

THE RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST





GOD IS YOUR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER

God is your Father in Heaven. He knows you personally and loves you more than you can comprehend. He wants you to be happy in this life and in eternity.

To accomplish this purpose, He provided a plan called the **gospel*** of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God; His life and teachings are the guide to peace in this life and joy in eternity.

Our Heavenly Father has brought back—restored—divine truths that you can learn and live. These truths were revealed to prophets from the beginning.

THE GOSPEL BLESSES FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS

The gospel of Jesus Christ blesses all who accept and live it. One of the best places to teach and apply the gospel is in families. God has established families to bring happiness to His children, to allow us to learn correct principles in a loving atmosphere, and to prepare us to return to Him after we die. Although family relationships can be challenging at times, our Heavenly Father blesses us as we strive to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ. These teachings help us strengthen our families.

HEAVENLY FATHER REVEALS HIS GOSPEL

As part of His plan, God chooses prophets, such as Adam, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Prophets:

- Teach about God and are special witnesses of His Son, Jesus Christ.
- Receive **revelation**, or direction from the Lord.
- Teach the gospel to the world and interpret the word of God.

*Words in red are defined on pages 18 and 19.

Prophets receive the **priesthood**, or the authority to speak and act in the name of God to lead His children. People who follow the prophets receive the blessings God has promised. Those who reject the gospel and God's prophets lose those blessings and distance themselves from God. Those who reject the prophets and abandon their commitment to follow God are in a condition called **apostasy**.

Revealed truths are lost as people reject the prophets.

Even though many of His children have repeatedly rejected Him and His prophets, our Heavenly Father continues to love His children.

He wants to give us everything we need to be happy now and to return to Him after we die. The scriptures reveal a pattern of God repeatedly reaching out to His children, even though we do not always listen:

- God chooses a prophet.
- The prophet teaches the gospel and leads the people.
- God blesses the people.
- The people gradually disregard or disobey the teachings of the prophet. They eventually reject the prophet and his teachings and fall into apostasy.
- Because of apostasy, people lose knowledge of the gospel. Priesthood authority is taken from among them.
- When the time is right and people are ready to follow Him again, God chooses another prophet, restores the priesthood and the Church, and directs the prophet to teach the gospel.

Words in red are defined on pages 18 and 19.

Old Testament prophets recorded the words of God.





JESUS CHRIST ESTABLISHED HIS CHURCH

From the time of the Creation, the children of God looked forward to the coming of the Savior Jesus Christ. As He had promised, our Heavenly Father sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth over 2,000 years ago.

Jesus Christ lived a perfect, sinless life. He established His Church, taught His gospel, and performed many miracles. He chose twelve men to be His **Apostles**, including Peter, James, and John. He taught them and gave them priesthood authority to teach in His name and to perform sacred **ordinances**, such as **baptism**.

When Jesus established His Church, He received instructions from our Heavenly Father. He then instructed His disciples. Jesus taught His followers that revelation from God was the rock on which He would build His Church.

At the end of His life, Jesus Christ suffered and died for the sins of everyone who has lived or who will live on earth. This sacrifice is called the **Atonement**. Through His suffering, death, and **Resurrection**, the Savior made it possible for us to be forgiven. Those who have faith in Him, repent, and keep His commandments receive forgiveness of sins and are filled with peace and joy.

Jesus Christ organized His Church:

- *He called and ordained Apostles.*
- *He gave them His authority to teach and baptize. This authority is called the priesthood.*
- *After His death and Resurrection, He continued to guide the Apostles through revelation.*

Words in red are defined on pages 18 and 19.

Jesus conferred the priesthood on His Apostles.

After His Resurrection, Jesus Christ guided His Apostles through revelation. The Bible records many ways in which He continued to direct His Church (see Acts 10; Revelation 1:1). Thus the Church of Jesus Christ was led by God and not by men.

THE GREAT APOSTASY

Following the death of Jesus Christ, wicked people persecuted and killed many Church members. Other Church members drifted from the principles taught by Jesus Christ and His

With the death of the Apostles of Jesus Christ, the truth was lost once again.

