

Comments on Moroni 6

Moroni continues from preceding chapters with details of how the church was regulated.

1 AND now I speak concerning baptism. Behold, elders, priests, and teachers were baptized; and they were not baptized save they brought forth fruit meet that they were worthy of it. 2 Neither did they receive any unto baptism save they came forth with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, and witnessed unto the church that they truly repented of all their sins. 3 And none were received unto baptism save they took upon them the name of Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end.

v1-3 All ecclesiastical leadership were required to be baptized, and their behavior had to show they were worthy (v. 1). All who were baptized, not just church leaders, had to be humble and contrite, repenting of all sins (v. 2). All who were baptized took it seriously, understanding they were becoming disciples of Christ and it was a lifelong commitment (v. 3).

4 And after they had been received unto baptism, and were wrought upon and cleansed by the power of the Holy Ghost, they were numbered among the people of the church of Christ; and their names were taken, that they might be remembered and nourished by the good word of God, to keep them in the right way, to keep them continually watchful unto prayer, relying alone upon the merits of Christ, who was the author and the finisher of their faith.

v4 Baptized persons received the gift of the Holy Spirit and were counted among members of the church and fellowshiped to keep them in the straight and narrow path.

5 And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls. 6 And they did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus. 7 And they were strict to observe that there should be no iniquity among them; and whoso was found to commit iniquity, and three witnesses of the church did condemn them before the elders, and if they repented not, and confessed not, their names were blotted out, and they were not numbered among the people of Christ. 8 But as oft as they repented and sought forgiveness, with real intent, they were forgiven. 9 And their meetings were conducted by the church after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done.

v5-9 The members of the church met often to fast, pray, fellowship (v. 5) and take the sacrament (v. 6). Anyone in the church who fell into sin and there were witnesses against it, if they didn't repent they were excommunicated from the church (v. 7), but when they genuinely repented they were accepted back into the church (v. 8). Church meetings were informal and led by the Spirit (v. 9).

v7 This church body had it clear on how to deal with people who fell into sin. There was no crisis on what to do with them, as was the case in the past, cp. Mosiah 26, Alma.

v9 Church meetings were apparently informal as to the order of worship. We would assume the administration of the sacrament was more formalized, being the only ritual in the worship. But, the rest of the meeting appears to have been ad hoc, based on where the Spirit led them. With a group of reliably inspired church members, this would probably be a pretty easy way to run the meetings. Also, as the callings of priests and teachers was formal, they would clearly be involved to some higher degree.

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