

SUBMISSION ITEMS

As of 7/02/17

Please keep your argument(s) brief and concise. If they are lengthy, they will be pared down - *significantly*. Please keep your remarks polite and respectful.

NOTE: Any additions for Governing/Guiding Principles will be handled separately by the subcommittee being organized to handle that document. You can still submit your ideas to the same email address. Also, any formatting submissions will be listed on a separate Formatting Submissions List, to be posted soon and voted on after July 4th.

ADDITIONS

- A.1 DS Blog: February 18, 2015 - *Babylon*: The God of Heaven tells me all the world should pray that Baghdad does not fall.

11 FOR: I guess my argument would be that when I read them, I felt an impact from the Spirit, and I have never forgotten these posts. Also the language: "The God of Heaven tells me..." seems to me clearly prophetic.

10 AGAINST:

- A.2 DS Blog: May 28, 2015 - *Lamentation for Baghdad*: Days of distress are upon Baghdad and the days of their troubles are begun. Distress shall overtake them, for those who come shall have no pity.

13 FOR: I guess my argument would be that when I read them, I felt an impact from the Spirit, and I have never forgotten these posts. Also the language: "The God of Heaven tells me..." seems to me clearly prophetic.

6 AGAINST:

- A.3 DS Blog: April 15, 2014 - *Abraham's Sons*

11 FOR: Denver prefaces the post by saying "Last night I was awakened by this" so it seems to have a place with his other publicly shared revelations. See the full text [here](#).

3 AGAINST:

- A.4 Add Joseph Smith's [Try the Spirits](#), an article written by Joseph Smith and published on 1 April 1842 in the Times and Seasons (See HC 4:571-581).

4 FOR: This is an editorial published by Joseph Smith himself, not taken from notes of a talk heard by others.

- a. This is one of the first things published by Joseph after becoming editor of the Times and Seasons on 15 March 1842 (see HC 4:551).
- b. He explains many things relating to the eternal nature of spirits.
- c. This would be an excellent replacement to the deletion of D&C 129

- d. I feel this was written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and is scripture.
- e. Although this is found in the TPJS, and I agree that "The instruction we have through the Book of Mormon is sufficient on its own to allow us to discern evil spirits", this article also puts forward a myriad of other important principles that would benefit us being in the scriptures.
- f. It emphasizes that we need to look at *ourselves* and the spirits that actuate each of us, which I think people are reluctant to do - and shows the dire consequences of being under the influence of an evil spirit when we think we are acting by the Spirit of God.

8 AGAINST

- A.5 Add the *Song which was sung in tongues and translated*, 27 February 1833, as recorded [here](#) in Revelation Book 2, with spelling and punctuation cleaned up.

5 FOR: Joseph personally edited this record of this song in Revelation Book 2, pointing to his acceptance of its veracity and correctness. If it was indeed correctly sung in tongues and then translated, this is a demonstration of God's declared gifts of the Spirit, pointing to His approval and providing of the event and content.
It is beautiful and moved my soul.

8 AGAINST: this could be added as a new hymn to the hymn project that is currently underway

- A.6 Add this Proverb written in Joseph Smith's journal (labeled and headered as "Proverb" in his journal) to the *Proverbs of Joseph Smith*. Source [here](#).

As finest steel doth show a brighter polish
The more you rub the same;
E'en so, in love, rebuke will ne'er demolish
A wise man's goodly name.

9 FOR

1 AGAINST

- A. 7 Add this Proverb written in Joseph Smith's journal (labeled as "Proverb") to the *Proverbs of Joseph Smith*. Source [here](#), or: Journal, December 1842–June 1844; Book 1, 21 December 1842–10 March 1843 4 March 1843 • Saturday [Page 272]:

Proverb - For a man to be a great man, he must not dwell upon small things; though he may enjoy them.

12 FOR

0 AGAINST

- A.8 Add the following [letter](#) from President Hyrum Smith:

Nauvoo, March 15, 1844.

To the brethren of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints, living on China Creek, in Hancock County, Greeting:—Whereas brother Richard Hewitt has called on me to-day, to know my views concerning some doctrines that are preached in your place, and states to me that some of your elders say, that a man having a certain priesthood, may have as many wives as he pleases, and that doctrine is taught here [at Nauvoo]: I say unto you that that man teaches false doctrine, for there is no such doctrine taught here; neither is there any such thing practised here. And any man that is found teaching privately or publicly any such doctrine, is culpable, and will stand a chance to be brought before the High Council, and lose his license and membership also: therefore he had better beware what he is about.

And again I say unto you, an elder has no business to undertake to preach mysteries in any part of the world, for God has commanded us all to preach nothing but the first principles unto the world. Neither has any elder any authority to preach any mysterious thing to any branch of the church unless he has a direct commandment from God to do so. Let the matter of the grand councils of heaven, and the making of gods, worlds, and devils entirely alone: for you are not called to teach any such doctrine—for neither you nor the people are capacitated to understand any such principles—less so to teach them. For when God commands men to teach such principles the saints will receive them. Therefore beware what you teach! for the mysteries of God are not given to all men; and unto those to whom they are given they are placed under restrictions to impart only such as God will command them; and the residue is to be kept in a faithful breast, otherwise he will be brought under condemnation. By this God will prove his faithful servants, who will be called and numbered with the chosen.

And as to the celestial glory, all will enter in and possess that kingdom that obey the gospel, and continue in faith in the Lord unto the end of his days. Now, therefore, I say unto you, you must cease preaching your miraculous things, and let the mysteries alone until by and bye. Preach faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; repentance and baptism for the remission of sins; the laying on of the hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost: teaching the necessity of strict obedience unto these principles; reasoning out of the scriptures; proving them unto the people. Cease your schisms and divisions, and your contentions. Humble yourselves as in dust and ashes, lest God should make you an ensample of his wrath unto the surrounding world. Amen.

In the bonds of the everlasting covenant,

I am
Your obedient servant,
HYRUM SMITH.
(Times and Seasons 5 [March 15, 1844]: 474)"

12 FOR

0 AGAINST

A.9 Add this letter to the Church by the Elders (including Joseph Smith). Source [here](#).

THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH IN KIRTLAND, TO THEIR BRETHERN ABROAD.
Dear brethren in Christ, and companions in tribulation:

WHEN we call to remembrance the ties with which we are bound to those who embrace the everlasting covenant, and the fellowship and love with which the hearts of the children of our Lord's kingdom should be united, we cherish a belief, that you will bear with us, when we take this course to communicate to you some of the many thoughts which occupy our minds, and press with continued weight upon our hearts, as we reflect upon the vast importance and responsibility of your callings, in the sight of the Master of the vineyard. And though our communications to you may be frequent, yet we believe they will be received on your part with brotherly feelings; and, that from us your unworthy brethren, you will suffer a word of exhortation to have place in your hearts, as you see the great extent of the power and dominion of the prince of darkness, and realize how vast the numbers are who are crowding the road to death without ever giving heed to the cheering sound of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Consider for a moment, brethren, the fulfillment of the words of the prophet; for we behold that darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the inhabitants thereof—that crimes of every description are increasing among men—vices of every enormity are practiced—the rising generation growing up in the fulness of pride and arrogance—the aged losing every sense of conviction, and seemingly banishing every thought of a day of retribution—intemperence, immorality, extravagance, pride, blindness of heart, idolatry, the loss of natural affection, the love of this world, and indifference toward the things of eternity increasing among those who profess a belief in the religion of heaven, and infidelity spreading itself in consequence of the same—men giving themselves up to commit acts of the foulest kind, and deeds of the blackest dye; lying, blaspheming, stealing, robbing, murdering, defaming, defrauding, blasting the reputation of neighbors, advocating error and opposing the truth, forsaking the covenant of heaven, and denying the faith of Jesus—and in the midst of all this, the day of the Lord fast approaching when none except those who have on the wedding garment will be permitted to eat and drink in the presence of the Bridegroom, the Prince of peace!

Impressed with the truth of these facts, what can be the feelings of those who have been made partakers of the heavenly gift, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come? Who but those who can see the awful precipice upon which the world of mankind stand in this generation, can labor in the vineyard of the Lord with a feeling sense of their deplorable situation? Who but those who have duly considered the condescension of the Father of our spirits, in providing a sacrifice for his creatures, a plan of redemption, a power of atonement, a scheme of salvation, having as one of its great objects, to bring men back into the presence of the King of heaven, crown them in the celestial glory, and make them heirs with his Son to that inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away—can realize the importance of a perfect walk before all men, and a diligence in calling upon all men to partake of these blessings? How indescribably glorious are these tidings to mankind! Of a truth they may be considered tidings of great joy to all people; and tidings too that ought to fill the earth and cheer the heart of every one when sounded in his ears.— And the reflection, that every one is to receive according to his own diligence and perseverance while in the vineyard, ought to inspire every one who is called to be a minister of these glad tidings, to so improve upon their talent that they may gain other talents, that when the Master sits down to take an account of the conduct of his servants, that it may be said, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will now make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

Some may presume to say, that the world in this age is fast increasing in righteousness; that the dark ages of superstition and blindness have passed over, when the faith of Christ was known and practiced only by a few, when ecclesiastic power held an almost universal control over

christendom, and when the consciences of men were held bound by the strong chains of priestly power; but now, the gloomy cloud is burst, and the gospel is shining with all the resplendent glory of an apostolic day; and that the kingdom of the Messiah is greatly spreading, that the gospel of our Lord is carried to divers nations of the earth, the scriptures translating into different tongues, the ministers of truth crossing the vast deep to proclaim to men in darkness a risen Savior, and to erect the standard of Emmanuel where light has never shone, and that the idol is destroyed, the temple of images forsaken; and those who but a short time previous followed the traditions of their fathers and sacrificed their own flesh to appease the wrath of some imaginary god, are now raising their voices in the worship of the Most High, and are lifting their thoughts up to him with the full expectation, that one day they will meet with a joyful reception into his everlasting kingdom!

But, a moment's candid reflection upon the principles of these systems, the manner they are conducted, the individuals employed, the apparent object held out as an inducement to cause them to act, we think, is sufficient for every candid man to draw a conclusion in his own bosom, whether this is the order of heaven or not. We deem it a just principle, and it is one the force of which we believe ought to be duly considered by every individual, that all men are created equal, and that all have the privilege of thinking for themselves upon all matters relative to conscience. Consequently, then, we are not disposed, had we the power, to deprive any one from exercising that free independence of mind which heaven has so graciously bestowed upon the human family as one of its choicest gifts; but we take the liberty, (and this we have a right to do,) of looking at this order of things a few moments, and contrasting it with the order of God as we find it in the sacred scriptures. In this review, however, we shall present the points as we consider they were really designed by the great Giver to be understood, and the happy result arising from a performance of the requirements of heaven, as therein revealed, to every one who obeys them; and the consequence attending a false construction, a misrepresentation, or a forced meaning that was never designed in the mind of the Lord when he condescended to speak from the heavens to men for their salvation.

