**Historical Background for D&C 93**

Between March and May 1833, the saints were busy with kingdom building.  The United Order acted to purchase three farms, including the French farm, “purchased on account of the facilities found there for making brick, which was essential to the building up of the city.”  (*History of the Church,*1:336).  Also, the decision was made to purchase the tannery of Arnold Mason.  Next, plans were made to build a school house for the School of the Prophets, “for the accommodation of the elders, who should come together to receive instruction preparatory for their missions, and ministry, according to [D&C 90]” (*History of the Church,* 1:342).  More elders were sent to Zion in Jackson County.  In general, the Church was making big plans with a grand and sweeping scope unusual for such a small group.

On April 6, 1833 in Zion, the saints, numbering about 100, met and celebrated the third anniversary of the church. “This was the first attempt made by the Church to celebrate the anniversary of her birthday… it being just 1800 years since the Savior laid down His life that men might have everlasting life, and only three years since the Church had come out of the wilderness” (*History of the Church*, 1:337).  The great joy of this gathering was tempered later that month when the first Missouri mob, numbering 300, gathered to torment the saints.  However, the mob was too disorganized and drunk to menace anyone and spontaneously disbanded.

Spiritually, the Brethren were being showered with great blessings.  During this period, the School of the Prophets made prophets out of its students. **Joseph** declared, “many present had the eyes of their understanding opened by the Spirit of God, so as to behold many things.  I then blessed the bread and wine, and distributed a portion to each.  Many of the brethren saw a heavenly vision of the Savior, and concourses of angels, and many other things, of which each one has a record of what he saw.” (*History of the Church*, 1:334-335)  The school was only open during the winter time. Therefore, in April when time came to plant crops, the school was closed.  But the revelations continued.

During the Spring of 1833, the saints were working to fulfill the commands given in D&C 90.  With respect to the Prophet’s duty, he was to continue his translation of the Old Testament and “from time to time, as shall be manifested by the Comforter, receive revelations to unfold the mysteries of the kingdom.” (DC 90:14)  Section 93 is a great example of the Prophet unfolding “the mysteries of the kingdom.”  Therein, the saints are told that if they are sufficiently prepared, they may see the face of the Lord—a promise which had already been fulfilled in the School of the Prophets.  Furthermore, this revelation restores the lost record of John the Baptist as quoted by John the Revelator.

**DC 93:1 every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me... shall see my face and know that I am**

**James E. Faust**

I would surmise that all who are members of this great Church have a desire to see the face of the Savior. This is an available blessing, for He has said, “It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, andkeepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am” (D&C 93:1). Too few of us catch sight of this horizon as we fail to avail ourselves of God’s promises. (“Lost Horizons,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1999, 4–5)

**Joseph F. Smith**

All these your brethren who are called to the Apostleship, and to minister in the midst of the house of Israel, are endowed, or ought to be endowed richly, with the spirit of their calling. For instance, these twelve disciples of Christ are supposed to be eye and ear witnesses of the divine mission of Jesus Christ. It is not permissible for them to simply say:  “I believe; I have accepted it, just because I believe it.” Read the revelation. (Sec. 18.) The Lord informs us that they must know, they must get the knowledge for themselves, it must be with them as if they had seen with their eyes and heard with their ears, and they know the truth. That is their mission to testify of Jesus Christ and him crucified, and risenfrom the dead and clothed now with almighty power at the right hand of God, the Savior of the world. That is their mission and their duty; and that is the doctrine and the truth; that is their duty to preach to the world, and see that it is preached to the world. (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Church History and Modern Revelation,* 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 1: 75 - 76.)

**James E. Faust**

The Lord has promised that "every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, andkeepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know that I am.” When I was called to the holy apostleship many years ago, my sure witness prompted me to testify on that occasion in these words: "I understand that a chief requirement for the holy apostleship is to be a personal witness of Jesus as the Christ and the Divine Redeemer. Perhaps on that basis alone, I can qualify.” (“A Growing Testimony,” *Ensign*, Nov 2000, 53–54, 59)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

Humbly, as an Apostle of the Lord Jesus Christ, I say to you not only that Jesus lived, but that he lives—with all that those words imply!  (“Our Acceptance of Christ,” *Ensign,* June 1984, 69)

**George Q. Cannon**

I know that God lives. I know that Jesus lives; for I have seen Him. I know that this is the Church of God, and that it is founded on Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. I testify to you of these things as one that knows—as one of the Apostles of the Lord that He lives send that He will live, and will come to reign on the earth. (Roy W. Doxey, comp., *Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 2: 357.)

**Melvin J. Ballard**

I know, as well as I know that I live and look into your faces, that Jesus Christ lives, and he is the Redeemer of the world, that he arose from the dead with a tangible body, and still has that real body which Thomas touched when he thrust his hands into his side and felt that wound of the spear, and also the prints of the nails in his hands. (John 20:26-29) I know by the witness and the revelations of God to me that Thomas told the truth. I know by witness that Joseph Smith told the truth, for mine eyes have seen. For in the visions of the Lord to my soul, I have seen Christ's face, I have heard his voice. I know that he lives, that he is the Redeemer of the World, and that as he arose from the dead, a tangible and real individual, so shall all men arise in the resurrection from the dead. (Roy W. Doxey, comp., *Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 2: 357.)

**Boyd K. Packer**

One question of this type I am asked occasionally, usually by someone who is curious, is, "Have you seen Him?" That is a question that I have never asked of another. I have not asked that question of my Brethren in the Council of the Twelve, thinking that it would be so sacred and so personal that one would have to have some special inspiration—indeed, some authorization—even to ask it.

Though I have not asked that question of others, I have heard them answer it—but *not* when they were asked. I have heard one of my Brethren declare, "I know, from experiences too sacred to relate, that Jesus is the Christ." I have heard another testify, "I know that God lives, I know that the Lord lives, and more than that, I know the Lord." I repeat: they have answered this question not when they were asked, but under the prompting of the Spirit, on sacred occasions, when "the Spirit beareth record." (D&C 1:39.)

There are some things just too sacred to discuss: not secret, but sacred; not to be discussed, but to be harbored and protected and regarded with the deepest of reverence. (“The Spirit Beareth Record,” *Ensign*, June 1971, 87)

**DC 93:2 the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world**

**Dallin H. Oaks**

Jesus Christ is the light of the world because he is the source of the light which “proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space” (D&C 88:12). His light is “the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (D&C 93:2; see also D&C 84:46). The scriptures call this universal light “the light of truth” (D&C 88:6), “the light of Christ” (D&C 88:7; Moro. 7:18), and the “Spirit of Christ” (Moro. 7:16). This is the light that quickens our understanding (see D&C 88:11). It is “the light by which [we] may judge” (Moro. 7:18). It “is given to every man, that he may know good from evil” (Moro. 7:16).

