. They came into being and were given efficacy, force, and validity because of the mercy, love, and condescension of an infinitely glorious being who is God above all.

Man could not create himself, nor the earth, nor the living things on its face. But Deity in his goodness and grace could and did; and if there had been no creation, the children of God could not have become inheritors of immortality and eternal life.

Having been created man could not by any power of his own introduce death and procreation and probation into the eternal scheme of things. But Deity in his goodness and grace could and did; and if there had been no mortality and death, we could not gain either immortality or eternal life.

Man cannot resurrect himself, nor create celestial salvation, nor raise himself, unaided, unto eternal life. But Deity in his goodness and grace has done all these things, and hence salvation of every sort, kind, and degree comes by the goodness and grace of God.

It is imperative that we fix in our minds the eternal, immutable, absolute verity that all things come by grace. We are created by grace; we live as mortals on earth by grace; we are resurrected by grace. And we are saved by grace. And all of these things come, in one

sense and manner of speaking, without works. They are the work of the Almighty, not the work of weak and fallen and powerless mortals. Truly, there is nothing that man can do of himself, unaided from heaven, that will bring to pass his immortality and eternal life. There should be no question in informed and rational minds about these basic concepts.

Why then did Paul say the saints must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling before the Lord? Why did Jesus say that not everyone that said unto him, Lord, Lord, would enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that did the will of the Father? And why did Jesus ask, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.) Why did James say that faith without works was dead? Why do the scriptures, incessantly, everlastingly, from beginning to end, talk about keeping the commandments, living the law, walking in the light, overcoming the world, crucifying the old man of sin, and so on and so on?

Again there is no mystery about it; it is in no way hidden or obscure. Of course men must work out their own salvation through righteous works. Salvation is available by grace; it is obtained by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life . . . He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:16, 36.)

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts 16:30.) Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ: What is it? It is faith in him and his gospel as signified by obedience. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15.) It is the father of repentance, and of baptism, and of the receipt of the gift of the Holy Ghost.

It was the belief of the primitive saints that enabled them to work miracles, and heal the sick, and raise the dead, and enjoy all of the gifts of the Spirit. "These signs shall follow them that believe." (Mark 16:16.) It is God's eternal law that where there is faith there will be signs and miracles. "He that believeth on me," Jesus said, "the works that I do shall he do also: and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." (John 14:12.) There is no way of overstating the eternal verity that salvation is for those who believe in Christ, nor that the belief spoken of is the faith that moves mountains and works miracles.

To gain salvation men must forsake their sins and walk in paths of righteousness. The doctrine of salvation by grace alone and without works, as it is interpreted by many people, permits them to live after the manner of the world, to one degree or another, and yet suppose they will inherit eternal bliss in the realms ahead. How much wiser they would be if they hearkened to the prophetic word which says: "Reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved." (2 Nephi 10:24.)

And also: “Come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

“And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.” (Moroni 10:32-33.)

To gain that salvation which God in his goodness and grace has made available to all men, we must obey the laws upon which the receipt of so great a blessing is predicated. These laws are:

1. We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and have faith in his holy name. We must believe that he bore our sins on conditions of repentance; that he came to save sinners and that by his stripes we are healed; and that he rose from the dead and invites all men to come unto him and partake of his goodness and grace.
2. We must repent of our sins, forsake the world, and rely wholly upon the merits of Him who is mighty to save.
3. We must be baptized by immersion, under the hands of a legal administrator, for the remission of sins. By so doing we place ourselves on the strait and narrow path leading to eternal life.
4. We must receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands of those who have power to baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost. This gift gives us the right to the constant companionship of the Holy Spirit based on faithfulness.
5. We must keep the commandments after baptism, enduring to the end, living righteously, living by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.

In discussing these things—and they are the plan of salvation as far as men are concerned—Nephi, speaking of the saints who after baptism find themselves on the strait and narrow path, gives this exhortation:

“Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of god and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.

“And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now,



behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end.” (2 Nephi 31:20-21.)

And Paul, speaking of “the doctrine of God our Saviour,” and addressing himself to baptized members of the earthly kingdom gives a similar exhortation:

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

“Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Titus 2:10-14.)

If a determination as to whether we are Christians is to be made on our acceptance of “the doctrine of God our Saviour,” we are prepared to take our chances before the bar of the Great Judge when all men will be judged for their thoughts, their words, their writings, and all the deeds done in the flesh.

## CHAPTER 6—THE WORSHIP OF GOD

It seems to be a matter of great concern in some quarters as to whether the Latter-day Saints pray to Christ and whether they worship him as a God. We shall address both issues.

Do we worship Christ as God? The answer is both, yes and no, and as with all major gospel doctrines needs some explanation.

Do we pray to Christ because he is God? The answer is an emphatic, no, to which someone replies, “But your own Book of Mormon tells of praying to him.” And so, once again, those who sincerely desire to learn the doctrine must hear it expounded correctly.

Those who claim Mormons are not Christians find theological support for their thesis in the fact that we do not pray to Christ and that we do not worship him in the same way we worship the Father.

That there is a difference between our way of worship and that of other Christian churches is to be expected. They believe the creeds of Christendom; we do not.

To them the Godhead is a trinity-in-unity that does not separate the three persons. They are all considered to be of one substance, power, and eternity. The worship of any one of them is the worship of all the rest, and prayers may be addressed to the Father, the Son, or

the Holy Ghost, because there is no distinction between them, and the same worship is given to the Father and the Son because they are of one substance.

