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# GUIDE AND STANDARD

THIS GUIDE AND STANDARD IS PRESENTED TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO FOLLOW CHRIST AND TO JOIN IN FELLOWSHIP. BECAUSE FELLOWSHIPS ARE INDEPENDENT AND BELIEVERS CLAIM TO FOLLOW NO MAN BUT SEEK THE LORD AND HIS SPIRIT TO GUIDE THEM, THIS INFORMATION IS SHARED NOT BY WAY OF COMMANDMENT, BUT BY WISDOM.

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## GUIDE

### PREAMBLE

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has declared that today is once again a day of salvation. He has set His hand to gather His sheep from the four corners of the earth, to free them from the bonds of Babylon, to re-enthone the agency of man, to free the believing captives from the chains of false religion, and to reestablish the New and Everlasting Covenant with a people who will have Him to be their God. His invitation to His sheep is to awake and arise, to repent and return, and to organize themselves, accepting the Lord's invitation to come to Him and ascend back into the presence of the Father. Fellowships are a means the Lord has given to prepare a people for this great undertaking. Unlike rules that only preoccupy, principles ennoble, inviting people to learn higher truths, develop wisdom, and govern themselves after the pattern of Heaven and according to the dictates of their own conscience. Those who labor in this work with all their heart, might, mind, and strength will become glorious in the eyes of the Lord.

*Organize yourselves, prepare every needful thing and establish an house, even an house of prayer, an house of fasting, an house of faith, an house of learning, an house of glory, an house of order, an house of God, that your incomings may be in the name of the Lord, that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord, that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord with uplifted hands unto the Most High.*  
(T&C 86 para. 29)

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### CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST:

Christ stated, *Behold, verily, verily I say unto you, I will declare unto you my doctrine. And this is my doctrine and it is the doctrine which the Father hath given unto me, and I bear record of the Father and the Father beareth record of me and the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me, and I bear record that the Father commandeth all men everywhere to repent and believe in me. And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved, and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God. And whoso believeth not in me and is not baptized shall be damned. Verily, verily I say unto you that this is my doctrine and I bear record of it from the Father. And whoso believeth in me believeth in the Father also, and unto him will the Father bear record of me for he will visit him with fire and with the Holy Ghost. And thus will the Father bear record of me and the Holy Ghost will bear record unto him of the Father and me, for the Father and I and the Holy Ghost are one. And again I say unto you, Ye must repent and become as a little child and be baptized in my name or ye can in nowise receive these things. And again I say unto you, Ye must repent and be baptized in my name and become as a little child or ye can in nowise inherit the kingdom of God. Verily, verily I say unto you that this is my doctrine. And whoso buildeth upon this buildeth upon my rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against them. And whoso shall declare more or less than this and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil and is not built upon my rock, but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation and the gates of hell standeth open to receive such when the floods come and the winds beat upon them. Therefore go forth unto this people and declare the words which I have spoken unto the ends of the earth.*<sup>1</sup> Full acceptance of this doctrine is the primary governing principle of followers of Jesus Christ.

In order for a foundation to be built upon the rock of Christ, you need to turn to Christ, hearken to His voice, believe and repent of your transgressions, be baptized in water in His name (*see section on baptism*), and receive the Holy Ghost. If you will do this, you will be able to ask all things and have it be given.<sup>2</sup>

Repentance, which includes turning from error and ignorance to face God, is the guiding principle of God's house. To produce fruit meet for the Father's kingdom, groundwork must be provided by God that is outlined in the Doctrine of Christ.

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#### CONCERNING BAPTISM AND THE SACRAMENT:

Baptize as set forth in the Book of Mormon.

*And he said unto them: On this wise shall ye baptize: and there shall be no disputations among you. Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them:*

*Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water and in my name shall ye baptize them. And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying:*

*Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.*<sup>3</sup>

Baptism should be according to the age of accountability which is the age of 8 as revealed by my servant Joseph.<sup>4</sup> Moroni 8 is given as wisdom in me that you do not mock me and put trust in dead works, denying my mercy and the power of the Spirit by baptizing your little children.

