
Northrop Sweet

(1802–1881)

D&C 33

Northrop, a resident of Palmyra, listened to Hyrum Smith preach in Ezra Thayre’s barn. He was convinced of the truthfulness of his Restoration message and was baptized in October 1830 by Parley P. Pratt. A few days after Northrop entered baptismal waters, the Prophet Joseph Smith received the following revelation,

Behold, I say unto you, my servants Ezra [Thayre] and Northrop Sweet, open ye your ears and hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, whose word is quick and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, soul and spirit; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

For verily, verily, I say unto you that ye are called to lift up your voices as with the sound of a trumpet, to declare my gospel unto a crooked and perverse generation (D&C 33:1–2).

On their journey from New York to Ohio, Northrop and Ezra preached in several homes and baptized many. After they arrived in Kirtland in 1831, Northrop was ordained an elder. Shortly thereafter, he forfeited his Church membership and helped Wycam Clark form a new religion called The Pure Church of Christ. According to George A. Smith, “They [claimed they] could carry the whole world with them by preaching ‘Mormon’ principles. They had two or three meetings; but the society would never have been known in the world, had not a few of us remembered the circumstances and told of it.”¹ The Pure Church of Christ was “composed of six members . . . but that was the extent of

¹ George A. Smith, “Divine Origin of ‘Mormonism’—Doings and Sayings of Early Opposers and Apostates,” *Journal of Discourses*, 7:114.

the growth of this early schism.”² When the church failed to prosper, Northrop moved from Kirtland but remained a resident of Ohio until about 1845.

By 1850 he had moved to Batavia, Michigan, where he served the community as a highway commissioner and later a justice of the peace. He was living with his son Hezekiah in Bethel, Michigan, in 1880. Northrop died in Coldwater, Michigan, at age 78.

² George A. Smith, “Historical Discourse,” *Journal of Discourses*, 11:4.