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Truth, the Foundation

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GOSPEL DOCTRINE

CHAPTER I

Truth, the Foundation

OUR HOPE FOUNDED ON TRUTH. Our hope of salvation must be founded upon the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, for we cannot build upon error and ascend into the courts of eternal truth and enjoy the glory and exaltation of the kingdom of our God. That cannot be done.—*Oct. C. R.*,* 1917, p. 3.

THE GOSPEL FOUNDED IN TRUTH. I have no fears in my heart, or mind, that that which is called “Mormonism”—which is indeed the gospel of Jesus Christ—will not bear the scrutiny of science and the researches of the learned and literate into all truth. The gospel of Jesus is founded in truth. Every principle of it is susceptible of demonstration beyond any just reason for contradiction. The Lord is doing his work and will do it, and no power can stay it.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1908, p. 127.

TRUTH, THE FOUNDATION. We believe in righteousness. We believe in all truth, no matter to what subject it may refer. No sect or religious denomination in the world possesses a single principle of truth that we do not accept or that we will reject. We are willing to receive all truth, from whatever source it may come; for truth will stand, truth will endure. No man’s faith, no man’s religion, no religious organization in all the world, can ever rise above the truth. The truth must be at the foundation of religion, or it is in vain and it will fail of its purpose. I say that the truth is at the foundation, at the bottom and top of, and it

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entirely permeates this great work of the Lord that was established through the instrumentality of Joseph Smith, the prophet. God is with it; it is his work, not that of man; and it will succeed no matter what the opposition may be. We look now at the opposition arrayed against the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and smile, so to speak, with feelings of confidence, doubly assured by the experience of the past, in comparison to the feelings that possessed the souls of our fathers and mothers in the early days of the Church, when they were but a handful, with all the world arrayed against them; just a few poor, homeless people, driven from their possessions, cast out from the communities in which they sought to establish themselves and build their homes. When I think of our people, thrust into the wilderness, wandering and seeking for a place where the soles of their feet might rest, and see, then, the world arrayed against them, and think of the little chance that appeared before them, for success and the accomplishment of their purposes, I wonder that more of them did not tremble and falter than did; but some of them were true in the midst of it all, even unto death. If it had been necessary for them to have been martyred for the truth, willingly would they have given their lives, as they gave all else that they possessed in the world, for the knowledge they had of the divinity of the work in which they were engaged. Are we as faithful today? Are we as devout as our fathers were? Oh, my God, help me to be as true as they were! Help me to stand as they stood, upon the pedestal of eternal truth, that no power on earth, or in hell, may remove me from that foundation. This is my prayer to the Lord for my own sake, and it is my prayer to him for every Latter-day Saint throughout the length and breadth of the world.—*Apr. C. R.*,* 1909, p. 7.

MAN SAVED BY TRUTH. We have no ill feelings in our

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hearts toward any living creature. We forgive those who trespass against us. Those who have spoken evil of us, and who have misrepresented us before the world, we have no malice in our hearts towards them. We say, let God judge between them and us; let him recompense them for their work. We will not raise a hand against them; but we will extend the hand of fellowship and friendship to them, if they will repent of their sins and come unto the Lord and live. No matter how malicious they may have been, or how foolish they may have acted, if they will repent of it we will receive them with open arms and we will do all we can to help them to save themselves. I cannot save you; you cannot save me; we cannot save each other, only so far as we can persuade each other to receive the truth, by teaching it. When a man receives the truth he will be saved by it. He will not be saved merely because some one talks to him, but because he received and acted upon it. The gospel is consistent, it is common sense, reason, revelation; it is almighty truth from the heavens made known to man.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1902, p. 86.

GOSPEL TRUTH CAN NOT BE SUPERSEDED. There is no science, nor philosophy, that can supersede God Almighty's truth. The Lord has said, "My word is truth," and indeed it is; and I believe that the Latter-day Saints know enough about the word of God to know it is his word when they see it and shun whatever is not; and that they will abide by the word of God, for it is truth. As the Savior said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." I believe that the Latter-day Saints, and especially the leading men in Israel, have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the principles of the gospel that they know the truth, and they are made free by its possession—free from sin, free from error, free from darkness, from the traditions of men, from vain philosophy, and from