None should be received unto baptism unless they have understood and accepted the Doctrine of Christ, and none, except little children, are considered worthy to partake of the sacrament if they have not repented and been baptized. Baptisms should be performed in living water if possible. Baptism should be offered freely to all willing souls and their names recorded. If possible, they should be liberally welcomed into fellowship.

*The sacrament should be taken in the way God commanded. Partake of the sacrament in your families and in your gatherings. Christ commanded it. Follow the pattern (laid out in scripture).<sup>5</sup> Kneel with the church... Use wine. If you are opposed to alcohol or have a medical condition that prevents you from using wine, use red grape juice. Use the symbol of the blood of our Lord. Red wine is bitter for a reason. Drinking that bitter wine in remembrance of His blood is symbolic and appropriate.*<sup>6</sup>

Provided the proper prayer, emblems and if possible, position (kneeling) are used (*Moroni 4-5*), the Sacrament may be administered to the body of the church in a number of ways. The officiator may break and bless the bread, immediately blessing the wine, so that all may partake of the sacramental emblems together, or the emblems may be blessed and consumed separately; either is acceptable so long as it is done with an eye single to God's glory.

If the priest and the congregation desire to make an oath that they will always remember Him, then let any who so desire raise the right arm to the square as a signal that they are holding themselves to the sharp corner of truth and squareness in their commitment to God to always remember Him. The Lord, in turn, promises to reciprocate, filling us with His Spirit. The Lord provides these ordinances as the means by which He may fill us with His Spirit.

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CONCERNING THE GOVERNMENT OF FELLOWSHIPS:

Part of the progression toward becoming a Zion family is fellowshiping as family and friends into independently-governed groups. A fullness of charity, the greatest of all virtues, can only be gained as we reach outside ourselves and our families to become one through the love of God. Fellowships are a means by which people may become united in love and become precious to each other, while helping bear one another's burdens.

The principles required to elevate a body of believers into the body of Christ are found within the Book of Mormon and the former commandments. *Therefore verily I say unto you my friends, Call your solemn assembly as I have commanded you, and as all have not faith, seek ye diligently, and teach one another words of wisdom, yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom, seek learning even by study and also by faith.*<sup>7</sup>

Let this be the manner in which you come together to worship: *And the church did meet together oft to fast and to pray and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of their souls. And they did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine in remembrance of the Lord Jesus.*<sup>8</sup>

It is wisdom that fellowships should be governed after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for by the power of the Holy Ghost you will be led whether to preach, or to exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing.<sup>9</sup>

Fellowships of believers should be patterned after the order of heaven. Thus, there should be no compulsion or contention, nor strife, envy, or malice in our meetings, but they should be full of long-suffering, meekness, gentleness, love unfeigned and pure knowledge.<sup>10</sup> All are free to organize as best suits the needs of the group, seeking not only to accurately say, but also to do what the Lord commands.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, organize so as to reflect determination to serve God; trust in the scriptures, bear one another's burdens, and associate with others as equals.

It is not necessary to set up a lasting supervisory structure among believers when all are animated by the Mind of God. Let there be no permanent hierarchy, but a group of equals, and let decisions be made in councils, guided by the scriptures, and governed by common consent.<sup>12</sup> If a job needs to be filled within the fellowship, people may volunteer and be accepted. When people cooperate with one another and willingly agree, they are free and are acting according to their own agency to bring to pass great things without compulsion and without command. That is required if we are to become equal and remain free. It is ever thus with the Lord.