Jesus Christ is also the light of the world because his example and his teachings illuminate the path we should walk to return to the presence of our Father in Heaven. Before Jesus was born, Zacharias prophesied that the Lord God of Israel would visit his people “to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide [their] feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:79). (“The Light and Life of the World,”*Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 63–64)

**Marion G. Romney**

This tremendous truth—that every soul is enlightened by the spirit of Christ and endowed with the ability to respond to its guidance—is perfectly understandable when we remember that mortals are, by inheritance, spirits. They are the natural-born spirit children of God. It is therefore natural that there persists in every human soul, from preexistent spiritual life, the capacity to instinctively respond to the promptings of the Spirit.

The truth that “every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God” is often repeated in the scriptures. In section 93 of the Doctrine and Covenants, it is stated this way: (quotes D&C 93:1–2)…

Such teachings clearly establish the fact that the spiritual guidance received by each individual is strictly up to the individual. Each is enlightened by the Spirit when he comes into the world, given his free agency, and held responsible for his exercise thereof. (“Guidance of the Holy Spirit,”*Ensign*, Jan. 1980, 4)

**DC 93:4 The Father because he gave me of his fulness, and the Son because I was in the world**

This passage is the Lord’s own explanation of how He may be called the *Father* or the *Son*.  It is a scriptural explanation of a great, but poorly understood, divine dichotomy—that the God of the Old Testament would become the Jesus of the New Testament—that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would condescend from heaven to take upon him a *mortal* tabernacle—that God would become a man. Only in the Book of Mormon is this doctrine more clearly taught:

   God himself shall come down among the children of men and shall redeem his people.

   And because he dwelleth in the flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son—

   The Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son— (Mosiah15:1-3)

“The central idea suggested in the above revelation is that Christ is the Father because the Man of Holiness gave Jesus of His fulness. Thus, as Christ entered the world, He received divine powers of intelligence and life from His Father. Thereby the Father dwelt in Christ, making Him the Father; and as the Father, Jesus manifested the works of the Man of Holiness on earth. This explanation is in full accord with Christ's declaration to Philip: ‘Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.’ (John 14:10)” (Hyrum L. Andrus, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Pearl of Great Price*, 97-98)

**DC 93:6  John saw and bore record of the fulness of my glory**

The Lord doesn’t identify which John this is.  The doctrine of section 93 is similar to the first chapter of John’s gospel.  The assumption that the John spoken of is John the Beloved is natural.  However, the student must read the text of D&C 93 and John 1 very carefully to correctly identify this *John*. John the Beloved hints that the first chapter of his gospel actually comes from the lost record of John the Baptist.  He declared, “this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?... He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness” (John 1:19-23).

Apparently, in the lost record of John the Baptist is a testimony of what the Baptist saw upon baptizing the Son of God!  What did he see? Read verses 7 – 17 of section 93; he saw that Christ was the Word in the beginning; he saw that the worlds were made by Him; he saw that He received grace for grace; he saw the Holy Ghost descend upon Him in the form of a dove; he heard the voice and witness of the Father; he saw that Jesus received all power both in heaven and on earth.  Fortunately, we have the promise that someday we will enjoy more than 11 verses of the record of John the Baptist, for “the fullness of John’s record is hereafter to be revealed.”

“[In] the first chapter of the Gospel of John… John the Beloved, is quoting the speaker, John the Baptist, and both are testifying of Christ.” (JonnD. Claybaugh, “As Flaming Fire and a Ministering Angel,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1999, 60)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

From latter-day revelation we learn that the material in the forepart of the gospel of John (the Apostle, Revelator, and Beloved Disciple) was written originally by John the Baptist. By revelation the Lord restored to Joseph Smith part of what John the Baptist had written and promised to reveal the balance when men became sufficiently faithful to warrant receiving it…Even without revelation, however, it should be evident that John the Baptist had something to do with the recording of events in the forepart of John's gospel, for some of the occurrences include his conversations with the Jews and a record of what he saw when our Lord was baptized—all of which matters would have been unknown to John the Apostle whose ministry began somewhat later than that of the Baptist's. There is little doubt but that the Beloved Disciple had before him the Baptist's account when he wrote his gospel. The latter John either copied or paraphrased what the earlier prophet of the same name had written.(*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary,*3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 1: 71.)

**DC 93:8  he was the Word, even the messenger of salvation**

**Bruce R. McConkie**

"The word of the kingdom"!—again we declare it: He is preaching the gospel; the plan of salvation; faith, repentance, and baptism; the receipt of the Holy Ghost; the everlasting word. He is speaking of a kingdom; a kingdom of God on earth; a church to be presided over by apostles and prophets; an organized body—surely the Lord's house is a house of order—that administers salvation to all who enter its strait door and mingle with its saintly citizens, the citizens of the kingdom. And how beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the Lord who is the Author of Salvation, who himself preaches the gospel of peace, and who says unto Zion: I am thy God; come unto me.

But let the sower be Christ—who it is in this instance—or let it be any of the lesser sowers whom he calls to labor in his fields, the principle is the same. The seed is the word of God, the gospel of salvation. (*Mortal Messiah: From Bethlehem to Calvary*, vol. 2, 248)

**DC 93:9  the life of men and the light of men**

**Dallin H. Oaks**

We solemnly affirm that Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God the Eternal Father, is the light and life of the world.

Jesus Christ is the light and life of the world because all things were made by him. Under the direction and according to the plan of God the Father, Jesus Christ is the Creator, the source of the light and life of all things. Through modern revelation we have the testimony of John, who bore record that Jesus Christ is “the light and the Redeemer of the world, the Spirit of truth, who came into the world, because the world was made by him, and in him was the life of men and the light of men.

“The worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him, and through him, and of him” (D&C 93:9–10)…

Our Savior is the light of the world. We should live so that we can be enlightened by his Spirit, and so that we may hear and heed the ratifying seal of the Holy Ghost, which testifies of the Father and the Son (see D&C 20:26). We should study the principles of his gospel and receive its ordinances. We should keep his commandments, including his two great commandments to love God and to love and serve our neighbors (see Matt. 22:36–40). We should be faithful to the covenants we have made in the name of Jesus Christ.