To us the Godhead consists of three persons, two of whom have bodies of flesh and bones, and the third is a personage of Spirit. Each of these has and does perform his own labors of creation, redemption, and testifying, as the case may be, though they are all united as one because they possess the same character, perfections, and attributes. Accordingly, we pray to and worship the Father, in the name of the Son, by the power of the Holy Ghost, and in no other ways.

Worship and religion go together; they cannot be separated. True religion requires true worship; false religion accepts false forms of worship. True worship identifies true Christians and is summarized by the following concepts:

1. Nature of True Worship.

True and saving worship begins with a belief in the true God. It is one thing to pray to the God of heaven and quite another to importune at the feet of Baal; it is one thing to approach the throne of grace, boldly, confidently, and in person, and quite another to send one's petition, timidly, feeling no fellowship with Deity, to some saint with a request for intercession with Him who sitteth upon the throne.

True and saving worship presupposes a belief in the true gospel. It embraces an acceptance on man's part of the laws and plan, given of God for the salvation of his children.

True and saving worship requires enough faith on man's part to know that God has all power and that he will pour down the blessings of heaven upon those who seek him with all their hearts. It includes a willingness, a desire, and an attempt to obey the Lord's law and keep his commandments.

Those who truly worship the Lord both fear and love him. They tremble at the very thought of his displeasure should they walk in the ways of the wicked. But they love and revere him for his goodness and grace in making salvation possible. They ascribe unto him glory and honor and thanksgiving for all that he has done for them. As a result true worshippers serve the Lord; they labor on his errand; they seek to save others, as yet others have saved them.

Above all true worship is emulation. It is pursuing a course that will lead the worshipful souls to the same high status of dignity, honor, and power possessed by Him who is the object of their worship. Of this we shall speak more particularly hereafter.

2. Worship the Father.

True Christians worship the Father. Their prayers are directed to him and to him only. They do not pray to the Son nor to the Holy Ghost. Rather they worship the Father, in the name of the Son, by the power of the Holy Ghost. The very act of praying in the name of the Son precludes a prayer to him direct because praying to the Father in Christ's name means praying to the Father in Christ's place and stead as though he were doing the praying.

The Book of Mormon instance in which the Nephites properly prayed direct to Christ was one in which he stood personally before them in his glorified, resurrected body. Their prayers consisted of acclamations of praise, "calling him their Lord and their God." But even then Jesus himself, lest there be any misunderstanding that prayers should go to the Father, did himself pray to the Father and say: "Thou seest that they believe in me because thou hearest them, and they pray unto me; and they pray unto me because I am with them." (3 Nephi 19:18, 22.)

On all other occasions they prayed to the Father in the name of Christ in accord with his command: "And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you. Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name." (3 Nephi 18:20-21.)

When the scriptures speak of worshipping the Son they mean we should stand in reverential awe and ascribe unto him glory and honor because of his atoning sacrifice. The Christian worship whereby men gain salvation goes to the Father.

Thus the revealed word says that the Father "is infinite and eternal," that he created mankind, "and gave unto them commandments that they should love and serve him, the only living and true God, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship." (Doctrine and Covenants 20:17-19.) And also: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him." (Doctrine and Covenants 59:5.) And thus Jesus himself said: "True worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. For unto such hath God promised his Spirit. And they who worship him, must worship in spirit and in truth." (Joseph Smith Translation, John 4:25-26.) There is no other way, no other approved system of worship.

### 3. Man's Reconciliation with God.

True worship is a way of life; it is the course that reconciles fallen man with his Maker; it includes all of the laws and ordinances which prepare and qualify earth's mortals to return to their heavenly home, there to inherit eternal glory in the divine presence.

Fallen man, mortal man as he now is, is spiritually dead. He is dead as pertaining to the things of the Spirit; he is not endowed with the Spirit, which dwells only with the righteous. He has been cast out of the presence of God, out of the spiritual presence, and he is dead as pertaining to the things of righteousness.

Christ came to ransom man from his lost and fallen state. Through Christ man can live again spiritually; he can be born again; he can become alive to the things of righteousness. Through Christ man can receive the Holy Spirit; he can dwell in the divine presence; he can be reconciled to God. Such is the intent and purpose of the plan of salvation, and man, by the grace of God, has power to turn from sin to sanctification, from death to life, from being a rebel to being reconciled.

“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature,” Paul tells us. As a new creature, he is no longer carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature. Having been born again he is alive in Christ. Thus it is, Paul continues, that God “hath reconciled us [the saints] to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation.” Not only are the saints reconciled, they are to minister the glad tidings of reconciliation to others. This ministry of reconciliation is “that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” Christ bears our sins on conditions of repentance. And the Lord “hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation,” so that we may invite others to repent and be reconciled. “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” (2 Corinthians 5:17-20.)

What greater purpose could any worship have than to prepare men to be at peace with their Maker here and now, and then to dwell with him everlastingly in the heavens—all because man has reconciled himself to the divine will.

#### 4. The Mediation of Jesus Christ.

It is through Christ that true worship and consequent salvation is made available to mortals. He is the one and only Mediator between us and the Father; he mediates between us and our Maker; his mediation brings to pass our reconciliation.