Among existing councils, or in decisions among believers, votes should be taken openly. Let each stand as a witness of what he or she believes. Individuals should exercise self-restraint and humility and not speak too much and dominate the discussion; members should share their opinions to the best of their ability, then trust the Lord with the final outcome.<sup>13</sup> Decisions need not be made in haste, but must be built upon righteous principles for God to carry out His work with this people. It is better to defer for a time than to reach a hasty decision because the Lord condemns haste, which brings pestilence, including confusion.<sup>14</sup>

Every man and every woman is given gifts born of the Spirit, and all are called to build up the Kingdom of God upon the earth. Let there be no covetousness in or among the fellowships, for each gift is needed. Talents and gifts are given to allow us to emulate the Lord, to serve and lift our neighbor, and to forward the cause of Zion. However, the earth is full of lying spirits. *To avoid deception, study the thoughts and impressions you receive: if they fill with pride, vainglory, laziness, an ambition to control and lead, or suggest that you alone are faithful while all around you are in error, they are not*

*of me, but are of the devil, saith the Lord. Yea, I say unto you, the humility and meekness required for those who would be my servants is hardly found on the earth. Repent, therefore, and adopt the ways of your Lord.*

The Lord's name must not be invoked in vain.<sup>15</sup> This means that unless He has explicitly directed to say, "Thus saith the Lord," we are obliged to persuade only by pure knowledge.<sup>16</sup> Pure knowledge should be shared through the medium of scripture. Grounded on the bedrock of scripture, personal revelations may lift and inspire the body, resulting in further light and truth. Man's thoughts and ways are lower than God's. If led by the Spirit, one may be led to share an experience, but it should not be used to compel agreement; rather, inspiration by way of dream, vision, messenger, or His Spirit should be shared and judged by what is found in scripture, that we may remember not only to say, but also to do what was given us by God. Persuasion rather than domination is necessary to bring harmony between us.

Temporary councils may be formed to carry out endeavors extending in scope outside of fellowships. These should be organized, and run, according to common consent. This means that while men or women may be invited to join, they are given the latitude to determine their level of involvement and should always be free to leave. Above all, agency should be preserved and individuals should be allowed to bring their gifts and talents to the project as they feel directed by the Mind of God. Voluntary participation is necessary in the work of the Lord. Coercing help from friends and loved ones violates the pattern of Heaven and results in hurt and loss.<sup>17</sup>

When beginning an endeavor, cast a net widely to allow all who feel so inspired to join. Once formed, take the time to come to an agreement about how the group will be run, make a commitment to see the project through, and then plead for Heaven's guidance and support. If the people in that group will work with an eye single to His glory and the welfare of Zion, rather than their own name and reputation, the Lord can take their weak effort and give it His strength. Once a project has gained momentum, and the group has achieved a shared vision, it is best to refrain from quickly and unwisely adding others who were not inspired to do the work in the first place. Rather, trust in the Lord; a small unified group working alongside Him is more powerful than a thundering crowd.

When it is hoped that the endeavor will be adopted by the body of believers, let the group take its work and present it to the body. While it is a righteous principle to not seek credit or glory of men, accountability is also a true principle. Therefore, let there be a spokesman and a witness for the council to the body. If the general body of believers do not vote to accept the product, they are not obligated to do so. Time must be given to the body to deliberate before a vote can be requested.

Fellowship among believers must be guided by the underlying principle of sacrifice.<sup>18</sup> It is the nature of almost all men to stand as sentinels, looking outwards to see what another may sacrifice, but the focus should be within our own hearts, asking God what more we can do. In fellowships we have the opportunity to do that, including alleviating the poor among us, bearing each other's burdens, and seeking to elevate all in our sphere.

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#### CONCERNING PRINCIPLES OF GODLY INFLUENCE:

God is no respecter of persons. God desires to have a covenant people upon the earth that are of one heart, one mind, and dwell in righteousness together regardless of their mortal differences. Agency, pure love of Christ, and purity in heart are the foundational principles which can make a people of one heart and one mind.

In governing the children of men, the Lord uses persuasion, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, unfeigned love, kindness, and pure knowledge, which enlarges the soul without hypocrisy and

without guile. He implores us to do the same in our relationships with one another. These are the only principles of influence to be used among God's people. This foundation respects individual agency (self-selection) to decide their level of involvement without an overseer. Only when moved upon by the Holy Ghost can you censure another, and even then, it should be done in a timely manner with exactness, then showing an increase in love toward that person. This allows him to recognize that you are not his enemy and that your faithfulness toward him is stronger than the cords of death. Exercise of compulsion, coercion, control, or unrighteous dominion is not of God and is not to be used as a means of influencing or government.<sup>19</sup>

There is no central organization, regulation, or control over any individual or fellowship. Fellowships vary and no two are exactly alike. Their course, frequency, and scope is determined by the common consent of the participants. They are organic and, like living things, expand, contract, divide, and can sometimes come to an end. Some fellowships are large and others are very small, perhaps consisting of only a few individuals or even one or two families. Where two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, He will be in the midst of them.