Previous to entering upon a subject of so great a moment to the human family, there is a prominent item which suggests itself to our minds which, here, in few words we wish to discuss: All regularly organized and well established governments, have certain laws by which, more or less, the innocent are protected and the guilty punished. The fact admitted, that certain laws are good, equitable and just, ought to be binding upon the individual who admits this fact, to observe in the strictest manner an obedience to those laws. These laws when violated, or broken by that individual, must, in justice convict his mind with a double force, if possible, of the extent and magnitude of his crime; because he could have no plea of ignorance to produce; and his act of transgression was openly committed against light and knowledge. But the individual who may be ignorant, and imperceptibly transgresses or violates these laws, though the voice of the country requires that he should suffer, yet he will never feel that remorse of conscience that the other will, and that keen-cutting reflection will never rise in his breast that otherwise would, had he done the deed, or committed the offence in full conviction that he was breaking the law of his country, and having previously acknowledged the same to be just. It is not our intention by these remarks, to attempt to place the law of man on a parallel with the law of heaven; because we do not consider that it is formed in that wisdom and propriety; neither do we consider that it is sufficient in itself to bestow any thing in comparison to the law of heaven, even should it promise it. The law of men may guarantee to a people protection in the honorable pursuits of this life, and the temporal happiness arising from a protection against unjust insults and injuries; and when this is said, all is said, that can be in truth, of the power, extent, and influence of the law of men, exclusive of the

law of God. The law of heaven is presented to man, and as such guarantees to all who obey it a reward far beyond any earthly consideration: it does not promise that the believer in every age should be exempt from the afflictions and troubles arising from different sources in consequence of wicked men on earth; though in the midst of all this there is a promise predicated upon the fact that it is the law of heaven, which transcends the law of man, as far as eternal life is preferable to temporal; and the blessings which God is able to give, greater than those which can be given by man! Then, certainly, if the law of man is binding upon man when acknowledged, much more must the law of heaven be. And as much as the law of heaven is perfect, more than the law of man, so much greater must be the reward if obeyed. The law of man promises safety in temporal life; but the law of God promises that life which is eternal, even an inheritance at his own right hand, secure from all the powers of the wicked one.

We consider that God has created man with a mind capable of instruction, and a faculty which may be enlarged in proportion to the heed and diligence given to the light communicated from heaven to the intellect; and that the nearer man approaches perfection, the more conspicuous are his views, & the greater his enjoyments, until he has overcome the evils of this life and lost every desire of sin; and like the ancients, arrives to that point of faith that he is wrapped in the glory and power of his Maker and is caught up to dwell with him. But we consider that this is a station to which no man ever arrived in a moment: he must have been instructed into the government and laws of that kingdom by proper degrees, till his mind was capable in some measure of comprehending the propriety, justice, equity, and consistency of the same. For further instruction we refer you to Deut. xxxii. where the Lord says, that Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye, &c. which will show the force of the last item advanced, that it is necessary for men to receive an understanding concerning the laws of the heavenly kingdom, before they are permitted to enter it: we mean the celestial glory. So dissimilar are the governments of men, and so divers are their laws, from the government and laws of heaven, that a man, for instance, hearing that there was a country on this globe called the United States of North America, could take his journey to this place without first learning the laws of this government; but the conditions of God's kingdom are such, that all who are made partakers of that glory, are under the necessity of first learning something respecting it previous to their entering into it. But the foreigner can come to this country without knowing a syllable of its laws, or even subscribing to obey them after he arrives. Why? Because the government of the United State does not require it: it only requires an obedience to its laws after the individual has arrived within its jurisdiction.

As we previously remarked, we do not attempt to place the law of man on a parallel with the law of heaven; but we will bring forward another item, to further urge the propriety of yielding obedience to the law of heaven, after the fact is admitted, that the laws of man are binding upon man. Were a king to extend his dominion over the habitable earth, and send forth his laws which were of the most perfect kind, and command his subjects one and all to yield obedience to the same; and annex as a reward to those who obeyed them, that at a certain period they should be called to attend the marriage of his son, who in due time was to receive the kingdom, and they should be made equal with him in the same; and annex as a penalty for disobedience that every individual should be cast out at the marriage feast, and have no part nor portion with his government; and what rational mind could for a moment accuse the king with injustice for punishing such rebellious subjects? In the first place his laws were just, easy and perfect: nothing was required in them of a tyrannical nature; but their very construction was equity and beauty; and when obeyed would produce the happiest situation possible to all who adheared to them, beside

the last great benefit of sitting down with a royal robe in the presence of the king at the great grand marriage supper of his son, and be made equal with him in all the affairs of the kingdom.

When these royal laws were issued, and promulgated throughout the vast dominion, every subject, when interrogated whether he believed them to be from his sovereign answered, Yes, I know they are, I am acquainted with the signature, for it is as usual, THUS SAITH THE KING! This admitted, the subject is bound by every consideration of honor to his country, his king, and his own personal character, to observe in the strictest sense every requisition in the royal edict. Should any escape the search of the ambassadors of the king, and never hear these last laws, giving his subjects such exalted privileges, an excuse might be urged in their behalf, and they escape the censure of the king. But for those who had heard, who had admitted, and who had promised obedience to these just laws no excuse could be urged, and when brought into the presence of the king, certainly, justice would require that they should suffer a penalty! Could that king be just in admitting these rebellious individuals into the full enjoyment and privileges with his son, and those who had been obedient to his commandments? Certainly not. Because they disregarded the voice of their lawful king; they had no regard for his virtuous laws, for his dignity, nor for the honor of his name; neither for their own country's sake, nor their private virtue! They neither regarded his authority enough to obey him, neither did they regard the immediate advantages and blessings arising from these laws if kept, to observe them, so destitute were they of virtue and goodness; and above all, they regarded so little the joy and satisfaction of a legal seat in the presence of the king's only son, and to be made equal with him in all the blessings, honors, comforts, and felicities of his kingdom, that they turned away from an anticipation of them, and considered that they were beneath their present notice, though they had no doubt as to the real authenticity of the royal edict.

We ask, again, would the king be just in admitting these rebels to all the privileges of his kingdom, with those who had served him with the strictest integrity? We again answer, No! such individuals would be dangerous characters in any government, good & wholesome laws they despised; just and perfect principles they trampled under their feet as something beneath their notice, and disregarded those commands of their sovereign entirely which they had once acknowledged to be equitable! How could a government be conducted with harmony if its administrators were possessed with such different dispositions and different principles? Could it prosper? Could it flourish? Would harmony prevail? Would order be established, and could justice be executed in righteousness in all branches of its department? No! In it were two classes of men as dissimilar as light is from darkness, virtue from vice, justice from injustice, truth from falsehood, and holiness from sin! One class were perfectly harmless and virtuous: they knew what virtue was for they had lived in the fullest enjoyment of it, and their fidelity to truth fairly tested by a series of years of faithful obedience to all its heavenly precepts. They knew what good order was, for they had been orderly and obedient to the laws imposed on them by their wise sovereign, and had experienced the benefits arising from a life spent in his government till he had now seen proper to make them equal with his son.— Such individuals would indeed adorn any court where perfection was one of its main springs of action, and shine far more brilliant than the richest gem in the diadem of the prince.

The other class were a set of individuals who disregarded every principle of justice and equity, whatever: and this is demonstrated from the fact, that when just laws were issued by the king, which were perfectly equitable, they were so lost to a sense of righteousness that they disregarded those laws, notwithstanding an obedience to them would have produced the happiest result possible, at the time, as regarded their own personal comfort and advantage. They were

entirely destitute of harmony and virtue, so much so that virtuous laws they despised. They had proven themselves unworthy a place in the joys of the prince, because they had for a series of years lived in open violation of his government. Certainly, then, those two classes of men could not hold the reins of the same government at the same time in peace; for internal jars, broils, and discords would rack it to the center, were such a form of government to attempt to exist under such a system. The virtuous could not enjoy peace in the constant and unceasing schemes and evil plans of the wicked; neither could the wicked have enjoyment in the constant perseverance of the righteous to do justly. And that there must be an agreement in this government, or it could not stand, must be admitted by all. Should the king convey the reins into the hands of the rebellious the government must soon fall; for every government, from the creation to the present; when it ceased to be virtuous, and failed to execute justice, sooner or later has been overthrown. And without virtuous principles to actuate a government all care for justice is soon lost, and the only motive which prompts it to act is, ambition and selfishness. Should the king admit these rebels into his house to make them equal with the others, would be condescending beneath his character; because he once issued virtuous laws which were received by a part of his subjects, and the reward annexed was a seat at the marriage feast, and an adoption into his own family as lawful heirs. So should he now offer any thing differently he would blast forever his own reputation, and destroy forever that government which he once so diligently labored to establish and preserve, and which he once had wisdom to organize. Such individuals as the last named, would be a bane to a virtuous government, and would prove its overthrow if suffered to hold a part in conducting its helm!

We take the sacred writings into our hands. and admit that they were given by direct inspiration for the good of man. We believe that God condescended to speak from the heavens and declare his will concerning the human family: give to them just and holy laws to regulate their conduct, and guide them in a direct way, that in due time he might take them to himself, and make them joint heirs with his Son. But when this fact is admitted, that the immediate will of heaven is here contained, are we not bound as rational creatures to live in accordance to all its precepts? Will the mere admission, that this is the will of heaven ever benefit us if we do not comply with all its teachings? Do we not offer violence to the Supreme Intelligence of heaven, when we admit the truth of its teachings, and do not obey them? Do we not condescend beneath our own character, and the better wisdom which heaven has endowed us with, by such a course of conduct? For these reasons, if we have direct revelations given us from heaven, surely, those revelations were never given to be trifled with, without the triflers incurring displeasure, and assuring vengeance upon their own heads, if there is any justice in heaven; and that there is, must be admitted by every individual who admits the truth and force of its teachings; its blessings and cursings, as contained in the sacred volume.

