



---

NEAL A. MAXWELL INSTITUTE  
FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOLARSHIP

---

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY • PROVO, UTAH

**Title** Work, Worship, and Grace

**Author(s)** David L. Paulsen and Cory G. Walker

**Reference** *FARMS Review* 18/2 (2006): 83-177.

**ISSN** 1550-3194 (print), 2156-8049 (online)

**Abstract** Response to *The Mormon Culture of Salvation: Force, Grace and Glory* (2000), by Douglas J. Davies.

## WORK, WORSHIP, AND GRACE

David L. Paulsen and Cory G. Walker

**D**ouglas Davies comes highly qualified to describe and assess the Mormon culture of salvation. He holds doctoral degrees in both theology and anthropology, wrote his dissertation on Mormonism (under the title “Mormon Spirituality”), and serves as director of the graduate program in Mormon studies at the University of Durham. He has twice hosted Mormon studies conferences in the United Kingdom, the first at the University of Nottingham in 1994 and the second at the University of Durham in 1998. He was an invited speaker at the Mormon studies conference hosted by the Yale Divinity School in 2003 and at the Joseph Smith Symposium hosted by the Library of Congress in 2005. Davies began a sabbatical leave in the fall of 2006 during which he will focus on Mormon Christology and soteriology.

---

The historical research for this paper was initiated by Kenneth West, who assisted in preparing a prepublication review of Davies’s book. Benjamin Huff, Jeffrey Johnson, Stanley Thayne, and Rachel Wilcox have each critically read this manuscript and made substantial improvements to form or substance. Brett McDonald, Ashley Sanders, and Tyler Stoehr have also made helpful suggestions. Funding for this project has been generously provided by the College of Humanities, the Department of Philosophy, and the Neal A. Maxwell Institute for Religious Scholarship at Brigham Young University. We express our gratitude to all who have contributed to this project.

Response to Douglas J. Davies. *The Mormon Culture of Salvation: Force, Grace and Glory*. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2000. vii + 293 pp., with bibliography and index. \$29.95 paperback, \$109.95 hardcover.

He will deliver the plenary address at the annual meeting of the Society for Mormon Philosophy and Theology hosted 22–24 March 2007 at Brigham Young University. He is also an ordained priest in the Church of England.

As can be seen from the survey of his bibliography appended to this review (appendix A), Davies has published extensively on Mormon topics. Davies often explains that he is writing as neither advocate nor critic of Mormonism. Rather, he attempts a detached, academic approach to Latter-day Saint culture and religion.

Davies's work *The Mormon Culture of Salvation* is an insightful treatment of religious ritual, practice, and beliefs pertaining to salvation in Latter-day Saint culture.<sup>1</sup> His "outsider" perspective can provoke reflection for those who have lived their entire lives within the Latter-day Saint faith. Though at points Davies's writing, especially his ventures down divergent anthropological streams, may be difficult to navigate for the casual reader, overall the book is eminently readable. Most important, it delivers on its promise to provide a deeper understanding of the Mormon culture of salvation and, thus, makes a substantial contribution to Mormon studies.

While Davies addresses issues from perspectives that may not be familiar to some readers, most of his passages are marked by clarity and insight wholly accessible to all, with prose both moving and illuminating. Consider the following striking passage:

In the Mormon history of salvation the literal pioneer trek to a promised land passed into a new ritual path of salvation. . . . Whether in the room above Joseph Smith's shop in Nauvoo, in the Endowment House of Salt Lake City or the St. George Temple and, after it, the other great temples of the Latter-day movement, Saints could act within a site of destiny: a sacred place in which death was subjugated and a rich promise of eternity was held out to those who would be faithful to their endowment vows. Even

---

1. We know of two very brief reviews of Davies's book: Richard Lyman Bushman, review of *The Mormon Culture of Salvation: Force, Grace and Glory*, by Douglas J. Davies, *Journal of Religion* 82/1 (2001–2): 117–18; and Malise Ruthven, *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 16/2 (1 May 2001): 239–43.

if wickedness might have arisen within the Salt Lake community, so that heaven on earth was impossible, given a community where the evil were ever mixed with the good, the temple could arise as a citadel of hope. These were places to subdue the powers of death. For as the Saints had the mysteries of their own potential divinity revealed to them and were inducted into ritual acts and given the crucial words of power, they were furnished with the means of passing through death into the eternal realms of exaltation, passing angels as they went. (p. 92)

Davies expresses much more than just the importance of temple worship to Latter-day Saints. The imagery evoked captures a fundamental spirit of temple rituals, juxtaposing the suffering and trials of the persecuted pioneers with God's goodness in supplying a citadel of hope, apart from mobs and deceitful brethren. A people constantly confronted with the harsh realities of temporal death were allowed a place to contemplate something more lasting—the bonds of eternity. Davies thus powerfully connects early Latter-day Saint difficulties with the profound consolation found in temple worship.

While we believe Davies to be accurate in his overall impression of the temple and many other aspects of the Mormon culture of salvation, there are also observations he makes with which many Latter-day Saints would disagree. In the hopes of occasioning continuing dialogue, we focus on three topics wherein we believe Davies's book falls short: the relation of temple work to worship, the Mormon teaching on grace, and the role of Christ's death on the cross in Latter-day Saint understanding of the atonement.

### Temple Work as Worship

"Mormon temples," according to Davies, "are also regularly regarded more as places of work than of worship. Indeed, the idea of worship is not a prime consideration in the temple in the sense of extended periods of reflective quietude or of communal song or chant" (p. 75). However, doing temple work for the living and the dead, Davies says, "does not contradict the idea of worship; in fact it is entirely consonant

with the LDS ethic of activity. The temple offers a prime setting for a sanctified activism. To be active is a key Mormon value” (p. 75). Davies does acknowledge the role of the celestial room in providing an atmosphere for personal spiritual reflection and communion. He writes, for instance, that after engaging in temple rituals, family members may “linger in the Celestial Room . . . and there may experience a sense of the presence of God in a special way” (p. 76). The celestial room in the temple is meant to remind Latter-day Saints of their spiritual goals and the promises made to them and is, as Davies acknowledges, a sacred place to be in a special way in the presence of God.

This room *does* in fact provide a setting for “extended periods of reflective quietude” and is also a place for spiritual self-examination and for quiet prayers of gratitude and of supplication; indeed, this place nearly demands an attitude of worshipful contemplation. Thus, we believe that Davies’s characterization is incomplete when inferring that the idea of personal worship is *not* a prime consideration for those who attend the temple.

Kathleen Hughes, first counselor in the Relief Society general presidency, describes Latter-day Saint understandings of temple worship well:

Because the temple is a house of peace, a house of revelation, a house of prayer, we should prepare ourselves to partake of the spirit and gifts that reside there for us as [children] of our Heavenly Father. Preparing to experience the blessings of the temple requires that we go humbly, prayerfully, and thoughtfully, that we willingly put aside the world and its worries. It requires that while in the temple we are attentive and we actively and thoughtfully listen and participate in ordinances we receive for ourselves and for others.<sup>2</sup>

In many cases the idea of worship *is* a prime consideration for those who attend the temple. And that worship even includes *corporate* worship.<sup>3</sup>

2. Kathleen Hughes, in “Visiting Teaching Message: Prepare for Temple Worship,” *Ensign*, April 2003, 74.

3. Davies characterizes the temple as a place of “sanctified activism” (p. 75) and some individual and family contemplation, but not of “corporate” or “congregational worship” (p. 76). However, congregational worship is an important aspect of temple worship, among

As Davies points out, when Latter-day Saints go to the temple they often say they are going there to do “temple work.” However, we maintain that such statements are not in the least discordant with the idea of worship and that Latter-day Saints (unlike Davies) generally do not find work and worship dichotomous. Indeed, we contend that any work performed with the Spirit and on the behalf of others actually *is* worship and not *merely*, as Davies says, activity that does “not contradict the idea of worship” (p. 75). This theme occurs repeatedly in Latter-day Saint literature. Consider, for instance, Elder Bruce R. McConkie’s teaching that “true and perfect worship consists in following in the steps of the Son of God”<sup>4</sup> and President Joseph Fielding Smith’s claim that “worship is far more than prayer and preaching and gospel performance. The supreme act of worship is to keep the commandments.”<sup>5</sup> These statements can be related to the injunction to worship God with all our “might, mind, and strength” (2 Nephi 25:29).

While it is easy to see how conventional modes of worship involve our hearts and our minds, it is much harder to see how our might and strength could be expended other than actively. We argue for such an understanding based upon both biblical precedent and modern revelation. The biblical record is replete with the idea of *work* as *worship*. Consider Colossians 3:16–17, where Paul writes: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the*

---

the many others. Perhaps the clearest example of “corporate” worship in the temple setting is the participation in prayer circles by a significant number of temple patrons. One of the purposes of this practice is to “bind together the religious participants as a group” in a sacred relationship with God. See D. Michael Quinn, “Latter-day Saint Prayer Circles,” *BYU Studies* 19/1 (1978): 79. Sealing rites usually performed in the company of extended family and close friends bind couples and families for eternity, with the eventual intent to bind the entire human family in one, link by family link—a rather ambitious corporate project. Even the reception of the endowment and the making of individual covenants with God are carried out in a group setting.

4. Bruce R. McConkie, “How to Worship,” *Ensign*, December 1971, 130.

5. Joseph Fielding Smith, “I Know That My Redeemer Liveth,” *Ensign*, December 1971, 27.

Father by him” (emphasis added). The close connection here between activities conventionally associated with worship (“singing,” “teaching and admonishing” in “songs and hymns,” etc.) and *all other activities* indicates that Paul sees no disconnect between the “inner” activities of worship and contemplation and the outer activities of daily life and religious service. Indeed, James indicated that what we do in our daily activities forms the core of our religious devotion: “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

If we think that we still must place greater emphasis on the activity of quiet reflection than upon Christian labor, consider that Jesus, when confronted by Jewish authorities for working on the Sabbath, explained that working lay at the core of the divine life: “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working” (John 5:17 NIV). By so working, Jesus devoted his entire life to the true worship of his Father, and he emphatically reinforced the authority of the first commandment to “worship the Lord thy God, and him only . . . serve” (Matthew 4:10; see 22:37).

Other sources further corroborate a close connection between work and worship. For instance, in Hebrew, the word for worship, *avodah*, derives from the word denoting labor and service, the same word used when Adam is told that by the sweat of his brow he is to earn his bread. When the Israelites went to the temple to perform their sacrifices, they referred to these activities using variants of *avodah*, combining both aspects of the word to express the fact that their activities were consecrated to the service of the Lord. Perhaps one might raise the objection that, in Mormon temple work, the service is not given “directly” to the Lord but is rather done on behalf of one’s deceased relatives. Surely, however, this objection comes up short when we consider that the Lord wants the salvation of all his children (1 Timothy 2:3–4) and that both uniquely Latter-day Saint scripture and traditional Christian verses declare that any service given by us to our neighbors is ultimately service to our God (Mosiah 2:17; Matthew 25:40).

It seems, then, that Latter-day Saints (and Christians generally) can find a middle ground between the apparent dilemma of Mary's foot washing and Martha's housecleaning: provided that our housecleaning is devoted to the Lord and is according to his purposes, others will simultaneously receive the blessings of our Christian labors and we will receive the blessing of being instructed by the Lord in worship. While the Bible provides ample evidence that soul-saving *work* is in fact worship, Latter-day Saints may even consider such work to be worship of the highest order. Anyone familiar with Latter-day Saint teachings knows that one of the most frequently quoted Book of Mormon passages is that of King Benjamin's declaration, "I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God" (Mosiah 2:17). What greater service can one render to another than to unlock the gate to the path of salvation?

According to President Gordon B. Hinckley, "These unique and wonderful buildings, and the ordinances administered therein, represent the ultimate in our worship. These ordinances become the most profound expressions of our theology."<sup>6</sup> While Davies appropriately attempts to distinguish the Saints' participation in temple ritual from weekly worship services held in chapels or meetinghouses, the general distinction he draws between worship and temple work does not comport with Latter-day Saint self-understanding.

### Grace and Active Discipleship

The connection Davies draws between temple work and the emphasis Latter-day Saints put on sanctified activity is both insightful and, in our opinion, largely correct. The problem in Davies's account, as we see it, is one of balance—a problem that also reveals itself in Davies's discussion of grace in Mormon culture. There is no doubt that human agency and proactive approaches to salvation are distinctly emphasized in Latter-day Saint theology. However, we believe

---

6. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Of Missions, Temples, and Stewardship," *Ensign*, November 1995, 53.



that this emphasis in no way diminishes (nor, to our knowledge, has it ever diminished) the role of grace nor the centrality of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of all creation.

In many cases, activity and work are meant to accentuate what, in the Mormon perspective, is a complementary doctrine of works *and* dependence upon Christ for salvation. Regarding the connection, Elder Russell M. Nelson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles wrote of two concepts that need to be kept especially in mind as one prepares to attend the temple:

The first is *covenant*. . . . A covenant made with God should be regarded not as restrictive but as protective. . . .

The second concept to stress in our mental preparation is *Atonement*. The Atonement of Jesus Christ is the central act of all human history. It is the core of the plan of salvation. *Without the infinite Atonement, all mankind would be irretrievably lost.* Temple ordinances and covenants teach of the redeeming power of the Atonement.<sup>7</sup>

In the temple, members of the church make covenants with God. Every action in the temple nonetheless remains intimately connected with divine grace, as displayed in the atonement of Jesus Christ, without which nothing else that happens in the temple has any meaning. Elder Dallin H. Oaks helps us understand how Christ and his atonement give significance to what occurs in the temple.

The scriptures speak of the Lord's putting his name in a temple because he gives authority for his name to be used in the sacred ordinances of that house. That is the meaning of [Joseph Smith's] reference to the Lord's putting his name upon his people in that holy house. (See D&C 109:26.)

Willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ can therefore be understood as willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ. According to this meaning, by partak-

---

7. Russell M. Nelson, "Prepare for Blessings of the Temple," *Ensign*, March 2002, 21–22, last emphasis added.

ing of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us.<sup>8</sup>

It is the authority of Jesus Christ that gives sacred ordinances performed in the temple their meaning; it is the Savior's name that members of the church take upon themselves when they go into the temple; his authority is what Latter-day Saints believe gives validity to ordinances performed in sacred places. It is Christ's name and authority that make any blessing or benefit from temple ordinances possible, and such blessings come "when he chooses to confer them upon us." Whatever power temple ordinances have comes from Christ. His grace,<sup>9</sup> not the actions of men, has the power to offer exaltation. Though Latter-day Saints very much believe that God asks certain things of them before they can receive the "highest blessings available," never, from Joseph Smith to the present, has there been taught any way to receive those blessings except "by the authority of the Savior"; it is his choice to confer them and his grace by which they are conferred.

The doctrine of our dependence on God and the atonement of Jesus Christ for salvation runs deep through the teachings of Joseph Smith and of every Latter-day Saint prophet after him. Though Davies does make several insightful connections between Latter-day Saint ideals of activity and corresponding expressions of salvation in the Mormon culture, we believe that some of his perspectives regarding the church's doctrine of grace miss the mark. Within the final pages of his work, Davies writes:

It is worth reiterating the point that, while Mormons have long tended to avoid the notion of grace, because of its Protestant association with notions of spiritual rebirth, it may well be that growth in size and self-assurance will encourage some

---

8. Dallin H. Oaks, "Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ," *Ensign*, May 1985, 81.

9. The LDS Bible Dictionary, 697, speaking of grace, explains that "The main idea of the word is divine means of help or strength, given through the bounteous mercy and love of Jesus Christ. . . . This grace is an enabling power that allows men and women to lay hold on eternal life and exaltation after they have expended their own best efforts."

Saints to stress it once more. Grace will become a resource for those active Saints who have done all they feel able to do and yet, still, feel themselves lacking in final religious benefit. The advantage possessed by Mormonism is that its pool of potential orientations contains doctrinal elements of grace within it. In practice, it is likely that the dissonance between self-willed activism and divinely bestowed love will continue to enhance a creative tension of LDS spirituality that will foster further growth. (p. 265)

Davies's claim that "Mormons have long tended to avoid the notion of grace" seems misleading. It is true that Latter-day Saints have consistently rejected certain formulations of what Davies calls a "Protestant" approach to grace. For instance, Latter-day Saints reject all five principles of the Calvinistic doctrine of grace enunciated at the Council of Dort and represented by the acronym TULIP (Total depravity, Unconditional election, Limited atonement, Irresistible grace, and the Perseverance of the saints). To the extent that Latter-day Saints avoid some traditional Christian *locutions* (such as being "born again" or "grace alone" or even "saved") for expressing their doctrine of grace, it is because objectionable theological baggage has unfortunately become associated with the terms. However, *this* avoidance does *not* constitute (nor has it ever constituted) an avoidance of a doctrine of grace nor the rejection of a resource on which church members can rely when they "feel themselves lacking." Any avoidance of "grace" has been merely nominal and not doctrinal.

### The "Discourse of Grace"

Before we are able to further draw out this doctrine of grace, however, we must clarify some equivocations in the use of the term *grace*. Davies writes that "When LDS authors speak of grace they are radically aware of several ways of interpreting the term and also of the ethical and social consequences of each perspective" (p. 54). Davies identifies two senses of grace, the first of which he calls the "traditional" interpretation of the evangelicals. In this sense, Davies says,

grace leaves no room to speak of works in contributing to salvation because they simply exist in two separate grammars of discourse. A good life, full of good works, is a practical consequence of receiving grace but contributes nothing to the salvation guaranteed by grace. Davies writes that, concerning the evangelical view,

In this argument grace on the part of God and faith on the part of individuals belong, one might say, to the same logical type. The idea of having to earn salvation or even of having to engage in certain acts because one has been given grace plays no part in this equation precisely because the grammars of discourse of grace and works belong to different logical types of thought, argument and action. (p. 54)

The second sense Davies identifies is that of “grace as divine love and forgiveness of God . . . to remove the sin, the original sin, introduced by Adam” (pp. 54–55). Davies here is directing his discussion to the Latter-day Saint doctrine that through the atonement of Christ, resurrection and appointment to some degree of glory are guaranteed for all humankind, save sons of perdition. He makes the point that though this is true for both those inside and outside the church, active Latter-day Saints are able to achieve the desired “level of glory, or of salvation,” only through certain performances within the religious and moral spheres. Davies marks what he sees as a “divide” between the atonement of Christ and what Latter-day Saints refer to as “exaltation,” which needs to be crossed dynamically with human effort and the accomplishment of certain works.

Even here Davies’s account of the Latter-day Saint doctrine of grace misses the mark in at least three ways: (1) Latter-day Saints believe that our *individual* sins (not just the original sin introduced by Adam) are forgiven as a result of God’s grace. (2) Latter-day Saints believe that salvation (in the Protestant sense of that term—salvation from death and hell, coupled with immortality in the presence of God) is graciously and unconditionally granted to all but sons of perdition. (3) For Latter-day Saints the real issue of salvation has to do with the individual’s continued growth into God’s likeness (sanctification) and

exaltation, which are the synergistic outcome of divine grace and human striving. It is the Latter-day Saint degrees-of-glory eschatology that does not fit nicely with Protestant models of grace, grafted as they are to a heaven-or-hell eschatology.<sup>10</sup>

In order to appreciate the possible misunderstandings that arise from failing to consider complex Latter-day Saint eschatology, that eschatology must be briefly summarized. According to Latter-day Saint doctrine, there are three principal “degrees of glory” in the hereafter: the telestial, the terrestrial, and the celestial (in order from lowest to highest). Those in the telestial kingdom—in short, those who did not deny the Holy Spirit but never received the testimony of Jesus and spent their lives in wickedness—will still enjoy a glory that exceeds our present comprehension, despite being initially “thrust down to hell” (D&C 76:89; 76:84). They will ultimately enjoy the ministrations of the Holy Spirit but not the full presence of the Godhead (D&C 76:86). Those in the terrestrial kingdom include, among others, those who did not receive the gospel in the flesh but afterwards received it when the Son visited and taught them in spirit prison (vv. 73–74), as well as those who received the gospel in the flesh but were not valiant in the testimony of Jesus (v. 79). These will receive of the “glory” of the Father but not of his “fulness,” presumably meaning that they will

---

10. Salvation is an all-or-nothing affair for most Protestants, making the distinction between “born again” and “unregenerate” correspond exactly to that between “saved” and “damned.” For Latter-day Saints, though, most of the “unregenerate” receive a degree of glory—one which passes all earthly understanding (D&C 76:89)—for having chosen to come to earth and for deciding not to deny the Holy Spirit. Moreover, Latter-day Saints hold that the life led by those receiving lower degrees of glory is substantially different from that supposedly enjoyed in Protestant heaven or hell. Those in the telestial kingdom for instance (and thus some of those that are “saved”) do not enjoy the full presence of the Godhead as they would in Protestant versions of heaven. However, the absence of the Father and the Son (which in this respect would equate to Protestant notions of hell) is a far cry from the Protestant notion of eternal torment, as they still enjoy the presence of God the Holy Spirit and a glory beyond human comprehension. Similarly, the residents of the terrestrial kingdom are neither clearly “saved” nor clearly “damned” according to Protestant definitions: they have accepted the testimony of Jesus (corresponding to “saved”) but have not been valiant therein and receive only the “glory” and not the “full presence” of the Father (corresponding in this sense to “damned”). Clearly, given these and other differences, the Latter-day Saint understanding of salvation cannot be directly correlated to Protestant soteriology and eschatology.

not progress to share fully in the divine perfection (D&C 76:75–76, 79). They too will not enjoy the full presence of the Godhead, being with the Son and the Holy Spirit but not the “fulness” of the Father (D&C 76:77). Those in the celestial kingdom—“just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,” or, in other words, those who enter into and are faithful to gospel covenants—will dwell eternally with the Godhead, being made equal to the Father in power, might, and dominion (D&C 76:69, 95). Within the celestial kingdom, those in the highest of the three levels of glory are those who have entered into eternal marriage (D&C 131:2–3) and remained faithful to that covenant (D&C 132:19). They are the only ones who will have “eternal increase” (D&C 131:4; 132:19), which many Latter-day Saints have understood to mean “eternal increase in progeny.”<sup>11</sup> It is these individuals who are referred to as “gods” within Latter-day Saint scriptures, seeing as they are granted powers, dominions, might, *and* increase equal to that which the Father possesses.

Without focusing on the implications of the eschatology and soteriology described above, Davies’s further explanations continue to miss the mark. For instance, he writes that

it is this point that introduces a logical problem into the LDS discussion of grace. For, on one understanding of this scheme of things, it is the individual’s own level of performance in the moral sphere, within the context of church organization, that will yield the appropriate level of glory, or of salvation. . . . In other words, achievements or “works” belong to the same logical type as rewards or salvation, and they are grounded in human effort. (p. 55)

As noted, Latter-day Saints do not accept the Protestant assumption that faith/grace and human agency/actions/works constitute two separate grammars of discourse. To the contrary, we believe that it is false and that James and even Paul, as well as living prophets, make it clear that faith/grace and human agency/actions/works are actually

---

11. See Shirley S. Ricks, “Eternal Lives, Eternal Increase,” in *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, 2:465.

*inseparable*. Moreover, though he mentions it, Davies again fails to adequately consider the bearing on the issue of the Mormon distinctions (1) between salvation and exaltation in general and (2) between degrees of salvation in particular.

He makes the point that the lines of argument taken by Latter-day Saint authors like Robert Millet and Stephen Robinson maintain that a robust doctrine of saving grace can be found within Mormon beliefs but seem to do so in discord with “much LDS material on religious life” (p. 56). The views which to Davies seem out of place in a traditional Mormon context, and his assessment of the matter, come to light in the following passage:

Millet’s text addresses the issue of salvation by saying, “my good works are necessary, but they are not sufficient.” Then in striking terms he adds, “I cannot work myself into celestial glory, and I cannot guarantee myself a place among the sanctified through my own unaided efforts. . . . It is not by my own merits that I will ever make it. Rather it is by and through the merits of Christ.”

Given their stress on divine and not human action, these are relatively strange affirmations of salvation in ordinary Mormon discussion. But the cultural dilemma still does not disappear, for Millet is clear in maintaining the importance of human activity. . . . What is intriguing is that earlier in his book Millet echoes the extremely traditional language of Protestant theology by using, in a most positive way, the terms of imputed righteousness. “[The Lord] takes the sin. He imputes to us his righteousness. That is the only way we can become righteous in eternity. People do not become perfect just by striving. . . .” It is, in fact, unusual to find an established LDS writer, and a key figure in the religious education world of Brigham Young University . . . in this kind of discussion of religious experience. (p. 59)

With one exception, these affirmations are neither unusual nor strange.<sup>12</sup> Latter-day Saints have *never* taught that they can guarantee

---

12. One of these terms, *imputed righteousness*, seems to be an exception and does seem foreign to LDS discourse. No clear discussion of it was found in recent writings of

themselves a place among the sanctified through their own unaided efforts or by means of their own merits. They have consistently taught throughout their history that Christ's is the only name by which salvation can come and that it comes by the grace of God manifest in the atonement of Christ. The church has always also taught, however, that God's grace does not absolve us of having particular duties to perform. This is not to say that it is the performance of the things God asks of us through which salvation comes—only that God continues to expect certain things of us apart from the grace he freely gives.

Heavy emphasis on human action in relation to salvation has usually been made in polemical contexts in which Latter-day Saints have defended their doctrine against the claim of salvation by grace *alone*. Elder Neal A. Maxwell writes, regarding the parable of the unprofitable servant from the New Testament, that

God's generosity [or grace] toward us is not to be expressed by the dilution of the demands of duty that He lays upon us. Where much is given, much is expected—not the other way around. Nor is divine generosity to be expressed by a lessening of God's standards concerning what is to be done. Rather, when much is given and much is done by the disciple, then God's generosity is overwhelming!<sup>13</sup>

The idea of God asking that we do something before the fullness of his blessings is conferred is quite common in Christendom, even if it is believed that all he asks is that we accept Christ as our personal Savior. In this case it is usually understood that it is not the confessing itself that saves, but the grace that is given due to the confessing. This is similar to the church's teaching that we are saved by grace "after all

---

ecclesiastical leaders, though Millet himself cites Elder D. Todd Christofferson's "Justification and Sanctification," *Ensign*, June 2001, 18–25, as using the idea. We believe that Elder Christofferson's text does not clearly teach the doctrine of imputed righteousness (and may in fact contradict it). We believe the doctrine to be problematic; it requires an impossible transferability of righteousness, demands an untenable penal substitution theory of the atonement, and entails that God declare sinners righteous when they in fact are not. See Blake T. Ostler, *Exploring Mormon Thought: The Problems of Theism and the Love of God* (Salt Lake City: Kofford Books, 2006), 352–61.

13. Neal A. Maxwell, *Even As I Am* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1982), 86.



we can do.” Note that it is grace that saves, even if God mandates the mode of our acceptance of the grace. The teaching of a doctrine of grace, like the one Davies found out of place from Millet, is traceable through the history of the church. Elder W. Rolfe Kerr put the concept well when he writes, with reference to his childhood days of living on a farm:

After we plowed, planted, irrigated, and cultivated the fields, we cast our fate in His hands. We worked hard but knew that without the sunshine and rain, the grace and mercy of God, and the benevolence of loving parents, we could accomplish nothing.

Is not this faith in and dependence upon God what King Benjamin taught when he said: “If you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole soul has power to possess, to that God who has created you, . . . if ye should serve him with all your whole souls yet ye would be unprofitable servants. . . . And now I ask, can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay. Ye cannot say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth” (Mosiah 2:20–21, 25).

We are indebted to God for our very lives. When we keep His commandments, which is our duty to do, He immediately blesses us. We are therefore continually indebted and unprofitable to Him. Without grace, our valiance alone cannot save us.<sup>14</sup>

There is no conflict or inconsistency with this teaching from the Book of Mormon, the church’s views throughout its history, and current church explanations regarding the interplay of grace, works, and salvation.