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#### CONCERNING RECONCILIATION AND UNITY:

The Lord seeks a people who are unified and willing to live in peace one with another.<sup>20</sup> He desires that if we have been offended or hurt by another, that we speak with him or her privately and attempt to be reconciled. To do otherwise is gossip, which is not pleasing to the Lord.<sup>21</sup> The Lord also commands that we not engage in lying, backbiting, evil-speaking, and finding fault with others.<sup>22</sup> Contending with others in anger is not of God, but originates from the devil.<sup>23</sup> When the love of God dwells in the hearts of men, contention ceases.<sup>24</sup>

Jarrings, contentions, envyings, strifes, and ambitious and covetous desires impede hearing the voice of the Lord and pollute the inheritances of a people of God.<sup>25</sup>

To be forgiven, Christ not only requires us to forgive others,<sup>26</sup> but to plead for mercy for those who have offended us. The role of accusing is left to 'the accuser of the brethren,' or Satan.<sup>27</sup> When we accuse others we interfere with their salvation. If we are the one who was offended, and we make no accusation against them, then the Lord will make no accusation against us. Satan's right to accuse is inferior to ours as victims of the offense, because it is us who suffer in the flesh the wrongs of others. If we make no claims for justice, surrender such, and seek instead for mercy on behalf of others, then Satan's accusations can have no claim upon them. We mimic Christ, follow His example, and in our own limited way, also atone for the sins of others.

*Therefore, ...see that ye are merciful unto your brethren. Deal justly, judge righteously, and do good continually, and if ye do all these things, then shall ye receive your reward. Yea, ye shall have mercy restored unto you again, ye shall have justice restored unto you again, ye shall have a righteous judgment restored unto you again, and ye shall have good rewarded unto you again, for that which ye do send out shall return unto you again and be restored. Therefore, the word restoration more fully condemneth the sinner and justifieth him not at all.*<sup>28</sup>

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#### CONCERNING TITHING AND SACRIFICE:

Tithing in fellowships is a necessary step to becoming a Zion family. Tithes and offerings follow the principle of sacrifice. If we cannot help our brothers and sisters who are poor among us through tithing, how can we entertain the thought that we will be able to have all things in common later? Therefore it is wisdom that our tithes first meet the needs of the poor in our fellowships. Tithes, once

collected, should then be administered to others by the common consent of the fellowship. When dispersing tithing funds, women should contribute to the process so that decisions are made in wisdom and needs are considered which women alone may recognize.

Having petitioned the Lord, He explained that the purpose of tithing *was never to establish a wealthy general fund nor to invite the wrongful accumulation of wealth that has resulted from the long abuse of this law. The law was to be a light thing, easily borne by the faithful. Tithing was always to be taken from surplus (meaning unnecessary excess property) and increase (meaning what remains after all costs of the household have been paid). It was to be drawn out of the abundance in the possession of the giver, so that there may be enough and to spare, not from property required for their necessities. The tithes of this people are to be used for the poor among this people, if they want to become Mine.*

Tithing should be used to help those in need<sup>29</sup> in your fellowship for things such as food, clothing, housing, medical and educational costs, and for such purposes as the fellowship determines to be appropriate, on a case by case basis. While tithes should not be used to support the idle, it is better to give freely than to judge the efforts of your fellow man.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to tithing, we should be willing to give offerings to those who ask of us, and not turn the beggar away from our door.

If there is an excess among your fellowship, you may donate towards the temple or by common consent decide to contribute to the needs of another fellowship. Stretching outward from one's group binds together hearts and minds with cords of love and sacrifice. It is necessary for these bonds to form within and between fellowships, so that the Lord may transform individual members into a unified body.