Our Savior is also the life of the world. We should give thanks for his absolute gift of immortality. We should receive the ordinances and keep the covenants necessary to receive his conditional gift of life eternal, the greatest of all the gifts of God (see D&C 14:7). (“The Light and Life of the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 63)

**DC 93:10 the worlds were made by him; men were made by him; all things were made by him**

The creation of this earth is but a beginning to the things which Elohim created through his Son. Jehovah created more than just this earth, this sun, and this moon. He created “worlds without number.”  “And by the word of my power have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth. And worlds without number have I created; and I also created them for mine own purpose; and by the Son I created them” (Moses 1:32-33)

**Elder Melvin J. Ballard**

Jesus Christ, under the direction of His Father, was the organizer and builder of this world; that out of the elements that existed in space, He, the great Master, compounded, produced and materialized this substantial world upon which you and I live; that we are indebted to Him, and to our Father in heaven, for this life that we are enjoying, the bodies that we have, the beautiful world that we inhabit. We sometimes wonder where our heaven will be, that is, the people of the world wonder. We Latter-day Saints have no reason to doubt where our heaven will be, for the Lord has made known to us, that this splendid world that has been provided for us will ultimately be redeemed, having obeyed the laws of its being, and become celestialized, the home of celestial beings; so that if we shall ever come into heaven, or heavenly conditions, it will be, ultimately, upon this redeemed world. Jesus Christ has been the organizer and the builder of it, possessed with power to do all that. (*Conference Report, April 1914*, Overflow Meeting.)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

When I think of the Savior, I think of the words of Matthew, Mark, and Luke but particularly the words of John:

   In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men (John 1:1–4).

Here is something spoken of more than a babe in a manger; here is declared the Creator of all that is good and beautiful. I have looked at majestic mountains rising against a blue sky and thought of Jesus, the Creator of heaven and earth. I have stood on a spit of sand in the Pacific and watched the dawn rise like thunder—a ball of gold surrounded by clouds of pink and white and purple—and thought of Jesus, the Word by whom all things were made and without whom was not anything made that was made. I have seen a beautiful child—many of them—bright-eyed, innocent, clean, and trusting, and marveled at the majesty and miracle of creation. What then shall you do with Jesus that is called Christ?

This earth is his creation. When we make it ugly, we offend him. (“God So Loved the World,” *New Era*, Apr. 1983, 48)

**DC 93:12 he received not of the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace**

What if Jesus had come to earth with a fullness from the first?  What if he was born with no veil drawn over his memory? What if at the age of 5 he understood that he had created the entire earth and had power over all the elements?  What if at the age of 9 he understood his own immaculate conception—that his literal Father was Heavenly Father?  What if at the age of 11 he fully understood him mission and purpose on the earth?

How is that fair?  The skeptic might argue that anyone can be perfect if they come to earth without the veil of forgetfulness, knowing their mission from the first, with the power of God at his fingertips.  The skeptic would thereby diminish Christ’s perfect life, saying, “Of course he was sinless!  Of course he fulfilled his mission!  Of course he did the will of the Father!”  The infinite atonement could not really be infinite unless the test was real, unless the chance of failure was truly possible, unless the Master knew what it was like to walk without a perfect knowledge.  So, it was necessary for Jesus to receive grace for grace—just like everybody else.

Christ condescended to succor us.  He had to experience all of the challenges of mortality—including the veil of forgetfulness and growing grace for grace.  Hereby, His test was real.  Hereby, His victory was real.  Hereby, His compassion is perfected.  This is how Jesus can be our advocate, because he knows “the weakness of man and how to succor them who are tempted.” (D&C 62:1)  He has been there.  He knows what it is like.

**Bruce R. McConkie**

John explained how Christ was God in pre-existence, exercising the fulness of his Father's creative powers; how he then came to earth to undergo a mortal probation, in which he gained experience and went from grace to grace; and how, after the resurrection, he received, as a consequence, all power in heaven and on earth. (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965-1973], 1: 867)

**DC 93:18 you shall receive the fullness of the record of John**

Of Peter, James, and John, we have the most doctrine and scripture from John the Revelator.  He wrote the last gospel, three epistles, and the Revelation.  We don’t know all he knows, but we have his record.  The record we don’t have is the record of John the Baptist.  Someday, we are promised that we will receive the record of John the Baptist.  So also will we receive the revelation in the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon (Ether 4:5-7), and the secret acts of men (D&C 88:108-110).

**DC 93:19  know how to worship, and know what you worship**

**Joseph Smith**

 There are but a very few beings in the world who understand rightly the character of God. The great majority of mankind do not comprehend anything, either that which is past, or that which is to come, as it respects their relationship to God. They do not know, neither do they understand the nature of that relationship; and consequently they know but little above the brute beast, or more than to eat, drink and sleep. This is all man knows about God or his existence, unless it is given by the inspiration of the Almighty.

If a man learns nothing more than to eat, drink and sleep, and does not comprehend any of the designs of God, the beast comprehends the same things. It eats, drinks, sleeps, and knows nothing more about God; yet it knows as much as we, unless we are able to comprehend by the inspiration of Almighty God. If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves…

My first object is to find out the character of the only wise and true God, and what kind of a being he is… I will go back to the beginning before the world was, to show what kind of being God is. What sort of a being was God in the beginning? Open your ears and hear, all ye ends of the earth, for I am going to prove it to you by the Bible, and to tell you the designs of God in relation to the human race, and why He interferes with the affairs of man.

*God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret. If the veil were rent today, and the great God who holds this world in its orbit, and who upholds all worlds and all things by his power, was to make himself visible,—I say, if you were to see him today, you would see him like a man in form—like yourselves in all the person, image, and very form as a man; for Adam was created in the very fashion, image and likeness of God, and received instruction from, and walked, talked and conversed with him, as one man talks and communes with another*.

In order to understand the subject of the dead, for consolation of those who mourn for the loss of their friends, it is necessary we should understand the character and being of God and how he came to be so; for I am going to tell you how God came to be God. We have imagined and supposed that God was God from all eternity. I will refute that idea, and take away the veil, so that you may see.

These are incomprehensible ideas to some, but they are simple.*It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God, and to know that we may converse with him as one man converses with another, and that he was once a man like us; yea, that God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did.*(Joseph Fielding Smith, *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 343-346)

**Harold B. Lee**

To have due reverence for God, our Heavenly Father, in our devotions requires an understanding of his personality and his existence. Indeed the expressed purpose of some of the most important revelations of the Lord through the prophets is "that you may understand and know how to worship, and know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness." (D&C 93:19)

A prophet (Brigham Young) of this dispensation taught us that "If any of us could see the God we are striving to serve, if we could see our Father who dwells in the heavens, we should learn that we are as well acquainted with him as we are with our earthly father; and he would be as familiar to us in the expression of his countenance and we should be ready to embrace him, if we had the privilege. (*Decisions for Successful Living*[Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973], 46)

**DC 93:22 all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn**

As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we should aspire to join another church—the Church of the Firstborn.  The former is full of imperfect people striving to keep the commandments of God.  Some will be exalted; some will not.  The latter is full of perfect people, or rather the resurrected souls of just men made perfect through the atonement of Christ.  These have been born again as sons and daughters unto Christ (Mosiah5:7), heirs to his glory, joint-heirs with him of all that the Father has (Rom. 8:17; D&C 84:38).  While we should honor our membership in the latter-day Church, membership in the everlasting Church of the Firstborn is even more desirable.