Joseph Smith did in fact teach that our own efforts could never do anything to “earn salvation”—which Davies claims is part of the “traditional” sense of grace—but that it is only the name of Christ and his merit that has the power to save. A verse from the second book of Nephi in the Book of Mormon serves to make this point more

---

14. W. Rolfe Kerr, “Parables of Jesus: The Unprofitable Servant,” *Ensign*, October 2003, 47.

apparent: “Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8). It is this sense of grace that has been perpetuated throughout the church’s history and recently reiterated by authors like Millet and Robinson.

In the section that follows we survey Latter-day Saint teachings on grace (a) beginning with Joseph Smith and his associates and continuing with Joseph’s successors down to the present day, and (b) in Mormon hymns from the first hymnbook to the current one. Although we briefly survey the evidence here, we think we cite enough to seriously challenge Davies’s assertions (1) that Mormons have historically avoided the notion of grace and (2) that contemporary LDS discourse on grace represents a turn-of-the-century development. More evidence is detailed in appendixes B, C, and D, and much more could be gathered. It is not our purpose in this response to attempt a full formulation of a Mormon understanding of grace nor to engage in a comparative analysis of the teachings of the several Mormon prophets. Neither do we attempt to show here that they have all spoken with one voice, though this may well be the case. Rather, our principal aim in this section is to provide data to show that, contrary to Davies’s assertion, the church has never avoided a notion of grace. Indeed, it has *always* affirmed that we cannot be saved without grace.

### Historical Survey of Prophetic Teachings on Grace

From its most humble beginnings, the church has taught that salvation from sin and death is possible only in and through the grace of Jesus Christ. Never has the church taught that we could merit salvation or that our own efforts could ever suffice to save us. Joseph Smith stressed that “the fundamental principles of our religion are the testimony of the Apostles and Prophets, concerning Jesus Christ, that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven; and all other things which pertain to our religion are

only appendages to it.”<sup>15</sup> Indeed, Joseph recognized that without the grace of God, as manifest in the life and atonement of Christ, there is nothing we can do to be saved. In his own words, “I do not, nor never have, pretended to be any other than a man ‘subject to passion,’ and liable, without the assisting grace of the Savior, to deviate from that perfect path which all men are commanded to walk.”<sup>16</sup> It is not only to the grace of God that we owe thanks for our very lives, but also for our ability to live them well and our hope to return to live with God.

An article Joseph Smith called “one of the sweetest pieces that has been written in these last days”<sup>17</sup> illustrates more clearly how he and other early Mormons viewed the roles of grace and action in our salvation. The article, written by Brigham Young and Willard Richards, responds to the question, “Do you believe in election and reprobation?” and begins by stating that their purpose is “that the saints may learn doctrine.” After offering several scriptural examples of groups and individuals who were “elected” to do great works to further the purposes of God, they cite several scriptures to illustrate the roles of faith, works, and grace in election and salvation:

Are men, then, to be saved by works? Nay, verily, “By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Eph. ii: 8); “Not of works, lest any man should boast” (v. 9); “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us” (Titus iii: 5); and yet faith without works is dead, being alone (James ii:17). Was not Abraham, our father, justified by works (v. 21)? Shall we then be saved by faith? Nay, neither by faith nor works, but by works is faith made perfect (v. 22); but “by grace are ye saved” (Eph. ii: 8); “And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; and if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise works is no works” (Rom.

---

15. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, comp. Joseph Fielding Smith (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 121.

16. *History of the Church*, 1:10n.

17. See *History of the Church*, 4:256.

xi: 6); “Ye see then how that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (James ii: 24).

Rom. x: 3,4, “For they (Israel) being ignorant of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God; for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Thus the righteousness of God is made manifest in the plan of salvation by His crucified son; “for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,” but the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth (Acts iv: 10, 12).<sup>18</sup>

On another occasion, President Young taught that

The best man that ever lived on this earth only just made out to save himself through the grace of God. The best woman that ever lived on the earth has only made her escape from this world to a better one, with a full assurance of enjoying the first resurrection. It requires all the atonement of Christ, the mercy of the Father, the pity of angels and the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be with us always, and then to do the very best we possibly can, to get rid of this sin within us, so that we may escape from this world into the celestial kingdom.<sup>19</sup>

It is clear from President Young’s words that the combination of doing the best we can *and* the grace of God is necessary in order for us to inherit the celestial kingdom and all the blessings our Heavenly Father has to bestow. It is also clear that even the best man is inexorably dependent on grace for his salvation.

What did Brigham Young mean by the phrase “[doing] the very best we possibly can”? He once said that “in and of ourselves we have no power to control our own minds and passions; but the grace of God

---

18. *History of the Church*, 4:264–65 (punctuation somewhat standardized), quoting Brigham Young and Willard Richards, “Election and Reprobation,” *Millennial Star* 1/9 (January 1841): 224; see also *Times and Seasons* 4/1 (15 November 1842): 5.

19. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 11:301.

is sufficient to give us perfect victory.”<sup>20</sup> He also said that “the grace, the power, and the wisdom of God will make me all that I ever will be, either in time or eternity.”<sup>21</sup> Thus, even the ability to make the very best effort we can, of ourselves, nevertheless requires grace. Without the grace of God there is no way for us to do our best: it is his mercy that makes our best even possible. Grace is thereby doubly tied to the Mormon doctrine of works and salvation for President Young. If there is still any doubt concerning President Young’s position on the necessity of grace in obtaining salvation, his following words help make the matter quite clear: “All will have to come to the Lord and be sanctified through the grace of Christ by faith in his name; without this, I am happy to say, that none can be purified, sanctified and prepared to inherit eternal glory.”<sup>22</sup>

With this clarification, we are prepared to understand what, to non-Mormons, may seem a very odd phrasing at the start of this quotation: that the best of men “only just made out to save himself.” Davies quotes a similar passage in which President Young tells the Saints about “how to save themselves and their friends” (p. 32).<sup>23</sup> If we are saved either by our own efforts or by God’s power and mercy, then the cited language, taken out of context, seems to suggest the former. And in fact, among traditional Christians, discussions of grace have tended to revolve around the question of “whether, in the last resort, salvation depends upon human or divine endeavor” (p. 51). Yet President Young’s view implies that this framing of the question is fundamentally mistaken since it presupposes that full salvation ultimately depends on *either* human *or* divine endeavor, when in fact it ultimately requires *both*. Both God’s saving work and our own diligent striving are essential for us to receive God’s highest blessings, even as our good works are themselves made possible by grace. Christ enables us to act in a way that will turn to our salvation.

---

20. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:226.

21. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:162.

22. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 14:150.

23. Quoting *The Essential Brigham Young* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1992), 19.

This doctrine of dependence on the Lord for our ability to do *any* good work was reiterated by President John Taylor when he wrote, “A man, as a man, could arrive at all the dignity that a man was capable of obtaining or receiving; but it needed a God to raise him to the dignity of a God.”<sup>24</sup> He admits that a man, on his own, can raise himself only as high as men go, obviously not to the exalted state of the celestial kingdom, to sit in God’s throne (see Revelation 3:21). He recognizes that for humankind to dwell in God’s presence and grow in God’s likeness, God’s assistance and grace are required.

Once again expounding the connection between the efforts God asks us to make and his grace and how both relate to our salvation and exaltation, Taylor writes:

The conditions required of the human family to enable them to obtain the high exaltation which the atonement makes it possible for them to receive, are: First, Faith in God as our Father and the great Supreme Ruler of the universe; in whose hands are the destinies of the human family; in whom we live and move and have our being. And in His Son Jesus Christ, as the Lamb, . . . as the great Mediator and great propitiatory sacrifice provided by the Father before the creation, and consummated by the offering of Himself upon the cross. For “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” . . .

The second principle of the Gospel of salvation, is repentance. . . .

Thirdly, Baptism for the remission of sins, of our personal transgressions, which, through this means, provided by divine mercy, are, by reason of the atonement, blotted out. To use the words of Paul: “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” . . .

---

24. John Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1882), 145.

Next the reception of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands of those who have received the Holy Priesthood.<sup>25</sup>

Like those who came before him, Taylor makes it quite clear that it is to God we owe any thanks or hope for full salvation (or “exaltation” as Latter-day Saints are wont to describe it), though God does expect us to meet his conditions. “The redeemed of the Lord . . . are indebted to the Lord Jesus Christ, through His atonement, for the position that they will occupy in the state of exaltation here referred to; and if they are exalted . . . it is through the ordinances which He has appointed for the accomplishment of this object.”<sup>26</sup> It is only God’s grace that can save and exalt and his grace that makes possible the accomplishment of the good works he asks of us.

Not to belabor the point, we move more quickly through the rest of the historical line of Latter-day Saint leaders to find what we have found with the first—a doctrine of works, grace, and salvation in which Millet’s words are not out of place, but seem quite at home: “I cannot work myself into celestial glory, and I cannot guarantee myself a place among the sanctified through my own unaided efforts. . . . It is not by my own merits that I will ever make it. Rather it is by and through the merits of Christ.”<sup>27</sup>

Orson Pratt is quoted as saying that “redemption from the original sin is without faith or works; redemption from our own sins is given through faith and works. *Both are the gifts of free grace*; but while one is a gift forced upon us unconditionally, the other is a gift merely offered to us conditionally. The reception of the one is compulsory; the reception of the other is voluntary.”<sup>28</sup> Again we note how clear it is that it is God’s grace, the gift of his matchless love, that makes possible salvation from the consequences of both Adam’s transgression and our own sins, but there is some conditionality placed on aspects of God’s great gift of grace. It is an understanding of this point that

---

25. Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, 181–82.

26. Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, 35.

27. Robert L. Millet, *Selected Writings of Robert L. Millet: Gospel Scholars Series* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2000), 505.

28. Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:330, emphasis added.

clears up misconceptions regarding Latter-day Saints “working themselves into heaven” and shows Millet’s position to be consistent with historic Mormon teachings on grace.

Lorenzo Snow, perhaps understanding the possible misconception of the Mormon doctrine regarding works and salvation, taught that “It is important that we, as Latter-day Saints, should understand and bear in mind that salvation comes through the grace of God.”<sup>29</sup> To those who struggle to do their best but often find themselves coming up short, Joseph F. Smith said, “Notwithstanding our many weaknesses, imperfections and follies the Lord still continues His mercy, manifests His grace and imparts unto us His Holy Spirit, that our minds may be illuminated by the light of revelation.”<sup>30</sup> President Heber J. Grant declared to “the people of the world” that the First Presidency and the church they lead call “all men to come unto [Jesus Christ], that through his grace they may attain to eternal life and an inheritance with him in the kingdom of his Father.”<sup>31</sup> President Grant invites the world to the kingdom of God not through any work or combination of works, but through the grace of God. Though it should be apparent that it is consistent with Latter-day Saint teachings to declare that it is by the grace of God that we are saved, we must point out again that there is a difference between Latter-day Saint views regarding this saving grace and some traditional Protestant views. President David O. McKay reminds us that the scriptures telling us we are impotent to save ourselves without the grace of Christ are absolutely true but also warns us that “the fallacy that Jesus has done all for us, and live as we may, if on our deathbed, we only believe, we shall be saved in his glorious presence, is most pernicious.”<sup>32</sup>

Elder James E. Talmage of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles writes that “individual salvation or rescue *from the effects of personal sins* is to be acquired by each for himself by faith and good works

---

29. Lorenzo Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, 23:192.

30. Joseph F. Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:347.

31. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), 5:286.

32. David O. McKay, *Gospel Ideals: Selections from the Discourses of David O. McKay* (Salt Lake City: Improvement Era, 1953), 8; see 10–11.



*through the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ.*”<sup>33</sup> Talmage also argues that “without Christ no man can be saved, and the salvation provided at the cost of Christ’s sufferings and bodily death is offered upon certain clearly defined conditions only; and these are summarized under ‘obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.’”<sup>34</sup> Again we see reinforced the doctrine that it is Christ and his mercy that saves, while aspects of that salvation are made conditional upon our obedience.<sup>35</sup>

---

33. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1962), 31 n. 5, emphasis added.

34. James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1977), 91.

35. An important *Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, published in seven volumes between 1955 and 1961, states that the scriptural concept of grace connotes that “God has done for us something which we could not do for ourselves.” This commentary is based on the notes and prior publications of two nineteenth-century scholars, George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl, and was edited, amplified, and arranged by Philip C. Reynolds with the assistance, on some volumes, of David Sjodahl King. The section on grace, from volume four, is either from unpublished notes or is the work of the editors; see Bruce Van Orden, “Every City, Hill, River, Valley, and Person,” review of *Book of Mormon Dictionary*, by George Reynolds, *FARMS Review of Books* 8/1 (1996): 58–60.

Grace is portrayed as a divinely bestowed gift that includes life, faith, forgiveness of sin through repentance, and “immortality and Eternal Life, wrought by the Atonement of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.” The *Commentary* also recognizes misunderstandings on the doctrine of grace, such as the suggestion that Paul’s statements on grace “eliminate the need for personal righteousness (good works).” The authors resolve this misunderstanding by explaining that Latter-day restoration has made it “clear that obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel (works) was not lost in the doctrine of grace.” They also recognize, however, that this renewal of the role of works in the gospel has, unfortunately, “had a tendency to elevate works above grace in the minds of many believers.” They suggest that this misunderstanding may be due to an imperfect understanding of the Mormon doctrine of eternal progression, which is that “God’s children may progress throughout the eternities, until they may reach the status and the glory of the Creator Himself.”

