

A Plea Unto Every Latter Day Saint

2018 General Conference

The Emperor undressed, and the swindlers pretended to put his new clothes on him, one garment after another - as the Emperor turned round and round before the looking glass.

"How well Your Majesty's new clothes look. Aren't they becoming!" He heard on all sides, "That pattern, so perfect! Those colors, so suitable! It is a magnificent outfit." Then the minister of public processions announced: "Your Majesty's canopy is waiting outside."

"Well, I'm supposed to be ready," the Emperor said, and turned again for one last look in the mirror. "It is a remarkable fit, isn't it?"

He seemed to regard his costume with the greatest interest. The noblemen who were to carry his train stooped low and reached for the floor as if they were picking up his mantle. Then they pretended to lift and hold it high. They didn't dare admit they had nothing to hold. So off went the Emperor in procession under his splendid canopy.

Everyone in the streets and the windows said, "Oh, how fine are the Emperor's new clothes!"

"Don't they fit him to perfection?"

"And see his long train!"

Nobody would confess that they couldn't see anything, for that would prove him either unfit for his position, or a fool. No costume the Emperor had worn before was ever such a complete success.

"But," said a little child in the crowd, "He hasn't got anything on!"

"Did you ever hear such innocent prattle?" said the child's father.

But soon one person whispered to another what the child had said: "He hasn't anything on."

"A child says he hasn't anything on."

*"But he **hasn't** got anything on!" the whole town cried out at last.*

The Emperor shivered, for he suspected they were right. But he thought, "This procession has got to go on." So he walked more proudly than ever, as his noblemen held high the train that wasn't there at all.

Do you believe Jesus Christ, Moroni, and President Benson?

As Latter Day Saints, we have this funny thing we do about the church. When we hear something we feel might be true but which makes us uncomfortable or requires us to change, we assume it must be of the devil! Even if what is being shared is scripturally accurate, and even if God is willing to confirm the truth of it by the power of the Holy Ghost ([Moroni 10:5](#)), most of us tend to cling to our assumptions more than we love the Truth.

One of the great things about President Ezra Taft Benson is that he told us the truth, even when it was difficult to hear. During his ministry he reminded us that the church was still under the Lord's condemnation ([D&C 84:54-57](#)), and that the way out from under that condemnation was through repentance and coming unto Christ through the Book of Mormon. He also warned,

"It is important to realize that while the Church is made up of mortals, no mortal is the Church. Judas, for a period of time, was a member of the Church-in fact, one of its apostles-but the Church was not Judas..." (To the Humble Followers of Christ, [Conference Report April 1969](#))

The Great Deception

My own family began to realize the church was in trouble back in 2003. That's when Elder Russell M. Nelson published that article in the ensign titled "[Divine Love](#)." Have you read it and prayed about the things Elder Nelson believes about God? His views were very disconcerting. "Heretical" is the word that came to our minds.

When my wife and I read Nelson's teaching, we felt sick inside and very conflicted. It entirely contradicted the Lord's teachings found in our scriptures. Naturally we all know that blessings, salvation, and exaltation are conditional upon our repentance, but to see Elder Nelson teach that God's love was conditional was quite a shock. We realized right then that God really does respect free agency, both on a personal level and within the Church as a whole. ([Mosiah 27:13](#))

A lot of our friends have been reading church history and comparing scripture to what the church now teaches, and then coming to understand things are not right. It reminds us of the reality that history really does cycle, and that what Joseph Smith saw taking place in the church in his day is happening again in ours:

"No quorum in the Church was entirely exempt from the influence of those false spirits who are striving against me for the mastery; even some of the Twelve were so far lost to their high and responsible calling as to begin to take sides secretly with the enemy." (Joseph Smith, [History of the Church, vol 2, pg 488](#))

Satan knows that the most effective way to destroy the church is from the inside. And just as God allows Satan to attack America and the divinely inspired Constitution, He also does not stand in the way when latter-day saints allow "**spiritual wickedness in high places**" to infect the church. ([Ephesians 6:12](#)). Despite what you have been told, God will not violate the eternal law of agency. Joseph taught that if God's people insisted on clinging to idols (in particular their penchant for depending on the prophet) God would not stop them. But make no mistake: if they persist, He *will* cut them off. ([Ezekial 14](#))

Today, the Lord requires each of us to discern good from evil. ([Moroni 7:16-17](#)) Sometimes the Holy Ghost will confirm a truth that seems to contradict a teaching we may have learned in church. We may be surprised by the contradiction, but when the promptings we receive from the Holy Ghost are in conflict with any other teaching, we are instructed to abide by the spirit if those promptings are in harmony with the scriptures as well.

Let it be known:

The great deception in the church today is to dismiss truth and label it as "apostasy." ([2 Nephi 28:14](#))

There is a significant difference between "speaking evil of the Lord's anointed" and realizing a particular person never actually was anointed. ([D&C 121:34-37](#), [D&C 107:81-84](#).)

Each of us is required to take the essential step in our growth from idolizing men, to having an "eye single" to His glory, that our "bodies shall be filled with light." ([D&C 88:67](#)).

For surely, there is a fundamental difference between "follow the prophet," and "come unto Christ." ([John 17:3](#)).

Whatever happened to following Christ and His Word?