He is our Advocate and Intercessor. In the process of mediating between us and our Creator, in the process of reconciling sin-ridden men with a sin-free God, he makes intercession for all who repent. He advocates the cause of those who believe in him. “Father,” he pleads, “spare these my brethren that believe on my name, that they may come unto me and have everlasting life.” (Doctrine and Covenants 45:5.)

He opens the door to eternal life. This greatest of all gifts is reserved for those who know the only true God and the Redeeming One who came in his name and power. He is the revealer of the Father. God is and can be known only by revelation; he stands revealed or he remains forever unknown. Jesus said: “No man knoweth . . . who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.” (Luke 10:22.)

Indeed, God was in Christ manifesting himself to the world. In his appearance, in his person, and in his attributes, the Son was and is in the likeness of the Father. He is in “the express image of his [Father’s] person,” Paul tells us. (Hebrews 1:3.) He himself said: “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30), and “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

(John 14:9.) The four gospels are a treasure house of knowledge concerning the Father because they set forth what the Son is like, and he is like his Father.

Who can doubt that Christ's mission was and is to reveal the Father; to lead men to the Father; to teach them how to worship the Father; to reconcile them to the Father. "I am the way," he said. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6.)

##### 5. Worshipping by Emulation.

The Lord Jesus in his mortal ministry set the pattern, marked the way, and charted the course for all men. He worshipped the Father and gained a fulness of eternal glory, thereby showing how we must worship to gain a like reward. The Father is our God and he is Christ's God. After his resurrection Jesus said: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John 20:17.) All of us, Christ included, are the spirit children of the Father; all of us, Christ included, seek to become like the Father. In this sense the Firstborn, our Elder Brother, goes forward as we do.

After he, while yet a spirit being, had gained power and intelligence that made him like unto God; after he had become, under the Father, the Creator of worlds without number; after he had reigned on the throne of eternal power as the Lord Omnipotent—after all this he yet had to gain a mortal and then an immortal body.

After the Son of God "made flesh" his "tabernacle," and while he "dwelt among the sons of men"; after he left his preexistent glory as we all do at birth; after he was born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea—after all this he was called upon to work out his own salvation.

Of our Lord's life while in this mortal probation the scripture says: "He received not of the fulness at first, but received grace for grace; And he received not of the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness." Finally, after his resurrection, "he received a fulness of the glory of the Father; And he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him."

Thus the Lord Jesus worked out his own salvation while in this mortal probation by going from grace to grace, until, having overcome the world and being raised in immortal glory, he became like the Father in the full, complete, and eternal sense. And all men must worship the Father in the same way Christ did in order to gain the same salvation. "I give unto you these sayings"—those telling how Christ worked out his salvation—"that you may understand and know how to worship," the Lord says, "and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due course receive of his fulness."

What a wondrous concept this is. We too can become like the Father. "For if you keep my commandments," the Lord continues, "you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, you shall receive grace for grace." (Doctrine and Covenants 93:14-20.)

## 6. Fellowship with the Saints.

There is a true Christianity and a false Christianity; and there is a true worship and a false worship. False worship is to live after the manner of the world and have fellowship with the wicked and ungodly both in this life and in the life to come.

True worship gives us full fellowship with the saints on earth and in heaven. It is the fellowship of righteousness. True worship consists in living righteously. “Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,” John said. “If we say we have fellowship with him [the Father], and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1:3-7.)

## CHAPTER 7—THE MORMON MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

May we now place the capstone on the house of faith and knowledge and understanding that it has been our privilege to build? May we set forth the crowning verities showing that Mormons are Christians? May we single out and speak reverently of the added light and knowledge about Christ our Lord that has come to us, and to us only, in these last days?

So far, in this work, we have complied with the divine decree, “Produce your cause, saith the Lord.” (Isaiah 41:21.) Our cause is his cause. It is to bear witness of him, to proclaim the everlasting word to the world, to chart, for all men, the course leading to eternal life. It is to invite all who will to come and walk in paths of truth and righteousness so as to find place with their Maker both now and forever. In the presentation of our cause and in the very nature of things, we have borne the witness that we are Christians.

So far, in this work, we have responded to the heaven-sent invitation, “Bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob.” (Isaiah 41:21.) Such reasons as seem applicable to the issues at hand; such reasons as show the basis for the hope within us; such reasons for placing us in the Christian fold in one manner of speaking; and such reasons for separating us from a sort of Babylonish-Christianity—all these have been summarized. It lies within the power of all to analyze and extend them. Such is the personal responsibility of all who seek salvation, for no man can be saved in ignorance of God and his laws, and men are saved no faster than they gain a knowledge of Christ and his everlasting gospel.

Our presentation of the cause, which we have espoused and which is the center of our lives, and our recitation of the reasons for the glorious hope that is ours—both of these may fall far short of the high standard that pleases a Divine Providence. But at least enough has been said to open the door to that continuing investigation which will enable all who seek the truth to find it and be thereby edified and enlightened.

But now let us lay aside the matter of words and terms and definitions. Let us rise above the clouds of contention. What does it matter if this or that theologian interprets the holy word to encircle us within the Christian fold or to drive us out into the valley of the shadow of death? Let us, rather, get to the heart and core and center of the matter and ask what the Latter-day Saints think of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whether we are designated by man made definitions as a cult, as a sect, as a pagan group, as non-Christians—what does it matter? Can our basic character be altered by pelting us with unsavory epithets? Is the beauty and worth of a diamond diminished by calling it a carbon crystal? In the true and final sense the real issue in revealed religion is what men think of their Redeemer. Is he the Savior of the world? Did he come to ransom men from the temporal and spiritual death brought into the world by the fall of Adam? Are repentant souls washed clean by the blood of the Lamb? Is he the Atoning One by whom salvation comes? Must we believe his gospel, live his law, and follow his prophets to gain eternal felicity with Moses and the prophets in the realms ahead?