To illustrate this misunderstanding, they cite an analogy, used by “exponents” of eternal progression, which likens “man’s quest for eternal glory to climbing a flight of endless stairs.” They view this analogy as one of limited merit since “it does not give sufficient recognition to the doctrine of grace” and “fails to give full force and effect to the atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ.” They modify the analogy “to include a huge and unbridgeable chasm somewhere along the stairs’ upward course,” and “it is the Atonement of Christ which carries us across the otherwise unbridgeable chasm.” And though obedience is required of us as the “effort by which we ascend the endless stairs,” we are enabled to do so only by “an outpouring of grace.” Philip C. Reynolds and David Sjodahl King, eds., *Commentary on the Book of Mormon [from the Notes of George Reynolds and Janne M. Sjodahl]* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1959), 4:7–16. Thus, under this modified analogy,

Joseph Fielding Smith writes:

We are therefore unable in and of ourselves to receive redemption from our sins by any act of our own.

This is the grace that Paul was teaching. Therefore, it is by the grace of Jesus Christ that we are saved. . . .

. . . So we are saved by grace and that not of ourselves. It is the gift of God. . . .

So Paul taught these people . . . he pointed out to them the fact that if it were not for the mission of Jesus Christ, if it were not for this great atoning sacrifice, they could not be redeemed. And therefore it was by the grace of God that they are saved, not by any work on their part, for they were absolutely helpless. Paul was absolutely right.<sup>36</sup>

Ezra Taft Benson taught that “by grace, the Savior accomplished His atoning sacrifice so that all mankind will attain immortality. By His grace, and by our faith in His atonement and repentance of our sins, we receive the strength to do the works necessary that we otherwise could not do by our own power.”<sup>37</sup> Emphasizing this very point in his Easter message to the church, President Howard W. Hunter said, “In this Easter season of the year—when we are reminded yet again of all Christ has done for us, how dependent we are upon his redeeming grace and personal resurrection, and how singular his name is in the power to dispel evil and death and save the human soul—may we all do more to respect and revere his holy name and gently, courteously encourage others to do the same.”<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps one of the clearest statements regarding the doctrine under discussion was given by the current president of the church, President Gordon B. Hinckley:

---

it is grace that enables us to climb the stairs and grace through the atonement of Christ that bridges the chasm we could not cross on our own.

36. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1955), 2:309–10.

37. *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 353–54.

38. Howard W. Hunter, “Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 64.

I believe that through His [Christ's] atoning sacrifice, the offering of His life on Calvary's Hill, He expiated the sins of mankind, relieving us from the burden of sin if we will forsake evil and follow Him. I believe in the reality and the power of His Resurrection. I believe in the grace of God made manifest through His sacrifice and redemption, and I believe that through His Atonement, without any price on our part, each of us is offered the gift of resurrection from the dead. I believe further that through that sacrifice there is extended to every man and woman, every son and daughter of God, the opportunity for eternal life and exaltation in our Father's kingdom, as we hearken to and obey His commandments.<sup>39</sup>

Latter-day Saints have consistently taught that it is not our works that save us, while simultaneously teaching that some of the blessings imparted by God's grace (including exaltation) are dependent upon our complying with the conditions he specifies for appropriating that grace. It is Christ, and only Christ, who can save. God's grace enables us to do his will, and the blessings of doing so come by his grace as well. Humans may often feel themselves lacking and, by themselves, absolutely *are* lacking. Without God's grace, we are impotent to achieve either salvation or exaltation.

Though the church has continuously and consistently taught the necessity of grace for salvation and exaltation, we find that the word *grace* and related locutions are now appearing more frequently in contemporary Latter-day Saint discourse. As previously mentioned, we believe the earlier less-frequent usage is explained by the objectionable theological baggage associated with such terms and the complexity introduced into the discourse by Latter-day Saint belief in multiple degrees of salvation. For instance, unqualifiedly using the term *saved* in reference to oneself when speaking to an evangelical would blur distinctions between salvation and exaltation that lie at the heart of Latter-day Saint thought. Thus, by avoiding these terms, some Latter-day Saint authors may have sought to avoid confusion and endless

---

39. Gordon B. Hinckley, "In These Three I Believe," *Ensign*, July 2006, 7.

explication. However, avoidance of these locutions may have engendered even more serious misunderstanding. Thus, now may be the time for Latter-day Saint authors to reappropriate scriptural (both biblical and LDS-specific) soteriological terms, making clear how their usage differs from that of traditional Christians.

President Hinckley, in an address to the church membership in October 2001, said, in reference to the growing church, “We are not changing.<sup>40</sup> The world’s perception of us is changing. We teach the same doctrine. We have the same organization. We labor to perform the same good works. But the old hatred is disappearing, the old persecution is dying. People are better informed. They are coming to realize what we stand for and what we do.”<sup>41</sup> Millet explains that “to be baptized into The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to enter a religious society that is anything but static. . . . So while Latter-day Saints hold tenaciously to the foundational doctrines and principles of revealed religion laid down by Joseph Smith [and, we would add, by his successors in the prophetic office], on the one hand, it will appear to many, on the other hand, that the Latter-day Saints are changing.”<sup>42</sup> Again, if there has been any change in the Mormon teaching of grace, it has been merely nominal, not doctrinal. If the “discourse of grace” has been avoided, it is not the discourse of grace *per se*; rather, it is Protestant versions of the same.

### ***Saved and Born Again***

To further illustrate the explanation set out above of Mormon usage and (nominal not conceptual) avoidance of the term *grace*, let

---

40. What can we make of the seemingly conflicting ideas that the church is not changing yet never static? President Hinckley’s statement concerning the unchanging nature of the church was proffered in the context of discussing a membership growing in faith and size and in a world with constantly new conceptions and perceptions. In this respect the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, like any other viable religious body, is always adjusting for such change by emphasizing and refining, organizing and restructuring. What remains the same are the “foundational doctrines and principles” set down by the Prophet Joseph Smith.

41. Gordon B. Hinckley, “Living in the Fulness of Times,” *Ensign*, November 2001, 5.

42. Robert L. Millet, “Joseph Smith’s Christology: After Two Hundred Years,” in *The Worlds of Joseph Smith: A Bicentennial Conference at the Library of Congress*, ed. John W. Welch (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University Press, 2006), 246.

us consider two related soteriological terms—namely, *saved* and *born again*.

Speaking of the phrase *to be saved*, Davies comments:

The phrase, “to be saved”, has often been associated with the Protestant Evangelical idea of spiritual rebirth understood as an experience through which the individual senses a removal of guilt and a newness of personal outlook. Theologically, this is directly interpreted as the outcome of grace, both in the sacrifice of Christ and in God enlightening the individual heart through the Holy Spirit to accept the outcome of that divine sacrifice. There is a sense of having been acted upon, of being a passive recipient of divine love in this context. This scheme was well known in early Mormonism’s environment of frontier revivalism, and the Church avoided it. (p. 55)

Again, even if some Latter-day Saint authors avoid or have, in the past, avoided such locutions as *saved* or *born again*, such avoidance is merely nominal, not conceptual. In fact, a Latter-day Saint would likely be more than willing to accept Davies’s summation of spiritual rebirth as “the outcome of grace, both in the sacrifice of Christ and in God enlightening the individual heart through the Holy Spirit.” Indeed, the notions of rebirth and being saved have always been prominent in Latter-day Saint culture.

The Book of Mormon and the New Testament have the same number of verses using the exact phrase *born again* (three verses in each, though the Book of Mormon is a substantially larger text), and the Pearl of Great Price contains another verse using the phrase. In the Book of Mormon, Mosiah 27:25 reads, “And the Lord said unto me: Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be *born again*; yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters.” Alma 5:49 specifically states that Alma the Younger’s cause and purpose are to teach one central message to all who will hear it, “that they must repent and be *born again*.” Additionally, Alma 7:14 tells us that

one “must . . . be *born again*; for the Spirit saith if ye are not *born again* ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, who is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness.” These verses and the verses of the New Testament in which Jesus taught Nicodemus of spiritual rebirth have been well-known and have often been quoted since the church began.<sup>43</sup> This is not to say that, when using the locutions being discussed here, Latter-day Saints and evangelical Protestants mean the same thing by them, only to make the point that as far as the Mormon culture is concerned, there has never been a specific avoidance of the terms for lack of a belief in the concept of grace (although the phrase has been and still is largely avoided). Once again, this is not to imply that such locutions are commonplace amongst Latter-day Saints; most would probably resist explaining their spiritual experiences as experiences of being “born again,” but we emphasize again that, for Latter-day Saints, the reasons for this resistance stem from potential misunderstanding and confusion rather than doctrinal disagreement.

The Saints offer no apology or equivocation regarding the need for being born again; rather, they seek only clarification as to what, exactly, that phrase means. Being born again, for the Latter-day Saint, has very much to do, as the verses previously quoted demonstrate, with the doctrines of repentance and baptism. Coming to faith in Christ motivates repentance, baptism, reception of the Holy Ghost, and a process of growth toward the likeness of Christ. This *process* (as opposed to a singular discrete experience, though such an experience or experiences may initiate or may be involved throughout the process) is how Latter-day Saints typically understand the type of spiritual rebirth spoken of by Jesus to Nicodemus. Of course, none of these actions singly, nor these actions in combination, effect such a rebirth without God’s grace as mediated through the atonement of Christ.

---

43. There are also numerous relevant uses of the locution *to be saved* or *saved* in Latter-day Saint specific scripture. See appendix D. Careful comparison and analysis of these passages is an important task deferred.

Though required steps lie along the path toward the gate of heaven, the gate itself, our ability to pass through it, and the steps that lead up to the gate, are all there by the grace of God.

To clarify this point, consider, as an example, repentance. Latter-day Saints believe repentance to be an essential step in spiritual rebirth and exaltation. Regarding the way repentance and grace are connected, Elder Gene R. Cook, a member of the Seventy, writes:

*Repentance.* . . . The grace of the Lord through the Atonement can both cleanse us of sin and assist us in perfecting ourselves through our trials, sicknesses, and even “character defects.” We are both sanctified and justified through the grace of the Lord. (See D&C 20:30–31.) Truly, “as a man his sins confess, Christ, in mercy, manifests.” (Gene R. Cook and Holly Cook, “I Am a Healthy Man,” unpublished hymn; see Alma 24:10.) Remember, Christ can repair our flaws and failings that otherwise are not repairable. (See Gen. 18:14; Mark 9:23–24.)<sup>44</sup>

Though human volition is required for the essential step of repentance to be taken, the step would not exist were it not for the grace of God. Repentance helps to make us more perfect, and the perfection process could not take place without it; however, the perfecting aspect of repentance is not any work we perform but “the grace of the Lord through the Atonement.” Mormon doctrine tells us that without repentance there can be no exaltation<sup>45</sup> but also teaches that it is God’s grace that makes repentance possible and efficacious.<sup>46</sup>

This scheme of receiving God’s grace is not, however, purely a passive one. Few salvational schemes—including that which was present “in early Mormonism’s environment of frontier revivalism”— can be considered completely passive. Nearly all Christians believe that one must at least first acknowledge Christ as one’s Savior, and thus must

---

44. Gene R. Cook, “Receiving Divine Assistance through the Grace of the Lord,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 80.

45. See Alma 5:31–33, 49–51; 9:12; 34:15–17; Helaman 14:13; D&C 3:20; 20:29.

46. See Alma 22:14; Helaman 5:11; 14:17–18; 3 Nephi 7:16.

*act*, in order to be saved by his grace. However, contrary to Davies's assertions, there *is* certainly a strong sense among Latter-day Saints of one having been *acted upon* as a recipient of divine love. Though Latter-day Saint doctrine may reject the absolute passivity of the individual who receives Christ's grace, the church has never avoided the idea that we are acted upon by Christ when we receive and are transformed by his love.

### The Teaching of Grace in Mormon Hymnology

In further support of our claim that Mormons possess an original and sustained doctrine of grace that runs deeper than merely an explanation of the resurrection and absolution from original sin, we turn to the Saints' hymnbooks, which from the beginning were designed to teach and reinforce the doctrines already established by the church. The preface to the first Latter-day Saint hymnbook, *A Collection of Sacred Hymns for the Church of the Latter Day Saints*, compiled and adapted by Emma Smith and William W. Phelps, makes this point explicit, stating, "In order to sing by the Spirit, and with the understanding, it is necessary that the church of the Latter Day Saints should have a collection of 'SACRED HYMNS,' *adapted to their faith and belief in the gospel*" (emphasis added). Karen Lynn Davidson writes that "though many hymns and hymn traditions were available to them, the early Saints did not choose to adopt in its entirety any other church's hymn tradition. They felt the need for a distinctive hymn tradition that would reflect their unique theology."<sup>47</sup> The need for a hymnbook that provides doctrinally sound and unique Latter-day Saint wisdom has not changed with the years. In the introduction to the current hymnbook, the First Presidency praises the hymns for "meet[ing] the varied needs of today's worldwide church membership"<sup>48</sup> and expresses hope

---

47. Karen Lynn Davidson, *Our Latter-day Hymns: The Stories and the Messages* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 7.

48. *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), ix.



that the “hymnbook will take a prominent place among the scriptures and other religious books in our homes.”<sup>49</sup>

The frequent references to grace in both the early and contemporary hymnals suggest that a robust sense of grace has always been a part of the theology they reflect. The first hymn included in the 1835 edition of the LDS hymnbook “Know then that every soul is free”<sup>50</sup> denies a Calvinist tradition that sees God’s grace as irresistible, being somehow foisted upon the person elected to receive it, willing or not. The anonymous author of this hymn expresses the view that “God will force no man to heav’n” but adds that “God is pleased when we improve His grace and seek his perfect love.”<sup>51</sup> The use of the word *improve* in this verse indicates the good use or profitable application of God’s grace. Thus, according to the hymn, God is pleased when his grace is accessed and used to the profit and benefit of mankind. The words *improve* and *seek* as used in this hymn signal a type of active approach to God’s grace and love. This action, however, does not add anything to the quality of the grace and does not add to the salvific attributes of the grace itself; the action called for on the part of humanity seems only to make the effects of God’s grace attainable. The fifth verse of the song, included in the church’s first hymnal but left out of the current collection of hymns, helps illustrate the author’s take on grace. It reads: “It’s my free will for to believe, ’Tis God’s free will me to receive: To stubborn willers this I’ll tell, It’s all free grace, and all free will.” This line of thinking seems quite consistent with the words of Elder Oaks quoted earlier that, though church members are asked to exercise their free will in the performance of certain ordinances to gain access to the full extent of blessings God has to offer, to put his grace to the most profitable use, or improve his grace, it is Christ who chooses to confer the blessings and his name and authority by which they are conferred. Though the verse denies a traditional view of irresistible grace, as did Joseph Smith, it is obvious from the

---

49. *Hymns of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, x.

