

## Comments on Doctrine & Covenants 20

This section deals with the organization and governance of the Church. It is divided into halves, v. 1-36 present the doctrine of the Church and v. 36-84 present the application of the doctrine, or the institution and bureaucracy of the ecclesiastical body. Ecclesiastical hierarchies and bureaucracies were established anciently as well, cp. Exod. 18:17-26.

The text of this section is of the variety of Scripture that falls under the "inspired writings" category. There are no quotations of the Lord, the author(s) write in the first-person (cf. v. 5) as well as third-person (cf. v. 6), and there are a number of confidence statements given (cf. v. 17, 29, 31, 35). This indicates the author knew what he was writing was true and inspired, but was being written in his own words by his own hand. Hence the difference in composition and content when compared with other sections which are quotations of the Lord (cf. D&C 19, 21) or of heavenly visions (cf. D&C 76). The content of the present text is largely composed of preceding revelations and sections of the Book of Mormon.

The original draft of this text was likely written by Cowdery some time during 1829. How heavily the original draft was subsequently edited by Smith is unclear, but there is clear evidence Smith did edit it.

1 THE rise of the Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, it being regularly organized and established agreeable to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April-- 2 which commandments were given to Joseph Smith, Jun., who was called of God, and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the first elder of this church; 3 And to Oliver Cowdery, who was also called of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the second elder of this church, and ordained under his hand; 4 And this according to the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory, both now and forever. Amen.

v1-4 A general introduction presenting Smith and Cowdery as called of God by the grace of the Lord.

v1 The official date of the foundation of the Church.

5 After it was truly manifested unto this first elder that he had received a remission of his sins, he was entangled again in the vanities of the world; 6 But after repenting, and humbling himself sincerely, through faith, God ministered unto him by an holy angel, whose countenance was as lightning, and whose garments were pure and white above all other whiteness; 7 And gave unto him commandments which inspired him; 8 And gave him power from on high, by the means which were before prepared, to translate the Book of Mormon; 9 which contains a record of a fallen people, and the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to the Jews also; 10 which was given by inspiration, and is confirmed to others by the ministering of angels, and is declared unto the world by them-- 11 Proving to the world that the holy scriptures are true, and that God does inspire men and call them to his holy work in this age and generation, as well as in generations of old; 12 Thereby showing that he is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. Amen. 13 Therefore, having so great witnesses, by them shall the world be judged, even as many as shall hereafter come to a knowledge of this work. 14 And those who receive it in faith, and work righteousness, shall receive a crown of eternal life; 15 But those who harden their hearts in unbelief, and reject it, it shall turn to their own condemnation-- 16 For the Lord God has spoken it; and we, the elders of the church, have heard and bear witness to the words of the glorious Majesty on high, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

v5-16 These verses discuss Smith's mission. The effect of his mission is to separate the sheep from the goats. Note Smith is speaking in the third person about himself.

v5 "entangled again", one would assume Smith is referring to the debacle of losing the 116 pages of the Book of Lehi.

v9-16 These verses share the theme of D&C 17 and Ether 5. Ether 5:4 provides a distillation on the subject of these verses.

v9-12 A parenthesis on the Book of Mormon. It introduces the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, who are later referenced in v. 13.

v13-16 The sheep are separated from the goats.

v13 "by them", i.e., the witnesses of the BofM referenced in v. 10-11.

17 By these things we know that there is a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth, and all things which are in them; 18 And that he created man, male and female, after his own image and in his own likeness, created he them; 19 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. 20 But by the transgression of these holy laws man became sensual and devilish, and became fallen man. 21 wherefore, the Almighty God gave his Only Begotten Son, as it is written in those scriptures which have been given of him. 22 He suffered temptations but gave no heed unto them. 23 He was crucified, died, and rose again the third day; 24 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; 25 That as many as would believe and be baptized in his holy name, and endure in faith to the end, should be saved-- 26 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, 27 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; 28 which Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are one God, infinite and eternal, without end. Amen.

v17-28 These verses recount the Creation, Fall and Redemption of man, which is the initiation and fulfillment of God's plan. It shows the plan is the same and God is the same through all of history. Note the emphasis on Redemption issues. This section completely endorses classic Old Testament and New Testament fundamentals, thereby uniting the historical with the contemporary. Thus, historical events are relevant to the contemporary ecclesia because these ancient events have eternal consequences.

v17 "there is a God in heaven, who is infinite and eternal, from everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God", using the standard religio-philosophical definitions of these terms one could use this passage to argue against LDS teachings concerning eternal progression and the nature of God. However, if we compare this passage with other similar statements we quickly discover that the standard religio-philosophical definitions for these terms do not conform to the scriptural definitions. Take

Hebr. 13:8 for example. There, we are informed Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and eternally. If Jesus can pass through mortality, die, be resurrected and exalted and still be labeled as "eternally the same" then it is plain the religious-philosophical definitions are ascriptural.

v26-28 Another parenthesis on the independent and eternal nature of the gospel. It is not dispensation specific, hence the contemporary work detailed in v. 5-16. Adam knew the gospel, Abraham knew the gospel, Moses taught the gospel using the Law, and we have the gospel today.

29 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. 30 And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true; 31 And we know also, that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds, and strength. 32 But there is a possibility that man may fall from grace and depart from the living God; 33 Therefore let the church take heed and pray always, lest they fall into temptation; 34 Yea, and even let those who are sanctified take heed also. 35 And we know that these things are true and according to the revelations of John, neither adding to, nor diminishing from the prophecy of his book, the holy scriptures, or the revelations of God which shall come hereafter by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, the voice of God, or the ministering of angels. 36 And the Lord God has spoken it; and honor, power and glory be rendered to his holy name, both now and ever. Amen.

v29-36 Soteriology, or the Doctrine of Salvation, is reviewed. This is the same doctrine presented to man from Adam to the present day and it will continue to the last day per v. 26-28.

v29-30 These verses discuss the three parts of Salvation in one very succinct passage: Justification by Grace (i.e. the expiation of sins by the Mercy of Christ), Sanctification by the Spirit (i.e., the baptism of fire, the purification of the individual by repentance), and exaltation after enduring to the end.

This doctrine is eminently Biblical: Justification is discussed in Rom. 5:1-2, Eph. 2:8-9; Sanctification in 2 Thes. 2:13, James 2:26; and Exaltation in Matt. 25:34, Rom. 8:17, 2 Tim. 4:8, Rev. 3:21. See the discussion below on the New

Testament Doctrine of Salvation for a more in depth treatment of the topic.

v35 This verse is a confidence statement indicating the authors know the doctrine is true according to the Scriptures. It conforms to them strictly, requiring them to neither add nor take away anything, following Scriptural injunctions (cf. Deut. 4:2, Rev. 22:18). The implicit message is those churches which fail to teach all that is required for Salvation are taking away from what the Bible says.