the untried, unproven theories of scientists, that need demonstration beyond the possibility of a doubt. We have had science and philosophy through all the ages, and they have undergone change after change. Scarcely a century has passed but they have introduced new theories of science and of philosophy that supersede the old traditions and the old faith and the old doctrines entertained by philosophers and scientists. These things may undergo continuous changes, but the word of God is always true, is always right. I want to say to you that the principles of the gospel are always true—the principles of faith in God, of repentance from sin, of baptism for the remission of sins by authority of God, and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost; these principles are always true and are always absolutely necessary for the salvation of the children of men, no matter who they are or where they are. These principles are always true, and you cannot get away from them. No other name, under heaven, is given, but that of Jesus Christ, by which you can be saved or exalted in the Kingdom of God. No man can enter into the kingdom of heaven except he be born again of the water and of the Spirit. These principles are indispensable, for God has declared them. Not only has Christ declared them by his own voice, and his disciples from generation to generation, in the olden time, but in these latter days, they have taken up the same testimony and declared these things to the world. They are true today as they were true then, and we must obey these things.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1911, pp. 7, 8.

MAN'S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT. The greatest achievement mankind can make in this world is to familiarize themselves with divine truth, so thoroughly, so perfectly, that the example or conduct of no creature living in the world can ever turn them away from the knowledge that they have obtained. "In the footsteps of the Master," the greatest of all the teachers that this world has ever received, is the

safest and the surest course to pursue that I know of in the world. We can absorb the precepts, the doctrines and the divine word of the Master, without any fear that the exemplar will fail of carrying out and executing his own precepts and fulfilling his own doctrines and requirements.

From my boyhood I have desired to learn the principles of the gospel in such a way and to such an extent that it would matter not to me who might fall from the truth, who might make a mistake, who might fail to continue to follow the example of the Master, my foundation would be sure and certain in the truths that I have learned, though all men else go astray and fail of obedience to them. We all have heard of people who have pinned their faith to the arm of flesh, who have felt that their belief, their confidence and their love for the principles of the the gospel of Jesus Christ would be shattered, if their ideals—those possibly who first taught them the principles of the gospel—should make a mistake, falter or fall.

I know of but One in all the world who can be taken as the first and only perfect standard for us to follow, and he is the Only Begotten Son of God. I would feel sorry indeed, if I had a friend or an associate in this life who would turn away from the plan of life and salvation because I might stumble or make a failure of my life. I want no man to lean upon me nor to follow me, only so far as I am a consistent follower in the footsteps of the Master.—*Juvenile Instructor*, 1915, Vol. 50, pp. 738, 739.

TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS WILL PREVAIL. I do not expect any victory, any triumph, anything to boast of, to come to the Latter-day Saints, except upon the principles of righteousness and of truth. Truth and righteousness will prevail and endure. If we will only continue to build upon the principles of righteousness, of truth, of justice, and of honor, I say to you there is no power beneath the celestial kingdom that can stay the progress of this work. And as

this work shall progress, and shall gain power and influence among men, so the powers of the adversary and of darkness will diminish before the advancement and growth of this kingdom, until the kingdom of God, and not of men, will triumph.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1914, p. 4.

REALITY OF THE FAITH OF THE SAINTS. There is no doubt in the minds of Latter-day Saints in relation to the existence and personage of the Lord God Almighty, who is the Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. There is no doubt in the minds of Latter-day Saints that Jesus is the Son of God, being begotten of the Father in the flesh. And there is no Latter-day Saint in all the world but knows as truly and as fully as God can impart that knowledge to the soul of man, that he shall live again after death, and that men and women shall be associated together as God has ordained, and they have been united by his power, to dwell together forever and forever; and they shall know as they are known, they shall see as they are seen, and they shall understand as God understands; for they are his children.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1907, p. 39.

MEANING OF SCIENCE. True science is that system of reasoning which brings to the fore the simple, plain truth. The Savior of the world was pre-eminently the Scientist of this earth, and the truths he uttered 1900 years ago have withstood the assaults of science and prejudice and hate.—*Logan Journal*, Logan, February 6, 1912.