50. The title (and first line) of this hymn in our current hymnal is “Know This, That Every Soul Is Free.” *Hymns*, no. 240 (1985 ed.).

51. Punctuation and words as appearing in 1985 hymnal.

song that it is God's grace that allows man to hear the message and "in glory dwell" (verse 6). The hymn places a strong emphasis on correct use of our ability to choose and the effects of that choice which, as Davies properly points out, are prominent themes in Mormonism. But even with this emphasis, there is room in the hymn, and in Latter-day Saint theology, to express a doctrine of God's grace as the power to save those who cannot save themselves.

The second hymn included in the earliest LDS hymnal reads: "Rivers of love and mercy here, In a rich ocean join; Salvation in abundance flows Like floods of milk and wine. The gates of glorious gospel grace, Stand open night and day."<sup>52</sup> The fourth hymn included in the 1835 hymnal, "Glorious things of thee are spoken,"<sup>53</sup> three verses of which are included in the current LDS hymnal, told even the earliest Saints to "See the stream of living waters, Springing from celestial love, . . . Who can faint, while such a river Ever flows their thirst t'assuage? Grace which like the Lord, the giver, Never fails from age to age." These sentiments do in fact sound like the calming words of grace offered to a congregation that would often have chance to feel themselves lacking in what they were able to accomplish in relation to what they felt the Lord expected of them. Davies does indeed identify a legitimate pastoral need in the church, and likely for many other congregations of believers, of helping those who feel themselves unworthy or undeserving of the Lord's blessings. But there has always been direction given concerning how the need might be fulfilled. There has always stood the admonition in the church: turn to Christ and his grace, for he is mighty to save. Thus the first members of the church could sing for joy with the words of another of their sacred hymns, "My days unclouded as they pass, . . . are monuments of wondrous grace, . . . Seal my forgiveness in the blood Of Christ, my Lord; his

52. "Let ev'ry mortal ear attend," *Hymns*, no. 2 (1835 ed.). The first lines function as titles in the index.

53. *Hymns*, no. 46 (1985 ed.). It is interesting to note in context with the discussion at hand that John Newton, author of "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken," also authored the well-known lyrics to the Christian hymn "Amazing Grace."

name alone I plead for pardon, gracious God, And kind acceptance at thy throne.”<sup>54</sup>

Many of these early hymns have been included in Latter-day Saint hymnbooks ever since that first hymnal of 1835, but new additions to subsequent hymnals reflect the same doctrine. Hymn 16 in the hymnal *The Latter-day Saints’ Psalmody*, gathered for publication in 1889 at the request of President John Taylor, reminded the saints that “The Lord, who built the earth and sky, In mercy stoops to hear thy cry; His promise all may freely claim: ‘Ask and receive in Jesus’ name.”<sup>55</sup> Hymn 22 directed the Saints to ask the Lord in song to “Make our enlarged souls possess And learn the height and breadth and length And depth of thine unmeasured grace.” Those laboring under heavy loads were told in hymn 37 of the *Latter-day Saints’ Psalmody* that the Lord’s “grace shall make the burden light.” The Latter-day Saint hymnbook of 1927, meant to supplement a Sunday School songbook and filled with hymns of a more traditional nature, was intended for use during sacrament services. The book included “Lord, Thou Wilt Hear Me,” by Isaac Watts, which, in its third verse reads, “I pay this evening sacrifice, And when my work is done, Great God, my faith, my hope relies Upon Thy grace alone.”

The current hymnbook still contains the popular hymn “How Firm a Foundation,” also one of the hymns included in the first official Latter-day Saint hymnbook; the words of this hymn could not leave the attentive singer in any doubt as to where he might turn for salvation or aid when lacking. The hymn instructs messianically: “In ev’ry condition—in sickness, in health, In poverty’s vale or abounding in wealth, . . . As thy days may demand, so thy succor shall be. . . . When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace, all sufficient, shall be thy supply. The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine. . . . The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose I will not, I cannot, desert to his foes; That soul,

---

54. “Great God! to thee my evening song,” *Hymns*, no. 46 (1835 ed.).

55. *Hymns*, no. 16 (1889 ed.). The hymns in this psalmody do not have titles, but rather names of hymn tunes.

though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake!"<sup>56</sup>

We have provided only the smallest sample of hymns that affirm the doctrine of grace. For a more complete listing of Latter-day Saint hymns that declare this doctrine, see appendix C. It does not appear to us that the church has avoided the notion of grace.

### The Proactive Christ of Gethsemane and the Cross

Davies accurately identifies the prominent place of human action and agency in Latter-day Saint culture. He also applies this perspective of proactive religion to the Latter-day Saint view of the atonement. In a section entitled "Proactive Christ," Davies writes,

The LDS interpretation of Christ's garden experience involves a most interesting relocation of the act of atonement within Christian theological accounts that have, traditionally, seen the cross as the prime site of assuming human sin. The *Encyclopedia* entry is telling, at this point, quoting President Ezra Taft Benson's words that "it was in Gethsemane that Jesus took on Himself the sins of the world." One realistic interpretation of this emphasis concerns Christ's volition as consonant with that stress on decision making in Mormonism that comes to a focus in the philosophical notion of human agency, one so vital to LDS thought. Christ's acceptance of the sins of the world in the garden is but the moment of implementation of his voluntary decision to do so that had been taken in pre-mortal realms. (p. 48)<sup>57</sup>

---

56. "How Firm a Foundation," *Hymns*, no. 85 (1985 ed.).

57. Davies's point here about the "relocation" of the act of atonement to the Garden of Gethsemane is not entirely correct. While it is certainly true that Latter-day Saints focus more attention on the Garden of Gethsemane than other Christians do, it is LDS doctrine that the atonement started in the garden, reached perhaps its ultimate depths on the cross, and gloriously ended with the resurrection. On this second point Elder Bruce R. McConkie wrote, speaking of the crucifixion: "While he was hanging on the cross . . . all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred." Elder McConkie later in the same talk goes on to declare that "[the atonement] took place in Gethsemane and at Golgotha." "The Purifying Power of Gethsemane," *Ensign*, May 1985, 10, 11.

This section illustrates the depth and care of Davies's examination of Latter-day Saint belief and practice as he works to draw out the distinctive themes that run through its texture and tie them together as a whole. As with his discussion of grace, however, we argue that Davies's account of Latter-day Saint belief and practice does not accurately match Latter-day Saint self-understanding.

In his account of the Mormon view of Christ's atonement, Davies recognizes that the unique role of Gethsemane supports a distinctive view of Christ as effecting the atonement by means of his proactive volition rather than by his passive suffering. However, in Latter-day Saint thought, the importance of Gethsemane does not eclipse the importance of Christ's death on the cross, as Davies seems to suggest. Rather, Gethsemane and the cross are both necessary phases of the process of atonement, which Christ undertook on our behalf.

Latter-day Saint understanding of Christ and his saving work supports an active conception of discipleship. Davies examines the portrayal of Christ in the sacrament, music, art, texts, and theology of the Saints, particularly with attention to the role of Christ in Gethsemane. He acknowledges that his is just one "interpretation" of the emphasis on Gethsemane and calls for further investigation (pp. 49, 54). While significantly incomplete, his provocative account provides a valuable opportunity to articulate the LDS view in ways that otherwise remain implicit.

Key to Davies's interpretation is a contrast between Gethsemane as a place where Christ actively chooses to carry out the atoning work and Calvary as a place where Christ passively suffers a tortured death:

In Gethsemane, as in the LDS preexistence, Christ is the clear and decisive voice, accepting his heavenly father's will for the benefit of others. He is the proactive Christ. On Calvary, by contrast, Christ becomes more passive, led, mocked, crucified and killed. The logic of LDS discourse on atonement is grounded in this self-commitment to affliction, and not in an abject passivity as a sacrifice upon whom death is wrought. (p. 49)

Davies understands Latter-day Saints to emphasize Gethsemane, in line with their typical emphasis on activity, while downplaying or

neglecting Calvary and the cross. Rather than saving us by suffering and dying, Christ supremely exemplifies the life of obedience through which Mormons seek salvation: “the Plan of Salvation . . . was worked out through [Christ’s] sinless life of obedience . . . and culminated in his resurrection and ascension” (p. 44). In light of this, “each Saint whose sins have been forgiven through this atonement should, henceforth and similarly, seek to live in a dedicated and self-sacrificial way” (p. 52). Latter-day Saints do believe we are called to follow Christ’s pure example. However, his sinlessness (as contrasted with our sinfulness) also helps explain why he was able to offer himself as the supreme sacrifice that made salvation possible.

Davies begins his analysis by observing that Latter-day Saints do not use the cross as a symbol of their faith.<sup>58</sup> He sees this as theologically significant. He then considers the understanding of Jesus’s role that is reflected in Latter-day Saint observance of the sacrament of the Lord’s supper: eating and drinking in remembrance of Christ’s body and blood. This ritual, the most important element of weekly worship, reflects the core principles of the LDS understanding of salvation through Christ.<sup>59</sup> Surprisingly, Davies takes this ceremony to refer to something other than Christ’s sacrificial death:

---

58. While church policy does discourage using the cross, we believe the reasons are historical rather than theological. Early church members were drawn largely from communities whose churches bore no crosses; see Ryan K. Smith, “The Cross: Church Symbol in Contest in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 74 (December 2001): 705–34. Early Latter-day Saints simply followed suit. When Protestant America began using the cross again in the late 1800s, Latter-day Saints, culturally and geographically isolated from the rest of America, did not act similarly. No doctrine entails the policy. See George Scott, “Mormons and the Cross: A Puritanical Heritage” (unpublished manuscript).

59. The sacrament service is much more significant in this way than Davies implies when he says it “is not the central soteriological vehicle of Mormonism,” but, rather, “a privilege retained by temple rites” (p. 39). The covenant of obedience made at baptism and renewed in the sacrament is in fact central to the process of salvation. Though he does not say why, Davies seems to assume that some one ritual vehicle must be central to the Mormon understanding of salvation, rendering others somehow secondary. Without venturing a detailed explanation here, we suggest that temple ceremonies are better understood as symbolizing the completion of the process of salvation, the same process of which baptism signifies the beginning, and that the sacrament signifies the maintenance and continuation.

Another reference to Christ in the Sacrament Service does refer to his body but does not engage in explicit reference to blood shedding or to the cross. This comes in the formal rite of remembrance associated with the Last Supper. . . . This expresses the Church's strong memorialist emphasis on the work of Christ, "that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son," while largely avoiding any sacramental references to Christ as sacrifice. (p. 41)

Davies is correct that the prayer given over the bread in the sacrament service does not mention the blood, and the cross is not explicitly mentioned in any part of the ceremony. Read in isolation, the reference to the body might not seem to be a clear reference to Christ's sacrifice. However, in combination with the prayer that immediately follows, it should be clear that this is a reference to Christ's body which he laid down in death, as a sacrifice.

The sacrament service comprises two phases, formally quite similar, and one immediately following the other: the first remembering Christ's body and the second remembering his blood. In each, the administering priest pronounces a prayer over the emblem—bread for the first and water for the second—and then the emblem is passed to the congregation. The prayer over the water asks God to bless it to those who drink it "in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them" (D&C 20:79). These emblems thus represent precisely the flesh and blood of Christ's atoning sacrifice.

While Davies rightly notes that, in contemporary Mormon sacrament services, no music is played during the blessing and passing of the emblems, the music played and sung immediately beforehand reveals their significance. The standard format for sacrament meetings includes a hymn specifically referred to as the "sacrament hymn," whose lyrics contemplate Christ's sacrifice and during which the bread is broken by the priests. The topical index of hymns in the back of the current LDS hymnal lists approximately thirty hymns under the theme "Sacrament" from which the sacrament hymn is typically drawn. Their themes are represented in titles such as the following: "Upon the Cross of Calvary" (no. 184), "In Memory of the Crucified"

(no. 190), “He Died! The Great Redeemer Died” (no. 192), and “There Is a Green Hill Far Away” (no. 194) (referring to Calvary). The hymns’ lyrics focus the congregants’ minds on how Christ was “bruised, broken, torn for us On Calvary’s hill” (no. 181), “died that we might live” (no. 182), hung “on the tree” (no. 185), accepted the “crown of thorns” and the “cruel cross” (no. 188), and so forth, as well as referring to the “blood that dripped like rain” in Gethsemane (no. 185). It is quite clear to the participants that in the sacrament service they are remembering how Christ suffered and died to take away their sin. Gethsemane transforms the Mormon conception of Christ’s sacrifice in large part by extending it: Christ’s suffering and the shedding of his blood began well before his arrest and torment and the crucifixion in which it was completed.

The Saints are also, of course, making or renewing a covenant, as fits the theme of activity that Davies highlights. In the sacrament, Latter-day Saints remember Christ and renew their commitment to follow him and to obey his commandments in order to be blessed with his Spirit. It is not a merely passive reception of his sacrifice, but an active response. The distinctive combination of active and passive elements in the LDS commemoration of the Lord’s supper may seem mysterious to someone from another tradition. However, for a people who understand discipleship actively, it is a natural combination. Christ taught, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). He expressed this love movingly in laying down his life for us. Hence to commit ourselves to keep his commandments is the only fitting response to his sacrifice. It is by living in obedience that we walk the path of salvation that he opened for us (cf. 2 Nephi 31:17–21). Latter-day Saints thus are both passive and active in regard to Christ’s sacrifice: we act in response to it.