37 And again, by way of commandment to the church concerning the manner of baptism--All those who humble themselves before God, and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church.

v37 This verse starts off the regulations of the governing of the ecclesia by defining the requirements for baptism. This is the obvious first step.

38 The duty of the elders, priests, teachers, deacons, and members of the church of Christ--An apostle is an elder, and it is his calling to baptize; 39 And to ordain other elders, priests, teachers, and deacons; 40 And to administer bread and wine--the emblems of the flesh and blood of Christ-- 41 And to confirm those who are baptized into the church, by the laying on of hands for the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost, according to the scriptures; 42 And to teach, expound, exhort, baptize, and watch over the church; 43 And to confirm the church by the laying on of the hands, and the giving of the Holy Ghost; 44 And to take the lead of all meetings. 45 The elders are to conduct the meetings as they are led by the Holy Ghost, according to the commandments and revelations of God.

v38-67 The responsibilities of Priesthood holders towards the ecclesia are reviewed in these verses. The man is to be sanctified for the service as a priest (cf. Exod. 28:41) so he may serve the people (cf. Mosiah 8:18, D&C 29:4, D&C 84:48, D&C 93:46) and act as a mediator for the people's sins (cf. Num. 18:1, also cp. Num. 25:13). This role of Priesthood holder as sanctifier is reflected in the Greek word "hierateuma" which is translated to "priesthood" in the KJV. The most literal

translation of this term to English would be "sacred-effect". The men who wield the Priesthood are to have a sanctifying effect upon the ecclesia, they are to assist people in being spiritually born again.

The current program of age indexed progression through the Priesthood (e.g., Deacon at 12, Teacher at 14, etc.) was not historically practiced.

v41, 43 "to confirm", i.e., to bestow upon an individual or establish a body of individuals. For "establish", cp. Acts 14:27, 15:32 and 15:41.

46 The priest's duty is to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, and administer the sacrament, 47 And visit the house of each member, and exhort them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties. 48 And he may also ordain other priests, teachers, and deacons. 49 And he is to take the lead of meetings when there is no elder present; 50 But when there is an elder present, he is only to preach, teach, expound, exhort, and baptize, 51 And visit the house of each member, exhorting them to pray vocally and in secret and attend to all family duties. 52 In all these duties the priest is to assist the elder if occasion requires.

v46-52 The Priest's duties are reviewed. The Priest is required to defer to an Elder when an Elder is present.

53 The teacher's duty is to watch over the church always, and be with and strengthen them; 54 And see that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking; 55 And see that the church meet together often, and also see that all the members do their duty. 56 And he is to take the lead of meetings in the absence of the elder or priest-- 57 And is to be assisted always, in all his duties in the church, by the deacons, if occasion requires. 58 But neither teachers nor deacons have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands; 59 They are, however, to warn, expound, exhort, and teach, and invite all to come unto Christ.

v53-59 The Teacher's and Deacon's duties are discussed, and prohibitions are placed on them baptizing. Deacons are to defer to Teachers, and Teachers are to defer to Priests and Elders.

60 Every elder, priest, teacher, or deacon is to be ordained according to the gifts and callings of God unto him; and he is

to be ordained by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is in the one who ordains him. 61 The several elders composing this church of Christ are to meet in conference once in three months, or from time to time as said conferences shall direct or appoint; 62 And said conferences are to do whatever church business is necessary to be done at the time. 63 The elders are to receive their licenses from other elders, by vote of the church to which they belong, or from the conferences. 64 Each priest, teacher, or deacon, who is ordained by a priest, may take a certificate from him at the time, which certificate, when presented to an elder, shall entitle him to a license, which shall authorize him to perform the duties of his calling, or he may receive it from a conference. 65 No person is to be ordained to any office in this church, where there is a regularly organized branch of the same, without the vote of that church; 66 But the presiding elders, traveling bishops, high councilors, high priests, and elders, may have the privilege of ordaining, where there is no branch of the church that a vote may be called. 67 Every president of the high priesthood (or presiding elder), bishop, high councilor, and high priest, is to be ordained by the direction of a high council or general conference.

v60-67 These verses regulate Priesthood ordinations. In a system where authority comes from someone who already has it, called Sacerdotalism, regulations on how authority is dispensed must be maintained.

Note v. 63 imposes a requirement for common consent, or general sustaining, from the ecclesia, and v. 65 precludes ordinations from occurring outside any existing organized church body if one exists. These requirements effectively preclude the dispensing of the Priesthood at the will of any single individual, and therefore eliminate the possibility for cases of individual abuse.

v60 When one is ordained by the "power of the Holy Ghost" they are ordained by the authority of the Priesthood. The Holy Spirit of Promise ratifies Priesthood ordinances, cp. D&C 76:53, D&C 132:7.

68 The duty of the members after they are received by baptism.--The elders or priests are to have a sufficient time to expound all things concerning the church of Christ to their understanding, previous to their partaking of the sacrament and being confirmed by the laying on of the hands of the elders, so that all things may be done in order. 69 And the members shall manifest before the church, and also before the elders, by a godly walk and conversation, that they are worthy of it, that there may be works and faith agreeable to the holy

scriptures--walking in holiness before the Lord. 70 Every member of the church of Christ having children is to bring them unto the elders before the church, who are to lay their hands upon them in the name of Jesus Christ, and bless them in his name. 71 No one can be received into the church of Christ unless he has arrived unto the years of accountability before God, and is capable of repentance. 72 Baptism is to be administered in the following manner unto all those who repent-- 73 The person who is called of God and has authority from Jesus Christ to baptize, shall go down into the water with the person who has presented himself or herself for baptism, and shall say, calling him or her by name: Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. 74 Then shall he immerse him or her in the water, and come forth again out of the water.

v68-74 The appropriate method of preparation for (v. 68-69) and administration of baptism (v. 72-74) for new members. Any children who are younger than the age of accountability are to be blessed, not baptized (v. 70-71).

v73 "having been commissioned", in 3 Ne. 11:25 the statement provided is "having authority given". In the 3 Ne. account the twelve there received their authority directly from Jesus, whereas in D&C those being addressed received the Priesthood indirectly.

75 It is expedient that the church meet together often to partake of bread and wine in the remembrance of the Lord Jesus; 76 And the elder or priest shall administer it; and after this manner shall he administer it--he shall kneel with the church and call upon the Father in solemn prayer, saying: 77 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen. 78 The manner of administering the wine--he shall take the cup also, and say: 79 O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this wine to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.



v75-79 The appropriate method of administering the Lord's Supper, or the sacramental bread and wine.

80 Any member of the church of Christ transgressing, or being overtaken in a fault, shall be dealt with as the scriptures direct. 81 It shall be the duty of the several churches, composing the church of Christ, to send one or more of their teachers to attend the several conferences held by the elders of the church, 82 with a list of the names of the several members uniting themselves with the church since the last conference; or send by the hand of some priest; so that a regular list of all the names of the whole church may be kept in a book by one of the elders, whomsoever the other elders shall appoint from time to time; 83 And also, if any have been expelled from the church, so that their names may be blotted out of the general church record of names. 84 All members removing from the church where they reside, if going to a church where they are not known, may take a letter certifying that they are regular members and in good standing, which certificate may be signed by any elder or priest if the member receiving the letter is personally acquainted with the elder or priest, or it may be signed by the teachers or deacons of the church.

v80-84 Policies concerning Church records.

v83 "blotted out", cp. Mosiah 26:32-36.