In the providences of Him who has called us to proclaim His gospel and perform His ordinances, we have knowledge about Christ and salvation that is elsewhere unknown. We have all that the world has and in addition many glorious truths of salvation have been revealed to us alone. The Old Testament abounds, for instance, in Messianic prophecies about the Promised Messiah. So also does that portion of the Book of Mormon that records the Jaredite history and the so-called pre-Christian era history of the Nephites. It is our purpose now to sample some of these Messianic utterances which with at least some propriety we shall designate as the Mormon Messianic Prophecies.

The Book of Mormon is Another Testament of Jesus Christ. As recited on the title page, which was itself translated from the plates, it came forth for “the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that JESUS is the CHRIST, the ETERNAL GOD, manifesting himself unto all nations.” Then, from the first words of the first Nephi to the last words of the last Moroni, with the Jaredite record included as a crowning jewel, the whole divine record bears witness of Christ and teaches his eternal doctrine.

Nearly 600 years before that holy night when the Promised Messiah, in Bethlehem of Judea, came forth from the womb of Mary amid the stench and filth of a stable, Nephi saw in vision the coming of God’s Son into the world. He saw Mary—“A virgin, most beautiful and fair above all other virgins”—as she dwelt in Nazareth. An angelic ministrant identified her as “the mother of the Son of God, after the manner of the flesh.” Nephi “beheld that she was carried away in the Spirit,” after which he saw her “bearing a child in her arms.” As to the child the angel, who came from God in heaven to converse with man on earth, this angel testified: “Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father:” (1 Nephi 11:13-21.)

Scriptorian, theologian, student of the prophets that he was, we have no doubt Nephi remembered with exulting joy the wondrous words of his friend Isaiah: “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father,

The Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6.) And we have no doubt that Isaiah and Nephi, separated by a century and a continent, both saw the same sacred scenes. Why should it be otherwise in the providences of Him who is no respecter of persons and who seeks to pour out truth and light upon all who will receive it?

But whatever the two seers saw, Nephi’s account stands supreme. This American Hebrew saw “the Redeemer of the world,” and “the prophet who should prepare the way before him.” He saw the baptism of “the Lamb of God,” and “the Holy Ghost come down out of heaven and abide upon him.” He saw Jesus and the Twelve go forth and minister “in power and great glory.” He saw “multitudes of people who were sick, and who were afflicted with all manner of diseases, and with devils and unclean spirits . . . And they were healed by the power of the Lamb of God; and the devils and the unclean spirits were cast out.”

And then, O crime of crimes, He who came to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows; He who was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and with whose stripes we are healed—He who is “the Son of the everlasting God”—He “was judged, . . . lifted up upon the cross and slain for the sins of the world.” (1 Nephi 11:27-34.)

These visions and scores of revelations about Christ and his doctrines, all of which teach that salvation is available in and through the infinite and eternal atonement, caused Nephi to acclaim: “We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins. . . And now behold, I say unto you that the right way [the way to gain salvation] is to believe in Christ, and deny him not; and Christ is the Holy One of Israel; wherefore ye must bow down before him, and worship him with all your might, mind, and strength, and your whole soul; and if ye do this ye shall in nowise be cast out.” (2 Nephi 25:26, 29.)

If an angel came down from God in heaven to preach a sermon to man on earth, what message would he proclaim? We have accounts of many sermons by the mortal Jesus, delivered in Palestine, and of the Immortal Christ, delivered to the Nephites after his resurrection. But there is only one extended sermon in our present scriptures that was delivered by an angel from beyond the veil. Its subject—the coming, the ministry, and the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ. Its doctrine—the atonement of the Eternal One. These Messianic words of the angel, uttered about 124 B.C., excel in grandeur and import anything on the same subject in the whole Bible:

“The time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, and shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases.



“And he shall cast out devils, or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men.

“And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people.

“And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary.

“And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men even through faith on his name; and even after all this they shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him.

“And he shall rise the third day from the dead; and behold, he standeth to judge the world; and behold, all these things are done that a righteous judgment might come upon the children of men. . .

“And moreover, I say unto you, that there shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent. . .

“Salvation was, and is, and is to come, in and through the atoning blood of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent.

“For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be, forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.” (Mosiah 3:5-19.) No man who is enlightened by the power of the Holy Spirit can read these words without knowing in his heart that they are true and that the volume of holy writ wherein they are found is true.

Who among all the prophets ever set forth one of the ways in which Christ is the Everlasting Father as well as King Benjamin did in these words:

“Because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him and have become his sons and his daughters.

“And under this head ye are made free, and there is no other head whereby ye can be made free. There is no other name given whereby salvation cometh; therefore, I would

that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives.

“And it shall come to pass that whosoever doeth this shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ ....

“Therefore, I would that ye should be steadfast and immovable always abounding in good works, that Christ, the Lord God Omnipotent may seal you his, that you may be brought to heaven, that ye may have everlasting salvation and eternal life, through the wisdom, and power, and justice, and mercy of him who created all things, in heaven and in earth, who is God above all.” (Mosiah 5:7-9, 15.)