Davies next turns to visual art as an indication of Christ’s role in Latter-day Saint eyes. He considers two items as representative: the portrayal of Christ in the *Christus* statue in the Salt Lake City North Visitor’s Center and a painting of Christ in Gethsemane by Harry Anderson. A wide range of visual art appears in Latter-day Saint homes, meetinghouses, and temples, and in Latter-day Saint



publications. However, these two items do represent key aspects of how the Saints visualize Christ and reflect a character similar to many other portrayals. Latter-day Saints focus their attention on the atoning Christ both in his acts in Gethsemane and as the resurrected Christ.<sup>60</sup>

The *Christus* portrays “one who has conquered and now holds a place of power, albeit, once more, with sensitive care rather than authoritarianism” (p. 45). Here Christ is serene and reaches out to us in love. From a distance, one might see no sign of the agony he has endured, but a closer look at the statue reveals the marks of the nails visible in Christ’s hands and feet, and of the spear in his side. These marks are crucial to the Latter-day Saint understanding of the resurrected Christ. Mormons favor portraying him in this resurrected state because it marks the completion of his triumph over sin and death, accomplished through his sacrifice.

More central to the LDS imagination than the *Christus* is the almost cinematic portrayal of Christ as he descends to visit the Nephites in the New World, recorded in 3 Nephi 11 (and rendered literally cinematic in more than one LDS production). This is clearly the pivotal event of the Book of Mormon, which the Nephites had been anticipating for years. Announced by the voice of the Father from the heavens, Jesus descends to a group of Nephites gathered at their temple. He then speaks to them, identifying himself in a way that is very illuminating of the Mormon view of his mission. He says:

I am Jesus Christ, whom the prophets testified shall come into the world.

And behold, I am the light and the life of the world; and I have drunk out of that bitter cup which the Father hath given me, and have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning. . . .

---

60. At least, this is the focus in recent decades, as reflected in a number of portrayals of these moments. The resurrected Christ is depicted, for example, appearing to the disciples in Jerusalem, appearing to the Nephites in the New World, and returning in power to begin his millennial reign on earth.

Arise and come forth unto me, that ye may thrust your hands into my side, and also that ye may feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet, that ye may know that I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world. (3 Nephi 11:10–11, 14)

Far from downplaying his crucifixion, Christ presents the wounds left in his body as the characteristic marks of who he is and his significance for humanity. Rather than beginning to teach, after extending this invitation he underscores the importance of these wounds by waiting for what may have been hours as “the multitude went forth . . . one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands” (3 Nephi 11:15), in total “about two thousand and five hundred souls” (3 Nephi 17:25). As believers in Christ who were not privileged to know him during his mortal ministry, it is common for contemporary Mormons to imagine themselves in the place of these Nephites.

As one would expect from such a passage, supported by similar descriptions in the New Testament, this image of meeting Christ and recognizing the marks of his crucifixion has strongly penetrated the LDS imagination. It is frequently recalled in popular discourse as Mormons imagine meeting Christ themselves, after death or at his second coming.<sup>61</sup> An important stimulus for this pattern is a hymn loved by Joseph Smith, “A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief” (no. 29 in the current hymnal), in which Christ is recognized by “the tokens in his hands.”<sup>62</sup>

In Gethsemane, Christ seals his carefully pondered decision to proceed with the atonement and accepts the suffering that causes him to “bleed at every pore” (D&C 19:18). The resolve displayed in John’s description of Christ before his death—“for this cause came I unto this hour” (John 12:27)—fits well with Latter-day Saint portrayals of

---

61. See, for instance, Elder McConkie’s oft-quoted final conference address, “The Purifying Power of Gethsemane,” 11, in which he states that “I am one of [Christ’s] witnesses, and in a coming day I shall feel the nail marks in his hands and in his feet and shall wet his feet with my tears.”

62. See *History of the Church*, 6:614–15.

Christ in Gethsemane. As Davies observes, far from being led around by captors, he is “the one who acts, and acts decisively” (p. 45). Again, however, as Latter-day Saints interpret these events, this view of Christ as active is not only available in Gethsemane. The Latter-day Saint view of Christ as active is not based on a downplaying of his crucifixion and death. Rather, in light of Gethsemane it becomes clear that Christ is active throughout his ministry, suffering, death, and resurrection. Not only the process of suffering in Gethsemane, but the trial and death were part of what he intended. Thus, while the Gospel of John does not mention Gethsemane, his descriptions of Christ as in control, even while in bonds, fit seamlessly with the Latter-day Saint vision of these events.<sup>63</sup> The distinctiveness of the Latter-day Saint view of Gethsemane should not, however, obscure how much the Saints share with other Christian groups in our conception of Christ’s atoning sacrifice.

Though Latter-day Saints sometimes speak of the atonement for sin as occurring primarily in Gethsemane, one of the most influential articulations of the importance of Gethsemane presents the suffering in Gethsemane and on the cross in roughly parallel terms. After a moving description of the events in Gethsemane, Elder Bruce R. McConkie proceeds with a similarly moving description of Christ’s trial, scourging, walk to Calvary, and crucifixion.

---

63. Though Christ is crucified by his fellow Jews, this is an outcome he chooses, and well in advance. Based on the New Testament record it is appropriate to say he is active and in control as it happens, particularly as the events are portrayed in the Gospel of John. Not only did Christ have the power to prevent it, and yet still allowed it; he took positive steps to set the stage for his arrest and crucifixion. He set out for Jerusalem, telling his disciples what would happen (Matthew 20:17–19; Luke 18:31–33). When Judas was about to betray him, he said to Judas, in effect, “Go do what you are going to do” (John 13:27). In John 16 he speaks of his death itself in an active voice, saying he is leaving: “now I go my way to him that sent me” (John 16:5); “I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father” (John 16:28). In the garden, he stopped Peter from defending him, saying, “the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?” (John 18:11). When Pilate said, “I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee,” Jesus appears to disagree, telling him that the matter is in greater hands than Pilate’s (John 19:11). Rather than lingering with the two thieves whose legs were to be broken, Christ seems even to choose his time of death: “He said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost” (Luke 23:46).

Darkness covered the land for the space of three hours, as it did among the Nephites. There was a mighty storm, as though the very God of Nature was in agony.

And truly he was, for while he was hanging on the cross for another three hours, from noon to 3:00 P.M., all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred.

And, finally, when the atoning agonies had taken their toll—when the victory had been won, when the Son of God had fulfilled the will of his Father in all things—then he said, “It is finished” (John 19:30), and he voluntarily gave up the ghost.<sup>64</sup>

In McConkie’s description, the process of atonement for sin, though begun in Gethsemane, extended through the crucifixion. A similar view of Christ as resolute is illustrated strikingly in a recent video entitled *The Lamb of God*—produced first for the LDS Seminary program and then released more widely—which portrays Christ’s agony in Gethsemane, his trial, scourging, mockery, crucifixion, and resurrection.<sup>65</sup>

This view of Christ as active in the crucifixion as well as in Gethsemane is obvious in 3 Nephi. In his initial appearance, quoted above, Christ refers to his suffering and death as a victory (3 Nephi 11:11, 14). Later, he strikingly transforms the image of himself on the cross into an image of power:

I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me.

And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, that I might draw all men unto me,<sup>66</sup> that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me. (3 Nephi 27:13–14)

---

64. McConkie, “The Purifying Power of Gethsemane,” 10.

65. *The Lamb of God*, VHS (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1993).

66. Compare the similar portrayal of his crucifixion as empowering in John 12:24: “Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Christ's undergoing crucifixion at human hands thus gives him power over humanity. Yet here, as with the Latter-day Saints' own activity, it is not merely the activity of a volunteer. Rather, in this, as in all his actions, Christ is obedient to and carries out the will of the Father.

Davies, approaching Mormonism with his extensive knowledge of traditional Christianity, is perhaps overly influenced by the categories shaped in its theological debates. The tie between his interpretations of Mormon beliefs on Gethsemane and on grace is explicit: "Using slightly inappropriate comparisons, the Gethsemane-Calvary distinction may, perhaps, be viewed as the Mormon equivalent of the Pelagian-Augustinian debate" (p. 51). This debate, which in fact continued from "Pauline thought, through Augustine's opposition to Pelagius, and into the Reformation argument about faith and works" considered "the relative importance of human will and action and divine will and action in the process of salvation. The crucial element turns on whether, in the last resort, salvation depends upon human or divine endeavour, whether humans are agents of their own salvation or whether they are more passive recipients" (p. 51). The traditional approach thus assumes that salvation must ultimately depend either on human action *or* divine action but not both. Seeing the clear Latter-day Saint teaching that human efforts are crucial to full salvation or exaltation, Davies infers that Christ's work of redemption must then be less crucial. Yet the distinctiveness of the Mormon view lies precisely in overcoming this dichotomy. We can only be saved through God's mercy, but God does not choose to save us without our willing and active acceptance of his gifts and his governance over our lives. Similarly, it is only because Christ died on the cross that the new life to which he calls us becomes possible.

## Conclusion

We have found much with which to take issue in Davies's illuminating volume. And yet Latter-day Saints are fortunate to interact with a scholar of Davies's knowledge, experience, and insight who has such a profound interest in our faith. His publications continue

to enrich the field of Mormon studies. They challenge us to examine aspects of our faith that we may not have considered in depth, and they cast familiar points in a new and sometimes surprising light. Further, where we have found gaps in his work, they are of the most interesting kind: they stem from and express his insights. Davies's discussions of Mormon approaches to temple work, grace, Gethsemane, and the cross show how a distinctive Mormon focus on active discipleship is reflected in all facets of the faith. Although his account is incomplete, he perceptively draws out key elements of the texture that unites Mormon belief and practice and gives the combination its peculiar dynamism. We look forward to future works penned by Davies and the spur they will provide to clarify and deepen our own understanding of our faith.

## Appendix A: Douglas J. Davies Bibliography of Latter-day Saint–Related Publications

(Listed in chronological order, most recent first)

2005. “Mormonism.” In *Encyclopedia of Cremation*, edited by Douglas J. Davies with Lewis H. Mates, 320. London: Ashgate.
2005. “Anglican Soteriology: Incarnation, Worship, and the Property of Mercy.” In *Salvation in Christ: Comparative Christian Views*, edited by Roger R. Keller and Robert L. Millet, 53–67. Provo, UT: BYU Religious Studies Center.
2004. “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormonism).” In *New Religions*, 32–35. New York: Oxford University Press.
2004. “Time, Place and Mormon Sense of Self.” In *Religion, Identity and Change: Perspectives on Global Transformations*, edited by Simon Coleman and Peter Collins, 107–18. London: Ashgate.
2004. “Mormonism.” In *Encyclopedia of Protestantism*, edited by Hans J. Hillerbrand, 3:1313–17. New York: Routledge.
2003. *An Introduction to Mormonism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2002. *Death, Ritual and Belief: The Rhetoric of Funerary Rites*, 2nd ed., 111–13, 222–23. London: Continuum.
2001. “Gethsemane and Calvary in LDS Soteriology.” *Dialogue* 34/3–4: 19–30. (Also guest editor of this issue of *Dialogue*.)
2001. “‘Gestus’ Manifests ‘Habitus’: Dress and the Mormon.” In *Dressed to Impress: Looking the Part*, edited by William J. F. Keenan, 123–40. Oxford: Berg.
2000. *The Mormon Culture of Salvation: Force, Grace and Glory*. Aldershot, England: Ashgate.
1996. *Mormon Identities in Transition*, editor. London: Cassell.
1995. “Jural and Mystical Authority in Religions: Exploring a Typology.” *DISKUS* (online journal of International Religious Studies) 3/2:1–12.
1991. “Pilgrimage in Mormon Culture.” In *Social Anthropology of Pilgrimage*, edited by Makhan Jha, 310–25. New Delhi: Inter-India Publications.

1989. "Mormon History, Identity, and Faith Community." In *History and Ethnicity*, edited by Elizabeth Tonkin et al., 168–82. London, Routledge.
1987. *Mormon Spirituality: Latter Day Saints in Wales and Zion*. Nottingham, England: University of Nottingham.
1984. *Meaning and Salvation in Religious Studies*. Leiden: Brill.
1973. "Aspects of Latter Day Saint Eschatology." In *Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, edited by Michael Hill, 122–35. London: SCM.



## Appendix B: A Doctrine of Grace throughout Latter-day Saint History

### Joseph Smith (1805–44)

The doctrine that the Presbyterians and Methodists have quarreled so much about—[once] in grace, always in grace, or falling away from grace, I will say a word about. They are both wrong. Truth takes a road between them both, for while the Presbyterian says: “Once in grace, you cannot fall”; the Methodist says: “You can have grace today, fall from it tomorrow, next day have grace again; and so follow on, changing continually.” But the doctrine of the Scriptures and the spirit of Elijah would show them both false, and take a road between them both; for, according to the Scripture, if men have received the good word of God, and tasted of the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, it is impossible to renew them again, seeing they have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame; so there is a possibility of falling away; you could not be renewed again, and the power of Elijah cannot seal against this sin, for this is a reserve made in the seals and power of the Priesthood.<sup>67</sup>

I only add, that I do not, nor never have, pretended to be any other than a man “subject to passion,” and liable, without the assisting grace of the Savior, to deviate from that perfect path in which all men are commanded to walk.<sup>68</sup>

### Brigham Young (1801–77)

There are no persons without evil passions to embitter their lives. Mankind are revengeful, passionate, hateful, and devilish in their dispositions. This we inherit through the fall, and the grace of God is designed to enable us to overcome it. The grace of God is bestowed upon all, and the kingdom of

---

67. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 338.

68. *History of the Church*, 1:10n.