## **Historical Material Pertaining to Doctrine & Covenants 20**

Early in the Church's history, the text of this section was read over the pulpit at all conferences and various large meetings. As the Church was starting out, regulation of such matters as addressed herein was certainly a primary concern until the people came to understand and practice them. Its prominent appearance as the first thing published in the Evening and Morning Star emphasizes its importance.

The first excerpt below is Smith's comment on the text. The second is his comments on a controversy which arose out of a particular interpretation of the text. The comments in the second excerpt necessarily imply Smith edited Cowdery's first draft. It also sheds light on the admonition against pride leveled at Cowdery (cf. D&C 23:1). The third excerpt is a historical commentary. Below the excerpts is a comparison of the 1833 Book of Commandments edition with the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants edition. Then follows a comparison of the Sacrament Prayers, quoted in this section, discussing the meaning derived from the similarities and differences between the prayers. And, finally, there is a discussion of Soteriology, or the doctrine of salvation, which is addressed in D&C 20:29-31.

The first publication of the text was in the Evening and Morning Star, volume 1, number 1, pages 1-2, June, 1832. It was subsequently published in the Book of Commandments in 1833, pages 47-55. It was published in the Kirtland edition Doctrine and Covenants in 1835, pages 77-82. It was published in the Millennial Star, volume 1, number 1, pages 10-13, May, 1840, and also in Times and Seasons, volume 3, number 23, pages 929-931, October 1, 1842. It was also published in a number of other church periodicals and publications.

There are numerous manuscript copies of this text in the handwriting of various early church leaders, owing to the purpose the text served. See Woodford's dissertation for a comprehensive accounting of them.

### **Excerpt from History of the Church**

In this manner did the Lord continue to give us instructions from time to time, concerning the duties which now devolved upon us; and among many other things of the kind, we obtained of Him the following, by the spirit of prophecy and revelation; which not only gave us much information, but also

pointed out to us the precise day upon which, according to His will and commandment, we should proceed to organize His Church once more here upon the earth:

[text of section 20 follows]

(Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, page 64)

### **Excerpt from History of the Church**

Shortly after we had received the above revelations [i.e., D&C 24, 25, 26], Oliver Cowdery returned to Mr. Peter Whitmer's, Sen., and I began to arrange and copy the revelations, which we had received from time to time; in which I was assisted by John Whitmer, who now resided with me.

Whilst thus employed in the work appointed me by my Heavenly Father, I received a letter from Oliver Cowdery, the contents of which gave me both sorrow and uneasiness. Not having that letter now in my possession, I cannot of course give it here in full, but merely an extract of the most prominent parts, which I can yet, and expect long to, remember.

He wrote to inform me that he had discovered an error in one of the commandments—Book of Doctrine and Covenants: "And truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto a remission of their sins." [i.e., D&C 20:37]

The above quotation, he said, was erroneous, and added: "I command you in the name of God to erase those words, that no priestcraft be amongst us!"

I immediately wrote to him in reply, in which I asked him by what authority he took upon him to command me to alter or erase, to add to or diminish from, a revelation or commandment from Almighty God.

A few days afterwards I visited him and Mr. Whitmer's family, when I found the family in general of his opinion concerning the words above quoted, and it was not without both labor and perseverance that I could prevail with any of them to reason calmly on the subject. However, Christian Whitmer at length became convinced that the sentence was reasonable, and according to Scripture; and finally, with his assistance, I succeeded in bringing, not only the Whitmer family, but also Oliver Cowdery to acknowledge that they had been in error, and that the sentence in dispute was in accordance with the rest of the commandment. And thus was this error rooted out, which having its rise in presumption and rash judgment, was the more particularly calculated (when once fairly understood) to teach

each and all of us the necessity of humility and meekness before the Lord, that He might teach us of His ways, that we might walk in His paths, and live by every word that proceedeth forth from His mouth. (Joseph Smith, History of the Church, Vol. 1, page 104-105)

### **Excerpt from The Prophet Joseph**

Joseph and Oliver knew during 1829 that they would organize a church. Revelations that year told of "the rising up and the coming forth of my church" (D&C 5:14) and "the foundation of my church" (D&C 18:4). In 1829 Cowdery drafted a version of what became in 1830 the first manual for church government—now Doctrine and Covenants, section 20. Called "Articles of the Church of Christ," it was a revelation to Oliver, who is "called with the same calling as Paul," to "baptize those who repent." The revelation explained the method of baptism, the words to use when ordaining priests and teachers, and the sacrament prayer. The document was signed, "Behold I am Oliver I am an Apostle of Jesus Christ." ...

At the first conference of the Church, on 9 June 1830, the members received and canonized the church government manual Oliver had penned by revelation the previous year, "The Articles and Covenants" (D&C 20). It was read at succeeding conferences and carried about by elders on missionary journeys and preaching assignments to be read to the believers.

Regarding priesthood, the Articles stipulated that Joseph Smith was called of God and "ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the first elder of this church." (D&C 20:2.) Oliver was second elder, and "an apostle is an elder" authorized to baptize, administer the sacrament, bestow the Holy Ghost, teach, expound, and conduct meetings under the guidance of the Holy Ghost. (See D&C 20:38-45.) Taking the revelation literally, Joseph and Oliver tried to perform their duties, and they did baptize, administer the sacrament, bestow the Holy Ghost, teach, and conduct meetings. They not only received authority but used it diligently.

The Articles gave specific duties to each of four priesthood offices—main branches—of elder, priest, teacher, and deacon. Taken together, the four offices had responsibility to perform ordinances, conduct meetings, and visit members to see that all did their duty. (See D&C 20:38-59.) Various churches, or branches, would be guided and coordinated at quarterly conferences of the elders. (See D&C 20:62-65.)

This revelation on church organization built upon the Book of Mormon pattern, with the addition of deacons. The offices had a graded order from least (deacon) to highest (elder), with the First and Second Elders as the top officers, all unpaid.

During the conference, new officers were ordained: Samuel H. Smith, an elder, by Oliver Cowdery; Joseph Smith, Sr., Hyrum Smith, and Martin Harris as priests; and Hiram Page and Christian Whitmer as teachers. The conference gave licenses to the seven elders present and to three priests and two teachers to preach and teach.