What Biblical Messianic prophecy can compare with these words of Alma given about 83 B. C.: “The Son of God cometh upon the face of the earth. “And behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God.

“And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

“And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities.” (Alma 7:9-12.)

In one of the greatest visions ever vouchsafed to man, the Brother of Jared saw the Lord Jesus thousands of years before Our Lord’s mortal birth. That holy being, destined to be born as God’s Son, said to his friend on earth: “I shall take upon me flesh and blood.

“Behold, I am he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have life, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters ....

“Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh.” (Ether 3:9, 14, 16.)

We need not name more of the Mormon Messianic Prophecies, though they are numbered in the scores; indeed, there are more, far more, than in the Bible. And they are found in greater plainness and perfection than are those in the Stick of Judah. Suffice it to say for our purposes that we, as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,

believe and know Christ is God; that he is the Son of God by whom redemption comes; that he came to reconcile fallen man to the Father; and that his gospel, as restored in these last days, is the plan of salvation by obedience to which all men can gain peace in this life and be inheritors of eternal life in the mansions on high.

## CHAPTER 8—THE NEPHITE TESTAMENT OF CHRIST

There is an Old Testament that foretells the coming of Christ; there is a New Testament that testifies of his ministry, teaches his doctrine, tells of his atoning sacrifice; and there is an American or Nephite Testament which does both. Collectively they bear the heaven-intended witness of Him by whom salvation comes, and without any one of them earth's present inhabitants cannot learn all they must know to gain salvation. And the most wondrous of these accounts is the Nephite Testament.

What is the Nephite Testament of Christ? It is the Book of Mormon, a volume of holy scripture that tells of the Lord's dealings with a Jaredite and a Lehite civilization both of which flourished in the Americas. It is a record of God's dealings with ancient peoples who had the fulness of the everlasting gospel. Their prophets and inspired men recorded the doctrines of salvation and the word of truth upon plates of gold. They set forth what the Lord Jesus did and said when he ministered on American soil. Their words are scripture and have been preserved for us in a purer and more perfect form than is the case with the Biblical canon. And in this connection shall we not ask: What conceivable reason can any devout truth-seeker have for rejecting any testament of Christ, be it written by Matthew, Mark, Nephi, Luke, or John?

When the Lord Jesus came unto his own in Jewish Jerusalem in the land of Judah, his own, the Jewish people of whom he was one, received him not. But when he came unto his other sheep, to his own in the land of Joseph, to those who were separated from their Jewish kin, his Nephite brethren received him in worshipful adoration.

When he was born of Mary, born as a mortal in Bethlehem of Judea, he came as a Prince in shepherd's guise; he came to minister among men as had all the prophets of all the ages. But when he appeared in the Western Hemisphere, he came in immortal glory, no longer subject to hunger, thirst, and fatigue, and free from all of the limitations of the flesh.

When he came as the Lord Jesus to live and teach and atone, as only a divine being could, he lived a sinless life, spake as never man spake, and then suffered in Gethsemane and on Calvary for the sins of all men on conditions of repentance. And when he came as the Lord Jehovah, whose dead body had come forth from the Arimathean's tomb, he continued to live in sinless perfection, to speak as he had ever spoken, but the days of his sorrow and suffering were no more.

In the Old World, in the days of his flesh, he had neither form, nor comeliness, nor beauty, that men should desire him; he was despised and rejected of men; he was

stricken, smitten, and afflicted—all because he dwelt among the wicked and ungodly of the world. He dwelt among the only people on earth who, hearing his gracious words and seeing his wondrous works, would yet crucify their King. In the New World he, as one fairer than the children of men, ministered among a righteous remnant of the House of Jacob, among a people who sought his face and gloried in his words.

His Jewish ministry is recorded in the four gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. That portion of his Nephite ministry which we are prepared to receive is recorded in a fifth gospel, called Third Nephi. Additional teachings, beyond our present spiritual capacity to understand, are preserved on the sealed portion of the plates and will come forth during the Millennium.

It is self-evident that the Lord Jesus would speak more profound words and perform more wondrous deeds among the pure Nephites than among the quibbling scribes and self-righteous Pharisees. Indeed, the account of his doings and sayings as found in the Book of Mormon far excel those preserved in the Biblical accounts. Let us, then, in presenting our witness of the Lord Jesus Christ, turn to that prophetic word which has come to us from the prophets and seers of ancient America.

Our Lord's birth, spelled out to the very day, was made known to the Nephites. In a day of great sorrow and persecution he said to Nephi the disciple: "Lift up your head and be of good cheer; for behold, the time is at hand, and on this night shall the sign be given, and on the morrow come I into the world, to show unto the world that I will fulfil all that which I have caused to be spoken by the mouth of my holy prophets. Behold, I come unto my own, to fulfil all things which I have made known unto the children of men from the foundation of the world, and to do the will, both of the Father and of the Son—of the Father because of me, and of the Son because of my flesh. And behold, the time is at hand, and this night shall the sign be given." (3 Nephi 1:13-14.)

The promised sign which then came included a day and a night and a day during which there was no darkness, but it was as light as at mid-day. Thus it was that a whole nation of faithful Nephites gained a sure knowledge of his birth, a knowledge reserved in the Old World for a few shepherds and a handful of those who attended Mary. And should this knowledge not have come to faithful Nephites as well as to worthy Jews?