Here, then, we have this part of our subject immediately before us for consideration: God has in reserve a time, or period appointed in his own bosom, when he will bring all his subjects, who have obeyed his voice and kept his commandments, into his celestial rest. This rest is of such perfection and glory, that man has need of a preparation before he can, according to the laws of that kingdom enter it and enjoy its blessings.— This being the fact, God has given certain laws to the human family, which, if observed, are sufficient to prepare them to inherit this rest. This, then, we conclude, was the purpose of God in giving his laws to us: if not, why, or for what were they given? If the whole family of man were as well off without them as they might be with them, for what purpose or intent were they ever given? Was it that God wanted to merely show that he could talk? This would be nonsense, to suppose that he would condescend to talk in vain; for it would be in vain, and to no purpose whatever: because, all the commandments contained in the

law of the Lord, have the sure promise annexed of a reward to all who obey; predicated upon the fact, that they are really the promises of a Being who cannot lie, and who is abundantly able to fulfil every tittle of his word: and if men were as well prepared, or could be as well prepared, to meet God without their ever having been given in the first instance, why were they ever given? for certainly, in that case they can now do him no good.

As we previously remarked, all well established and properly organized governments have certain fixed and prominent laws for the regulation and management of the same.— If man has grown to wisdom and is capable of discerning the propriety of laws to govern nations, what less can we expect from the Ruler and Upholder of the universe? Can we suppose that he has a kingdom without laws? Or do we believe that it is composed of an innumerable company of beings who are entirely beyond all law? Consequently have need of nothing to govern or regulate them? Would not such ideas be reproachful to our Great Parent, and an attempt to cast a stigma upon his glorious character! Would it not be asserting, that we had found out a secret beyond Deity? that we had learned that it was good to have laws, and yet He, after existing from eternity, and having power to create man, had not found out the fact, that it was proper to have laws for his government! We admit that God is the great source and fountain from whence proceeds all good; that he is perfect intelligence, and that his wisdom is alone sufficient to govern and regulate the mighty creations and worlds which shine and blaze with such magnificence and splendor over our heads, as though touched with his finger and moved by his Almighty word. And if so, it is done and regulated by law; for without law all must certainly fall into chaos. If, then, we admit that God is the source of all wisdom and understanding, we must admit that by his direct inspiration he has taught man that law was necessary in order to govern and regulate his own immediate interest and welfare: For this reason, it is beneficial to promote peace and happiness among men: And as before remarked, God is the source from whence proceeds all good; and if man is benefitted by law, then certainly, law is good; and if law is good, it, or the principle of it emanated from God: for God is the source of all good; consequently, then, he was the first Author of law, or the principle of it, to mankind.

To be continued.

1 FOR

0 AGAINST

A.10 Add this March 1834 letter to the Church by the Elders (including Joseph Smith). Source [here](#).

THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH IN KIRTLAND, TO THEIR BRETHREN ABROAD

(Continued from our last.)

Dear brethren in Christ, and companions in tribulation.

HAVING in a former number of the Star, written you quite lengthy on some few items connected with the religion which we profess, we deem it of importance to the cause in which all our united efforts ought, with an eye single to the glory of God to be engaged, that we may escape the corruptions of the world, and not only show ourselves approved in his sight, but may be instruments in the order of his providence in convincing some of our fellow-travellers to eternity of the importance of turning from error to righteousness, and embracing the fulness of the everlasting gospel—to continue this letter of instruction and exhortation, believing, (as we have previously remarked,) that on your part it will be received in brotherly fellowship. We would remind you, brethren, of the fateagues, trials, privations, and persecutions, which the ancient saints endured for the only purpose of persuading men of the excellency and propriety

of the faith of Christ, were it in our opinion necessary, or would serve in any respect to stimulate you to labor in the vineyard of the Lord with any more diligence; but we have reason to believe, (if you make the holy scriptures a sufficient part of your studies,) that their perseverance is known to you all; and that they were willing to sacrifice the present honors and pleasures of this world, that they might obtain an assurance of a crown of life from the hand of our Lord; and their excellent examples in labor, which manifests their zeal to us in the cause which they embraced, you are daily striving to pattern. And not only these, but the commandments of our Lord, we hope, are constantly revolving in your hearts, teaching you, not only his will in proclaiming his gospel, but his meekness and perfect walk before all, even in those times of severe persecutions and abuse which were heaped upon him by a wicked and adulterous generation. Remember, brethren, that he has called *you* unto holiness; and need we say, to be like him in purity? How wise; how holy; how chaste, and how perfect, then, you ought to conduct yourselves in his sight; and remember too, that his eyes are continually upon you. Viewing these facts in a proper light, you cannot be insensible, that without a strict observance of all his divine requirements, you may, at last, be found wanting; and if so, you will admit, that your lot will be cast among the unprofitable servants.— We beseech you, therefore brethren, to improve upon all things committed to your charge, that you lose not your reward!

No doubt, the course which we pursued in our last to you, is yet familiar to your minds; that we there endeavored to show, as far as our limits would extend, the propriety, in part of adhering to the law of heaven; and also, the consistency in looking to heaven for a law or rule to serve us as a guide in this present state of existence, that we may be prepared to meet that which inevitably awaits us, as well as all mankind.— There is an importance, perhaps, attached to this subject, which the world has not as fully examined as the importance of it requires. Think for a moment, of the greatness of the Being who created the universe; and ask, Could he be so inconsistent with his own character, as to leave man without a law or rule to regulate his conduct, after placing him here, where, according to the formation of his nature he must in a short period sink into the dust? Is there nothing further; is there no existence beyond this veil of death which is so suddenly to be cast over all of us? If there is, why not that Being who had power to place us here, inform us something concerning hereafter? If we had power to place ourselves in this present existence, why not have power to know what shall follow when that dark veil is cast over our bodies? If in this life we receive our all; if when we crumble back to dust we are no more, from what source did we emanate, and what was the purpose in our existence? If this were all, we should be led to query, whether there was really any substance in existence: and we might with propriety say, "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die!" If this were really so, then why this constant toiling, why this continual warfare, and why this unceasing trouble? But this is not the case, the voice of REASON, the language of INSPIRATION, and the Spirit of the living GOD, our Creator, teaches us, as we hold the record of truth in our hands, that this is not the case; that this is not so; for, the heavens declare the glory of a GOD, and the firmament shows his handy work; and a moment's reflection, is sufficient to teach every man of common intellect, that all these are not the mere production of *chance*, nor could they be supported by any power less than by an Almighty hand: and he that can mark the power of Omnipotence inscribed upon the heavens, can also see His own hand-writing in the sacred volume; and he who reads it oftenest will like it best, and he who is acquainted with it, will know the hand wherever he can see it; and when once discovered, it will not only receive an acknowledgment, but an obedience to all its heavenly precepts. For a moment reflect, what could have been the purpose in our Father in giving to us a law? Was it that it might be obeyed, or disobeyed? And think further too, not only the propriety, but the importance of attending to his laws in every particular. If, then, there is an importance in this respect, is there not a responsibility of great weight resting upon those who are called to declare these truths to men? Could we, or were we capable of laying any thing before you as a just comparison, we would cheerfully do it; but in this our capacity fails, and we are inclined to think, that man is unable, without an assistance beyond what has been given to those before us, of expressing in words the greatness of this important office. We can

only say, that if an anticipation of the joys of the celestial glory, as witnessed to the hearts of the humble is not sufficient, we will leave with yourselves the result of your own diligence; for God ere long, will call *all* his servants before him, and there from His own hand they will receive a just recompense and a righteous reward for all their labors.

So much by way of introduction, and we shall now proceed to examine still further the subject of law. However little may have been heretofore thought, or said upon the subject of law, does not diminish in the least the propriety nor the design of it, since it emanated from God; and though it may have been, and may be at this day a subject untouched by the professors of christianity, that does not lessen its value, neither does it diminish its power in judging men from their actions according to it, at the last day, those who have, or may have come to a knowledge of it. It may be supposed, and we think with a degree of propriety, that man had given to him in the beginning, from the hand of his Maker, every necessary law and instruction, for his peace, happiness, and future comfort; and if not, living as he did in the immediate presence, and walking under the inspection of heaven, if he needed more, he could yet ask it, and that wise Hand which had formed him of the dust was sufficient; not only sufficient, but knowing all things, knew whether man needed more or not, and if he did, it would be bestowed. To suppose that the Maker of the universe never gave to man any law after he had formed him, would, in our opinion, be offering an insult to his glorious character, and be comparing him beneath, even an earthly parent! For where, we ask, is the kind humane father to be found, who would, for any consideration whatever, suffer his children to grow up to manhood without giving them instruction, and instruction too, which would be wisely calculated to benefit them, even in ripened years? Should he teach them virtue in their youth, (a principle too much neglected with most parents,) if observed in age it certainly would be virtue still; and the more it was observed the more honorable would be the gray hairs, until his spirit took its welcome exit to mingle with its kindred spirits, and rejoice in the salvation of that God from whom came the first principles of virtue. Should the great Author of our being, after he had made all things, and even man, and pronounced them *all* good, leave man without a law, we might well suppose that here was a contradiction in terms, indeed; for he had pronounced all things which he had made GOOD, and yet there was no good in man, consequently he was not worthy to receive a law whereby his conduct might be governed; but must be left without any principles or directions from the hand of his Maker to guide him in the least particular.

From these facts, in short, and the further knowledge contained in the scriptures, it is reasonable to suppose, that man departed from the first teachings, or instructions which he received from heaven in the first age, and refused by his disobedience to be governed by them. Consequently, he formed such laws as best suited his own mind, or as he supposed, best adapted to his situation. But that God has influenced man more or less since that time in the formation of law for his benefit we have no hesitancy in believing; for, as before remarked, he being the source of all good, every just and equitable law was in a greater or less degree influenced by him. And though man in his own supposed wisdom would not admit the influence of a power superior to his own, yet for wise and great purposes, for the good and happiness of his creatures, God has instructed man to form wise and wholesome laws, since he had departed from him and refused to be governed by those laws which he had given by his own voice from on high in the beginning. But notwithstanding this transgression, by which man had cut himself off from an immediate intercourse with his Maker without a Mediator, it appears that the great and glorious plan of his redemption was previously meditated; the sacrifice prepared; the atonement wrought out in the mind and purpose of God, even in the person of the Son, through whom man was now to look for acceptance, and through whose merits he was now taught that he alone could find redemption, since the word had been pronounced, Unto dust thou shalt return!