Apostles. The Apostles were killed, and priesthood authority—including the keys to direct and receive revelation for the Church—was taken from the earth. Because the Church was no longer led by priesthood

authority, error crept into Church teachings. Good people and much truth remained, but the gospel as established by Jesus Christ was lost. This period is called the Great Apostasy.

This apostasy resulted in the formation of many churches with conflicting teachings. During this time, many men and women sought the truth, but they were unable to find it. Many good people believed in God and Jesus Christ and tried to understand and teach truth, but they did not have the full gospel or priesthood authority. As a result, each generation inherited a state of apostasy as people were influenced by what previous generations passed on, including changes to Christ's gospel.

Some inspired people, such as Martin Luther and John Calvin, recognized that practices and doctrines had been changed or lost. They tried to reform the churches to which they belonged. Without priesthood authority, however, Christ's gospel could not be returned to its original form. A **restoration** was needed.

Words in red are defined on pages 18 and 19.

God knew there would be an
apostasy. Through an
Old Testament prophet, He said:

*“Behold, the days come . . . that I will
send a famine in the land, not a famine of
bread, nor a thirst for water,
but of hearing the words of the Lord:*

*“And [people] shall wander from sea to
sea, and from the north even to the east,
they shall run to and fro to seek the word
of the Lord, and shall not find it.”*

Amos 8:11–12



THE RESTORATION OF THE GOSPEL

In 1820, as He had done throughout history, our Father in Heaven again chose a prophet to restore the gospel and the priesthood to the earth. That prophet's name was Joseph Smith. As a young man, Joseph was confused by the differences among the many churches in his area and wanted to know which church was right. Knowing he lacked wisdom, he followed the counsel found in the Bible, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5).

Joseph Smith decided to ask God what he should do. When Joseph prayed to know the truth, our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ appeared to him. Jesus told Joseph not to join any of the churches, for "they were all wrong" and "they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof" (Joseph Smith—History 1:19).

As God had done with Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and other prophets, He called Joseph Smith to be a prophet through whom the complete gospel was restored.

Joseph Smith saw our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Of this experience, he said:

"I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun, which descended gradually until it fell upon me. . . .

"When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other— This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!"

Joseph Smith—History 1:16–17

The Restoration of the Priesthood

In 1829, Joseph Smith received the same priesthood authority that Jesus Christ had given to His Apostles. John the Baptist, who baptized Jesus, appeared to Joseph Smith and conferred on him the **Aaronic Priesthood**, or lesser priesthood. Peter, James, and John (three of Jesus Christ's original Apostles) later appeared to Joseph Smith and conferred on him the **Melchizedek Priesthood**, or higher priesthood.

After he received priesthood authority, Joseph Smith was directed to organize the Church of Jesus Christ again on the earth. Through him, Jesus Christ again called Twelve Apostles.

Jesus Christ sent John the Baptist and then three of His Apostles to give Joseph Smith priesthood authority.

Just as Jesus Christ led His Apostles through revelation after His Resurrection, He continues to direct the Church today through living prophets and apostles. The President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the

chosen prophet of God today. He, his counselors, and the Twelve Apostles hold the priesthood authority held by all the prophets and apostles of previous times. These men are prophets, seers, and revelators.

Words in red are defined on pages 18 and 19.

Peter, James, and John—Apostles of Jesus Christ—conferred the Melchizedek Priesthood on Joseph Smith.





THE BOOK OF MORMON

As part of the Restoration of the gospel, God brought forth the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. By the power of God, Joseph Smith translated this book from an ancient record written on gold plates. The Book of Mormon is “a record of God’s dealings with the ancient inhabitants of the Americas and contains, as does the Bible, the fulness of the everlasting gospel” (introduction to the Book of Mormon).

The Book of Mormon is a powerful witness of Jesus Christ. It helps us understand His teachings, including those in the Bible.