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

As I understand it, those who become members of the Church of the Firstborn are those who have kept the commandments of the Lord in theirfulness. I do not understand that every member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to become a member of the Church of the Firstborn; for there are many who are not willing to walk in the light of truth and continue in God obedient to every ordinance and commandment. These will fall short of this great glory for they have not overcome by faith. Then again you see from this scripture that the promise is made that if we will walk in the light, learn how and what to worship, we become begotten sons and daughters of God and hence are partakers of his glory. (*Take Heed to Yourselves* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1966], 95)

**DC 93:24 truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come**

Little did Pontius Pilate know that his conversation with a seemingly obscure Nazarene would be recorded for eternity.  Little did he know that his greatest moment with the Savior was to ask the question, “What is truth?”  Pilate’s mistake was to ask the question rhetorically, not knowing that his prisoner could indeed answer the question.  Unfortunately, he did not wait for an answer.  Instead, he “went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all” (John 18:38).  1800 years later, almost to the month, the Lord would answer this grand question through his prophet,**Joseph Smith, Jun.**

Please don’t take for granted the vastness of this definition of *truth*.  What about the great and heavy responsibility to give such a definition? Philosophers and thinkers for centuries have tried to grapple with the nature of truth.  How can the world believe that the unpolished Joe Smith at the age of 27 could have come up with this brilliant definition of truth without divine help?  175 years later, the definition is as groundbreaking as when it was first given.  Indeed, how can the world explain the genius, the raw intelligence, the indisputable transcendence of this and the other doctrines in section 93?

**Charles A. Callis**

 What is truth? "And truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come." What a broad, comprehensive definition of truth the Lord gives! And because we are guided into all truth by that infallible guide, the Comforter, we hold dear to our hearts these great fundamental principles: The divine parentage and the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, his crucifixion and divine atonement, the glorious resurrection, eternal life, the eternity of the marriage covenant, all of which bring forth joys inexpressible, the unspeakable gifts of God, manifested to our souls by the Holy Spirit. (*Conference Report*, April 1938, Afternoon Meeting, 99)

**Hyrum M. Smith**

Is not that a beautiful definition of truth? Does it not embrace all truth? And indeed, according to that definition, have not the Latter-day Saints more truth than all the other peoples of the wide world, because they have a greater knowledge of the dealings of God with men in the past, of man's condition in the present, and of the destiny of mankind, than any other people or denomination? And how have we received this, my brethren and sisters? (*Conference Report*, April 1902, Afternoon Session, 22)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Truth does not change; it is immutable… Truth never grows old, it is always new, because it is that which remains when all else passes away. (*Conference Report,* October 1928, Third Day—Morning Meeting 99)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

The true religionist is actually the ultimate realist, for he has a fully realistic view of man and the universe; he traffics in truths that are culminating and everlasting; he does not focus on facts that fade with changing circumstances or data that dissolve under pressures of time and circumstance. The Lord said, ". . . truth abideth and hath no end." (D&C 88:66) (*Things As They Really Are* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 1)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

Truth cuts across all three time zones—our pre-mortal state, our second state (mortality), and the eternal future that is fashioned for us. It is the understanding of these truths that can make men free as well as happy. (*Deposition of a Disciple* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976], 48)

**DC 93:26 I am the Spirit of truth**

**Harold B. Lee**

The Light of Christ, the Spirit of Truth, or Spirit of God, variously spoken of…  in essence means the influence of Deity that proceeds forth from the presence of God, that which quickens the understanding of man. (See D&C 88:49.) The apostle John spoke of it as “the true Light, whichlighteth every man that cometh into the world.” (John 1:9.)

A president of the Church makes this further explanation: “There is not a man [or person] born into the world, but has a portion of the Spirit of God, and it is that Spirit of God which gives to his spirit understanding, … each in accordance with his capacity to receive the light . . . [which] will never cease to strive with man, until man is brought to the possession of the higher intelligence.” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 63, 62.)

To those not acquainted with the language of the scriptures, it might be explained that the Light of Christ could be described as one’s conscience, or the voice of the divine within one’s own soul. (“A Time of Decision,” *Ensign*, July 1972, 32)

**DC 93:27 no man receiveth a fulness unless he keepeth his commandments**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

"No man receiveth a fulness (of truth) unless he keepeth his commandments." This is a vital truth. It is logical and just. If men could receive afulness of truth in sin, or in rebellion against God, then the whole universe would be in danger of dissolution, and, of course, since truth is that which was, is, and will be, that which is false cannot endure or find supremacy. God is the source of light and truth. He it is who quickens the intelligence of men, and he has power to restrict men in light and truth. Never, worlds without end, can man obtain the fulness and be out of harmony with God. But when in full harmony he shall be "glorified in truth" until he "knoweth all things." (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 2: 162.)

**DC 93:29  Man was also in the beginning with God**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

The Latter-day Saints are the only people in the world, as far as my knowledge goes, who have a clear, distinct doctrine in regard to the questions: Where did we come from? Why are we here? and, Where are we going? I believe we are the only people in the world who believe in the pre-existence of the human family. There are many who believe in the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, but they do not believe that we, individually, lived before we came into this life.

One of the strange things to me is the fact that so many people believe that there is a spirit in man and when he dies that spirit continues to live as an immortal thing, yet that it had no existence until man was born in this mortal life.

We lived in the presence of God in the spirit before we came here. We desired to be like him, we saw him, we were in his presence. There is not a soul who has not seen both the Father and the Son, and in the spirit world we were in their presence; but  it became necessary for us to gain experiences which could not be obtained in that world of spirits, and so we were accorded the privilege of coming down here upon this earth.(*Doctrines of Salvation*, 3 vols., edited by Bruce R. McConkie [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-1956], 1: 56.)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

In 1833 Joseph was told not only that Jesus was with God premortally, but that “man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.” (D&C 93:29.)

What a stunning parting of the curtains so that man could have a correct view of himself! The silence of centuries was officially broken. As the morning of the Restoration began to break, the shadows of false doctrines began to flee. Man’s view of himself could become clearer, unimpeded by the overhanging of “original sin.” We are accountable to a just God for our actual and individual sins—not Adam’s original. (“A Choice Seer,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1986, 8)

**DC 93:29 Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made**

“An element of every human being is divine and eternal. Joseph Smith used several different terms to refer to that eternal essence—spirit, soul, mind, and intelligence. He received the knowledge that ‘man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be.’ (D&C 93:29.) He taught that ‘the mind of man is as immortal as God himself’ and that ‘the Spirit of Man [meaning intelligence] is not a created being.’

“He did not define, however, this element’s form and substance, nor did he identify its attributes, other than its eternal nature. This eternal element of intelligence or light of truth is something other than the spirit bodies God created later; these later entities were ‘the intelligences that were organized’ and were the spirits that Abraham saw.