But that man was not sufficient of himself to erect a system, or plan with power sufficient to free him from a destruction which awaited him, is evident from the fact, that God, as before remarked, prepared a

sacrifice in the gift of his own Son which should be sent in due time, in his own wisdom, to prepare a way, or open a door through which man might enter into his presence, from whence he had been cast for disobedience.— From time to time these glad tidings were sounded in the ears of men in different ages of the world down to the time of his coming. By faith in this atonement or plan of redemption, Abel offered to God a sacrifice that was accepted, which was the firstlings of the flock. Cain offered of the fruit of the ground, and was not accepted, because he could not do it in faith: he could have no faith, or could not exercise faith contrary to the plan of heaven. It must be the shedding of the blood of the Only Begotten to atone for man; for this was the plan of redemption; and without the shedding of blood was no remission; and as the sacrifice was instituted for a type, by which man was to discern the great Sacrifice which God had prepared; to offer a sacrifice contrary to that, no faith could be exercised, because redemption was not purchased in that way, nor the power of atonement instituted after that order; consequently, Cain could have no faith: and whatsoever is not of faith is sin. But Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God himself testifying of his gifts. Certainly, the shedding of the blood of a beast could be beneficial to no man, except it was done in imitation, or as a type, or explanation of what was to be offered through the gift of God himself; and this performance done with an eye looking forward in faith on the power of that great Sacrifice for a remission of sins. But however various may have been, and may be at the present time the opinions of men respecting the conduct of Abel, and the knowledge which he had on the subject of atonement, it is evident in our minds, that he was instructed more fully into the plan than what the bible speaks; for how could he offer a sacrifice in faith, looking to God for a remission of his sins in the power of the great Atonement, without having been previously instructed into that plan? And further, if he was accepted of God, what were the ordinances performed further than the offering of the firstlings of the flock? It is said by Paul in his letter to his Hebrew brethren, that Abel obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts. To whom did God testify of the gifts of Abel, was it to Paul? We have very little on this important subject in the fore part of the bible. But it is said, that Abel himself obtained witness that he was righteous. Then certainly God spoke to him: indeed, it is said that God talked with him; and if he did, would he not, seeing he was righteous, deliver to him the whole plan of the gospel? And is not the gospel the news of redemption? How could Abel offer a sacrifice and look forward with faith on the Son of God for a remission of his sins, and not understand the gospel? The mere shedding the blood of beasts or offering any thing else in sacrifice, could not procure a remission of sins, except it were performed in faith of something to come, if it could, Cain's offering must have been as good as Abel's. And if Abel was taught of the coming of the Son of God, was he not taught of his ordinances? We all admit that the gospel has ordinances, and if so, had it not always ordinances, and were not its ordinances always the same? Perhaps, our friends will say, that the gospel and its ordinances were not known till the days of John the son of Zecharias, in the days of Herod the king of Judea.

But we will here look at this point: For our own part, we cannot believe, that the ancients in all ages were so ignorant of the system of heaven as many suppose, since all that were ever saved, were saved through the power of this great plan of redemption, as much so before the coming of Christ as since; if not, God has had different plans in operation, (if we may so express it,) to bring men back to dwell with himself; and this we cannot believe, since there has been no change in the constitution of man since he fell; and the ordinance or institution of offering blood in sacrifice, was only designed to be performed till Christ was offered up and shed his blood, as said before, that man might look forward with faith to that time. It will be noticed that according to Paul, -[see Gal. iii 8.]- the gospel was preached to Abraham. We would like to be informed in what name the gospel was then preached, whether it was in the name of Christ or some other name? If in any other name, was it the gospel? And if it was the gospel, and that preached in the name of Christ, had it any ordinances? If not, was it the gospel? And if it had, what were they? Our friends may say, perhaps, that there were never any ordinances except those of offering sacrifices, before the coming of Christ, and that it could not be possible for the gospel to have been

administered while the sacrifices of blood were. But we will recollect, that Abraham offered sacrifice, and notwithstanding this, had the gospel preached to him. That the offering of sacrifice was only to point the mind forward to Christ, we infer from these remarkable words of his to the Jews, Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it and was glad. -[See John viii 56.]- So, then, because the ancients offered sacrifice it did not hinder their hearing the gospel; but served, as we said before, to open their eyes, and enabled them to look forward to the time of the coming of the Savior, and to rejoice in his redemption. We find also, that when the Israelites came out of Egypt they had the gospel preached to them, according to Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, which says, For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. -[See Heb. iv 2.]- It is said again, in Gal. iii 19, that the law -[of Moses, or the Levitical law]- was added because of transgression. What, we ask, was this law added to, if it was not added to the gospel? It must be plain that it was added to the gospel, since we learn that they had the gospel preached to them. From these few facts, we conclude, that whenever the Lord revealed himself to men in ancient days, and commanded them to offer sacrifice to him, that it was done that they might look forward in faith to the time of his coming, and rely upon the power of that atonement for a remission of their sins. And this they have done, thousands who have gone before us, whose garments are spotless, and who are, like Job, waiting with an assurance like his, that they will see him in the *latter day* upon the earth, even in their flesh.

We may conclude, that though there were different dispensations, yet all things which God communicated to his people, were calculated to draw their minds to the great object, and to teach them to rely upon him alone as the Author of their salvation, as contained in his law. From what we can draw from the scriptures relative to the teachings of heaven we are induced to think, that much instruction has been given to man since the beginning which we have not. This may not agree with the opinions of some of our friends, who are bold to say, that we have every thing written in the bible which God ever spake to men since the world began, and that if he had ever said any thing more we should certainly have received it. But we ask, does it remain for a people who never had faith enough to call down one scrap of revelation from heaven, and for all they have now, are indebted to the faith of another people who lived hundreds and thousands of years before them, to say how much God has spoken and how much he has not spoken? We have what we have, and the bible contains what it does contain; but to say that God never said any thing more to man than is there recorded, would be saying at once, that we have at last received a revelation; for it must be one to advance thus far, because it is no where said in that volume by the mouth of God, that he would not, after giving what is there contained, speak again; and if any man has found out that for a fact, he has ascertained it by an immediate revelation, other than has been previously written by the prophets and apostles. But through the kind providence of our Father a portion of his word which he delivered to his ancient saints, has fallen into our hands, and they are presented to us with a promise of a reward if obeyed, and with a penalty if disobeyed; and that all are deeply interested in these laws, or teachings, must be admitted by all who acknowledge their divine authenticity.

It may be proper for us to notice in this place, a few of the many blessings held out in this law of heaven as a reward to those who obey its teachings. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world, and this he has given an assurance of in that he raised up his Son Jesus Christ from the dead; the point on which the hope of all who believe the inspired record is founded for their future happiness and enjoyment: because, if Christ is not risen, said Paul to the Corinthians, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins: and those who have fallen asleep in him have perished. -[See 1 Cor. xv.]-If the resurrection from the dead is not an important point, or item in our faith, we must confess that we know nothing about it; for if there is no resurrection from the dead, then Christ has not risen; and if Christ has not risen he was not the Son of God; and if he was not the Son of God there is not nor cannot be a Son of God, if the present book called the scriptures is true; because the time has gone by when, according to that book he was to make his appearance. On this subject, however, we are reminded of the words of Peter to the Jewish Sanhedrim, when speaking of Christ, he says, that God raised him from the dead, and we -[the apostles]-

are his witnesses of these things, and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. -[See Acts v.]- So that after the testimony of the scriptures on this point, the assurance is given by the Holy Ghost, bearing witness to those who obey him, that Christ himself has assuredly risen from the dead; and if he has risen from the dead, he will, by his power, bring all men to stand before him; for if *he* has risen from the dead the bands of the temporal death are broken that the grave has no victory. If then, the grave has no victory, those who keep the sayings of Jesus and obey his teachings have, not only a promise of a resurrection from the dead; but an assurance of being admitted into his glorious kingdom; for, he himself says, Where I am, there shall also my servant be. -[see John xii.]- In the twenty second chapter of Luke's account of the Messiah, we find the kingdom of heaven likened unto a king who made a marriage for his son. That this son was the Messiah will not be disputed, since it was the *kingdom of heaven* that was represented in the parable; and that the saints, or those who are found faithful to the Lord, are the individuals who will be found worthy to inherit a seat at the marriage-supper, is evident from the sayings of John in the Revelations, where he represents the sound which he heard in heaven to be like a great multitude, or like the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. -[Rev. xix.]-

That those only are the individuals who keep the commandments of the Lord and walk in his statutes to the end, that are permitted to set at this glorious feast, is evident from the following items: In Paul's last letter to Timothy, which was written just previous to his death, he says, I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. No one who believes the account, will doubt for a moment this assertion of Paul which was made, as he knew, just before he was to take his leave of this world. Though he once, according to his own word, persecuted the church of God and wasted it, yet after embracing the faith, his labors were unceasing to spread the glorious news; and like a faithful soldier, when called to give his life in the cause which he had espoused, he laid it down, as he says, with an assurance of an eternal crown. Follow the labors of this apostle from the time of his conversion to the time of his death, and you will have a fair sample of industry and patience in promulgating the gospel of Christ: Whipped, stoned, and derided, the moment he escaped the hands of his persecutors, he, as zealously as ever, proclaimed the doctrine of the Savior. And all may know, that he did not embrace the faith for the honor of this life, nor for the gain of earthly goods. What then could have induced him to undergo all this toil? It was, as he said, that he might obtain that crown of righteousness from the hand of God. No one, we presume, will doubt the faithfulness of Paul to the end: None will say, that he did not keep the faith, that he did not fight the good fight, that he did not preach and persuade to the last: And what was he to receive? A crown of righteousness. And what shall others receive who do not labor faithfully, and continue to the end? We leave such to search out their own promises if any they have; and if they have any they are welcome to them, on our part, for the Lord says, that every man is to receive according to his works. Reflect for a moment, brethren, and enquire, whether you would consider yourselves worthy a seat at the marriage feast with Paul and others like him, if you had been unfaithful? Had you not fought the good fight, and kept the faith, could you expect to receive; have you a promise of receiving a crown of righteousness from the hand of the Lord, with the church of the first born? Here then, we understand, that Paul rested his hope in Christ because he had kept the faith, and loved his appearing; and from his hand he had a promise of receiving a crown of righteousness. If the saints are not to reign, for what purpose are they crowned? In an exhortation of the Lord to a certain church in Asia, which was built up in the days of the apostles, unto whom he communicated his word on that occasion by his servant John, he says, Behold I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. And again, To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. -[see Rev iii.]- And again, it is written, Behold, now are we the sons of God, and it