The Book of Mormon is convincing evidence of the Restoration of the gospel through Joseph Smith. You can know for yourself that the Book of Mormon is true. To gain this knowledge, you must read it, ponder its message, and desire to know if it is true. You must ask your Heavenly Father to confirm that it is His word. As you do so, He will reveal to you through the **Holy Ghost** that it is true.

As you come to know that the Book of Mormon is true, you will also come to know by the Holy Ghost that Joseph Smith was a prophet of God, that the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored through him, and that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is led by a prophet and apostles today.

You can know that what the missionaries have taught is true if you read and pray about the Book of Mormon:

“If ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”

Moroni 10:4–5

Words in red are defined on pages 18 and 19.

Jesus Christ’s visit to the Americas is recorded in the Book of Mormon.

HOW CAN I KNOW?

You can know this message is true. If you ask your Heavenly Father in prayer, you can receive an answer from Him through the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is also called the Spirit of

God, and one of His roles is to witness, or testify, of the truth.

How Do I Pray?

- *Address your Heavenly Father.*
- *Express the feelings of your heart (gratitude, questions, requests to confirm the truth of the Book of Mormon and of what the missionaries have taught).*
- *Close (“In the name of Jesus Christ, amen”).*

This knowledge can be miraculous and life changing, but it usually comes as a quiet assurance, without spectacular displays of God’s power. The Holy Ghost confirms the truth through feelings, thoughts, and impressions. As taught in the Bible, “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, [and] temperance” (Galatians 5:22–23).

These feelings from the Holy

Ghost are personal revelation to you that the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored through Joseph Smith is true. You will then need to choose whether you will live in harmony with the knowledge you have received.



LIST OF TERMS

Aaronic Priesthood The lesser priesthood. This priesthood includes the authority to baptize and is named for Aaron in the Old Testament of the Bible.

Apostasy When individuals, the Church, or entire nations forsake or abandon the gospel of Jesus Christ. Apostasy results in division, confusion, and loss of priesthood authority, or the right to act in the name of God.

Apostle The title Jesus Christ gave to the twelve men He chose as His closest associates during His ministry on earth and to whom He gave authority to act in His name. In modern times, Jesus Christ has called other men to serve as His Apostles. As in former times, an Apostle is a special witness of Jesus Christ and has authority from Him.

Atonement The event that enables us to be reconciled to God. To atone is to suffer the penalty for sin, thereby removing the effects of sin from repentant sinners. Jesus Christ was the only one capable of making a perfect Atonement for all mankind. His Atonement included His suffering for our sins, the shedding of His blood, and His death and Resurrection. Because of the Atonement, everyone who has lived will be resurrected. The Atonement also provides us with a way to be forgiven of our sins and to live forever with God.

Baptism An essential step in receiving forgiveness of sins. Through baptism and confirmation by priesthood authority, we become members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Baptism is by immersion, meaning that the person being baptized is briefly submerged in water. Baptism shows our willingness to follow Christ's example and to make covenants with God.

Gospel Our Heavenly Father's plan to help us have peace in this life and joy in eternity. The gospel is centered on the Atonement

of Jesus Christ and requires us to have faith in Him, repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Ghost, and endure to the end.

Holy Ghost Also called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, and the Comforter. He witnesses, or testifies, of Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and reveals and teaches the truth.

Melchizedek Priesthood The higher or greater priesthood. It is named for Melchizedek in the Old Testament of the Bible, who was a righteous high priest and king.

Ordinance A sacred, formal act performed by the authority of the priesthood. An example is baptism.

Priesthood The authority and power of God. God gives this power to man to act in His name. The Aaronic Priesthood was restored to Joseph Smith by John the Baptist, who baptized Jesus. The Melchizedek Priesthood was restored by Peter, James, and John, three of Jesus's Twelve Apostles.

Restoration Making something as it was; reestablishing it; bringing it back anew. After truth and authority had been lost from the earth, the gospel was restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. Restoration differs from reformation in that to *reform* means to modify an existing organization or practice in an effort to return it to its original state, while to *restore* means to reestablish or renew the original organization or practice in its entirety.