Thirty-three years and four days later fire and tempests and earthquakes and destruction swept over the Americas until the whole face of the land was changed—all as a witness that the Lord Jesus was crucified on Calvary outside Jerusalem's walls. Mountains were torn asunder; valleys became hills; some cities were burned while others sank into the sea; destruction and death fell upon the wicked; and the devils laughed. Then the voice of the Crucified One, now risen from the dead, spoke; and all the inhabitants on all the face of the land heard these words:

"Behold, I am Jesus Christ the Son of God. I created the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are. I was with the Father from the beginning. I am in the Father, and the Father in me; and in me hath the Father glorified his name.

“I came unto my own, and my own received me not. And the scriptures concerning my coming are fulfilled.

“And as many as have received me, to them have I given to become the sons of God; and even so will I to as many as shall believe on my name, for behold, by me redemption cometh, and in me is the law of Moses fulfilled.

“I am the light and the life of the world. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

“And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings.

“And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost.

“Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

“Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved.” (3 Nephi 9:15-22.)

Is there anything in all the revelations now known to men that compares with this divine pronouncement about the position of the Lord Jesus Christ in the eternal scheme of things? Where else is there such a perfect summary of his status as a God, of the redemption that came by him, and of what men must do to gain an eternal inheritance with him? Why should anyone reject these America-based words of a Divine Being whose Palestine-based words they profess to believe?

Many other words were spoken by the Risen Lord at this same time. Then, nearly a year later, when 2500 worshipping Nephites were wondering and marveling about Christ and his death, they heard a heavenly voice proclaim: “Behold my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, in whom I have glorified my name—hear ye him.”

Then the Man Jesus descended out of heaven and said: “Behold, I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world. And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning.”

To the whole multitude, who had fallen to the earth in reverential awe, the Immortal One commanded: “Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.” (3 Nephi 11:7, 10-11, 14.) This they did.

The Risen Lord then taught them his gospel and called and ordained legal administrators, including a Nephite Twelve to teach his word and to perform the ordinances of salvation. He delivered the Sermon on the Mount; told of the fulfilment of the law of Moses; identified the Nephites as the “other sheep” who would hear his voice; and expounded many of the ancient scriptures. He healed the sick, caused the lame to walk, and made the dumb to speak. He prayed with such power that no tongue can speak, nor can any pen write his words. Angels attended, the sacramental emblems were administered, and the people were taught that they should meet together often in faith and prayer and worship. In a later appearance he said of his Nephite ministry: “So great faith have I never seen among all the Jews; wherefore I could not show unto them so great miracles, because of their unbelief. Verily I say unto you, there are none of them that have seen so great things as ye have seen; neither have they heard so great things as ye have heard.” (3 Nephi 19:35-36.)

It was during one of his Nephite appearances that Jesus gave this grand exposition of the meaning and nature of the gospel:

“Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.

“And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me, that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil—

“And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works.

“And it shall come to pass, that 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.

“And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father.

“And this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men. And for this cause he fulfilleth the words which he hath given, and he lieth not, but fulfilleth all his words.

“And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.

“Now this is the commandment: Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel; and ye know the things that ye must do in my church; for the works which ye have seen me do that shall ye also do; for that which ye have seen me do even that shall ye do;

“Therefore, if ye do these things blessed are ye, for ye shall be lifted up at the last day.”  
(3 Nephi 27:13-22.)

Of our Lord’s Nephite ministry and of the inspired ministries of those whom he sends to represent him, the holy word attests:

“And wo be unto him that will not hearken unto the words of Jesus, and also to them whom he hath chosen and sent among them; for whoso receiveth not the words of Jesus and the words of those whom he hath sent receiveth not him; and therefore he will not receive them at the last day;

“And it would be better for them if they had not been born. For do ye suppose that ye can get rid of the justice of an offended God, who hath been trampled under feet of men, that thereby salvation might come?” (3 Nephi 28:34-35.)

## CHAPTER 9—THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS WITNESS OF CHRIST

What is the witness borne by the Mormons, by the Latter-day Saints, by the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, what is the witness they bear of that Lord who has placed his name upon them? If their witness is the true scriptural witness, then, by any definition, Mormons are Christians. If their witness is not true, then let them be called by any name or classified in any category, it matters not. Truth only will prevail in that day when the God of Truth tries all men’s beliefs and deeds by his eternal standard. And as to whether their witness is true—that is something every person must determine for himself individually.

Be it known to all men everywhere that our witness of the Lord Jesus Christ is the Old Testament witness. With all our hearts we believe the Messianic word proclaimed by all the ancient prophets. If Isaiah said it we believe it. The account of the Suffering Servant set forth in Isaiah 53 thrills us to the marrow. We love the holy word and see in the life of the Lord Jesus the complete fulfilment of all that is written in the law and in the Psalms and in the prophets.

Our witness of the Lord Jesus is also the New Testament witness. We believe he was born of Mary in Bethlehem of Judea; that God was his Father, thus making him the Son of God; and that the years of his flesh were thirty and three. We believe he was baptized by John at Bethabara in Jordan and that the Holy Ghost descended upon him like a dove. We accept the divine word which says he went forth through all Judea and Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom by the power of the Spirit. We know he opened blind eyes, unstopped deaf ears, loosed dumb tongues, caused the lame to leap, healed lepers and paralytics, and called back departed spirits to dwell again in their tenements of clay. We know he multiplied loaves and fishes, stilled storms, and walked on the tumultuous waves of the raging sea of Tiberias. We know him as a teacher whose Sermon on the Mount, whose parables, whose every word unite to testify that never man spake as he spake.