doth not appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.— And he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure. -[1 John. III, 2 & 3.]- How is it that these old apostels should say so much on the subject of the coming of Christ? He certainly had once came; but Paul says, To all who love his appearing, shall be given the crown: and John says, When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. Can we mistake such language as this? Do we not offer violence to our own good judgment when we deny the second coming of the Messiah? When has he partook of the fruit of the vine new with his ancient apostles in his Father's kingdom, as he said, just before he was crucified? In Paul's epistle to the Philippians, III, 20 & 21, he says, For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. We find another promise to individuals living in the church at Sardis, -[see Rev. III. 4 & 5.]- which will also show something of the blessings held out to the ancients who walked worthily before the Lord, which says, Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall WALK WITH ME IN WHITE; for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in WHITE raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life; but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. John represents the sound which he heard from heaven, as giving thanks and glory to God, saying that the Lamb was worthy to take the book, and to open its seals; because he was slain, and had by his blood redeemed them out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation; and had made them kings and priests unto God: and they should reign on the earth. -[see Rev. v.]- In the twentieth chapter we find a length of time specified, during which Satan is to be confined in his own place, and the saints reign in peace. All these promises and blessings we find contained in the law of the Lord, which the righteous are to enjoy; and we might enumerate many more places where the same or similar promises are made to the faithful, but we do not deem it of importance to rehearse them here, as this letter is now lengthy; and our brethren no doubt, are familiar with them all. Most assuredly it is, however, that the ancients, though persecuted and afflicted by men, obtained from God promises of such weight and glory, that our hearts are often filled with gratitude, that we are even permitted to look upon them, while we contemplate that there is no respect of persons in HIS sight, and that in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him. But from the few items previously quoted, we can draw a conclusion, that there is to be a day when all will be judged of their works, and rewarded according to the same; that those who have kept the faith will be crowned with a crown of righteousness; be clothed in white raiment; be admitted to the marriage-feast; be free from every affliction, and reign with Christ on the earth, where, according to the ancient promise, they will partake of the fruit of the vine new in the glorious kingdom with him: at least we find that such promises were made to the ancient saints. And though we cannot claim these promises which were made to the ancients, or that they are not our property merely because they were made to them, yet if we are the children of the most High, and are called with the same calling with which they were called, and embrace the same covenant that they embraced, and are faithful to the testimony of our Lord as they were, we can approach the Father in the name of Christ as they approached him, and for ourselves obtain the same promises. These promises, when obtained, if ever by us, will not be because Peter, John, and the other apostles, with the churches at Sardis, Purgamos, Philadelphia, and elsewhere, walked in the fear of God and had power and faith to prevail and obtain them; but it will be because *we, ourselves*, have faith and approach him in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, even as they did; and when these promises are obtained, they will be promises directly to us, or they will do us no good: communicated for *our* benefit; being our own property, (through the gift of God,) earned by our own diligence in keeping his commandments, and walking uprightly before him. If not, to what end serves the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and why was it ever communicated to us?

Previous to commencing this letter we designed giving you some instruction upon the regulation of the church; but that will be given hereafter. -[TO BE CONTINUED.]-

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0 AGAINST

A.11 Add this letter to the Church by the Elders (including Joseph Smith). Source [here](#) (at sidebar, click on April 1834, Vol. 2 No. 19)..

THE ELDERS OF THE CHURCH IN KIRTLAND, TO THEIR BRETHREN ABROAD

(Continued from our last.)

Dear brethren in Christ, and companions in tribulation.

IN our own country, surrounded with blessings innumerable, to which thousands of our fellow men are strangers, enjoying unspeakable benefits, and inexpressible comforts, when once our situation is compared with the ancient saints, as followers of the Lamb of God who has taken away our sins by his own blood, we are bound to rejoice and give thanks to him always. Since the organization of the church of Christ, or the church of the LATTER DAY SAINTS, which was on the 6th of April, 1830, we have had the satisfaction of witnessing the spread of the truth into various parts of our land, notwithstanding its enemies have exerted their unceasing diligence to stop its course and prevent its progress. Though evil and designing men have been combined to destroy the innocent, because their own craft was in danger, and have been assisted in raising *mobs* and circulating falsehoods by a miserable set of apostates, who have, for wicked and unbecoming conduct, been expelled from the body of which they were once members, yet the glorious gospel in its fulness is spreading and daily gaining converts, and our prayer to God is, that it may continue, and numbers be added of such as *shall* be saved.

The Messiah's kingdom on earth is of that kind of government, that there has always been numerous apostates, for this very fact, that it admits of no sins unrepented of without excluding the individual from its fellowship. Our Lord said, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. And again, many are called, but few chosen. Paul said to the elders of the church at Ephesus, after he had labored three years with them, that he knew, that some of their own number would turn away from the faith, and seek to lead away disciples after them. None, we presume, in this generation will pretend that they have the experience of Paul, in building up the church of Christ; and yet after his departure from the church at Ephesus, many, even of the elders, turned away from the truth; and what is almost always the case, sought to lead away disciples after them. Strange as it may appear, at first thought, yet it is no less so than true, that with all the professed determination to live godly, after turning from the faith of Christ, apostates have, unless they have speedily repented, sooner or later, fallen into the snares of the wicked one and have been left destitute of the Spirit of God, to manifest their wickedness in the eyes of multitudes. From apostates the faithful have received the severest persecutions: Judas was rebuked, and immediately betrayed his Lord into the hands of his enemies, because *satan* entered into him. There is a supreme intelligence bestowed upon such as obey the gospel with full purpose of heart, which, if sinned against, the apostate is left *naked* and destitute of the Spirit of God, and they are in truth, nigh unto cursing, and their end is to be burned. When once the light which was in them is taken from them, they become as much darkened as they were previously enlightened. And then, no marvel, if all their power should be enlisted against the truth, and they, Judas like, seek the destruction of those who were their greatest benefactors! What nearer friend on earth, or in heaven, had Judas, than the Savior! And his first object was to destroy him! Who, among all the saints in those last days, can consider himself as good as our Lord? Who is as perfect, who is as pure, and who as holy as he was? Are they to be found? He never transgressed or broke a commandment or law of heaven--no deceit was in his mouth, neither was guile found in his heart! And yet one that ate with him, who had often supped of the same

cup, was the first to lift up his heel against him! Where is there one like him! He cannot be found on earth. Then why should his followers complain, if from those whom they once called brethren and considered in the nearest relation in the everlasting covenant, they should receive persecution! From what source emanated the principle which has ever been manifested by apostates from the true church, to persecute with double diligence, and seek with double perseverance, to destroy those whom they once professed to love, with whom they once communed, and with whom they once covenanted to strive, with every power, in righteousness, to obtain the rest of God! Perhaps, our brethren will say, The same that caused Satan to seek to overthrow the kingdom of God, because he himself was evil, and God's kingdom is holy.

Being limited to a short space in this number of the Star, we leave advanced these few items, though in short, instead of pursuing our subject as in former numbers. The great plan of salvation is a theme which ought to occupy our strictest attention, and be regarded as one of heaven's best gifts to mankind. No consideration whatever ought to deter us from approving ourselves in the sight of God, according to his divine requirement. Men not unfrequently forget, that they are dependent upon heaven for every blessing which they are permitted to enjoy, and that for every opportunity granted them, they are to give an account. You know, brethren, that when the Master called his servants, he gave them their several benefits to improve only while he should tarry for a little season, and then he will call each to render his account; and where five talents were bestowed, ten will be required, and he that has made no improvement will be cast out as an unprofitable servant, and the faithful are to enjoy everlasting honors.-- Therefore, we earnestly employ the grace of our Father to rest upon you, through Jesus Christ his Son, that you may not faint in the hour of temptation, nor be overcome in the time of persecution. TO BE CONTINUED.

1 For

(Sidenote: even though the third installment ended with "To be continued," no further installments were published. The promised articles about "the regulation of the church" never came. Instead, the effort to redeem Zion through recruiting volunteers and conducting the Camp of Israel expedition to Missouri in spring and summer 1834 was undoubtedly a factor in the discontinuation of this series.)

0 Against

A. 12 **Letter to Silas Smith, 26 September 1833**

Kirtland Mills, Ohio, Sept 20 26th, 1833

Respected Uncle Silas:—It is with feelings of deep interest for the welfare of mankind which fill my mind on the reflection that all were formed by the hand of Him who will call the same to give and an impartial account of all their works in that great day to which you and myself in common with them are bound, that I take up my pen and seat myself in an attitude to address a few though imperfect lines to you for your perusal.

I have no doubt but you will agree with me that men will be held accountable for the things they have, and not for the things they have not, or, that all the light and intelligence communicated to them from their Beneficent Creator, whether it is much or little, by the same they in justice will be judged; and that they

are required to yield obedience to, and improve upon that, and that only, which is given; for man is not to live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.

Seeing that the Lord has never given them to understand by anything heretofore revealed that He had ceased to speak, forever, to his creatures, when sought unto in a proper manner, why should it be thought a thing incredible that He should be pleased to speak again, in these last days for their salvation?

Perhaps you may be surprised at this assertion. That I should say for the salvation of his creatures in these last days, since we have already in our possession a vast volume of his word, which he has previously given

But you will admit that the word spoken to Noah was not sufficient for Abraham, or it was not required of <him> to leave the land of his nativity, and seek an inheritance in a strange country upon the word spoken to Noah, but, for himself he obtained promises from the hand of the Lord, and walked in that perfection that he was called the friend of God.

Isaac, the promised seed, was not required to rest his hope alone upon the promises made to his father Abraham, but was privileged with the assurance of his approbation in the sight of Heaven, by the direct voice of the Lord to him.

If one man can live upon the revelations to another, might I not with propriety ask, why the necessity then, of the Lord's speaking to Isaac as he did, as is recorded in the twenty sixth chapter of Genesis? For the Lord there repeats, or rather, promises again to perform the oath which he had previously sworn to Abraham, and why this repetition to Isaac? Why was not the first promise as sure for Isaac as it was for Abraham? Was not Isaac Abraham's son, and could he not place implicit confidence in the veracity of his father as <being> a man of God?

Perhaps you may say that he was a very peculiar man, and different from men in these last days, consequently the Lord favored him with blessings, peculiar and different, as he was different from men in this age.

I admit that he was a peculiar man, and was not only peculiarly blessed, but greatly blessed.

But all the peculiarity that I can discover in the man, or all the difference between him and men in this age, is, that he was more holy and more perfect before God, and came to Him with a purer heart, and more faith than men in this day.