Seek to be wise stewards of that which is the Lord's to help the poor among you. As you start to lift the burdens of your brothers and sisters greater love will abound. There will be a natural progression as you become one with me to also become one with a group of individuals who are likewise seeking me in diligence. Prepare your heart and mind to live by faith, that in time you will all be equal in temporal and spiritual things. For in Zion, all will be of one heart and one mind and have all things in common.

The eventual goal of each fellowship is to become equal in all things one with another. One of the greatest sins is our failure to be equal. *'Nevertheless, in your temporal things you shall be equal, and this not grudgingly, otherwise the abundance of the manifestations of the Spirit shall be withheld. Now this commandment I give unto my servants for their benefit, while they remain, for a manifestation of my blessings upon their heads, and for a reward of their diligence, and for their security for food and for raiment, for an inheritance, for houses and for lands, in whatsoever circumstances I the Lord shall place them, and wherever I the Lord shall send them.'*<sup>31</sup> *This commandment, being equal in our temporal things, has never been followed. We suffer because of violating it. The abundant manifestations of the Spirit are gone and will not return without repentance.*<sup>32</sup>

*In order to be able to do this it will require a people who are one with me. Seek to be one with me that in time you may have the abundant manifestation of my blessings, both temporally and of the Spirit. Start with tithing in your fellowships and then prepare yourselves to receive more.*<sup>33</sup>

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CONCERNING PRIESTHOOD ORDINATION AND ADMINISTERING BLESSINGS:

A man is free to perform ordinances in his own family. But outside his own family, the ordinances of the gospel require the following process:

Before a man can perform a public ordinance, such as baptism or the Sacrament, he must be ordained, receive 'authority from Christ,' and be properly sustained. This allows the person to perform ordinances with authority given by Jesus Christ, not merely by taking the authority upon himself, and is the way we can have men called of God, as was Aaron,<sup>34</sup> in our day. A man need not be re-ordained if he was ordained a priest before April 2014 and can trace his line of authority back to Christ through Joseph Smith. If ordained after, he should be ordained in a fellowship, and a proper record kept of his line of authority stemming from the fellowship's proceedings. In all cases, the ordination is not the end, but the means to which the end may be received; that is, to receive an errand from the Lord. Power in the Priesthood can only come from Christ. Therefore, a man should follow the pattern laid out in the Book of Mormon and get authority from Christ's word, spoken to him by the power of the Spirit, to ratify the ordination before acting.

As only men are to hold priesthood for public ordinances, only women are to vote to sustain them. As soon as an ordinance is needed, women are qualified to vote. They are in need of the ordinance, and they ought to be entitled to vote in order to receive that ordinance. The Lord has said, *There shall be a minimum of seven women to sustain the man in any vote, and if the man is married, his wife shall be one of them.*<sup>35</sup> If his wife will not sustain him, he is unworthy to provide priesthood service outside his family and in the fellowship. If a young man lives at home, with his mother, she must be the first of those to sustain him; she shall be his advocate with the women. His sisters, if of an appropriate age to understand these things, may also vote for him. If that young man's mother will not sustain her son, her view should be considered as better informed than the view of any other seven women, even if they would consent. A young man should have his mother's confidence before he is allowed to perform priestly functions for others outside his family.

When it is proposed that a man be sustained by at least seven women, before that sustaining vote is taken, there should be a discussion as to whether there are any opposed to the man being sustained. If there are, those opposing should be allowed to first express any concerns about the man, and the women should hear the reasons before they decide whether to proceed with sustaining the man. After the vote, all of the women who vote to sustain should follow the pattern of the early church by providing a written certificate. The women should not only sign a certificate, but also write about their sustaining vote in their personal records so that there may be an abundance of witnesses.