But above all this—above it a thousand times over—we know him as the Atoning One, as the Redeemer, as the one by whose stripes we are healed. We accept without reservation, qualification, or limitation the fact that in Gethsemane and at Golgotha he bore the sins of all men on conditions of repentance. We know he sweat great goutts of blood from every pore as he bore a burden that none but a God could bear. And we are witnesses, along with Peter and John and Paul and all the apostles of old, that the Crucified One rose again the third day becoming thereby the first fruits of them that slept. We know he appeared to many after his resurrection and that through faith in his name those who believe and obey can enter into the same eternal felicity that now is his. Our witness of that Christ by whom salvation comes is also the Book of Mormon witness, which volume of holy scripture, as we have seen, is “Another Testament of Jesus Christ.” And our witness, drawn from the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and from latter day revelation is that our Blessed Lord will soon come again, in all the glory of his Father’s kingdom, to live and reign among the sons of men. In a not-distant day the Lord whom we seek shall descend with ten thousands of his angels, with the sound of a trump and the voice of the archangel, to take his rightful place as Lord and King and to reign on the throne of David forever as Gabriel promised Mary.

In the spring of 1820, in one of the grandest theophanies ever vouchsafed to mortal man, the Almighty God, attended by his Only Begotten Son, appeared in person to the Prophet Joseph Smith. On that blessed day of glory and wonder the Father and the Son descended in a pillar of light. “I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air,” the newly called prophet and soon-to-be seer tells us. “One of them [the Father, the Great God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe] spake unto me, calling me by name, and said to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him:” (Joseph Smith—History 1:17.)

What a witness this is: That same being who testified of his Beloved Son at Bethabara again opened his mouth and phrased words of love and testimony: That same being who was the Beloved Son 2000 years ago continues in that exalted role in our day. Truly Christ our Lord, risen from the tomb in glorious immortality, retains that body of flesh and bones which was felt by the apostles of old, and remains now as he was then and ever



shall be. What greater witness can there be than that of the Father testifying of the Son? And this modern witness comes to the world through the Latter-day Saints.

In April of 1830, as the Church and kingdom was again being set up on earth, the greatest of the latter day prophets bore this witness of that Lord whose Church it was and is:

“Wherefore, the Almighty God gave his Only Begotten Son, as it is written in those scriptures which have been given of him.

“He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them.

“He was crucified, died, and rose again the third day;

“And ascended into heaven, to sit down on the right hand of the Father, to reign with almighty power according to the will of the Father;

“That as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved—

“Not only those who believed after he came in the meridian of time, in the flesh, but all those from the beginning, even as many as were before he came, who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who spake as they were inspired by the gift of the Holy Ghost, who truly testified of him in all things, should have eternal life,

“As well as those who should come after, who should believe in the gifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost, which beareth record of the Father and of the Son;

“Which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen.

“And we know that all men must repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and worship the Father in his name, and endure in faith on his name to the end, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God.” (Doctrine and Covenants 20:21-29.)

The Almighty Father by whom all things are; the Beloved Son who atoned for the sins of the world; his resurrection and reigning in eternal glory; the plan of faith and repentance whereby salvation comes; the application of these saving truths to all men from Adam to the last man; the Father, Son and Holy Ghost standing as one eternal God, “infinite and eternal, without end”; the fact that those only who believe in Christ, repent, and keep the commandments all their days can be saved—all this is the Latter-day Saint witness of Christ! What fault can spiritually enlightened souls find with such a witness?

In the Vision of the Degrees of Glory—that grand unfoldment of the eternal destiny of man, than which there has scarcely been a greater revelation—in this Vision, this latter day rending of the heavens, Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon saw the realms of eternal

glory. While the eyes of their understanding were opened and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, they bore this witness:

“We beheld the glory of the Son, on the right hand of the Father, and received of his fulness;

“And saw the holy angels, and them who are sanctified before his throne, worshipping God, and the Lamb, who worship him forever and ever.

“And now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives:

“For we saw him, even on the right hand of God; and we heard the voice bearing record that he is the Only Begotten of the Father—

“That by him, and through him, and of him, the worlds are and were created, and the inhabitants thereof are begotten sons and daughters unto God.” (Doctrine and Covenants 76:20-24.)

How few of the seers of all the ages have seen such scenes: Who among the so-called Christians of earth has such knowledge as this? Should the Latter-day Saints be rejected and reviled and persecuted because they know more about Christ than do their fellow Christians? Is it wrong to believe all that the Bible records and yet believe other kindred and harmonious truths? Does it belittle or lessen the ancient witness to testify that there is also a new and modern witness of Christ?

As the hour drew near for the dedication of the Kirtland Temple a group of church leaders, assembled in that holy house, were privileged to see within the veil. “The heavens were opened upon us,” the Prophet Joseph Smith said, “and I beheld the celestial kingdom of God, and the glory thereof, whether in the body or out I cannot tell.

“I saw the transcendent beauty of the gate through which the heirs of that kingdom will enter, which was like unto circling flames of fire;

“Also the blazing throne of God, whereon was seated the Father and the Son.” (Doctrine and Covenants 137:1-3.) This occurred on January 21, 1836.

Incident to the dedication of that sacred sanctuary in Kirtland, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery, on April 3, 1836, both had opened to them the following vision:

“The veil was taken from our minds, and the eyes of our understanding were opened.