By 1830 the priesthood tree had a sturdy trunk with several branches. Authority had been restored, that is, bestowed and shared. Joseph and early members called it "authority," but not Melchizedek or Aaronic Priesthood or even priesthood. Priesthood bearers proselyted, baptized, confirmed, administered the sacrament, ordained, and conducted meetings as "they [were] directed and guided by the Holy Spirit," and managed the church. (D&C 46:2.) By February 1831, elders were blessing the sick through the laying on of hands. (See D&C 42:43-48.) (Larry C. Porter and Susan Easton Black, *The Prophet Joseph*, pages 57-60)

## Comparison of Original 1833 Text with Emended 1835 Version

There are numerous changes made between the 1833 and 1835 version, but none of them result in any change in meaning or substance. All of them are clarifications for plainer reading. As the text was frequently read over the pulpit at all conferences it is unsurprising the text was revised so as to be more easily understood.

The verse numbering in the 1835 D&C text below is that of the contemporary 1981 LDS edition for ease of reference. The textual emendations occurred in the 1835 Kirtland edition of the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Doctrine & Covenants.

### 1833 Book of Commandments

1 The rise of the church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in the flesh;  
2 It being regularly organized and established agreeable to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God in the fourth month and on the sixth day of the month, which is called April:  
3 Which commandments were given to Joseph, who was called of God and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, an elder of this church;  
4 And also to Oliver, who was called of God an apostle of Jesus Christ,

### 1835 Doctrine & Covenants

1 THE rise of the Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the flesh, it being regularly organized and established agreeable to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God, in the fourth month, and on the sixth day of the month which is called April-  
2 Which commandments were given to Joseph Smith, Jun., who was called of God, and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ, to be the first elder of this church;  
3 And to Oliver Cowdery, who was also called of God, an apostle of Jesus Christ,

an elder  
of this church,  
and ordained under his hand: 5  
And this according  
to the grace of our Lord  
and Savior Jesus Christ,  
to whom be all glory  
both now and forever. Amen.

6 For, after that  
it truly was manifested  
unto this first elder,  
that he had received  
a remission of his sins,  
he was entangled again  
in the vanities of the world;  
7 But after truly repenting,

God ministered unto him  
by an holy angel,  
whose countenance  
was as lightning, and  
whose garments were  
pure and white  
above all whiteness,  
and gave unto him  
commandments which inspired  
him from on high,  
and gave unto him power,

by the means which  
were before prepared, that  
he should translate a book;  
8 Which book contained  
a record of the fallen people,  
and also the fulness  
of the gospel of Jesus Christ  
to the Gentiles;  
9 And also to the Jews,

to be the second elder  
of this church,  
and ordained under his hand;  
4 And this according  
to the grace of our Lord  
and Savior Jesus Christ,  
to whom be all glory,  
both now and forever. Amen.

5 After  
it was truly manifested  
unto this first elder  
that he had received  
a remission of his sins,  
he was entangled again  
in the vanities of the world;  
6 But after repenting,  
and humbling himself sincerely,  
through faith,

God ministered unto him  
by an holy angel,  
whose countenance  
was as lightning, and  
whose garments were  
pure and white  
above all other whiteness;  
7 And gave unto him  
commandments which inspired  
him;

8 And gave him power  
from on high,  
by the means which  
were before prepared, to  
translate the Book of Mormon;  
9 Which contains  
a record of a fallen people,  
and the fulness  
of the gospel of Jesus Christ  
to the Gentiles  
and to the Jews also;  
10 Which was given  
by inspiration, and  
is confirmed to others  
by the ministering of angels,  
and is declared

proving unto them, that  
the holy scriptures are true;  
10 And also, that  
God doth inspire men and  
call them to his holy work,  
in these last days  
as well as in  
days of old,  
that he might be  
the same God  
forever.  
Amen.

11 Which book  
was given by inspiration, and  
is called the book of Mormon,  
and is confirmed to others  
by the ministering of angels,  
and declared unto the world  
by them:

12 Wherefore  
having so great witnesses,  
by them shall the world  
be judged,  
even as many as shall hereafter  
receive  
this work,  
either to  
faith and  
righteousness,

or to the hardness  
of heart in unbelief,

to their own condemnation,  
for the Lord God  
hath spoken it,  
for we,  
the elders of the church,  
have heard and bear witness  
to the words  
of the glorious  
Majesty on high;

unto the world by them--  
11 Proving to the world that  
the holy scriptures are true,  
and that  
God does inspire men and  
call them to his holy work  
in this age and generation,  
as well as in  
generations of old;  
12 Thereby showing that he is  
the same God  
yesterday, today, and forever.  
Amen.

13 Therefore,  
having so great witnesses,  
by them shall the world  
be judged,  
even as many as shall hereafter  
come to a knowledge of  
this work.

14 And those who receive it in  
faith, and  
work righteousness,  
shall receive a crown  
of eternal life;

15 But those who harden  
their hearts in unbelief,  
and reject it, it shall turn  
to their own condemnation--

16 For the Lord God  
has spoken it;  
and we,  
the elders of the church,  
have heard and bear witness  
to the words  
of the glorious  
Majesty on high,



to whom be glory  
forever and ever.  
Amen.

13 Wherefore, by these things  
we know that  
there is a God in heaven,  
who is infinite and eternal,  
from everlasting  
to everlasting,  
the same unchangeable God,  
the maker of heaven  
and earth and all things  
that in them is,  
and that  
he created man  
male and female, and  
after his own image, and  
in his own likeness  
created he them;  
14 And that he gave unto  
the children of men  
commandments,  
that they should  
love and serve him

the only being whom  
they should worship,  
but by the transgression  
of these holy laws,  
man became  
sensual and devilish, and  
became fallen man.

15 Wherefore, the Almighty God  
gave his only begotten Son,  
as it is written  
in those scriptures,  
which have been given of him,  
that he suffered temptations,  
but gave no heed unto them;  
16 That he was crucified,  
died, and  
rose again the third day, and  
that he ascended into heaven

to whom be glory  
forever and ever.  
Amen.

17 By these things  
we know that  
there is a God in heaven,  
who is infinite and eternal,  
from everlasting  
to everlasting  
the same unchangeable God,  
the framer of heaven  
and earth, and all things  
which are in them;  
18 And that  
he created man,  
male and female,  
after his own image and  
in his own likeness,  
created he them;  
19 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.  
20 But by the transgression  
of these holy laws  
man became  
sensual and devilish, and  
became fallen man.  
21 Wherefore, the Almighty God  
gave his Only Begotten Son, as  
it is written in  
those scriptures  
which have been given of him.  
22 He suffered temptations  
but gave no heed unto them.  
23 He was crucified,  
died, and  
rose again the third day;  
24 And ascended into heaven, to

to sit down on the right hand  
of the Father,  
to reign with Almighty power  
according to the will  
of the Father.  
17 Therefore, as many  
as would believe and  
were baptized in his holy name,  
and endured in faith  
to the end,  
should be saved;

18 Yea, even as many as  
were before he came  
in the flesh,  
from the beginning,  
who believed in the words  
of the holy prophets,  
who  
were inspired by  
the gift of the Holy Ghost,  
which truly testified of him  
in all things,

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 and  
Son and  
Holy Ghost,  
is one God,  
infinite and eternal,  
without end.  
Amen.