The same might be said on the subject of Jacob's history. Why was it that the Lord spake to him concerning the same promise, after He had made it once to Abraham, and renewed it to Isaac? Why could not Jacob rest contented upon the word spoken to his fathers? When the time of the promise drew

nigh for the deliverance of the children of Israel from the land of Egypt, why was it necessary that the Lord should begin to speak to them?

The promise or word to Abraham, was, that his seed should serve in bondage, and be afflicted, four hundred years, and after that they should come out with great substance. Why did they not rely upon this promise, and when they had remained in Egypt, in bondage, four hundred years, come out, without waiting for further revelations, but act entirely upon the promise given to Abraham that they should come out?

Paul said to his Hebrew brethren, that God might more abundantly show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, He confirmed it by an oath. He also exhorts them, who, through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Notwithstanding, we (said Paul) have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor to the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the vail, yet he was careful to press upon them the necessity of continuing on until they, as well as those who then inherited the promises, might have the assurance of their salvation confirmed to them, by an oath from the mouth of Him who could not lie; for that seemed to be the example anciently, and Paul holds it out to his Hebrew brethren as an object attainable in his day.

And why not? I admit that by reading the Scriptures of truth the Saints, in the days of Paul, could learn, beyond the power of contradiction, that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had the promise of eternal life confirmed to them by an oath of the Lord, but that promise or oath was <no> assurance to them of their salvation; but they could by walking in the footsteps and continuing in the faith of their fathers, obtain, for themselves an oath for confirmation that they were meet to be partakers of the inheritance, with the Saints in light.

If the Saints in the days of the Apostles were privileged to take the Ancients for examples, and lay hold of the same promises, and attain to the same exalted privilege of knowing that their names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life and that they were sealed there as a perpetual memorial before the face of the Most High, will not the same faithfulness, the same purity of heart and the same Faith, bring the same assurance of eternal life, and that in the same manner, to the children of men now in this age of the world? I have no doubt but that the holy Prophets and Apostles and Saints in ancient days, were saved in the Kingdom of God; neither do I doubt but that they held converse and communion with Him while they were in the flesh, as Paul said to his Corinthian brethren that the Lord Jesus showed Himself to above five hundred Saints at one time after His resurrection. Job said that he knew that his Redeemer lived and that he should see Him in the flesh in the latter days. I may believe that Enoch walked with God and by faith was translated. I may believe that Noah was a perfect man in his generation and also walked with God. I may believe that Abraham communed with God and conversed with angels. I may believe that Isaac obtained a renewal of the covenant made to Abraham by the direct voice of the Lord. I may believe that Jacob conversed with holy angels, and heard the voice of his Maker, that he wrestled with the angel

until he prevailed and obtained the blessing. I may believe that Elijah was taken to Heaven in a chariot of fire with fiery horses. I may believe that the saints saw the Lord and conversed with Him face to face after His resurrection. I may believe that the Hebrew Church came to Mount Zion, and unto the city of the Living God the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. I may believe that they looked into eternity, and saw the Judge of all, and Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant. But will all this purchase an assurance for me, and waft me to the regions of eternal day and seat me down in the presence of the King of Kings with my garments spotless pure and white?

Or must I not rather obtain for myself by my own faith and diligence in keeping the commandments of the Lord, an assurance of salvation for myself? And have I not an equal privilege with the ancient Saints? And will not the Lord hear my prayers and listen to my cries as soon as he ever did to theirs, if I come to him in the manner they did? Or, is he a respecter of persons?

So I must close this subject for want of time, and I may with propriety say at the beginning We would be glad to see you in [Kirtland](#), we would be glad to see you embrace the New Covenant and be one with us, we sometimes think you are now one with us in heart. I remain yours affectionately

Joseph Smith Jun To [Silas Smith](#)

A. 13 Include Joseph Smith's 12 November 1835 discourse. The source is Joseph Smith's journal, and can be seen [HERE](#). The text, in need of at least a capitalization pass, is as follows:

"I am happy in the enjoyment of this opportunity of meeting with this council on this occasion. I am satisfied that the spirit of the Lord is here, and I am satisfied with all the brethren present, and I need not say that you have my utmost confidence and that I intend to uphold you to the uttermost, for I am well aware that you have to sustain my character against the vile calumnies and reproaches of this ungodly generation, and that you delight in so doing.

Darkness prevails at this time, as it was at the time Jesus Christ was about to be crucified. The powers of darkness strove to obscure the glorious sun of righteousness that began to dawn upon the world, and was soon to burst in great blessings upon the heads of the faithful. And let me tell you brethren that great blessings await us at this time and will soon be poured out upon us if we are faithful in all things, for we are even entitled to greater blessings than they were, because they had the person of Christ with them to instruct them in the great plan of salvation. His personal presence we have not, therefore we need great faith on account of our peculiar circumstances. And I am determined to do all that I can to uphold you, although I may do many things inadvertently that are not right in the sight of God. You want to know many things that are before you, that you may know how to prepare yourselves for the great things that God is about to bring to pass. But there is one great deficiency or obstruction in the way that deprives us of the greater blessings, and in order to make the foundation of this church complete and permanent, we must remove this obstruction, which is to attend to certain duties that we have not as yet attended to. I supposed I had established this church on a permanent foundation when I went to the Missouri, and indeed I did so, for if I had been taken away, it would have been enough. But I yet live, and therefore God requires more at my hands.

The item to which I wish the more particularly to call your attention tonight is the ordinance of washing of feet. This we have not done as yet, but it is necessary now as much as it was in the days of the Savior, and we must have a place prepared that we may attend to this ordinance aside from the world. We have not desired much from the hand of the Lord with that faith and obedience that we ought, yet we have enjoyed great blessings, and we are not so sensible of this as we should be. When or where has God suffered one of the witnesses or first Elders of this church to fall? Never nor nowhere, amidst all the calamities and judgments that have befallen the inhabitants of the earth. His almighty arm has sustained us, men and Devils have raged and spent the malice in vain. We must have all things prepared and call our solemn assembly as the Lord has commanded us, that we may be able to accomplish his great work, and it must be done in God's own way. The house of the Lord must be prepared, and the solemn assembly called and organized in it according to the order of the house of God, and in it we must attend to the ordinance of washing of feet. It was never intended for any but official members. It is calculated to unite our hearts, that we may be one in feeling and sentiment, and that our faith may be strong, so that Satan cannot overthrow us nor have any power over us.

The endowment you are so anxious about you cannot comprehend now, nor could Gabriel explain it to the understanding of your dark minds. But strive to be prepared in your hearts, be faithful in all things, that when we meet in the solemn assembly—that is, such as God shall name out of all the official members will meet, and we must be clean every whit—let us be faithful and silent brethren, and if God gives you a manifestation, keep it to yourselves. Be watchful and prayerful, and you shall have a prelude of those joys that God will pour out on that day. Do not watch for iniquity in each other. If you do, you will not get an endowment, for God will not bestow it on such. But if we are faithful and live by every word that proceeds forth from the mouth of God, I will venture to prophesy that we shall get a blessing that will be worth remembering if we should live as long as John the Revelator. Our blessings will be such as we have not realized before, nor in this generation. The order of the house of God has and ever will be the same, even after Christ comes, and after the termination of the thousand years it will be the same, and we shall finally roll into the celestial kingdom of God and enjoy it for ever.

You need an endowment, brethren, in order that you may be prepared and able to overcome all things. And those that reject your testimony will be damned. The sick will be healed, the lame made to walk, the deaf to hear and the blind to see, through your instrumentality. But let me tell you that you will not have power after the endowment to heal those who have not faith, nor to benefit them, for you might as well expect to benefit a devil in hell as such an one who is possessed of his spirit and are willing to keep it, for they are habitations for devils and only fit for his society. But when you are endowed and prepared to preach the gospel to all nations, kindred and tongues, in there own languages, you must faithfully warn all, and bind up the testimony, and seal up the law. And the destroying angel will follow close at your heels and execute his tremendous mission upon the children of disobedience, and destroy the workers of iniquity, while the saints will be gathered out from among them and stand in holy places, ready to meet the bridegroom when he comes.

I feel disposed to speak a few words more to you my brethren concerning the endowment. All who are prepared and are sufficiently pure to abide the presence of the Savior will see him in the solemn assembly."

A.14 Add Joseph Smith's 2 first-hand accounts of the First Vision:

From the JSPP, JS History, ca. Summer 1832, pp.1–2

I was born in the town of Charon [Sharon] in the <State> of Vermont North America on the twenty third day of December AD 1805 of goodly Parents who spared no pains to instruct<ing> me in <the> christian

religion[.] at the age of about ten years my Father Joseph Smith Seignior moved to Palmyra Township, New York and as it required their exertions of all that were able to render any assistance for the support of the Family therefore we were deprived of the bennifit of an education suffice it to say I was nearly instructtid in reading and writing and the ground <rules> of Arithmatic which const[it]uted my whole literary acquirements. At about the age of twelve years my mind become seriously imprest [p. 1] with regard to the all important concerns of for the welfare of my immortal Soul which led me to searching the scriptures believeing as I was taught, that they contained the word of God thus applying myself to them and my intimate acquaintance with those of differant denominations led me to marvel excedingly for I discovered that <they did not adorn> instead of adorning their profession by a holy walk and Godly conversation agreeable to what I found contained in that sacred depository this was a grief to my Soul thus from the age of twelve years to fifteen I pondered many things in my heart concerning the sittuation of the world of mankind the contentions and divi[si]ons the wicke[d]ness and abominations and the darkness which pervaded the of the minds of mankind my mind become excedingly distressed for I become convicted of my sins and by searching the scriptures I found that mand <mankind> did not come unto the Lord but that they had apostatised from the true and liveing faith and there was no society or denomination that built upon the gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the new testament and I felt to mourn for my own sins and for the sins of the world for I learned in the scriptures that God was the same yesterday to day and forever that he was no respecter to persons for he was God for I looked upon the sun the glorious luminary of the earth and also the moon rolling in their magesty through the heavens and also the stars shining in their courses and the earth also upon which I stood and the beast of the field and the fowls of heaven and the fish of the waters and also man walking forth upon the face of the earth in magesty and in the strength of beauty whose power and intilgence in governing the things which are so exceding great and [p. 2] marvilous even in the likeness of him who created him <them> and when I considered upon these things my heart exclaimed well hath the wise man said the <it is a> fool <that> saith in his heart there is no God my heart exclaimed all all these bear testimony and bespeak an omnipotant and omnipreasant power a being who makith Laws and decreeeth and bindeth all things in their bounds who filleth Eternity who was and is and will be from all Eternity to Eternity and when <I> considered all these things and that <that> being seeketh such to worshep him as worship him in spirit and in truth therefore I cried unto the Lord for mercy for there was none else to whom I could go and to obtain mercy and the Lord heard my cry in the wilderness and while in <the> attitude of calling upon the Lord <in the 16th year of my age> a pillar of fire light above the brightness of the sun at noon day come down from above and rested upon me and I was filled with the spirit of god and the <Lord> opened the heavens upon me and I saw the Lord and he spake unto me saying Joseph <my son> thy sins are forgiven thee. go thy <way> walk in my statutes and keep my commandments behold I am the Lord of glory I was crucifyed for the world that all those who believe on my name may have Eternal life <behold> the world lieth in sin and at this time and none doeth good no not one they have turned asside from the gospel and keep not <my> commandments they draw near to me with their lips while their hearts are far from me and mine anger is kindling against the inhabitants of the earth to visit them acording to thir ungodliness and to bring to pass that which <hath> been spoken by the mouth of the prophets and Ap[o]stles