Didn't you find it odd that just recently the twelve decided to randomly sustain Elder Nelson as the President of the Church? Those who believe in the Doctrine and Covenants could only wonder what happened to the Lord's directive that "all things shall be done by common consent in the church, by much prayer and faith." ([D&C 26:2](#)). This example, and many other unscriptural actions by the Church reminds us why Joseph Smith taught:

"If any man writes to you, or preaches to you, doctrines contrary to the Bible, or Book of Mormon, or the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, set him down as an impostor." ([Times and Seasons Vol 5 April 1st 1844, Pg 490-491](#))

The Lord himself warned in [Matthew 24:24](#):

"...there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

Today the world is swarming with "false christs," and "false prophets," who invent stories, dreams, and false precepts to mislead those who could have been elect. Elder Nelson has done this before, and he will likely do it again. Most of us just accept whatever the church enacts because we have been taught [we can never be led astray](#). (Please review Wilford Woodruff's promise [in context](#) and then compare it to the church statement on [Race and the Priesthood](#) for a more accurate interpretation).

Today, "having keys" is used to imply that every decision made by the brethren is of God, even when our church history is full of leadership error - and even when the Lord makes it abundantly clear we are to follow Him and not trust in the arm of flesh. ([2 Nephi 4:34](#)).

Follow the Savior

"Jesus Christ is the only beacon on which we can rely. The message of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is that there is but one guiding hand in the universe, only one truly infallible light, one unfailing beacon to the world. That light is Jesus Christ, the light and life of the world, the light which one Book of Mormon prophet described as "a light that is endless, that can never be darkened. (Mosiah 16:9)." ([The Teachings of Howard W. Hunter](#), pg 42)

The Real Test

Please understand: Joseph Smith worked for years to help the Saints correct error and receive the Fulness being offered by God. He mourned, "It is often the case that young members in this church, for want of better information, carry along with them their old notions of things, and sometimes fall into egregious errors." ([Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith](#), pg 242)

When Joseph and Hyrum were tragically martyred, not all of the false beliefs the new members brought with them had been eradicated from the church. These incomplete understandings then became the "*traditions of the fathers*" that were passed down by the church during the last 185 years. ([D&C 43:9-11](#))

Having a fuller understanding of our complicated church history, and the doctrinal digression that has occurred since the death of Joseph, is important so we can repent and personally reclaim the light that has been lost. ([D&C 84:26-27](#)).

In relation to you and the Lord, and the salvation of your family, our latter-day situation is not really about the Church and the Brethren at all. In reality, the upcoming choice of whether to sustain Elder Nelson or not is representative of the greater issues involving God and being faithful to the cause of Christ. This moment is actually about our personal accountability before God. Our willingness to stand for Christ and our personal integrity in relation to truth.

Elder Nelson will come and go. Choosing Jesus Christ is forever.

Historically, this is the same test the Jews faced when they rejected Jesus in favor of what the Pharisees were teaching. It is the same test which occurred during the time of King Noah, when a true prophet came among the hierarchy. And it is the same test the early Saints faced during the time of Joseph Smith, when they failed to receive the fulness of the Gospel.

Our chance to receive the Fulness

"And when the times of the Gentiles is come in, a light shall break forth among them that sit in darkness, and it shall be the fulness of my gospel; But they receive it not; for they perceive not the light, and **they turn their hearts from me because of the precepts of men.** "

"And in that generation shall the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." (D&C 45:28-30)

There is a pattern one must follow in order to please God and reclaim the fulness of the gospel. It requires a person to be in tune with God and His holy Spirit to the degree that they can differentiate between truth and tradition. Trusting in men and their rhetoric about "keys" will damn you. (2 Nephi 28:21) Trusting in Christ and His Word will save you. (3 Nephi 11:35-41)

There are, of course, no other churches to join, and no other men to follow. But there are essential decisions for you to accomplish privately with the Lord.

Will You?

Will you come unto Jesus Christ in a deeper way than ever before-by ending your idolatry towards men and putting GOD above *all* things? (Exodus 20:3-5)

Will you remain loyal to Jesus Christ, Scripture, and the teachings of Joseph Smith, even when the LDS Church does not? (Acts 5:26-29)

Will you study church history and realize that what you have been taught about "keys" and "authority" is inaccurate and empty? (D&C 124:28, 2 Corinthians 3:6, Moroni 6:9)

Are you willing to compare what the Lord teaches in His Holy Word and receive the truth about our latter-day situation? (Mormon 8:35-41, Isaiah 28, 2 Nephi 28, D&C 86:1-4,)

Today every Latter Day Saint must choose: truth or tradition, God or man, Zion or Babylon?

On our face before the Lord

Perhaps instead of raising our hand to support a particular man, **we should be falling down before the Lord, pleading with Him that He will forgive us of our many sins.** (Alma 38:14).

The Mormon mainstream will soon sustain Elder Nelson as a prophet, seer, and revelator, trusting in him to know the way. If you choose to support this, you will be fulfilling all of the assumptions, habits, and false traditions each of us have been taught since the days of Brigham Young.

But within the church there are also thousands of Saints having a hard time doing this, because in their souls they know something just isn't right. And it is to YOU, to whom we make this plea:

Right now, reading this letter, you could listen to that part of you that already knows what is true. You could make the painful and necessary step of casting off the false traditions you have been handed, and instead come into the peace of pleasing Jesus Christ. You could individually choose to preserve the Restoration.

Let us all fall before the Mighty Christ and trust our salvation to no man! (John 14:6)

"Behold, I sent you out to testify and warn the people, and it becometh every man who hath been warned to warn his neighbor." (D&C 88:81)

The choice is real. This warning is not a deception.