19 And we know,

sit down on the right hand of  
the Father,  
to reign with almighty power  
according to the will  
of the Father;  
25 That as many  
as would believe and  
be baptized in his holy name,  
and endure in faith  
to the end,  
should be saved--

26 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,

27 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;

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

29 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.  
20 And we know, that  
justification through  
the grace of  
our Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ,  
is just and true;  
21 And we know, also, that  
sanctification through  
the grace of our  
Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ,  
is just and true,  
to all those who love and serve  
God with all their  
might, minds, and strength,  
but there is a possibility  
that men may fall from grace  
and depart from the living God.  
22 Therefore, let the church  
take heed and pray always,  
lest they fall into temptation;  
23 Yea, and even he  
that is sanctified also.  
24 And we know, that  
these things are  
true and agreeable to  
the revelation of John,  
neither adding to,  
nor diminishing from  
the prophecy of his book;  
25 Neither to  
the holy scriptures;  
26 Neither to  
the revelations of God  
which shall come hereafter,  
by the gift and power

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.  
30 And we know that  
justification through  
the grace of  
our Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ  
is just and true;  
31 And we know also, that  
sanctification through  
the grace of our  
Lord and Savior  
Jesus Christ  
is just and true,  
to all those who love and serve  
God with all their  
might, minds, and strength.  
32 But there is a possibility  
that man may fall from grace  
and depart from the living God;  
33 Therefore let the church  
take heed and pray always,  
lest they fall into temptation;  
34 Yea, and even let those who  
are sanctified take heed also.  
35 And we know that  
these things are  
true and according to  
the revelations of John,  
neither adding to,  
nor diminishing from the  
prophecy of his book,  
the holy scriptures,  
or  
the revelations of God  
which shall come hereafter  
by the gift and power

of the Holy Ghost;  
27 Neither by  
the voice of God;  
28 Neither by  
the ministering of angels,  
and the Lord God  
hath spoken it; and  
honor, power, and glory,  
be rendered to his holy name  
both now and ever.  
Amen.  
29 And again,  
by way of commandment  
to the church, concerning  
the matter of baptism;  
30 Behold whosoever  
humbleth himself before God  
and desireth to be baptized,  
and comes forth with  
a broken heart and  
a contrite spirit, and  
witnesseth unto the church,  
that they have truly repented  
of all their sins and  
are willing to take upon them  
the name of Christ,  
having a determination  
to serve him unto the end, and  
truly manifest by their works  
that they have received  
the Spirit of Christ  
unto the remission  
of their sins,  
then shall they be received  
unto baptism  
into the church of Christ.  
31 The duty of the elders,  
priests, teachers, deacons  
and members of  
the church of Christ.  
32 An apostle is an elder, and  
it is his calling to baptize  
and to ordain other elders,  
priests, teachers and deacons,

of the Holy Ghost,  
the voice of God,  
or  
the ministering of angels.  
36 And the Lord God  
has spoken it; and  
honor, power and glory  
be rendered to his holy name,  
both now and ever.  
Amen.  
37 And again,  
by way of commandment  
to the church concerning  
the manner of baptism--  
All those who  
humble themselves before God,  
and desire to be baptized,  
and come forth with  
broken hearts and  
contrite spirits, and  
witness before the church  
that they have truly repented  
of all their sins, and  
are willing to take upon them  
the name of Jesus Christ,  
having a determination  
to serve him to the end, and  
truly manifest by their works  
that they have received of  
the Spirit of Christ  
unto the remission  
of their sins,  
shall be received  
by baptism  
into his church.  
38 The duty of the elders,  
priests, teachers, deacons,  
and members of  
the church of Christ--  
An apostle is an elder, and  
it is his calling to baptize;  
39 And to ordain other elders,  
priests, teachers, and deacons;

and to administer the  
flesh and blood of Christ

according to the scriptures;

33 And to teach, expound,  
exhort, baptize, and  
watch over the church;

34 And to confirm the church  
by the laying on of the hands,  
and the giving of  
the Holy Ghost,  
and to take the lead  
of all meetings.

35 The elders are to  
conduct the meetings  
as they are led  
by the Holy Ghost.

36 The priest's duty  
is to preach, teach, expound,  
exhort and baptize, and  
administer the sacrament,  
and visit the house  
of each member, and  
exhort them to  
pray vocally and in secret, and  
also

to attend all family duties;

37 And ordain other  
priests, teachers and deacons,  
and

take the lead of meetings;  
but none of these offices  
is he to do when  
there is an elder present,

40 And to administer  
bread and wine--  
the emblems of  
the flesh and blood of Christ--

41 And to confirm those  
who are baptized  
into the church,  
by the laying on of hands  
for the baptism of fire and  
the Holy Ghost,

according to the scriptures;

42 And to teach, expound,  
exhort, baptize, and  
watch over the church;

43 And to confirm the church  
by the laying on of the hands,  
and the giving of  
the Holy Ghost;

44 And to take the lead  
of all meetings.

45 The elders are to  
conduct the meetings  
as they are led  
by the Holy Ghost,  
according to the commandments  
and revelations of God.

46 The priest's duty  
is to preach, teach, expound,  
exhort, and baptize, and  
administer the sacrament,

47 And visit the house  
of each member, and  
exhort them to  
pray vocally and in secret and

attend to all family duties.

48 And he may also ordain other  
priests, teachers, and deacons.

49 And he is to  
take the lead of meetings  
when there is no

elder present;

50 But when there is

but in all cases  
is to assist the elder.

38 The teacher's duty is to  
watch over the church always,  
and be with them, and  
strengthen them,  
and see that there is  
no iniquity in the church,  
neither hardness  
with each other,  
neither lying nor backbiting,  
nor evil speaking;

39 And see that the church  
meet together often, and  
also see that all members  
do their duty;

40 And he is to  
take the lead of meetings  
in the absence of  
the elder or priest,  
and is to be  
assisted always, and  
in all his duties  
in the church  
by the deacons;

41 But neither the teachers  
nor deacons  
have authority to baptize  
nor administer the sacrament,

but are to  
warn, expound, exhort and  
teach, and invite all

an elder present,  
he is only to  
preach, teach, expound, exhort,  
and baptize,

51 And visit the house  
of each member,  
exhorting them to  
pray vocally and in secret and  
attend to all family duties.

52 In all these duties the  
priest is to assist the elder  
if occasion requires.

53 The teacher's duty is to  
watch over the church always,  
and be with and  
strengthen them;

54 And see that there is  
no iniquity in the church,  
neither hardness  
with each other,  
neither lying, backbiting,  
nor evil speaking;

55 And see that the church meet  
together often, and  
also see that all the members  
do their duty.

56 And he is to  
take the lead of meetings  
in the absence of  
the elder or priest--

57 And is to be  
assisted always,  
in all his duties  
in the church,  
by the deacons,  
if occasion requires.

58 But neither teachers  
nor deacons  
have authority to baptize,  
administer the sacrament,  
or lay on hands;

59 They are, however,  
to warn, expound, exhort, and  
teach, and invite all

to come unto Christ.  
42 Every elder, priest,  
teacher or deacon,  
is to be ordained according to  
the gifts and callings of God  
unto him,

by the power of the Holy Ghost  
which is in the one  
who ordains him.