JS, Journal, 9–11 Nov. 1835, pp. 23–24

I made some enquiry after his name but received no definite answer; we soon commenced talking upon the subject of religion and after I had made some remarks concerning the bible I commenced giving him a relation of the circumstances connected with the coming forth of the book of Mormon, as follows— being wrought up in my mind, respecting the subject of religion and looking upon <at> the different systems taught the children of men, I knew not who was right or who was wrong and concidering it of the first importance that I should be right, in matters that involved eternal consequences; being thus perplexed in mind I retired to the silent grove and bowd down before the Lord, under a realising sense that he had said

(if the bible be true) ask and you shall receive knock and it shall be opened seek and you shall find and again, if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbradeth not; information was what I most desired at this time, and with a fixed determination I to obtain it, I called upon the Lord for the first time, in the place above stated or in other words I made a fruitless attempt to pray, my tounge seemed to be swollen in my mouth, so that I could not utter, I heard a noise behind me like some person walking towards me, <I> strove again to pray, but could not, the noise of walking seemed to draw nearer, I sprung up on my feet, and [p. 23] and looked around, but saw no person or thing that was calculated to produce the noise of walking, I kneeled again my mouth was opened and my tounge liberated, and I called on the Lord in mighty prayer, a pillar of fire appeared above my head, it presently rested down upon my <me> head, and filled me with joy unspeakable, a personage appeared in the midst, of this pillar of flame which was spread all around, and yet nothing consumed, another personage soon appeared like unto the first, he said unto me thy sins are forgiven thee, he testified unto me that Jesus Christ is the son of God;

A.15 Add the following revelation to the D&C. It appears to be a genuine revelation, witnessed by nearly fifty men and recorded at the time of the revelation or shortly thereafter:

Thursday March 14th, 1844 This day the council was together all day again and the same subjects continued in discussion previously. The record of the council was discussed and the Lord was pleased to give the following revelation, **“Verily thus saith the Lord, this is the name by which you shall be called, The Kingdom of God and his Laws, with the keys and power thereof with judgement in the hands of his servants. Ahman Christ.”** This was read to the council and a vote taken whether members would adopt that as their name. The vote was unanimous in the affirmative.

Council of Fifty Minutes, JSPP, to be released in Sept, 2017

A 16. Add the newest rendition of GOVERNING PRINCIPLES produced by the GP subcommittee.

[INSERT NEW TEXT HERE]

DELETIONS

Several items of great importance have presented difficulties for the committee. For example, there are serious questions about the authenticity and accuracy of both Section 110 and Section 132. Because of this, and because the Lord has already offered several corrections to the scriptures, we intend to inquire of the Lord to address all these dilemmas, which are beyond human capability to solve and require the word of the Lord to know what should be done. Therefore we are resolved to present these questions to the Lord, having full confidence that He will respond to the inquiry as He has previously given guidance for the project. That is why Sections 110 and 132, along with several other sections, are not on the Submissions List and will not require voting.

D. X Governing Principles has been moved to the Submissions List and therefore will be dealt with as an Addition rather than a deletion.

27 DELETE:

"The church has been damaged by correlation. President McKay predicted it would lead to apostasy. If I were to 'lead' and standardize things it would be a return to correlation. Why return to what has damaged Mormonism? It is the system that has done the damage. You cannot improve that flaw by choosing to make me your new correlator. I will not do it. It will darken your minds and would corrupt me. I am no better than you, and I believe some of you to be better than I. We need hundreds of independently functioning believers adapting the Gospel to their needs. Doctrine does not change, and the scriptures are constant. Your needs will vary. Therefore you apply what is changeless to your peculiar circumstances. You can do it better than any distant authority could possibly do it for you."

This quote from the tenth talk applies to us whether it is Denver who correlates, a scripture committee who correlates, or a group of fellowship delegates who correlate. And we all know that even words of wisdom can be warped by correlation and turned into commandments. The desire to "assist new converts to get the basics right" (see the Scripture Project Updates, April 30, 2017) indicates a paternalistic stance and assumes that we are currently in a position of great knowledge that would enable us to actually assist them. I believe that assumes too much and is prideful. In fact, our "basis in the [corrupt] LDS tradition" (ibid.) may specifically disqualify us from being in a position to assist new converts. We should run far away from anything that has a proven track record of sabotaging the restoration. The scriptures themselves are the only governing principles anyone needs.

I hope to persuade you to drop the idea of trying to codify guiding principles. Not that the principles are incorrect; I read the Guiding Principles document as well as the Alt Guiding Principles. The content rings true.

But the content can be true and yet the codification be damning (in the water sense). Said another way, what's the point? Fellowships will continue to either succeed or fail at establishing mini-Zions with or without this document. Will a codified set of guiding principles do anything other than encourage orthodoxy and discourage groups from calling on Heaven and getting their guidance that are unique to the needs of their particular group?

- A wise mother knows to apply the same knowledge to her children in very different ways. Each child is unique, and so is Wisdom's treatment of that child.
- That's the problem I see with the GP. Not so much the GP themselves, but that they are being canonized and made a part of a covenant. That's heavy stuff, and it teaches new converts the wrong lesson - that there is just one "blessed" way to run a fellowship.

26 KEEP

- I believe it would be a tragic loss if "Governing Principles" were removed from the proposed set of scriptures. I perceive it to be light. They contain additional light that we don't have elsewhere. Evidence for this is in the fruit coming from the principle of "temporary councils" and "casting the net widely". There has been a net cast widely for those willing to participate in an "Assisting the Remnant" committee. This section of the "Governing Principles" was the principle used to initiate this endeavor and will guide the ongoing effort. The voluntary participation, free use of gifts and talents, agency, level of participation,

working solely for God's glory and the welfare of Zion, open voting, and each standing as their own witness of what they believe are sweet and delicious principles. I wish to preserve them.

- Including a loose set of principles offers them the essentials needed to operate independently. For example:
 - Government of Fellowships: "...All are free to organize as best suits the needs of the group."
 - Tithing and Sacrifice: "...Tithes should be gathered within the fellowship and administered by the common consent of the fellowship."
 - Priesthood Ordination and Administering Blessings: "... The administration of these blessings should follow the dictates of prudence, skill, and the Spirit."
 - Marriage and Sealings: "...The ceremony for the contracting marriage should be as directed by the Spirit."

 - The GP allow fellowships, for the most part, freedom to organize in any way by the Spirit as the group consents to. Regarding having them canonized and part of a covenant - that's up to the Lord. He already knows what will and won't be in the approved scriptures. We won't know until we get there. So nothing has the potential of being foisted upon the assembly.

- Why is it good to have GP? We believe that it is necessary to have a set of guiding principles to prevent abuse, or a takeover from a charismatic, BY-type person. Will it work? Probably not in many cases...but maybe for a few? But if people will use the GP to exclude anyone, or to control behavior, then A) they won't be gathered and B) if it is wide-spread enough, our movement will fail anyway. Having a set of guiding principles won't be the factor that tips the scale away from letting us approach heaven or be gathered.
- However, there is a large potential upside. Think about how difficult it was for your initial group to figure things out. Or think back to the crazy things that Paul was addressing in his letters. In not many years, there will be a large missionary effort. Just like with Paul, missionaries will be out in the field, will convert people, and then will leave. It is hoped that the GP can be something that these new converts can use to help them approach the Lord and grow into a group that can be gathered.
- Are there some things in there that you feel should be left out? If so, let's get at that and make it better. As it stands, there will be a meeting in a month to draft a set of guiding principles. But it will still be up for the body to reject them. Once they are there, I plan on taking your arguments and listing them on the submissions list (if you still hold the same opinion after reading them) for a "no" vote.
- I guess I consider the GP more of our Constitution, while individual fellowships can have their own State constitutions. Some things don't need to be experimented on. ;) The question I am trying to wrestle with is how high-level should the GP be, what should be in there, etc. There shouldn't be anything (I don't believe that there's currently anything in there but I could be wrong) that can be used to exclude anyone. That's why we are asking for fellowship feedback on what should, and should not, be in there. When the time comes, the vote to remove it will be a legitimate one. Maybe it is all a test to see where our hearts are at.