ALL TRUTH FROM GOD. Let us sustain the cause of Zion. Let no man speak lightly of the principles of the gospel. Let no one treat lightly the ordinances of the house of God. Let no one hold in derision the Priesthood that the Lord has restored to the earth, which is the authority that he has given unto men. Let no man look contemptuously upon the organization of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as it has been established in the earth through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith,

whom the Lord raised up when he was but a child to lay the foundation of the same. Let no man treat these things lightly or doubtingly; but let every man seek earnestly to understand the truth and teach his children to become familiar with those truths of heaven that have been restored to the earth in the latter days. I believe with all my soul in God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I believe with all my might, mind and strength in the Savior of the world, and in the principle of redemption from death and sin. I believe in the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith. I believe in all the truth that I know, and I believe that there are many principles of eternal truth that still lie hidden from me and from the understanding of men, which will yet be revealed by the power of God unto his faithful servants. I believe that the Lord has revealed to the children of men all that they know. I do not believe that any man has discovered any principle of science, or art, in mechanism, or mathematics, or anything else, that God did not know before man did. Man is indebted to the Source of all intelligence and truth, for the knowledge that he possesses; and all who will yield obedience to the promptings of the Spirit, which lead to virtue, to honor, to the love of God and man, and to the love of truth and that which is ennobling and enlarging to the soul, will get a cleaner, a more expansive, and a more direct and conclusive knowledge of God's truths than anyone else can obtain. I tell you this, because I know it is true. The Lord Almighty lives; he made the heavens and the earth, and the fountains of water; and we are his children, his offspring, and we are not here by chance. The Lord designed our coming, and the object of our being. He designs that we shall accomplish our mission, to become conformed to the likeness and image of Jesus Christ, that, like him, we may be without sin unto salvation, like him we may be filled with pure intelligence, and like him we may be exalted to the right

hand of the Father, to sit upon thrones and have dominion and power in the sphere in which we shall be called to act. I testify to this doctrine, for the Lord has made me to know and feel the truth of it from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. I love good, honorable men—even men who may be mistaken, as far as their judgment is concerned, but who try to do right; I love them for the reason that they are my brethren, the sons of my Father, and I would that they might all see the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and accept it, and receive all the benefits of it, in time and throughout all eternity. If the Lord has revealed to the world the plan of salvation and redemption from sin, by which men may be exalted again into his presence and partake of eternal life with him, I submit, as a proposition that cannot be controverted, that no man can be exalted in the presence of God and attain to a fulness of glory and happiness in his kingdom and presence, save and except he will obey the plan that God has devised and revealed.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1902, pp. 85, 86.

THE SAINTS MAY KNOW THE TRUTH. To the faithful Latter-day Saint is given the right to know the truth, as God knows it; and no power beneath the celestial kingdom can lead him astray, darken his understanding, becloud his mind, or dim his faith or his knowledge of the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It can't be done, for the light of God shines brighter than the illumination of a falsehood and error; therefore, those who possess the light of Christ, the spirit of revelation and the knowledge of God, rise above all these vagaries in the world; they know of this doctrine, that it is of God and not of man.—*Oct. C. R.*, 1909, p. 9.

HOW TRUTH MAY BE KNOWN. It is a wicked and adulterous generation that seeketh after a sign. Show me Latter-day Saints who have to feed upon miracles, signs and visions in order to keep them steadfast in the Church, and

I will show you members of the Church who are not in good standing before God, and who are walking in slippery paths. It is not by marvelous manifestations unto us that we shall be established in the truth, but it is by humility and faithful obedience to the commandments and laws of God. When I as a boy first started out in the ministry, I would frequently go out and ask the Lord to show me some marvelous thing, in order that I might receive a testimony. But the Lord withheld marvels from me, and showed me the truth, line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, until he made me to know the truth from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and until doubt and fear had been absolutely purged from me. He did not have to send an angel from the heavens to do this, nor did he have to speak with the trump of an archangel. By the whisperings of the still small voice of the Spirit of the living God, he gave to me the testimony I possess. And by this principle and power he will give to all the children of men a knowledge of the truth that will stay with them, and it will make them to know the truth, as God knows it, and to do the will of the Father as Christ does it. And no amount of marvelous manifestations will ever accomplish this. It is obedience, humility, and submission to the requirements of heaven and to the order established in the kingdom of God upon the earth, that will establish men in the truth. Men may receive the visitation of angels; they may speak in tongues; they may heal the sick by the laying on of hands; they may have visions and dreams; but except they are faithful and pure in heart, they become an easy prey to the adversary of their souls, and he will lead them into darkness and unbelief more easily than others—*Apr. C.R.*, 1900, pp. 40, 41.