43 The several elders composing  
this church of Christ,  
are to meet in conference  
once in three months, or  
from time to time as  
they  
shall direct or appoint,

to do church business  
whatsoever is necessary.

44 And each priest or teacher,  
  
who is ordained by a priest,  
is to take a certificate  
from him at the time,  
which  
when presented to an elder,  
he is to give him a license,  
which shall authorize him  
to perform the duty  
of his calling.

to come unto Christ.  
60 Every elder, priest,  
teacher, or deacon  
is to be ordained according to  
the gifts and callings of God  
unto him;  
and he is to be ordained  
by the power of the Holy Ghost,  
which is in the one  
who ordains him.

61 The several elders composing  
this church of Christ  
are to meet in conference  
once in three months, or  
from time to time as  
said conferences  
shall direct or appoint;

62 And said conferences are  
to do whatever church business  
is necessary to be done  
at the time.

63 The elders are to receive  
their licenses from  
other elders,  
by vote of the church  
to which they belong,  
or from the conferences.

64 Each priest, teacher,  
or deacon,  
who is ordained by a priest,  
may take a certificate  
from him at the time,  
which certificate,  
when presented to an elder,  
shall entitle him to a license,  
which shall authorize him  
to perform the duties  
of his calling,  
or he may receive it  
from a conference.

65 No person is to be ordained  
to any office in this church,  
where there is  
a regularly organized branch

45 The duty of the members  
after they are received  
by baptism.

46 The elders or priests are  
to have a sufficient time to  
expound all things concerning  
this church of Christ  
to their understanding,  
previous to their  
partaking of the sacrament,  
and being confirmed  
by the laying hands  
of the elders;

47 So that all things may be  
done in order.

48 And the members shall  
manifest before the church,  
and also before the elders,  
by a godly walk  
and conversation,  
that they are worthy of it,  
that there may be works  
and faith agreeable

of the same,  
without the vote  
of that church;

66 But the presiding elders,  
traveling bishops,  
high councilors, high priests,  
and elders,  
may have the privilege  
of ordaining,  
where there is no branch  
of the church  
that a vote may be called.

67 Every president of  
the high priesthood  
(or presiding elder), bishop,  
high councilor, and  
high priest,  
is to be ordained  
by the direction  
of a high council or  
general conference.

68 The duty of the members  
after they are received  
by baptism.--  
The elders or priests are  
to have a sufficient time to  
expound all things concerning  
the church of Christ  
to their understanding,  
previous to their  
partaking of the sacrament  
and being confirmed  
by the laying on of the hands  
of the elders,  
so that all things may be  
done in order.

69 And the members shall  
manifest before the church,  
and also before the elders,  
by a godly walk  
and conversation,  
that they are worthy of it,  
that there may be works  
and faith agreeable



to the holy scriptures,  
walking in holiness  
before the Lord.  
49 Every member of  
this church of Christ  
having children,  
is to bring them  
unto the elders  
before the church,  
who are to lay their hands  
upon them  
in the name of the Lord,  
and bless them  
in the name of Christ.  
50 There can not any one  
be received into  
this church of Christ,  
who has not arrived  
to the years of  
accountability before God,  
and is not capable  
of repentance.  
51 And baptism  
is to be administered  
in the following manner  
unto all those who repent:  
52 Whosoever being  
called of God and  
having authority given them  
of Jesus Christ,  
shall go down into the water  
with them,

and shall say,  
calling them by name:  
53 Having authority  
given me of Jesus Christ,  
I baptize you  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Ghost.  
Amen.  
54 Then shall he immerse

to the holy scriptures--  
walking in holiness  
before the Lord.  
70 Every member of  
the church of Christ  
having children  
is to bring them  
unto the elders  
before the church,  
who are to lay their hands  
upon them  
in the name of Jesus Christ,  
and bless them  
in his name.  
71 No one can  
be received into  
the church of Christ  
unless he has arrived  
unto the years of  
accountability before God,  
and is capable  
of repentance.  
72 Baptism  
is to be administered  
in the following manner  
unto all those who repent--  
73 The person who is  
called of God and  
has authority  
from Jesus Christ to baptize,  
shall go down into the water  
with the person  
who has presented  
himself or herself for baptism,  
and shall say,  
calling him or her by name:  
Having been commissioned  
of Jesus Christ,  
I baptize you  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Ghost.  
Amen.  
74 Then shall he immerse

them  
in the water,  
and come forth again  
out of the water.  
55 And it is expedient that  
the church meet together oft  
to partake of bread and wine,  
in remembrance of  
the Lord Jesus;  
56 And the elder or the priest  
shall administer it, and  
after this manner  
shall he do,  
he shall kneel with the church,  
and call upon the Father  
in mighty prayer, saying:  
57 O God the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee in the name  
of thy Son Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify  
this bread  
to the souls of all those  
who partake of it,  
that they may eat  
in remembrance of the body  
of thy Son  
and witness unto thee  
O God the Eternal Father,  
that they are willing  
to take upon them  
the name of thy Son,  
and always remember him,  
and keep his commandments  
which he hath given them,  
that they may always  
have his Spirit  
to be with them.  
Amen.  
58 The matter of administering  
the wine:  
59 Behold they shall  
take the cup and say,  
O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee in the name

him or her  
in the water,  
and come forth again  
out of the water.  
75 It is expedient that  
the church meet together often  
to partake of bread and wine  
in the remembrance of  
the Lord Jesus;  
76 And the elder or priest  
shall administer it; and  
after this manner  
shall he administer it--  
he shall kneel with the church  
and call upon the Father  
in solemn prayer, saying:  
77 O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee in the name  
of thy Son, Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify  
this bread  
to the souls of all those  
who partake of it,  
that they may eat  
in remembrance of the body  
of thy Son,  
and witness unto thee,  
O God, the Eternal Father,  
that they are willing  
to take upon them  
the name of thy Son,  
and always remember him  
and keep his commandments  
which he has given them;  
that they may always  
have his Spirit  
to be with them.  
Amen.  
78 The manner of administering  
the wine--  
he shall  
take the cup also, and say:  
79 O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee in the name

of thy Son Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify this wine  
to the souls of all those  
who drink of it,  
that they may do it  
in remembrance of the blood  
of thy Son,  
which was shed for them,  
that they may witness  
unto thee,  
O God the Eternal Father,  
that they do always  
remember him,  
that they may have his Spirit  
to be with them.  
Amen.