Resurrection After physical death, the reuniting of the spirit with the perfected physical body of flesh and bones. Jesus Christ was the first to be resurrected.

Revelation Communication between God and His children, usually through the Holy Ghost. Individuals can receive revelation to guide their own lives, but only God's chosen prophet can receive revelation for the whole world. Revelation comes in many forms, but most often it comes as thoughts, feelings, and impressions.

ADDITIONAL STUDY

The following questions and scriptures will help you learn more about the principles in this pamphlet and ponder on them. The list is not comprehensive; footnotes and cross-references in the scriptures will direct you to additional passages and resources.

What does it mean to you that God is your Heavenly Father?

Malachi 2:10 (Bible, Old Testament)

Hebrews 12:9–10 (Bible, New Testament)

What is the role of a prophet? Why is it important to know that God speaks to prophets?

Amos 3:7 (Bible, Old Testament)

Jacob 4:4–6 (Book of Mormon, page 124)

What does it mean to have priesthood authority? How does someone receive this authority?

Matthew 10:1 (Bible, New Testament)

John 15:16 (Bible, New Testament)

What happens when that authority is lost?

Amos 8:11–12 (Bible, Old Testament)

1 Nephi 13:24–29 (Book of Mormon, pages 25–26)

Did Jesus’s Apostles know that an apostasy would occur?

Acts 20:28–31 (Bible, New Testament)

2 Thessalonians 2:2–3 (Bible, New Testament)

2 Timothy 4:3–4 (Bible, New Testament)

What does it mean to you that the gospel of Jesus Christ has been restored through Joseph Smith?

The Testimony of the Prophet Joseph Smith (pamphlet)

What is the Book of Mormon? How is it a witness of Joseph Smith’s calling as a prophet?

Book of Mormon title page

Book of Mormon introduction

What is the role of the Holy Ghost?

Alma 5:45–47 (Book of Mormon, page 221)

Moroni 10:3–5 (Book of Mormon, page 529)

WORSHIP WITH US

COME AND SEE HOW THE RESTORED GOSPEL
CAN BLESS YOUR LIFE



Sacrament meeting is the main worship service. It usually lasts a little over an hour and typically consists of the following:

Hymns: Sung by the congregation. (Hymnbooks are provided.)

Prayers: Offered by local Church members.

The sacrament: Bread and water are blessed and passed to the congregation in remembrance of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Speakers: Usually one or two preassigned members of the congregation speak on gospel topics.

Dress: Men and boys generally wear suits or nice pants with a shirt and tie. Women and girls wear dresses or skirts.

Donations are not requested during worship services.

We also invite you to attend additional meetings, according to your interests and age group. The order and availability of these meetings may vary.

Sunday School: Classes for studying the scriptures and doctrines of the gospel.

Priesthood meetings: Classes for men and boys ages 12 and older.

Relief Society: Classes for women ages 18 and older.

Young Women: Classes for girls ages 12 to 18.

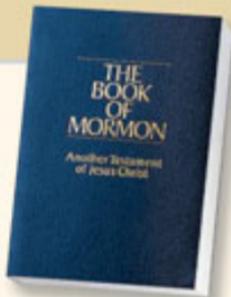
Primary: Group service and classes for children ages 3 to 11. A nursery for children ages 18 months to 3 years is often available.



Sacrament meeting time: _____

Chapel address: _____

What Should I Do?



- *Read the Book of Mormon.*

Suggested readings: _____

- *Pray to know that Joseph Smith was a prophet and that the Book of Mormon is the word of God.*

- *Attend church.*

- *Determine whether you will follow the Savior by being baptized. Date of baptism:*

- *Visit www.mormon.org to learn more about the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- *Continue meeting with the missionaries to learn more about the truths God has restored through modern-day prophets.*

Next appointment: _____

Missionaries' names and phone number:

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

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Page 13: Detail from *The Restoration of the Melchizedek Priesthood*, by Kenneth Riley

Page 14: Detail from *Jesus Christ Visits the Americas*, by John Scott

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