“From revelations given to Joseph Smith (see D&C 131–32) and from his own comments about them, plus subsequent statements from later prophets, 30 we know that spirit bodies are procreated by resurrected, exalted couples who have ‘a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever.’ (D&C 132:19.) Spirits are ‘begotten and born of heavenly parents, and reared to maturity in the eternal mansions of the Father.’  In our own primeval births, the eternal intelligence part of us was ‘organized’ and provided opportunity to become part of God’s plan of salvation—with the potential to become like him. This doctrine is ennobling and intriguing.” (Donald Q. Cannon, Larry E. Dahl, and John W. Welch, “The Restoration of Major Doctrines through Joseph Smith: The Godhead, Mankind, and the Creation,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1989, 30-31)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Some of our writers have endeavored to explain what an intelligence is, but to do so is futile, for we have never been given any insight into this matter beyond what the Lord has fragmentarily revealed. We know, however, that there is something called intelligence which always existed. It is the real eternal part of man, which was not created or made. This intelligence combined with the spirit constitutes a spiritual identity or individual. (*The Progress of Man* [Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1936], p. 11)

**Stephen L. Richards**

Now, since intelligence is co-eternal with God and is the very glory of God, it follows logically that it is the chief investiture of man. Indeed, it is man, for it is that part of his constituency that persists, that is eternal. This knowing, conceiving, illuminating principle of existence lies at the base of all our powers and potentialities. (*Conference Report*, April 1938, Afternoon Meeting 20)

**DC 93:30 All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it**

**Neal A. Maxwell**

All knowledge is not of equal significance. There is no democracy of facts! They are not of equal importance. Something might be factual, but not be important. For instance, today I wear a dark blue suit. That is true, but it is unimportant. As, more and more, we brush against truth, we sense that it has a hierarchy of importance. Some truths are salvationally significant and others are not.

It is clear from the verses of scripture that some truths may turn out to have a place in a yet-to-be-revealed hierarchy of truth which the world doesn’t anticipate. The scriptures tantalize us by saying “all truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it.” (D&C 93:30.) One even wonders if truths, like planets, might belong to a particular order. (See Abr. 3:9.) But we do not now know. No wonder we should not speak casually of “education for eternity.”

The highest education, therefore, includes salvational truths, bringing us a knowledge of “things as they really are, and of things as they really will be.” (Jacob 4:13.) This focus can be achieved without leaving the usual educational chores “undone.” (Matt. 23:23.) (“The Inexhaustible Gospel,”*Ensign*, Apr. 1993, 69)

**George Q. Cannon**

Some assert that “what everybody says must be true.” We confess we see no *must* in the case. What everybody says is as likely to be false as true. Truth does not depend on what is said of it or what anybody knows about it. Truth is independent of anybody and everybody and still remains the same however much it may be praised or blamed. Yet, we hope to see the day when ignorance, error and sin will be swept away, and the knowledge of God and truth will be universal. (*Gospel Truth: Discourses and Writings of President* George Q. Cannon, selected, arranged, and edited by Jerreld L. Newquist [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 288)

**DC 93:30 otherwise there is no existence**

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

It is easy to see what a sad condition the world would be in if Lucifer's plan had succeeded. Chaos would have ruled supreme. Every soul would have become a nonentity; individuality would have been destroyed and all righteousness, mercy, truth, would have passes away forever, and this would have brought destruction to the universe. How true are the words of the Lord: "All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence!"-D. C. 93:30. (*The Way to Perfection* [Salt Lake City: Genealogical Society of Utah, 1949], 179 - 180.)

**DC 93:31 here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man**

If intelligence can be defined as the light of truth and all truth is independent in its own sphere, then it is fair to conclude that intelligence is independent in the sphere in which God has placed it.  Man, as a form of organized intelligence, is therefore independent to act for himself.  “Here is the agency of man.”  **Elder Maxwell** rejoined, “God will not coerce men since all intelligence is free to act for itself ‘in that sphere in which God has placed it. … Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man’ (D&C 93:30–31).” (“The Richness of the Restoration,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1998, 13)  Man can act as an independent agent, but since man cannot always do right, he will, in order of time, transgress God’s law.  “Here is the condemnation of man.”  As soon as you place him in a truly independent sphere with real agency, where there is opposition in all things, condemnation from sin is inevitable, “because… they receive not the light. And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation” (v. 32).

**David O. McKay**

Next to the bestowal of life itself, the right to direct that life is God's greatest gift to man. Among the immediate obligations and duties resting upon members of the Church, and one of the most urgent and pressing for attention and action of all liberty-loving people is the preservation of individual liberty. Freedom of choice is more to be treasured than any possession earth can give. It is inherent in the spirit of man. It is a divine gift to every normal being. (*Gospel Ideals: Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay*[Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953], 299)

**Wilford Woodruff**

I wish to say that God has given unto all of his children of this dispensation, as he gave unto all of his children of previous dispensations, individual agency. This agency has always been the heritage of man under the rule and government of God. He possessed it in the heaven of heavens before the world was, and the Lord maintained and defended it there against the aggression of Lucifer and those that took sides with him, to the overthrow of Lucifer and one-third part of the heavenly hosts. By virtue of this agency you and I and all mankind are made responsible beings, responsible for the course we pursue, the lives we live, the deeds we do in the body. (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, edited by G. Homer Durham [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], 8)

p.s.  Note that the scriptures *never*, absolutely never, use the term “free agency.”  The term “moral agency” (D&C 101:78) might be used but never “free agency”.  The first reason is that agency was not free; it came at a price—it cost the souls of one third of the host of heaven. Second, man is not free as soon as he uses his agency unwisely.  All sin has a constricting, binding, imprisoning effect upon the soul. Since all men given agency will at some point commit sin, all independent agents will eventually come under condemnation and thereby need a Savior.  Third, the term *free agency* is the unfortunate, redundant combination of the philosophical term, *free will*, and the scriptural concept of *moral agency*.  In the past, General Authorities frequently used the term, but it is rarely used today.

**DC 93:33 spirit and element, inseparable connected, receive a fullness of joy**

“In other latter-day revelation, we read that a resurrected body is essential for a fulness of joy (see D&C 93:33–34); and we learn from D&C 45:17 and 138:50 that spirits in the post-mortal spirit world look upon the long absence of their spirits from their bodies as a type of bondage. The **Prophet Joseph Smith** explained: ‘We came to this earth that we might have a body and present it pure before God in the celestial kingdom. The great principle of happiness consists in having a body. The devil has no body, and herein is his punishment.’ (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith,* p. 181.) On another occasion, the Prophet said, ‘No person can have this salvation except through a tabernacle.’” (Robert J. Matthews, “Resurrection,” *Ensign,* Apr. 1991, 11)

**Alexander B. Morrison**

Possessing a mortal body is an essential step toward receiving a fulness of joy. Lehi said, “Adam fell that man might be; and men are, that they might have joy” (2 Ne. 2:25). The Lord declared to the Prophet Joseph Smith, “The elements are eternal, and spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy; and when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy” (D&C 93:33–34). In other words, spirit and element together, body and spirit united, are essential to the joy of man. Only in this immortal unity as resurrected beings can we experience afulness of joy and attain the very reason for our being. (“Life—The Gift Each Is Given,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1998, 16)

**Marion G. Romney**

When death comes, as it does to all men, the body returns to the earth and the spirit returns to the spirit world.