60 Any member of  
this church of Christ,  
transgressing  
or being overtaken in a fault,  
shall be dealt with according  
as the scriptures direct.  
61 It shall be the duty  
of the several churches,  
composing this  
church of Christ,  
to send one or more  
of their teachers to attend  
the several conferences,  
held by the elders  
of this church,  
with a list of the names  
of the several members,  
uniting themselves  
to the church  
since the last conference,  
or send by the hand  
of some priest,  
so that there can be kept  
a regular list of all the names  
of the members of  
the whole church,  
in a book kept  
by one of the elders;

of thy Son, Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify this wine  
to the souls of all those  
who drink of it,  
that they may do it  
in remembrance of the blood  
of thy Son,  
which was shed for them;  
that they may witness  
unto thee,  
O God, the Eternal Father,  
that they do always  
remember him,  
that they may have his Spirit  
to be with them.  
Amen.

80 Any member of  
the church of Christ  
transgressing,  
or being overtaken in a fault,  
shall be dealt with  
as the scriptures direct.  
81 It shall be the duty  
of the several churches,  
composing the  
church of Christ,  
to send one or more  
of their teachers to attend  
the several conferences  
held by the elders  
of the church,  
82 With a list of the names  
of the several members  
uniting themselves  
with the church  
since the last conference;  
or send by the hand  
of some priest;  
so that  
a regular list of all the names  
of the  
whole church  
may be kept in a book  
by one of the elders,

62 Whomsoever the other elders shall appoint

from time to time:

63 And also, if any have been expelled from the church, so that their names may be blotted out of the general church record of names.

64 Any member removing from the church where he resides, if going to a church where he is not known, may take a letter certifying that he is a regular member and in good standing;

65 Which certificate may be signed by any elder or priest, if the member receiving the letter is personally acquainted with the elder or priest, or it may be signed by the teachers or deacons of the church.

whomsoever the other elders shall appoint

from time to time;

83 And also, if any have been expelled from the church, so that their names may be blotted out of the general church record of names.

84 All members removing from the church where they reside, if going to a church where they are not known, may take a letter certifying that they are regular members and in good standing,

which certificate may be signed by any elder or priest if the member receiving the letter is personally acquainted with the elder or priest, or it may be signed by the teachers or deacons of the church.

## **On the Sacrament Prayers**

The Sacrament prayers over the bread and wine, now replaced by water, are quite similar, but have some noteworthy differences. While the similarities between the two prayers serve to emphasize the fundamental purpose of the Sacrament, the differences serve to establish the covenant theology associated with the Sacrament.

The covenant theology latent in the Sacrament prayers is seldom, if ever, discussed. This is probably because the Sacrament is often presented as a renewal of baptismal covenants. And rightly so. However, once that equation is made, there is not any additional attempt to draw covenant theology out of the prayers. These comments are intended to address both the purpose of and the covenant embedded in the Sacrament prayers.

### **Similarities Emphasize Purpose**

The Sacrament was instituted at Jesus' last Passover meal, held with the twelve:

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide [it] among yourselves: 18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. 19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake [it], and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. 20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup [is] the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. (Luke 22:17-22)

Jesus tells them plainly the bread represents his body and the wine represents his blood, and they are to eat it to remember that he has sacrificed them for us. Thus, the primary purpose of the Sacrament is to remind the people of the Atonement.

Note which parts of the prayers are identical, and what points get repeated for emphasis:

**O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee**  
in the name of thy **Son**,  
Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify

**O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee**  
in the name of thy **Son**,  
Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify

this bread  
to the souls  
of all those who partake of it,  
that they may eat  
**in remembrance of**  
the body of thy **Son**,

and **witness unto thee**,  
**O God, the Eternal Father**,  
that they are willing  
to take upon them  
the name of thy Son, and  
always **remember him** and  
keep his commandments  
which he has given them;  
that they may always  
have his **Spirit**  
to be with them. Amen.

this wine  
to the souls  
of all those who drink of it,  
that they may do it  
**in remembrance of**  
the blood of thy **Son**,  
which was shed for them; that  
they may **witness unto thee**,  
**O God, the Eternal Father**,  
that they do

always **remember him**,  
  
that they may  
have his **Spirit**  
to be with them. Amen.

The Holy Spirit is addressed once in each prayer, the Father is addressed twice in both prayers, and the Son is addressed three times in each prayer. All members of the godhead are addressed, but the role of Jesus is preeminent.

Remembering is explicitly referenced twice in both prayers, clearly echoing Jesus' intention at the Last Supper.

The "we ask thee" request for sanctification appears in both prayers, as does the acknowledgment of the formality of the act in "witness unto thee".

### **Differences Establish the Covenant**

The most obvious difference between the two prayers is the bread/wine and body/blood symbols. The bread-body clearly have reference to the more temporal aspects of the Atonement (mortality, physical death, and resurrection), and the wine-blood referring to the more spiritual aspects (sin, spiritual death, and justification). Aside from these differences, note the portions of the text which are entire different between the two prayers:

O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee  
in the name of thy Son,  
Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify  
this bread  
to the souls  
of all those who partake of it,  
that they may eat

O God, the Eternal Father,  
we ask thee  
in the name of thy Son,  
Jesus Christ,  
to bless and sanctify  
this wine  
to the souls  
of all those who drink of it,  
that they may do it

in remembrance of  
the body of thy Son,  
  
and witness unto thee,  
O God, the Eternal Father,  
that they **are willing**  
**to take upon them**  
**the name of thy Son,** and  
always remember him  
and **keep his commandments**  
**which he has given them;**  
that they may **always**  
have his Spirit  
to be with them. Amen.

in remembrance of  
the **blood** of thy Son,  
**which was shed for them;** that  
they may witness unto thee,  
O God, the Eternal Father,  
that they do  
  
always remember him,  
  
that they may  
have his Spirit  
to be with them. Amen.

The bread prayer is unique when it says:

they are willing to take upon them the name of thy  
Son, and...keep his commandments which he has given  
them...always

The wine prayer is unique when it says:

the blood...which was shed for them

This is the formula of the Sacrament covenant, the two parties involved signify the two parts of the contract. First, those who partake of the Sacrament are showing they are taking the name of Jesus Christ upon them and indicate they are going to hear and do his teachings. Second, Jesus has shed his blood for them. The two parties of the covenant are identified, and the requirements are stipulated. Jesus has shed his blood for us, and if want it to be of any efficacy to us, we must do what he tells us to do.

It is particularly fitting the recipient's portion of the covenant is combined with the bread prayer as the partaker is still in mortal flesh (the struggle with the flesh being emphasized by the fact that in order to "always have his Spirit" we must "keep his commandments"). The more spiritual wine prayer is reserved for the Lord's half of the covenant. Similarly, the two prayers follow a works and grace theme. The bread prayer emphasize the works we must do, while the wine prayer emphasizes the grace and mercy of Jesus' atoning blood.

### **Conclusion**

The symbolism of the Sacrament is intended to remind us, in

fitting terms, of the essential activities of eating and drinking, that Jesus sacrificed his body and blood for us so we may live.