HOW MAN LAYS AN IMPERISHABLE FOUNDATION OF TRUTH. But the men and the women who are honest before God, who humbly plod along, doing their duty, paying their tithing, and exercising that pure religion and undefiled before

God and the Father, which is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their afflictions and to keep oneself unspotted from the world, and who help look after the poor; and who honor the holy Priesthood, who do not run into excesses, who are prayerful in their families, and who acknowledge the Lord in their hearts, they will build up a foundation that the gates of hell cannot prevail against; and if the floods come and the storms beat upon their house, it shall not fall, for it will be built upon the rock of eternal truth. I pray that this vast congregation will build upon this imperishable foundation, upon the principle expressed by the words of Joshua, "as for me and my house, we will serve God," and as also expressed by Job, "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." If you have that spirit toward God and his work in these latter days, you will build steadily and slowly, it may be, but surely, upon a foundation that will endure throughout the countless ages of eternity. And if you do not get any great manifestations, you need not worry about it. You will get the testimony of Jesus Christ in your hearts, and you will know God and Jesus whom he has sent, whom to know is life eternal, just as well as those who receive visions. For those who do receive visions, the devil will try to make them believe that they were delusions, and if they commit sin, he will be sure to make them believe it. God bless you, is my prayer. Amen.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1900, p. 42.

REWARD OF ALL HONEST PEOPLE. In some instances you will find examples of people out in the world who do not know as much as you do of the gospel of Jesus Christ, who have not the testimony of the Spirit in their hearts as you have, of the divinity of Christ and of Joseph Smith, who are just as devout, just as humble, just as contrite in spirit, and as devoted to what they know, as some of us are, and they will be rewarded according to their works, every one of them, and will receive reward far surpassing anything that they dream of.—*Apr. C. R.*, 1912, p. 8.

THE GOSPEL IS SIMPLE. Some subjects are in themselves, perhaps, perfectly harmless, and any amount of discussion over them would not be injurious to the faith of our young people. We are told, for example, that the theory of gravitation is at best a hypothesis, and that such is the atomic theory. These theories help to explain certain things about nature. Whether they are ultimately true can not make much difference to the religious convictions of our young people. On the other hand, there are speculations which touch the origin of life and the relationship of God to his children. In a very limited degree that relationship has been defined by revelation, and until we receive more light upon the subject we deem it best to refrain from the discussion of certain philosophical theories which rather destroy than build up the faith of our young people. One thing about this so-called philosophy of religion that is very undesirable lies in the fact that as soon as we convert our religion into a system of philosophy, none but philosophers can understand, appreciate, or enjoy it. God, in his revelation to man, has made his word so simple that the humblest of men, without especial training, may enjoy great faith, comprehend the teachings of the gospel, and enjoy undisturbed their religious convictions. For that reason we are averse to the discussion of certain philosophical theories in our religious instructions.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol. 46, pp. 208, 209, April, 1911.

OUR KNOWLEDGE IS LIMITED. Our methods in speculation and reasoning about the things of God may often be harmless; but if we depart from the simplicity of God's word into a spirit of rationalism, we become the victims of vanity which endangers the true spirit of worship in the human heart. It is not easy for men to give up their vanities, to overcome their preconceived notions, and surrender themselves heart and soul to the will of God which is always higher than their own. The dangers of religious specula-

tions are as great today as they were in the days of Christ, and if we would avoid these dangers we must adhere to the simplicity of our religious belief and practices. When men and women realize they are getting into deep water where their footing is insecure, they should retreat; for they may be sure that the course they have been taking will lead them more and more away from their bearings which are not always easy to regain. The religion of the heart, the unaffected and simple communion which we should hold with God, is the highest safeguard of the Latter-day Saints. It is no discredit to our intelligence or to our integrity to say frankly in the face of a hundred speculative questions, "I do not know."

One thing is certain, and that is, God has revealed enough to our understanding for our exaltation and for our happiness. Let the Saints, then, utilize what they already have; be simple and unaffected in their religion, both in thought and word, and they will not easily lose their bearings and be subjected to the vain philosophies of man.—*Juvenile Instructor*, Vol 46, p. 269, May, 1911.

BLESSINGS FOR THE LOVE OF TRUTH. If you love the truth, if you have received the gospel in your hearts, and love it, your intelligence will be added upon, your understanding of truth will be expanded, become larger than in any other way. Truth is the thing, above all other things in the world, that makes men free—free from indolence and carelessness, free from the fearful consequences of neglect, for it will be a fearful consequence, if we neglect our duty before the living God. If you will learn the truth and walk in the light of truth you shall be made free from the errors of men and of crafts; you will be above suspicion and above wrong-doing of every description. God will approve of you and bless you and your inheritances, and make you prosper and flourish like a green bay tree.—*Improvement Era*, Vol. XXI, p. 102, December, 1917.