- I continue to be so blessed and inspired by the words contained within the RE scriptures, including the Governing Principles document. I have been blessed to hear the voice of the Lord in the words of the Governing Principles. The guidance, wisdom, and gentleness of the document makes me a better person. I am so grateful that the Lord is inspiring people to bring his words to remembrance.
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- I know of a surety of the truth contained within the RE scriptures (including the Governing Principles document) because of the mighty change that the Spirit of the Lord has wrought in my heart. I rejoice that an invitation to enter into a covenant with the Lord could possibly be extended to this people.
- I also have some unique experiences with Jeff that may be of interest to some on the committee. Recently, I had the privilege of reading and providing editorial feedback on his professional writing. An academic myself, I currently earn my living consulting on academic writing projects. After spending numerous hours reading and editing Jeff's work, I am very familiar with his tendencies as a writer-- tendencies that are repeated over and over across his professional writing. Upon my first reading of the Governing Principles, it was clear to me that Jeff did not write the Governing Principles with his own talents and skills as a writer. The clarity of exposition within the Governing Principles far exceeds what I have experienced in reading his academic work. I have shared this with him in the spirit of love and we have both rejoiced in what great things the Lord is doing.
- When I read it, God told me it was from Him.
- The GP were prepared as a result of an assignment from the scripture committee and the Lord to replace LE Section 20 with instruction that is relevant to the current movement and has their unanimous approval for inclusion. It is a principle with a promise. The work fulfills the need explained in *Things to Keep Us Awake At Night* to have a form of scripture "adapted so as to function to govern the existing fellowships among us." The document is helpful for current fellowships, and most especially for those who come into this movement over time as they seek to govern themselves according to righteous principles. Including this work may allow us to set a precedent for ourselves to allow all men to "speak in the name of the Lord," it may also allow us to finally go beyond the place where the early saints, and the people of Moses, failed.
- There is Wisdom in creating governing principles. I would recommend we should liken the governing principles to the US Constitution. Each dispensation has an outline of how to handle organization, management, ordinances, and growth. Using the scriptures alone doesn't take into account the uniqueness of the current dispensation. These are principles "by way of Wisdom". Knowledge without Wisdom always creates future problems. Up to this point, all of the conversations have been in a paradigm of a small group of believers, most originating from the LDS background. I am going to suggest that is not, and will not, be the future of this movement, if God sustains us and offers a covenant that is accepted. This movement will influence hundreds of thousands and millions over the coming decades. Many things will happen in the world in the coming future; economies will collapse, governments will change, truth will tear down false religions globally. People around the world will seek respect in what this movement can become. This movement can become global, affecting every kindred, tongue, and people. The truth of God has the opportunity to go forward boldly, nobly, and independent. It can penetrate every continent, visit every climb, and sound in every ear. This IS the destiny of this movement IF we can come together, offer a law, receive a covenant, obtain a priesthood, experience a seal, and become a Zion. If the founding fathers saw the destiny of the United States, they might have used even more Wisdom to create the Constitution. (Perhaps they would have removed slavery and avoided a civil war.) Asking for changes and compromises based on personal opinion and agenda negates Wisdom. I would strongly recommend looking at the end and working backward. There is WISDOM in governing principles accepted by all. Received by and through Wisdom. If there is interest in specific principles related to you, your family, or fellowship, create a set of governing principles for your own based on those needs outside of the globally accepted governing principles (aka a state constitution).

- **In my opinion** it is imperative that we organize ourselves. This is not establishing a new church or LDS INC or B Young renewed. It is wisdom. Denver wrote a series on organizing ourselves. He also wrote the series "All or Nothing" not too long ago. Both of these are worth review. I can attest that if you can't organize yourself, you live in chaos. Chaos is not God's way. We have to learn how to come together.
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- Reading through all of these posts, it occurs to me that a fallacy has been introduced that effectively equates proposed "guiding principles" with "correlation". I disagree that guiding principles could plausibly be equated with correlation in the LDS Church sense of the word. I agree, however, that we ought to think and pray hard to know about the propriety of guiding principles.
- "Correlation" in the LDS Church was officially recognized during the presidency of Harold B. Lee in the late 1960's/early 1970's. I agree with Denver's take that correlation effectively overthrew any semi-autonomous body involved with the church...such as the Relief Society. (Denver notes that correlation turned the Relief Society from a women's organization to a group of women being led by "the priesthood".)
- Libertarian principles typically state that governments which govern the least govern the best. And that decaying societies have more intricate and extensive codes of laws to govern the most minute instances. Certainly, sending delegates to a guiding principles convention could result in such monstrosities. We must pray and trust that the Lord will guide us. I suppose we'll see what happens from there
- As I was reading in RE D&C 48, I was reminded of these portions:
- *"For Cain also being authorized to offer sacrifice, but not offering it in righteousness, therefore he was cursed. It signifies then, that **the ordinances must be kept in the very way God has appointed, otherwise their priesthood will prove a cursing instead of a blessing.**"*
- *"Elijah was the last prophet that held the keys of this priesthood, and who will before the last dispensation, restore the authority and deliver the keys of this priesthood in order that **all the ordinances may be attended to in righteousness.**"*
- The importance of ordinances being "kept in the very way God has appointed" I think should be something to consider for the Governing Principles. Even if it's just listing where in the scriptures the ordinances are laid out, I think this is something that needs to be spelled out sometimes. We want to bring blessings and not cursings. When it comes to baptism, the sacrament, and other ordinances, we can agree that the portions laid out in the scriptures need to be kept exactly as intended and explained there. The variation comes from where it has not been spelled out and can be led by the spirit.

MODIFICATIONS

M.1 I'd like to make a formal proposal for naming the volumes:

- The Old Covenants
- The New Covenants
- Teachings and Commandments

"Testament" occurs twelve times in the New Testament (Hebrews 9:15 , etc.) as the rendering of the Greek diatheke, which is twenty times rendered "covenant" in the Authorized Version, and always so in the Revised Version. The Vulgate translates incorrectly by testamentum, whence the names "Old" and "New Testament," by which we now designate the two sections into which the Bible is divided. (<http://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionary/testament/>)

Therefore,

Vol. 1 "The Old Covenants" is really an account of multiple covenants, from Adam down to Moses. There isn't just one covenant being discussed in the volume. So I think it ought to be plural.

Vol. 2 "The New Covenants" is likewise an account of two covenants: one in Jerusalem and one in the new world. So it likewise ought to be plural.

Vol. 3 "Teachings and Commandments" is really a compilation of exactly that. The term "doctrine" was a misapplication of the term, given Christ's limit on the word. Since anyone who declares more or less than Christ's doctrine as His runs a serious risk, we probably ought to consider dropping the misused name and clarifying that the volume is just commandments and teachings. It contains some history, some principles, and some wisdom literature also, but the general term "teachings" would be appropriate as a title to describe them all.

The renaming would also make us a *very* peculiar people...

11 FOR:

The only covenant referred to in the book by the Lord was in D&C Section 84 (now Section 27) where He called the Book of Mormon the "new covenant". The Lord never officially called it "Doctrine & Covenants". The Lord referred to the book that was to be printed (Section 1) as the "book of my commandments," but there is no revelation for changing "commandments" to "covenants". That was a change of men:

- "After a hymn was sung, President Cowdery arose and introduced the "**Book of doctrine and covenants of the church of the Latter Day Saints,**" in behalf of the committee: he was followed by President Rigdon, who explained the manner by which they intended to obtain the voice of the assembly for or against said book."
- This is after the Lord's name has been removed from the Church and at a conference Joseph was not present for.
- RE 63 is a good example to look at, because it walks through one element of the covenant that the Lord is willing to make ends with His people, if they become His. I believe that the Book of Mormon lays out clearly the terms of that covenant and how it can be kept or broken. Most of the uses of the word covenant in the D&C refer to either "this covenant," which is the Book of Mormon, or "these covenants," as in the articles and covenants of the faith. In the latter case, I understand the word covenants to be more like rules (as in the case of restrictive covenants embedded in a neighborhood). One notable section is 54 (LE 132), but that is an oddball section in many ways. However, the D&C gives *commandments* in almost every single section. If you believe, as we have been persuaded to believe, that the title Doctrine and Covenants was not given by revelation (see 1835 General Assembly, where Joseph was not present), and you are simply looking at the material (with no history in the LDS church), with the additional understanding that the BofM is the new covenant, would you choose to refer to those sections are covenants or commandments? This isn't baiting; I really would like to know.

7 AGAINST:

M.2 *Lectures on Faith* should be titled *Lectures on the Doctrine of Jesus Christ*

18 FOR: Options include: 1-No title. Not giving them a title is tantamount to guaranteeing that the lectures will continued to be called *Lectures on Faith* and a table of contents requires a name.

Men need and will use a name in order to communicate. 2-call them *Lectures on Faith*. This continues the unfortunate title applied to them by the Brigham Young administration. The lectures are not lectures limited to the topic of faith as the name implies. The title *Lectures on Faith* obscures their breadth and depth. 3-Give them a new name that reflects their true purpose and content. I propose the lectures be referred to as the *Lectures on the Doctrine of Jesus Christ* for six reasons:

- a. First, the book in which these lectures were published was called *the Doctrine and Covenants*, the lectures were the **doctrine**.
- b. 2nd, The committee assigned to write the lectures were instructed "to arrange the items of **the doctrine of Jesus Christ**, for the government of the Church" (HC 2:165).
- c. 3rd, This same language, "**the doctrine of Jesus Christ**", was used August 17th, 1835 on the day all of the church quorums unanimously accepted the lectures as doctrine. (See second appendix in the Restoration Scriptures draft.)
- d. 4th, The first sentence of the first paragraph of the first lecture in the *Lectures on Faith* describes the Lectures as "a course of lectures designed to unfold to the understanding **the doctrine of Jesus Christ.**"
- e. 5th, the points of Christ's doctrine are taught in the lectures including faith, repentance (see for e.g. Lecture 2:24), baptism (see for e.g. Lecture 1:12, 1:32), the Holy Ghost (see for e.g. Lecture 2:24,), baptism by fire and of the Holy Ghost (see for e.g. Lecture 1:19), enduring (see for e.g. Lecture 6:2), coming unto Christ (see for e.g. Lecture 4:12), and seeing God in the flesh (see for e.g. Lecture 2:18)
- f. 6th, the proposed title emphasizes that Christ, who inspired the Lectures, is at the core of the lectures and is the object of our faith.

20 AGAINST:

- g. Each numbered numbered lecture is subtitled "of Faith."
- h. Christ explicitly warns against going beyond the "Doctrine of Faith." While these lectures treat the matter of faith, I worry about going beyond what He ordains, but the title is not the most important element for me.
- i. 3NE 11:32-40

M.3 That the *Lectures on Faith* be renamed the *Lectures on Theology*.

1 FOR: My main argument is that this is the title, Theology, given above the first page of the lectures. I believe this is what the early saints would have called them, but have no evidence. I think this title will provide easier communication with our LDS friends and family, as both my Deseret Book copies are subtitled, Theological Lectures.

20 AGAINST: This title is too broad. Theology is the study of God. The Lectures focus on the doctrine of Christ, as stated in the very first sentence.

M.4 Add to Section 170 to read as follows: As they organize their dispensation according to righteous principles and receive God's approval of the pattern, the dispensation is established and remains in effect until apostasy necessitates another restoration. *It is in the order of heavenly things that God should always send a new dispensation into the world when men have apostatized from the truth and lost the priesthood.* (addition from Joseph Smith, June 16, 1844, Sermon at the Grove)

5 FOR: This adds a little clarification to when and why God sends a new dispensation into the world; it is one of the most important points from one of Joseph's last discourses.

5 AGAINST: This does not explain when; it simply states that it will happen. It really is a statement of the obvious.