“We saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit, before us; and under his feet was a paved work of pure gold, in color like amber.

“His eyes were as a flame of fire; the hair of his head was white like the pure snow; his countenance shone above the brightness of the sun; and his voice was as the sound of the rushing of great waters, even the voice of Jehovah, saying:

“I am the first and the last; I am he who liveth, I am he who was slain; I am your advocate with the Father.”

And then, lest any should suppose that God would reveal anything to Joseph or Oliver or the Twelve that he will not reveal to the least and last saint as soon as he is able to bear it, the divine Lord attested: “I will appear unto my servants, and speak unto them with mine own voice, if my people will keep my commandments.” (Doctrine and Covenants 110:1-4, 8.)

On October 3, 1918, President Joseph F. Smith received his vision of the redemption of the dead. In it he saw the Savior’s visit to the spirits of the dead while his body was in the tomb. He saw the righteous spirits assembled in a “vast multitude,” “rejoicing together because the day of their deliverance was at hand.” While they “waited and conversed, rejoicing in the hour of their deliverance from the chains of death,” as he saw, “the Son of God appeared, declaring liberty to the captives who had been faithful; And there he preached to them the everlasting gospel, the doctrine of the resurrection and the redemption of mankind from the fall, and from individual sins on conditions of repentance.” (Doctrine and Covenants 138:15-19.)

All this is part of the Latter-day Saint witness of that Lord whose name they have taken upon themselves. But it is only a small part of the testimony of Jesus that the living saints bear. Our modern scriptures abound in the testimony and in the doctrine of Christ—testimony and doctrine that agree with and yet excel that which has come down to us from former dispensations. But great and wondrous as the scriptures are, their witness is only the beginning of that which must be in the lives of those who seek salvation. The ultimate witness and the sure testimony of our Lord is written in the souls of the saints. It is recorded in the book of the life of each person. It is inscribed in the bones and tissue and marrow of their bodies; it flows in the blood pumped by their believing hearts. The ultimate witness comes by the power of the Holy Ghost. That Spirit member of the Godhead is a revelator and a testator. His mission is to reveal and to testify. He bears record of the Father and the Son. From him we receive the sure knowledge of the divine Sonship of our Blessed Lord. And this gift of the Holy Ghost is reserved for and received by those only upon whose heads the hands of legal administrators have been placed and the promise given: “Receive the Holy Ghost.”

In consequence of all this—both the scriptures and the personal revelation that comes from the Holy Ghost—it is our blessed privilege to proclaim the testimony of Jesus to the world. We, accordingly, testify that Jesus is Lord of all. We know that he is God’s Almighty Son whose precious blood—dropping from every pore in Gethsemane and gushing from his riven side on Calvary—was shed for the salvation of all who believe in his holy name and who walk in the course he charted for men. We know that he has abolished death; that immortality and eternal life come by him; that his gospel is the plan

of salvation; and that this very gospel has been restored to earth in these last days and is now administered by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which Church is sometimes called the Mormon Church.

And so we ask: Are Mormons Christians?

In answer all the saints on both sides of the veil, all the holy angels, all the righteous people of all ages, whether living or dead, join in one mighty chorus whose inspired words resound from one end of heaven to the other. And the words are these: As the Lord lives, as God is true, as all the holy prophets know, as every true apostle testifies—salvation is in Christ and Mormons, as Christians, bear that witness to the world. So be it.

### ADDITIONAL READING

This work—for which the author alone is responsible and which is not an official church publication—is intended simply to mention a few high points, open the door to further investigation, and bear a solemn witness as to the truth of the concept presented.

With reference to the place and status and life and doctrine of the Lord Jesus, this author has in print:

*The Promised Messiah*, a 636-page work dealing with the Eternal Godhood of Christ and the Messianic prophecies foretelling his birth, ministry, atoning sacrifice, and ascension to eternal glory.

*The Mortal Messiah—From Bethlehem to Calvary*, a four-volume work, totalling 1874 pages, concerning our Lord in the days of his flesh, with particular reference to his birth in Bethlehem; his ministry in all the cities and towns of Judea and Galilee and beyond the borders of Israel; his teachings, parables, and miracles; his Jewish and Roman trials; his atonement, resurrection, and ministry among the departed dead; his ascension to his Father and subsequent ministry among the Nephites.

*The Millennial Messiah—the Second Coming of the Son of Man*, a 726-page work which summarizes events that have and will occur between the First and Second Comings of our Lord and tells of his imminent return and Millennial reign.

*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, a three-volume work, totalling 2015 pages, which analyzes the four gospels, and also the teachings of Christ as found in the balance of the New Testament.

*Mormon Doctrine*, an 856-page work dealing with the doctrines of Christ as found in holy writ both ancient and modern.

Numerous other authors have written *en extenso* about these and related matters. There is no dearth of information where the Lord's restored truths are concerned. Those seeking to

know the truth need not fill their minds with the half-truths and perverted explanations found in the writings of anti-Mormons.

And we would be everlastingly grateful to our friends, our detractors, and those who seek to reform or convert us, if they would let us be the ones who tell what we believe and what our way of worship is.

Our doctrine is set forth—not in the personal opinions and private views of individuals—but in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants, and the Pearl of Great Price, and it is expounded and explained in numerous texts by competent authors. There is no need to turn to Judas or Pilate to learn what Jesus and Peter believed.