Sustaining is by women, and removing authority to act within a community or fellowship, is likewise to be done by the vote of women. If a man's worthiness to function is called into question, then a conference can be convened to deal with the question. In removing authority, at least two witnesses should speak against the accused, and he should be allowed to speak on his behalf and call such witnesses as he chooses. Men can be witnesses, but only women are allowed to vote.<sup>36</sup> *I have told you that to remove authority to use priesthood outside a man's family requires a unanimous decision by twelve women. A council of twelve women must be convened either in the man's home fellowship among those who are acquainted with his daily walk, or in private at a general conference also including among the twelve women from the conference those who are acquainted with his daily walk, so that no injustice results. Reinstatement of the man's authority must be considered by the same council of twelve women when the man petitions for the decision to be rescinded, and requires seven of the twelve to agree upon his reinstatement, which can occur at any time. During the period of suspension, nothing affects the man's duties and responsibility in his own family.*<sup>37</sup>

Blessings of healing, counsel, and relief may be given by men and women according to their faith and the exercise of the gifts of the Spirit.<sup>38</sup> Blessings should be given meekly, not to support a craft, or for money, or to receive the praise of men, and should freely be given when solicited by the beneficiary or the beneficiary's family. The administration of these blessings should follow the dictates of prudence, skill, and the Spirit.

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CONCERNING THE PRINCIPLE OF EXACTNESS IN ORDINANCES:

The ordinances have been the same since Adam. According to Joseph Smith: *[Jesus] set the ordinances to be the same forever and ever.*<sup>39</sup> Also: *Ordinances instituted in the heavens before the foundation of the world, in the priesthood, for the salvation of men, are not to be altered or changed.*<sup>40</sup> This is why Joseph "restored" the Gospel, but did not bring anything new. It was a return to the earlier, forgotten truths.

*The Earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance[s], broken the everlasting covenant.*<sup>41</sup>

Covenants come from God, we either accept or reject what he offers, everything God ordains is by law, it is lasting, it won't be thrown down like things men ordain; his house is established by law, or in other words, by covenant. *Covenants, promises, rights, vows, associations and expectations that are mine will endure, and those that are not cannot endure. Everything in the world, whether it is established by men, or by Thrones, or by Dominions, or by Principalities, or by Powers, that are not by my word and promise, shall be thrown down when men are dead and shall not remain in my Father's Kingdom. Only those things that are by me shall remain in and after the resurrection.*<sup>42</sup>

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CONCERNING THE COVENANT TO MAKE A PEOPLE HIS:

*Every formality required from the days of Adam until now for establishing a covenant has been kept and met. Once the covenant is established, those sustained by seven women or a man inside his own family, who receive it, also have authority to administer the ordinance to others who want to be numbered among God's people. To administer to others, repeat the ordinance, read aloud the Lord's answer and the words of the covenant. Ask them to stand and say yes and they will become one of the Lord's covenant people. Do not change the words of the covenant, for to change an ordinance is to break it. All our ancestors have failed to follow the Lord's path. Generations now dead, anxiously wait for us to be faithful. They have part in this through you, if they have a righteous living descendent they are blessed vicariously through that relationship. We are all part of one family and your role in that family can bless the living and the dead.*<sup>43</sup>

*...Entering into the covenant offered by the Lord...does not mean there is a church or organization to be joined, it only means that you affirm that you will accept and abide the terms set by the Lord for being one of his people. You can be one of his covenant people and also hold membership in any church of your choosing. However, the covenant imposes the responsibility to help others who also accept the covenant. To regard them also as the Lords, to honor God, seek to recover Israel, teach children to honor God, care for the poor among God's people and to help lighten the burdens of others. None of those responsibilities involve establishing or joining an institution....*

*We are all equal. We all accept the Book of Mormon as a covenant for us to be numbered among the Lord's covenant people. This land, in particular, is a land of promise to those who serve the God of this land who is Jesus Christ. The time is coming when those who are not the Lord's people will be swept off the land.*<sup>44</sup>

*The covenant is conditional. All promises made by me will be fulfilled if you abide by the conditions of the covenant. What is required of you is clearly laid out. Study the answer and the covenant.<sup>45</sup> Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. Become one with me and all I have promised will be yours.<sup>46</sup>*

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#### CONCERNING MARRIAGE AND SEALINGS:

*Marriage was, in the beginning, between one man and one woman, and was...established at the beginning as a covenant by the word and authority of God, between the woman and God, the man and woman, and the man and God. It was ordained by my word to endure forever. Mankind fell, but a covenant established by my word cannot fail, and therefore in death they were not to be parted.*

*It was my will that all marriages would follow the pattern of the beginning, and therefore all other marriages would be ordained as at the first. But fallen men refused my covenant, did not hearken to my word, nor receive my promise, and marriages fell outside my rule, disorganized and without me, therefore unable to endure beyond the promises made between the mortal man and the mortal woman, to end when they are dead...<sup>47</sup>*

The taking of multiple wives was introduced by the descendants of the first murderer, and is not considered a reflection of the image of God, as originally revealed to Adam. The image of God was in the couple, Adam and Eve, which were one man and one woman. Likewise, the apostle confirmed that neither the man without the woman, nor the woman without the man, is approved of the Lord.<sup>48</sup> Families already practicing plural marriage and wishing to join a fellowship can do so as long as they understand that they should not take another wife, nor abandon any wife they currently have, and teach their children to end the practice.<sup>49</sup>

*Marriage by me, or by my word, received as a holy covenant between the woman and I, the man and woman, and the man and I, will endure beyond death and into my Father's Kingdom, worlds without end. Those who abide this covenant will pass by the angels who are appointed, and enter into exaltation...*

*Marriage is necessary for the exaltation of the man and woman, and is ordained by me through the Holy Spirit of Promise, or in other words by my covenant, my law, and my authority. Like the marriage in Eden, marriage is a sacrament for a sacred place, on holy ground, in my presence, or where the Holy Spirit of Promise can minister. But rebellion has kept mankind from inheriting what I ordained in the beginning, and therefore women and men have been left to marry apart from me. Every marriage established by me requires that I be part of the covenant for it to endure, for Endless is my name and without me the marriage cannot be without end: for so long as I endure it shall also endure, if it is made by my word and covenant...*

*Whenever I have people who are mine, I command them to build a house, a holy habitation, a sacred place where my presence can dwell, or where the Holy Spirit of Promise can minister, because it is in such a place that it has been ordained to recover you, establish by my word and my oath your marriages, and endow my people with knowledge from on high that will unfold to you the mysteries of godliness, instruct you in my ways, that you may walk in my path. And all the outcasts of Israel will I gather to my house, and the jealousy of Ephraim and Judah will end. Ephraim will not envy Judah and Judah will not provoke Ephraim...<sup>50</sup>*

Currently, the ceremony for contracting marriage should be as directed by the Spirit. We anticipate a fuller understanding of marriage, sealings and other ordinances to be revealed with the acceptance of the temple by the Lord.

# STANDARD

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## A STANDARD FOR ALL FELLOWSHIPS

The first great commandment is to love God. Worship God. I am the Truth, the Way, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father but by me, and all things testify of me. If you love me keep my commandments. All who keep my commandments and obey my voice shall see my face and know that I am. My sheep hear my voice and hearken to the voice of my servants.

The second commandment is like unto the first, love your neighbor as yourself. Every member of a fellowship has equal value. Who can measure the worth of a soul? Who can place a value on a child of God? Are not all my children? Did I not come to save every man and woman? Treat others my way. I am no respecter of persons. Let all things be done in charity.

Unity and love within a fellowship will create a connection with God. We are all broken parts of a greater whole—God’s family—the purpose of gathering together is to repair the family of God. Fellowships are where God can put the pieces back together. When we come together to worship with an eye single to the glory of God, then it is God who unites. Progression is rapid when labor is performed by mortals who work together.

Should the Lord send an angel to govern the affairs of men? Why should I send an angel when a group of broken individuals can come to the same understanding by joining together in love and meekness? Fear stops the flow of communication with God and destroys all relationships. Abuse is rampant and fosters fear. All are broken; only love, true forgiveness, and the atonement can break the chain. Implementing the Atonement of Jesus Christ in ourselves, our families, and our fellowships overcomes fear and heals all wounds.