Additionally, those who partake of the Sacrament enter into a covenant with the Lord. If they keep His teachings, then they will have His blood to atone for their sins.



## **Are You Saved?: New Testament Doctrine of Salvation**

### **Introduction**

When Latter-Day Saints, especially missionaries, come into contact with persons of other Christian denominations the topic of salvation is frequently discussed, sometimes heatedly. Our Church is frequently accused of believing in "works-based" salvation, when others claim it is only by Grace we are saved. The problem is not a theological or doctrinal one, it is semantic. The word "saved" is used several different ways in the New Testament. Therefore, it has different particular meanings according to the context of that particular scripture. When involved in a religious discussion it is important to make sure there is a mutual understanding of the words being used. Failure to do so results in confusion at best, and contention at worst as the conversation devolves to contradiction.

The most generic definition of the word "saved" is to be protected or delivered from that which is harmful or undesirable. Obviously, there are many things that are harmful to us in our environment, hence the different usages of the term. From here, we move on to the first degree of specification: physical salvation versus spiritual salvation. Physical salvation is then divided into two additional categories: temporal and eternal. Spiritual salvation has three major divisions: justification, sanctification and exaltation.

### **Types of Salvation**

#### **Temporal Physical**

Temporal physical salvation represents protection from mortal danger. Usage of the term "saved" in this context is exhibited when Jesus and the apostles are at sea in a ship when a great storm arises. The apostles in fear of capsizing, wake Jesus from His sleep and say, "Lord, save us: we perish" (Matt. 8:25). Peter repeats a similar plea, while sinking as he walks on the water, "Lord, save me" (Matt 14:30).

This concept is also conveyed when Jesus said, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Matt. 16:25). And when Jesus is discussing the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel he states, "For in those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation...and except

that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved" (Mark 13:19-20).

### **Eternal Physical**

The second type of physical salvation is more commonly referred to as resurrection, which is synonymous in the scriptures with immortality. Peter symbolically equates baptism with the resurrection and says it is to salvation when he states "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (cf. 1 Peter 3:21, also cp. Rom. 6:4 where Paul employs similar symbolism). Baptism does not save us by literally washing dirt from our bodies. Rather it saves us by permitting us to participate in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is the resurrection of life.

In his letter to the Corinthians, Paul describes our salvation from physical death: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15:42-44).

Christ taught "all that are in the graves shall hear [the Father's] voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29). Thus, resurrection saves our spirits from an eternal separation from our bodies after physical death.

### **Justification**

Justification, or the merciful act of having the punishment of your sins waived, is merited on the basis of faith alone. We cannot perform any work that will undo justice's demand that we be punished. Nothing we do on our own can free us from the punishment we rightly deserve from committing sin, as once it is committed it cannot be undone. Repenting of sins does not undo the demands of Justice for past sins, it prevents us from accruing more punishment in the future. Fortunately, Grace and Mercy come into play on our behalf. To be justified means to be made righteous. Jesus gives us the gift of forgiveness, which we do not deserve, so we can be considered righteous.

Jesus proclaimed His divine right to justify the believer as he sat among a group of critical Pharisees and a woman

entered and anointed His feet with oil. For her act of love, Jesus told her "thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:50, also cp. Mark 2:1-12).

Paul's often quoted, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is a the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8) is talking about justification. This is made plain by Paul's statement concerning works performed under the Law of Moses: "a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ...for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Gal. 2:16). And also when he states "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:1-2).

Lehi is saying precisely the same thing when he says "by the law no flesh is justified; or, by the law men are cut off. Yea, by the temporal law they were cut off; and also, by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become miserable forever...there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah...he is the firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved" (2 Ne. 2:5-9).

### **Sanctification**

The second type of spiritual salvation is the process of individual purification whereby believers in Christ are made holy through repentance. Paul ties sanctification and being saved together when he says, "we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13). Paul implies repentance and other good works are part of the sanctification by his statement, "being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness" (Rom. 6:22). He also states that those who are "called to be saints" are "them that are sanctified" (1 Cor 1:2).

Repentance is the major work of the sanctification process, and is referred to by James in his statement "faith without works is dead" (James 2:26). Repentance is part of the Sanctification process because it is a condition placed upon us by the individual who offers the freedom from punishment, namely Jesus Christ. Repenting in and of itself does not release us

from the demands of justice, as it is an attempt to make amends for sins previously committed and hopefully avoid them in the future by changing our daily walk.

Sanctification is synonymous with the baptism of the Holy Ghost (John 1:33), the baptism of fire (Matt. 3:11) and being born again (John 3:3-5). As we chose to repent, the Holy Spirit will give us greater understanding of the particular faults that we need to work on. It will also help us avoid and resist temptation as long as we seek after and heed its guidance. The Holy Spirit helps us purge our sinful natures and start anew by figuratively turning up the heat on us.

### **Exaltation**

To be exalted, means to be lifted up. In this case, lifted up into the heavenly kingdom of God. Exaltation is the endowment of glory, knowledge and power equivalent to that of Jesus Christ upon a resurrected person.

The term "eternal life" found in the scriptures is synonymous with exaltation, and is different from resurrection as is noted above. It is described in Christ's parable of the sheep and goats as "inherit[ing] the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34). Paul taught that we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if it so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:17). And, Peter says of those who are faithful "when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Pet. 5:4).

Enduring to the end is the condition for exaltation. Jesus, in warning the apostles that wicked men would persecute them, stated "ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matt. 10:22). The Lord states to a more general audience, "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3:21). Paul gives a good description of enduring to the end when reflecting upon his impending death he says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim 4:7).

### **Conclusion**

When Latter Day Saints use the term "salvation" they are typically referring to exaltation. Whereas most people of other denominations are referring to justification when they use the

word "saved". This makes it easy to get locked in arguments originating over simple semantics. Be sure to clarify terms and discuss the different usages of the word "saved" using the Scriptures. Doing so will help eliminate misconceptions on both sides. And, it can turn potentially contentious situations into teaching experiences.

Latter-Day Saint doctrine of salvation is entirely in agreement with New Testament doctrine of salvation, as it should be. Doctrine and Covenants section 20 verses 29-31 state, "we know that all men must repent and believe on the name of Jesus Christ, and worship the Father in his name, and endure to the end, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. And we know that justification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true; And we know also, that sanctification through the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is just and true, to all those who love and serve God with all their mights, minds and strength."

P			
H			
Y	Temporal	An act of Providence	Matt. 14:30-31
S			
I			
C	Eternal	Automatic for mortals	1 Peter 3:21
A			Rom. 6:4
L			John 5:28-29
S			
P	Justification	By grace through faith	Eph. 2:8-9
I			Rom. 5:1-2
R			
I	Sanctification	Works and the Spirit	2 Thess. 2:13
T			James 2:26
U			
A	Exaltation	Endure to the end	Matt. 10:22
L			Matt. 25:34
			Rev. 21:7

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