Separated from its body by death, the spirit is in a precarious predicament, which the prophet Jacob thus describes:

   If the flesh should rise no more, our spirits must become subject to that angel who fell from before the presence of the Eternal God, and became the devil, to rise no more.

   And our spirits must have become like unto him, and we become devils, angels to a devil, to be shut out from the presence of our God, and to remain with the father of lies, in misery, like unto himself. (2 Ne. 9:8–9.)

Redemption from death—that is resurrection—is, therefore, imperative to man’s future happiness.

   Spirit and element, inseparably connected, receive a fulness of joy;

   And when separated, man cannot receive a fulness of joy. (D&C 93:33–34.)

Now God, being omniscient, foresaw this predicament. He knew that death would pass upon all men because of Adam’s partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He also knew that for men to suffer forever by reason of death, which they were not responsible for, would be unjust. He, therefore, provided for the redemption of the soul through Christ’s death and resurrection.

On this point, he said in a modern revelation:

   Now, verily I say unto you, that through the redemption which is made for you is brought to pass the resurrection of the dead.

   And the spirit and the body are the soul of man.

   And the resurrection from the dead is the redemption of the soul.

   And the redemption of the soul is through him that quickeneth all things (D&C 88:14–17),

that is, through Christ. (“Easter Thoughts,” *Ensign*, May 1975, 82)

**DC 93:36 the glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth**

God’s intelligence is something different than what is measured with an Intelligence Quotient.  This *spiritual* intelligence is not based on knowledge and problem solving ability alone.  Instead, it is defined in rather non-intellectual terms—“light and truth.”  It is not obtained by scholastic pursuits and post-graduate degrees.  This sort of intelligence believes that God lives—even if the most studied, convincing atheist argues otherwise.  Spiritual intelligence recognizes Jesus of Nazareth as God’s Son—even if Jewish historians can see him only as a mere mortal.  Spiritual intelligence treats his enemy with mercy—even when the law and common sense suggest otherwise.

Seen in this light, we may ask how one is to obtain this kind of intelligence?  Again, secular studies are impressively inadequate.  The Lord’s recipe for obtaining knowledge and intelligence in this life is “through diligence and obedience.” (D&C 130:19)  The world might not think that the diligently obedient are the smartest; but true intelligence can only be measured by a *spiritual* IQ test.

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

To me the gospel is not a great mass of theological jargon. It is a simple and beautiful and logical thing, with one quiet truth following another in orderly sequence. I do not fret over the mysteries. I do not worry whether the heavenly gates swing or slide. I am only concerned that they open. I am not worried that the Prophet Joseph Smith gave a number of versions of the first vision anymore than I am worried that there are four different writers of the gospels in the New Testament, each with his own perceptions, each telling the events to meet his own purpose for writing at the time.

I am more concerned with the fact that God has revealed in this dispensation a great and marvelous and beautiful plan that motivates men and women to love their Creator and their Redeemer, to appreciate and serve one another, to walk in faith on the road that leads to immortality and eternal life.

I am grateful for the marvelous declaration that “the glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth.” (D&C 93:36.) I am grateful for the mandate given us to “seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom” and to acquire knowledge “by study and also by faith.” (D&C 88:118.) (“God Hath Not Given Us the Spirit of Fear,” *Ensign,* Oct. 1984, 5)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

We of this Church have been given a marvelous promise by the Lord. Said He: “That which is of God is light; and he that receiveth light, andcontinueth in God, receiveth more light; and that light groweth brighter and brighter until the perfect day” (D&C 50:24).

What a remarkable statement that is. It is one of my favorite verses of scripture. It speaks of growth, of development, of the march that leads toward godhood. It goes hand in hand with these great declarations: “The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth” (D&C 93:36); “If a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come” (D&C 130:19); and, “Whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection” (D&C 130:18).

What a profound challenge is found in these marvelous statements. We must go on growing. We must continually learn. It is a divinely given mandate that we go on adding to our knowledge. (“A Conversation with Single Adults,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1997, 62)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

The mind of man is the crowning creation of God, in whose express image man was made. The development of the mind is a companion responsibility to the cultivation of the spirit, as set forth in the revealed principles of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. (“Come and Partake,”*Ensign*, May 1986, 48)

**Russell M. Nelson**

Our personal intelligence is everlasting and divine. I believe Thomas Jefferson felt that dignity of the human spirit when he wrote: “I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.”

Because of our sacred regard for each human intellect, we consider the obtaining of an education to be a religious responsibility. Yet opportunities and abilities differ. I believe that in the pursuit of education, individual desire is more influential than institution, and personal faith more forceful than faculty. (“Where Is Wisdom?” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 6)

**DC 93:38 Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning**

**Boyd K. Packer**

[False] doctrines misrepresent the status of little children… [One] holds that little children are conceived in sin and enter mortality in a state of natural corruption. That doctrine is false!

Each time a child is born, the world is renewed in innocence.

The revelations teach us that “the glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth. Light and truth forsake that evil one.Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning; and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God. (“Little Children,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 17)

**Joseph Fielding Smith**

Every spirit was innocent in the beginning. When Lucifer rebelled because of his agency, he persuaded others to follow him, then their innocence came to an end, for they were in rebellion before God and had to be cast out. It seems very reasonable that others were not valiant in that pre-mortal state, and they may have led to the gradations upon the earth. However, the Lord declares that every spirit coming into this world is innocent. That is to say, so far as this life is concerned the spirit coming here is innocent. Nothing is to be laid to its charge; this is a correction of the false doctrine which prevails in some religious organizations, that children are born with the taint of "original sin" upon them. Such false doctrine denies the mercies of Jesus Christ and declares ignorance of the atonement of our Lord. (*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1946-1949], 2: 163.)

**Bruce R. McConkie**

What is original sin?

This is the false doctrine that the sin of Adam passes upon all men and that, therefore, all men—infants included—must be baptized to be saved. It is, however, a fundamental principle of true religion “that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression.” (A of F 1:2)

Are children tainted with original sin?