The glory of God is intelligence, or in other words light and truth. Light, like a candle, can pass God’s glory to others. Just as the sun rises to warm all the earth, light shared through love proceeds from within our hearts to draw in and unite all people. Light is given to all fellowships liberally that they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father’s kingdom. Otherwise there remains a scourge and judgment poured out upon the children of Zion.

When we lean on our own understanding we fail to connect with God and fail to fulfill the measure of our creation. Christ animates us as individuals and fellowships if we allow Him to do so. The words of Truth flow when the Spirit of God is animated in believers who speak and act according to the power of godliness. Faith is a principle of action and power. Unified actions, like prayer, ordinances, worship, song, coordinated dance, and physical labor can help a group achieve the flow of the Spirit. Revelation is God’s experience given to animate action in us— giving mere mortals the power to progress in their ascension to godhood.

Be of good cheer! The Lord will provide; do not fear. Have joy. Fellowships exist for the purpose of restoring the family of God and to prepare us for Zion. Our oneness testifies to the world that God is REAL. If you are not one, you are not mine.

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**SOURCES** (ALL SCRIPTURE SOURCES ARE FROM THE RESTORATION EDITION OF THE SCRIPTURES)

- 1 3 Nephi 5 para. 9
- 2 Genesis 4 para. 7
- 3 3 Nephi 5 para. 8
- 4 Genesis 7 para. 23
- 5 Moroni 4; T&C JSH:June-end 1829 para. 24 (p. 32)
- 6 *Preserving the Restoration*, Denver C. Snuffer, Jr., p. 521
- 7 T&C 86 para. 29
- 8 Moroni 6 para. 2
- 9 Moroni 6 para. 2
- 10 T&C 139 para. 5-8
- 11 T&C 82 para. 20
- 12 T&C 5
- 13 T&C 86 para. 30
- 14 T&C 49 para. 6; T&C 101 para. 15
- 15 Exodus 4 para. 4
- 16 T&C 139 para. 5-8
- 17 T&C 139 para. 5-8
- 18 T&C 110 - *Lectures on Faith - Lecture Sixth*
- 19 T&C 139 para. 5-8
- 20 T&C 21 para. 7
- 21 3 Nephi 5 para. 12; T&C 26 para. 5
- 22 T&C JSH:June-end 1829 para. 13 (p. 31); T&C 86 para. 30; T&C 157 para. 20
- 23 3 Nephi 5 para. 8
- 24 4 Nephi; Moroni 7
- 25 T&C 101 para. 2
- 26 T&C 50 para. 3; Colossians para. 9
- 27 T&C 147 para. 28 and para. 34; Revelations 3 para. 2
- 28 Alma 19 para. 10
- 29 Gen 7 para. 17
- 30 Mosiah 2
- 31 T&C 60 para. 4-5
- 32 *Preserving the Restoration*, p. 253
- 33 An answer to the prayer for this Guide and Standard, the December 3, 2017 portion
- 34 Hebrews 3 para. 2
- 35 T&C 168
- 36 *Preserving the Restoration* pp. 510-512; *Things to Keep us Awake at Night*, April 19, 2017, Denver C. Snuffer, Jr., p. 14
- 37 T&C 157 para. 57
- 38 Moroni 10 para. 3; T&C 147; 1 Corinthians 4 para. 2
- 39 T&C 140 para. 6
- 40 *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 308. (June 11, 1843.); JS History 1838–1856 vol. D-1
- 41 Isaiah 7 para. 1
- 42 T&C 157 para. 37
- 43 *Opening Comments, Covenant of Christ Conference*, September 3, 2017 Denver C. Snuffer, Jr., p. 2
- 44 *Opening Comments, Covenant of Christ Conference*, September 3, 2017 Denver C. Snuffer, Jr., pp. 1-2
- 45 T&C 157; T&C 158
- 46 An answer to the prayer for this Guide and Standard, the December 3, 2017 portion
- 47 T&C 157 para. 35-36
- 48 1 Corinthians 3 para. 15
- 49 T&C 153; 1 Corinthians 2 para. 8
- 50 T&C 157 para. 38-41