Absolutely not. There is no such thing as original sin as such is defined in the creeds of Christendom. Such a concept denies the efficacy of the atonement. Our revelation says: “Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning”—meaning that spirits started out in a state of purity and innocence in preexistence—“and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again, in their infant state, innocent before God” (D&C 93:38)—meaning that all children start out their mortal probation in purity and innocence because of the atonement. Our revelations also say, “The Son of God hath atoned for original guilt, wherein the sins of the parents cannot be answered upon the heads of the children, for they are whole from the foundation of the world.” (Moses 6:54.) (“The Salvation of Little Children,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1977, 4)

**DC 93:40 bring up your children in light and truth**

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

Parents, safeguard your families. Bring up your children in light and truth as the Lord has commanded. Shower them with love, but do not spoil them. Share your testimony with them. Read the scriptures together. Guide and protect them. You have no greater blessing and no greater responsibility than those whom the Lord has placed in your care. Pray together. There is no substitute for family prayer when all kneel together before the Lord. (“Thanks to the Lord for His Blessings,” *Ensign*, May 1999, 89)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

What, you may ask, can be done? The observance of four simple things on the part of parents would in a generation or two turn our societies around in terms of their moral values.

They are simply these: Let parents and children (1) teach and learn goodness together, (2) work together, (3) read good books together, and (4) pray together. (“Four Simple Things to Help Our Families and Our Nations,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1996, 7)

**Harold B. Lee**

Now keep in mind this; that when the full measure of Elijah’s mission is understood, that the hearts of the children will be turned to the fathers, and the fathers to the children. It applies just as much on this side of the veil as it does on the other side of the veil. If we neglect our families here in having family home night and we fail in our responsibility here, how would it look if we lost some of those through our own neglect? Heaven would not be heaven until we have done everything we can to save those whom the Lord has sent through our lineage. (“Therefore I Was Taught,”*Ensign*, May 1994, 37)

**James E. Faust**

Being a father or a mother is not only a great challenge, it is a divine calling. It is an effort requiring consecration. **President David O. McKay**stated that being parents is “the greatest trust that has been given to human beings.”

While few human challenges are greater than that of being good parents, few opportunities offer greater potential for joy. Surely no more important work is to be done in this world than preparing our children to be God-fearing, happy, honorable, and productive. Parents will find no more fulfilling happiness than to have their children honor them and their teachings. It is the glory of parenthood. John testified, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” (3 Jn. 1:4.) In my opinion, the teaching, rearing, and training of children requires more intelligence, intuitive understanding, humility, strength, wisdom, spirituality, perseverance, and hard work than any other challenge we might have in life. This is especially so when moral foundations of honor and decency are eroding around us. To have successful homes, values must be taught, and there must be rules, there must be standards, and there must be absolutes. (“The Greatest Challenge in the World—Good Parenting,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1990, 32–33)

**Gordon B. Hinckley**

Bring up your children in light and truth as the Lord has commanded.

Could you wish for anything more than peace for your children? Could you benefit society in any better way? I make you a solemn and sacred promise that if you will do this, the time will come when, looking upon those you have created, nurtured, and loved, you will see the fruits of your nurturing and get on your knees and thank the Lord for His blessing to you.

Now, with all of this, I know there are very many of you who are wonderful parents and whose children are growing in righteousness. Happy and productive will be their lives, and the world will be the better for them. I thank you and most warmly congratulate you. Surely you are fortunate.

But there are others—too many among our own—whose children, to quote the revelation, are “growing up in wickedness” and who “seek not … the riches of eternity, but their eyes are full of greediness” (D&C 68:31). To these I make my appeal.

It may not be easy. It may be fraught with disappointment and challenge. It will require courage and patience. I remind you of the faith and determination of the thirteen-year-old girl who, holding a paintbrush in her teeth, created the painting I showed you earlier. Love can make the difference—love generously given in childhood and reaching through the awkward years of youth. It will do what money lavished on children will never do.

—And patience, with a bridling of the tongue and self-mastery over anger. The writer of Proverbs declared, “A soft answer turneth away wrath”(Prov. 15:1).

—And encouragement that is quick to compliment and slow to criticize.

These, with prayers, will accomplish wonders. You cannot expect to do it alone. You need heaven’s help in rearing heaven’s child—your child, who is also the child of his or her Heavenly Father.

O God, our Eternal Father, bless the parents to teach with love and patience and encouragement those who are most precious, the children who have come from Thee, that together they might be safeguarded and directed for good and, in the process of growth, bring blessings to the world of which they will be a part, I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. (“Bring Up a Child in the Way He Should Go,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 60)

**DC 93:41-50 Frederick G. Williams… You have not taught your children light and truth**

This remarkable section of reproof from the Lord is instructive on many levels.  First, the Brethren are reproved for neglecting their parental duties. Second, we ask, who is under condemnation? What is remarkable is that the four men mentioned constitute the leadership of the Church—the First Presidency and the Bishop in Kirtland.  Certainly, we don’t expect perfection from our leaders but these Brethren were the most faithful. Speaking of these verses, **President George Albert Smith** remarked, “Isn't it unfortunate that men who received marvelous manifestations from the Lord, who knew the truth, were not able to resist the temptations of the adversary, and many of the blessings that they might have enjoyed were lost to them? We today are subject to the same influences but we should profit by the experiences of the past.”

“It would be foolish to suppose that there is some point, office, or position at which one can arrive in this mortal probation that places one above temptation or beyond the reach of mistakes common to mortal men. Speaking to the newly called apostles in the New World, the resurrected Lord said, ‘Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye must watch and pray always, lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye be led away captive by him’ (3 Ne. 18:15). To Peter, who was destined to stand at the head of the meridian Church, the Lord said, ‘Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat’ (Luke 22:31). Again, to the first Quorum of the Twelve of our day, the Lord directed Thomas B. Marsh, their president, to pray for them and to ‘admonish them sharply for my name's sake, and let them be admonished for all their sins, and be ye faithful before me unto my name’—this with the promise that ‘after their temptations, and much tribulation, behold, I, the Lord, will feel after them, and if they harden not their hearts, and stiffen not their necks against me, they shall be converted, and I will heal them’ (D&C 112:12-13).

“Well might we say that the best of temptations are reserved for the best of men. There is no immunity to the frailties of the flesh in offices or position. All must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling (see Philip. 2:12). Thus we make no claim that our prophets are infallible in behavior or in doctrine. We do claim, however, that they are among the best men living on the earth and that they teach the best doctrine the world has ever heard.” (Joseph Fielding McConkie, *Answers: Straightforward Answers to Tough Gospel Questions* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1998], 52.)

**Marion G. Romney**

Parents today are under the same obligation as were these early brethren to guide their children and encourage them to forsake those things that discourage the presence of the Spirit in their lives. The consequences of failing to train our children in the principles of the gospel are just as serious now as they were then. Although in the revelation the Lord spoke to fathers, the obligation rests just as heavily upon mothers.

As we bear this great responsibility, we must not be so busy with feeding, clothing, housing, and otherwise looking after the temporal needs of our children that we neglect the important things, the things calculated to fortify them against the evils of the world and prepare them for eternal life. We must not, as someone has said, become so intent upon climbing the mountain that in our exhaustion we fail to see the view from the top. Some of us are so caught up in the things of this world that, I fear, we have lost sight of the gospel view.  (“Let Us Set in Order Our Own Houses,”*Ensign*, Jan 1985, 3)

**DC 93:44 Sidney Rigdon… set in order thy house**

**J. Reuben Clark, Jr.**

Now, as I see it, my brethren and sisters, that is the crying need of the Church today. We must set in order our own houses, we must see that our children are properly taught; they must understand what the commandments of the Lord are, and we shall not have our skirts clear if we do not do all that is in our power, not alone by precept, but by example, in bringing them to live according to the principles of the Gospel. In no other way can salvation and exaltation come, and our troubles will be great, even as the Lord told the First Presidency over a hundred years ago, our troubles will be great if we fail in teaching our children properly. (*Conference Report*, October 1941, First Day—Morning Meeting 17)

**Alvin R. Dyer**

To the hundreds of thousands of Latter-day Saint families who are obedient to this divine counsel, there is evolving order out of chaos in their family lives, righteous purpose out of lack of direction, a greater appreciation for each individual, which is pleasing unto God, and a greater sense of coordinated values, which builds personal strength, inducing a power of restraint against superficial things. Truly the righteous, well-ordered home, if the leaders of nations could accept it, is the panacea for their most serious problems. Here is God, if we all will but accept it, communicating with his children and pointing the way.

In a letter recently received from the executive secretary of one of the large Christian denominations in America who upon request had been sent a complete digest of the Family Home Evening program of this Church as it has been printed, this was said: "The Family Home Evening program of the Mormon Church has lifted and inspired us." (*Conference Report*, October 1965, First Day—Morning Meeting 19)

**L. Tom Perry**

Families of the Church, consider your ways. Are you holding regular and meaningful family home evenings? I give you my promise that this inspired program can be a shield and protection to you against the evils of our time and will bring you, individually and collectively, greater and more abundant joy. (*Living with Enthusiasm* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1996], 106)

**DC 93:45 I will call you friends, for you are my friends**

**Robert D. Hales**

Jesus is the great Mediator. Though omnipotent and omniscient, all-powerful and all-knowing, He is our friend. After counseling early Brethren of the Church to “set in order your own house,” He said, “I will call you friends, for you are my friends” (D&C 93:43, 45). With all of His greatness, He has said that He is our friend. (“In Remembrance of Jesus,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 25)

**Neal A. Maxwell**

His is a beckoning friendship, a designation that is actually an invitation, for He declared: "I will call you friends, for ye are my friends, and ye shall have an inheritance with me."

We can better understand the remarkable nature of the Lord's friendship for us if we examine His relationship with His prophet-friends in times past.

In no dimension of the divine personality of Jesus Christ do we see His love any more fully expressed than in the divine tutorials given especially to His friends—those who believe in and who strive to follow Him, leaders and followers alike, rich and poor alike, men and women alike, for He is "no respecter of persons." He would not deny these enriching but stretching divine tutorials to any who follow Him, especially those who have already done much to prove their friendship for Him and are thus ready for further lessons. (*Even As I Am* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 42)

**DC 93:47 Joseph Smith, Jun.—You have not kept the commandments, and must needs stand rebuked before the Lord**

Religious imposters can’t afford their followers to think they have any faults.  One of the great evidences of the Joseph Smith’s divine calling is that he never hid his weaknesses.  The Lord rebuked and chastised him–the Prophet printed the rebuke.  Joseph never pretended to be something other than a man subject to the same mortal weakness as the rest of us.  With the Prophet, Richard Bushman noted there “is no effort to conceal or rationalize, no sign of Joseph justifying himself to prospective followers. The words flow directly from the messenger to Joseph and have the single purpose of setting Joseph straight.” (*Ensign*, Jan. 1993, 16)

**Dallin H. Oaks**

Joseph’s candor about his shortcomings is evident in the fact that one of the first revelations he recorded in writing and published to the world was a crushing rebuke he received from the Lord…”Behold,” the Lord declared, “how oft you have transgressed the commandments and the laws of God, and have gone on in the persuasions of men” (D&C 3:6). The Lord told Joseph to repent or he would be stripped of his prophetic role…

When Joseph warned the Saints against mortal imperfections, he did not raise himself above them, and they loved him for it. He cautioned a group of Saints newly arrived in Nauvoo against the tendency to be dissatisfied if everything was not done perfectly right. “He said he was but a man and they must not expect him to be perfect,” an associate recorded. “If they expected perfection from him, he should expect it from them, but if they would bear with his infirmities and the infirmities of the brethren, he would likewise bear with their infirmities” (*The Papers of Joseph Smith, Volume 2, Journal, 1832–1842*, ed. Dean C. Jessee [1992], 489). (“Joseph, the Man and the Prophet,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 71–72)

**DC 93:50 see that they are more diligent and concerned at home**

**David A. Bednar**

In 1833 the Prophet Joseph Smith received a revelation that contained a strong rebuke to several leading brethren of the Church to set their families in order. A specific phrase from this revelation provides the theme for my message—“More diligent and concerned at home.” I want to suggest three ways each of us can become more diligent and concerned in our homes…

1.    Express Love—and Show it.  We can begin to become more diligent and concerned at home by telling the people we love that we love them… We need to say it, we need to mean it, and most importantly we need consistently to show it.  We need to both express and demonstrate love. President Thomas S. Monson recently counseled: “Often we assume that [the people around us] *must* know how much we love them. But we should never assume; we should let them know… We will never regret the kind of words spoken or the affection shown. Rather, our regrets will come if such things are omitted from our relationships with those who mean the most to us”…

2.    Bear Testimony—and Live It.  We also can become more diligent and concerned at home by bearing testimony to those whom we love about the things we know to be true… Within the walls of our own homes, we can and should bear pure testimony of the divinity and reality of the Father and the Son, of the great plan of happiness, and of the Restoration… Our testimony… should be reflected both in our words and in our deeds. And our testimonies are proclaimed and lived most powerfully in our own homes… Such testimony generates light in a world that grows increasingly dark. Such testimony is the source of an eternal perspective and of enduring peace…

3.    Be Consistent… In my office is a beautiful painting of a wheat field. The painting is a vast collection of individual brushstrokes—none of which in isolation is very interesting or impressive. In fact, if you stand close to the canvas, all you can see is a mass of seemingly unrelated and unattractive streaks of yellow and gold and brown paint. However, as you gradually move away from the canvas, all of the individual brushstrokes combine together and produce a magnificent landscape of a wheat field.  Many ordinary, individual brushstrokes work together to create a captivating and beautiful painting.

Each family prayer, each episode of family scripture study, and each family home evening is a brushstroke on the canvas of our souls. No one event may appear to be very impressive or memorable. But just as the yellow and gold and brown strokes of paint complement each other and produce an impressive masterpiece, so our consistency in doing seemingly small things can lead to significant spiritual results. “Wherefore, be not weary in well-doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (D&C 64:33). Consistency is a key principle as we lay the foundation of a great work in our individual lives and as we become more diligent and concerned in our own homes. (*Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 17-20)