God is planted on the earth expressly to enable mankind to overcome the evil that is in them, and to save all.<sup>69</sup>

“Mormonism” has made me all I am, and the grace, the power, and the wisdom of God will make me all that I ever will be, either in time or eternity.<sup>70</sup>

Cast all bitterness out of your own hearts—all anger, wrath, strife, covetousness, and lust, and sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, that you may enjoy the Holy Ghost, and have that Spirit to be your constant companion day by day, to lead you into all truth, and then you will have good doctrine, good feelings, good wives, good children, a good community; and, finally, you will be Saints in the fullest sense of the word, but not yet. I believe we shall be Saints, through the grace of God.<sup>71</sup>

We cannot help being Saints; we cannot prevent the rolling forth of the work of God: in and of ourselves we have no power to control our own minds and passions; but the grace of God is sufficient to give us perfect victory.<sup>72</sup>

Blessed are they who trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who know that he is their Savior, and that in him they can find mercy, and grace to help in time of need.<sup>73</sup>

All will have to come to the Lord and be sanctified through the grace of Christ by faith in his name; without this, I am happy to say, that none can be purified, sanctified and prepared to inherit eternal glory.<sup>74</sup>

### John Taylor (1808–87)

Furthermore, that the doctrine of the atonement, as understood by us, was understood in like manner by the ancient

---

69. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:160.

70. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:162.

71. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:33.

72. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 8:226.

73. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 10:301.

74. Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 14:149–50.

servants of the Lord, and that it was the central principle of their faith, the foundation of their hope for eternal felicity and salvation, and their only trust for the resurrection of their bodies and life everlasting in the presence of the Father.<sup>75</sup>

A man, as a man, could arrive at all the dignity that a man was capable of obtaining or receiving; but it needed a God to raise him to the dignity of a God. For this cause it is written, “Now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him.” And how and why like Him? Because, through the instrumentality of the atonement and the adoption, it is made possible for us to become of the family of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; and that as He, the potential instrument, through the oneness that existed between Him and His Father, by reason of obedience to divine law, overcame death, hell and the grave, and sat down upon His Father’s throne, so shall we be able to sit down with Him, even upon His throne. Thus, as it is taught in the Book of Mormon, it must needs be that there be an infinite atonement; and hence of Him, and by Him, and through Him are all things; and through Him do we obtain every blessing, power, right, immunity, salvation and exaltation, He is our God, our Redeemer, our Savior, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be eternal and everlasting praises worlds without end.<sup>76</sup>

The conditions required of the human family to enable them to obtain the high exaltation which the atonement makes it possible for them to receive, are: First, Faith in God as our Father and the great Supreme Ruler of the universe; in whose hands are the destinies of the human family; in whom we live and move and have our being, And in His Son Jesus Christ, as the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world, as the great Mediator and great propitiatory sacrifice

---

75. Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, 190.

76. Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, 145–46.

provided by the Father before the creation, and consummated by the offering of Himself upon the cross. For “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Or, to use the words of the Nephite King Benjamin:

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend all the things which the Lord can comprehend,”

Or as Paul writes; “He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

The second principle of the Gospel of salvation, is repentance. It is a sincere and godly sorrow for and a forsaking of sin, combined with full purpose of heart to keep God’s commandments. As is written by the Prophet Isaiah: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.” And to quote from the Book of Mormon:

“And again: Believe that ye must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God, and ask in sincerity of heart that he would forgive you, and now, if you believe all these things, see that ye do them.”—Mosiah iv, 10.

Thirdly, Baptism for the remission of sins, of our personal transgressions, which, through this means, provided by divine mercy, are, by reason of the atonement, blotted out. To use the words of Paul: “Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.”

Next, the reception of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands of those who have received the Holy Priesthood,

and are duly authorized, ordained, and empowered to impart this blessing; Thus Peter preached on the day of Pentecost:

“Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”—Acts ii, 38, 39.

These are the introductory or first principles of the everlasting, unchangeable Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that is and has been the same to all men, amongst all nations, in all ages, whenever, or wherever it has been taught by the authority of heaven.<sup>77</sup>

It would seem that the redeemed of the Lord from all nations and peoples are indebted to the Lord Jesus Christ, through His atonement, for the position that they will occupy in the state of exaltation here referred to; and if they are exalted to be kings and priests unto God, it is through the ordinances which He has appointed for the accomplishment of this object, as the wise will understand.<sup>78</sup>

### Wilford Woodruff (1807–98)

Under these circumstances, of course, faith is required on the part of the Saints to live their religion, do their duty, walk uprightly before the Lord and build up his Zion on the earth. Then it requires works to correspond with our faith. I know the testimony of Jesus Christ is not palatable; it does not, and never did, suit the ears of the world at large. Christendom today does not like “Mormonism,” because it comes in contact with the traditions handed down from the fathers; the world never did like the truth.<sup>79</sup>

---

77. Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, 181–83.

78. Taylor, *Mediation and Atonement*, 35.

79. Wilford Woodruff, *Journal of Discourses*, 17:248–49.

The first principles of the Gospel taught from the dawn of creation, are faith, repentance and baptism, and the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost; and they are the same today. To certain minds there might be a mystery connected with these principles. Why, say some, is this so? We can only answer, because it is the law of the Great Jehovah, the plan framed in the heavens for the salvation and redemption of man. They are requirements made of the whole human family, which must be obeyed in order that the prevailing mystery may be banished, and the fruits and the blessings of the Gospel enjoyed. The Gospel is free to all; it is without money and without price.<sup>80</sup>

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance and baptism for the remission of sin, are absolute requirements, which must be complied with, before the Holy Ghost can be received.<sup>81</sup>

### Orson Pratt (1811–81)

The salvation, or redemption from your own sins, is not by free grace alone, it requires a little work. But what are the works? Jesus Christ, through his death and sufferings, has answered the penalty, on condition that you believe in him, and repent of your sins, and be baptized for the remission of them, and receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost, by the laying on of hands, and continue humble, and meek, and prayerful, until you go down to your graves; and on these conditions, Jesus will plead for you before the Father.<sup>82</sup>

Redemption from the original sin is without faith or works; redemption from our own sins is given through faith and works. Both are the gifts of free grace; but while one is a gift forced upon us unconditionally, the other is a gift merely offered to us conditionally. The reception of the one is compulsory; the reception of the other is voluntary. Man

---

80. Wilford Woodruff, *Journal of Discourses*, 18:218.

81. Wilford Woodruff, *Journal of Discourses*, 18:220.

82. Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:289.

cannot by any possible act, prevent his redemption from the fall; but he can utterly refuse and prevent his redemption from the penalty of his own sins.<sup>83</sup>

### Lorenzo Snow (1814–1901)

When we experience trying moments, then is the time for us to avail ourselves of that great privilege of calling upon the Lord for strength and understanding, intelligence and grace by which we can overcome the weakness of the flesh against which we have to make a continual warfare.<sup>84</sup>

It is important that we, as Latter-day Saints, should understand and bear in mind that salvation comes through the grace of God, and through the development in us of those principles that governed those righteous people before mentioned. The idea is not to do good because of the praise of men; but to do good because in doing good we develop godliness within us, and this being the case we shall become allied to godliness, which will in time become part and portion of our being.<sup>85</sup>

### Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918)

When we commit sin, it is necessary that we repent of it and make restitution as far as lies in our power. When we cannot make restitution for the wrong we have done, then we must apply for the grace and mercy of God to cleanse us from that iniquity.<sup>86</sup>

In going forth to war these young men are liable to be confronted with danger far greater than that which they might expect from the bullets of the enemy. There are many evils that usually follow in the wake of marshaled armies equipped for

---

83. Orson Pratt, *Journal of Discourses*, 1:330.

84. Lorenzo Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, 20:188.

85. Lorenzo Snow, *Journal of Discourses*, 23:192.

86. Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1919), 98.

and engaged in war, far worse than honorable death which may come in the conflict of battle. It matters not so much when our young men are called, or where they may go, but it does matter much to their parents, friends and associates in the truth, and above all to themselves, how they go. They have been trained all their lives as members of the Church to keep themselves pure and unspotted from the sins of the world, to respect the rights of others, to be obedient to righteous principles, to remember that virtue is one of the greatest gifts from God. Moreover, that they should respect the virtue of others and rather die a thousand times than defile themselves by committing deadly sin. We want them to go forth clean, both in thought and action, with faith in the principles of the gospel and the redeeming grace of our Lord and Savior. We would have them remember that only by living clean and faithful lives can they hope to attain the salvation promised through the shedding of the blood of our Redeemer.<sup>87</sup>

Notwithstanding our many weaknesses, imperfections and follies the Lord still continues His mercy, manifests His grace and imparts unto us His Holy Spirit, that our minds may be illuminated by the light of revelation.<sup>88</sup>

### Heber J. Grant (1856–1945)

To the people of the world we send our blessing, and bear witness to them that God lives, that Jesus Christ is his Only Begotten Son, the Redeemer of the world. We call upon all men to come unto him, that through his grace they may attain to eternal life and an inheritance with him in the kingdom of his Father.<sup>89</sup>

We urge you to remember that your righteousness rests between you and your God. Others may exhort, encourage, and

---

87. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, 426.

88. Joseph F. Smith, *Journal of Discourses*, 12:347.

89. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:286.



support, but you only can win the victory for your salvation, aided always by the love, the mercy, and grace of your Heavenly Father, who will be always near you in your righteous life, wherever your lot may be cast.<sup>90</sup>

### **George Albert Smith (1870–1951)**

By eternal decree, faith and work must walk hand in hand as we advance toward the goal of eternal life.<sup>91</sup>

### **David O. McKay (1873–1970)**

The fallacy that Jesus has done all for us, and live as we may, if on our deathbed, we only believe, we shall be saved in his glorious presence, is most pernicious. Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, has given us the means whereby man may obtain eternal happiness and peace in the kingdom of our Father, but man must work out his own salvation through obedience to the eternal principles and ordinances of the gospel. . . .

I am not unmindful of the scripture that declares, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Eph. 2:8.) That is absolutely true, for man in his taking upon himself mortality was impotent to save himself. When left to grope in a natural state, he would have become and did become “carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature.” But the Lord through his grace appeared to man, gave him the gospel or eternal plan whereby he might rise above the carnal and selfish things of life and obtain spiritual perfection.<sup>92</sup>

### **John A. Widtsoe (1872–1952)**

There are two first principles, faith and repentance, and two first ordinances, baptism and the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost in the Church of Christ. These are

---

90. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:182.

91. Clark, *Messages of the First Presidency*, 6:229.

92. McKay, *Gospel Ideals*, 8, 10–11.

closely interwoven. Faith is the first principle, upon which other principles rest, and in the end all ordinances are derivatives of faith. But faith must be expressed in human actions, else it cannot be known. A man proves his faith by his works; he has no other means of doing so. The ordinance of baptism for example may be viewed as man's signature to his compact with God, as an acceptance of the leadership of Jesus the Christ, and as a promise to live the law of the Lord—the things that would be expected from one who has acquired faith. Baptism is a logical sequence of faith. Every ordinance becomes in like manner a necessary tangible outward evidence of some phase of that inward conviction called faith. Each ordinance, in its place, becomes a logical acquiescence with some part of the vast territory covered by faith. Each ordinance becomes a witness to man's surrender to his Heavenly Father.<sup>93</sup>

Every person who accepts the divine plan for human salvation must accept the leadership of Jesus, and covenant to keep the laws of the plan. As Christ is accepted with all the attendant obligations of the gospel, in spirit and in deed, so man may win salvation (Pearl of Great Price, Moses 5:8–9), and there is no other way.<sup>94</sup>

\* \* The man who uses his powers in obedience to law to fight all enemies of progress, whether ignorance, temptation, appetites, or personalities, rises above existence; he lives; he is on the way to salvation. For him who does not so use his powers, though he exist, life does not function fully; the light of truth is blotted out; the enemy may defeat him; he is retreating from salvation. Salvation then is conditioned under the divine plan and with divine help, upon the proper exercise of the will of man. Complete salvation, which is full and eternal life, results from man's full endeavor to conform to the laws of

---

93. John A. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960), 196–97.

94. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 79.

life, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is why we often say that men save themselves with the aid of the Lord (D. & C. 29:44, 45).<sup>95</sup>

The manner of entrance into this the highest kingdom, is therefore made clear. Any person who wishes to enter it must have faith and repent from his sins. Then he must be baptized, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by one who has divine authority to perform such ordinances. There are principles and ordinances which in their entirety belong peculiarly to the higher kingdom.<sup>96</sup>

Though all this be so, the principle of free agency remains. The Church may teach, but each member has the right to accept or reject, in his life, the truth propounded. There is no more basic law of conduct in the gospel. The Lord has formulated the plan of salvation; he offers His help, but each individual must act for himself in winning the salvation offered. Measurably, with the aid of the Lord, each one of us “works out his own salvation”; and we must each face the consequences of our disobedience to law.<sup>97</sup>

### James E. Talmage (1862–1933)

Religion is more than the confession and profession of the lips. Jesus averred that in the day of judgment many would pretend allegiance to Him, saying: “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” Only by doing the will of the Father is the saving grace of the Son obtainable. To assume to speak and act in the name of the Lord without the bestowal of authority, such as the Lord alone can give, is to add sacrilege to hypocrisy.

---

95. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 190.

96. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 200.

97. Widtsoe, *Evidences and Reconciliations*, 280–81.

Even miracles wrought will be no vindication of the claims of those who pretend to minister in the ordinances of the gospel while devoid of the authority of the Holy Priesthood.<sup>98</sup>

Individual salvation or rescue from the effects of personal sins is to be acquired by each for himself by faith and good works through the redemption wrought by Jesus Christ.<sup>99</sup>

As we proceed with our study, we shall find that among the specific teachings of the Church respecting the Christ are these:

(1) The unity and continuity of His mission in all ages—this of necessity involving the verity of His preexistence and foreordination. (2) The fact of His antemortal Godship. (3) The actuality of His birth in the flesh as the natural issue of divine and mortal parentage. (4) The reality of His death and physical resurrection, as a result of which the power of death shall be eventually overcome. (5) The literalness of the atonement wrought by Him, including the absolute requirement of individual compliance with the laws and ordinances of His gospel as the means by which salvation may be attained. (6) The restoration of His Priesthood and the reestablishment of His Church in the current age, which is verily the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times. (7) The certainty of His return to earth in the near future, with power and great glory, to reign in Person and bodily presence as Lord and King.<sup>100</sup>

The application of the atonement to individual transgression, whereby the sinner may obtain absolution through compliance with the laws and ordinances embodied in the gospel of Jesus Christ, is conclusively attested by scripture. Since forgiveness of sins can be secured in none other way, there being either in heaven or earth no name save that of Jesus Christ whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, every soul stands in need of the Savior's mediation, since all are

---

98. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 245–46.

99. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 31 n. 5.

100. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 5.

sinner, “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” said Paul of old, and John the apostle added his testimony in these words: “If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”

Who shall question the justice of God, which denies salvation to all who will not comply with the prescribed conditions on which alone it is declared obtainable? Christ is “the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him,” and God “will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil.”

Such then is the need of a Redeemer, for without Him mankind would forever remain in a fallen state, and as to hope of eternal progression would be inevitably lost. The mortal probation is provided as an opportunity for advancement; but so great are the difficulties and the dangers, so strong is the influence of evil in the world, and so weak is man in resistance thereto, that without the aid of a power above that of humanity no soul would find its way back to God from whom it came. The need of a Redeemer lies in the inability of man to raise himself from the temporal to the spiritual plane, from the lower kingdom to the higher. In this conception we are not without analogies in the natural world. . . .

So, for the advancement of man from his present fallen and relatively degenerate state to the higher condition of spiritual life, a power above his own must cooperate. Through the operation of the laws obtaining in the higher kingdom man may be reached and lifted; himself he cannot save by his own unaided effort. A Redeemer and Savior of mankind is beyond all question essential to the realization of the plan of the Eternal Father, “to bring to pass the immortality and eternal

life of man”<sup>9</sup>; and that Redeemer and Savior is Jesus the Christ, beside whom there is and can be none other.<sup>101</sup>

Thus the scriptures of both hemispheres and in all ages of ante-meridian time bore solemn testimony to the certainty of Messiah’s advent; thus the holy prophets of old voiced the word of revelation predicting the coming of the world’s King and Lord, through whom alone is salvation provided, and redemption from death made sure.<sup>102</sup>

The narrative of this interview between Nicodemus and the Christ constitutes one of our most instructive and precious scriptures relating to the absolute necessity of unreserved compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel, as the means indispensable to salvation. Faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, through whom alone men may gain eternal life; the forsaking of sin by resolute turning away from the gross darkness of evil to the saving light of righteousness; the unqualified requirement of a new birth through baptism in water, and this of necessity by the mode of immersion, since otherwise the figure of a birth would be meaningless; and the completion of the new birth through baptism by the Spirit—all these principles are taught herein in such simplicity and plainness as to make plausible no man’s excuse for ignorance.<sup>103</sup>

A condition essential to the exercise of a living, growing, sustaining faith in Deity is the consciousness on man’s part that he is at least endeavoring to live in accordance with the laws of God as he has learned them, A knowledge that he is wilfully and wantonly sinning against the truth will deprive him of sincerity in prayer and faith and estrange him from his Father. He must feel that the trend of his life’s course is acceptable, that with due allowance for mortal weakness and human frailty he is in some measure approved of the Lord;

---

101. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 26–27, 28.

102. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 52.

103. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 162.

otherwise he is restrained from supplicating the throne of grace with confidence.<sup>104</sup>

The Apostle Paul quite comprehensively sums up the results of Christ's death and resurrection: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:20–22). That is, death having come on all men through the disobedience of Adam, so must all be raised to immortality and eternal life through the death and resurrection of Christ, Paul also asserted that "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death" (verse 26). John the Revelator declares that he saw death and hell cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14). The atonement, as wrought out by Jesus Christ, further signifies that He has opened up the way for man's redemption from his own sins, through faith in Christ's sufferings, death, and resurrection. The Apostle Paul well expresses this: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Romans 3:23–26). These passages evidence that redemption from death, through the sufferings of Christ, is for all men, both the righteous and the wicked; for this earth, and for all things created upon it. The whole tenor of the scriptures assures us that, while they may be sure of resurrection from death, regardless of their personal acts, yet they will be rewarded for their works, whether they be good or evil, and that redemption from personal sins can only be obtained through obedience to the requirements of the gospel, and a life of good works. The transgression of Adam being infinite

---

104. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 105.

in its consequences, those consequences cannot be averted, except through an infinite atonement.<sup>105</sup>

The sectarian dogma of justification by faith alone has exercised an influence for evil.<sup>106</sup> The idea upon which this pernicious doctrine was founded was at first associated with that of an absolute predestination, by which man was foredoomed to destruction, or to an undeserved salvation. Thus, Luther taught as follows: “The excellent, infallible, and sole preparation for grace is the eternal election and predestination of God,” “Since the fall of man, free will is but an idle word.” “A man who imagines to arrive at grace by doing all that he is able to do, adds sin to sin, and is doubly guilty.” “That man is not justified who performs many works; but he who without works has much faith in Christ.” (For these and other doctrines of the so-called “Reformation,” see D’Aubigné’s *History of the Reformation*, vol. 1, pp. 82, 83, 119, 122.) In Miller’s *Church History* (vol. 4, p. 514) we read: “The point which the reformer [Luther] had most at heart in all his labors, contests, and dangers, was the justification by faith alone.” Melancthon voices the doctrine of Luther in these words: “Man’s justification before God proceeds from faith alone. This faith enters man’s heart by the grace of God alone”; and further, “As all things which happen, happen necessarily according to the divine predestination, there is no such thing as liberty in our wills” (D’Aubigné, vol. 3, p. 340). It is true that Luther strongly denounced and vehemently disclaimed responsibility for the excesses to which this teaching gave rise, yet he was not less vigorous in proclaiming the doctrine. Note his words: “I, Doctor Martin Luther, unworthy herald of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, confess this article, that faith alone without works justifies before God; and I declare

---

105. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 478–79, appendix 4, quoting Franklin D. Richards and James A. Little, *A Compendium of the Doctrines of the Gospel* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1884), 8, 9.

106. We have chosen to lowercase run-in headings in the quotations from James E. Talmage.



that it shall stand and remain forever in despite of the emperor of the Romans, the emperor of the Turks, the emperor of the Persians—in spite of the pope and all the cardinals, with the bishops, priests, monks, and nuns—in spite of kings, princes, and nobles, and in spite of all the world and of the devils themselves; and that if they endeavor to fight against this truth they will draw the fires of hell upon their heads. This is the true and holy gospel, and the declaration of me, Doctor Luther, according to the teachings of the Holy Ghost” (D’Aubigné, vol. 1, p. 70). It should be remembered, however, that Luther, and even the most pronounced contenders for the doctrine of justification by faith, affirmed the necessity of sanctification as well as justification. Fletcher, *End of Religious Controversy*, p. 90, illustrates the vicious extreme to which this evil doctrine led, by accusing one of its adherents with having said: “Even adultery and murder do not hurt the pleasant children, but rather work for their good. God sees no sin in believers, whatever sin they may commit. \* \* \* It is a most pernicious error of the schoolmen to distinguish sins according to the fact, and not according to the person. Though I blame those who say, let us sin that grace may abound, yet adultery, incest, and murder, shall upon the whole, make me holier on earth, and merrier in heaven.”

A summary of the mediaeval controversy regarding the means of grace, including the doctrines of Luther and others, is presented in Roberts’ *Outlines of Ecclesiastical History*, part 3, section 2, to which the student is referred. The quotations given above are incorporated therein.

Faith includes works—by isolating certain passages of scripture and regarding them as though they are complete in themselves some readers have assumed inconsistency if not contradiction to exist. Paul has been misrepresented as a proponent of the sufficiency of faith without works, and James has been cited in opposition. Compare Rom. 4:25; 9:11; Gal. 2:16; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5, with James 1:22, 23; 2:14–26. Paul specifies the outward forms and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, which

had been superseded by the higher requirements of the Gospel, as unessential works. James speaks of actual effort and effective deeds as the works that result from true faith in God and His requirements. But after all, the apparent differences lie in the words and not in the spirit or the fact. The following note by Elder J. M. Sjodahl of the Church Historian's Office is instructive and in point: "If we comprehend fully the meaning in which the authors of the scriptures use the word 'faith' we shall see that there is no difference in meaning between true faith and works of faith. In the Bible the two terms mean the same thing. James does not contradict Paul. For, to 'believe' is to *live* by the laws of the gospel. The [Latin] verbs *credere* and *vivere* are synonymous, since faith without works is dead. That is the teaching of James, and Paul certainly does not teach salvation by means of *dead* faith."<sup>107</sup>

The individual effect of the atonement makes it possible for any and every soul to obtain absolution from the effect of personal sins, through the mediation of Christ; but such saving intercession is to be invoked by individual effort as manifested through faith, repentance, and continued works of righteousness. The laws under which individual salvation is obtainable have been prescribed by Christ, whose right it is to say how the blessings made possible by His own sacrifice shall be administered. All men are in need of the Savior's mediation, for all are transgressors. So taught the apostles of old: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." And again: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." That the blessing of redemption from individual sins, while open for all to attain, is nevertheless conditioned on individual effort, is as plainly declared as is the truth of unconditional redemption from death as an effect of the fall. There is a judgment ordained for all, and all will be judged "according to their works." The free agency of man enables him to choose

---

107. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 480–81, appendix 5.

or reject, to follow the path of life or the road that leads to destruction; therefore it is but just that he be held to answer for the exercise of his power of choice and that he meet the results of his acts.<sup>108</sup>

Without Christ no man can be saved, and the salvation provided at the cost of Christ's sufferings and bodily death is offered upon certain clearly defined conditions only; and these are summarized under "obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel."<sup>109</sup>

Inasmuch as salvation is attainable only through the mediation and atonement of Christ, and since this is made applicable to individual sin in the measure of obedience to the laws of righteousness, faith in Jesus Christ is indispensable to salvation.<sup>110</sup>

Though within the reach of all who diligently strive to gain it, faith is nevertheless a divine gift. As is fitting for so priceless a pearl, it is given to those only who show by their sincerity that they are worthy of it, and who give promise of abiding by its dictates. Although faith is called the first principle of the Gospel of Christ, though it be in fact the foundation of religious life, yet even faith is preceded by sincerity of disposition and humility of soul, whereby the word of God may make an impression upon the heart. No compulsion is used in bringing men to a knowledge of God; yet, as fast as we open our hearts to the influences of righteousness, the faith that leads to life eternal will be given us of our Father.<sup>111</sup>

### Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

There is a difference between the Lord Jesus Christ and the rest of mankind. We have no life in ourselves, for no power has

---

108. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 89–90.

109. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 91.

110. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 106.

111. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 107.

been given unto us, to lay down our lives and take them again. That is beyond our power, and so, being subject to death, and being sinners—for we are all transgressors of the law to some extent, no matter how good we have tried to be—*we are therefore unable in and of ourselves to receive redemption from our sins by any act of our own.*

This is the grace that Paul was teaching. Therefore, *it is by the grace of Jesus Christ that we are saved.* And had he not come into the world, and laid down his life that he might take it again, or as he said in another place, to give us life that we may have it more abundantly—we would still be *subject to death* and be *in our sins.*

As it was pointed out by Isaiah and others of the prophets many hundreds of years before his birth, Christ took upon himself the transgressions of all men and suffered for them, that they might escape, on conditions of their repentance, and acceptance of his gospel, and their faithfulness to the end. So we are saved by grace and that not of ourselves. It is the gift of God. . . .

So Paul taught these people—who thought that they could be saved by some power that was within them, or by observing the law of Moses—he pointed out to them the fact that if it were not for the mission of Jesus Christ, if it were not for this great atoning sacrifice, they could not be redeemed. And therefore it was by the grace of God that they are saved, not by any work on their part, for they were absolutely helpless. Paul was absolutely right.<sup>112</sup>

### Harold B. Lee (1899–1973)

Spiritual certainty that is necessary to salvation must be preceded by a maximum of individual effort. Grace, or the free gift of the Lord's atoning power, must be preceded by personal

---

112. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:309–10.

striving. Repeating again what Nephi said, “By grace . . . we are saved, after all we can do.”<sup>113</sup>

We hear much from some persons of limited understanding about the possibility of one’s being saved by grace alone. But it requires the explanation of another prophet to understand the true doctrine of grace as he explained in these meaningful words:

“For,” said this prophet, “we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.” (2 Nephi 25:23.) Truly we are redeemed by the atoning blood of the Savior of the world, but only after each has done all he can to work out his own salvation.<sup>114</sup>

We are saved by grace, yes, through the atonement of the Master, but Nephi taught this other principle: “For we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do.” (2 Nephi 25:23.)<sup>115</sup>

### Spencer W. Kimball (1895–1985)

There can be no real and true Christianity, even with good works, unless we are deeply and personally committed to the reality of Jesus Christ as the Only Begotten Son of the Father, who bought us, who purchased us in the great act of atonement.<sup>116</sup>

However good a person’s works, he could not be saved had Jesus not died for his and everyone else’s sins. And however powerful the saving grace of Christ, it brings exaltation to no man who does not comply with the works of the gospel.<sup>117</sup>

---

113. Harold B. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places: Selected Sermons and Writings of President Harold B. Lee* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974), 213.

114. Lee, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*, 236.

115. Harold B. Lee, Conference Report, October 1956, 62; see also Clyde J. Williams, ed., *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996), 407.

116. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, ed. Edward L. Kimball (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 68.

117. Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969), 207.

**Ezra Taft Benson (1899–1994)**

Lehi taught that “no flesh can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8). Even the most just and upright man cannot save himself solely on his own merits, for, as the Apostle Paul tells us, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Therefore, repentance means more than simply a reformation of behavior. Many men and women in the world demonstrate great will-power and self-discipline in overcoming bad habits and the weaknesses of the flesh. Yet at the same time they give no thought to the Master, sometimes even openly rejecting Him. Such changes of behavior, even if in a positive direction, do not constitute true repentance. Repentance involves not just a change of actions, but a change of heart.<sup>118</sup>

By grace, the Savior accomplished His atoning sacrifice so that all mankind will attain immortality. By His grace, and by our faith in His atonement and repentance of our sins, we receive the strength to do the works necessary that we otherwise could not do by our own power. By His grace we receive an endowment of blessing and spiritual strength that may eventually lead us to eternal life if we endure to the end. By His grace we become more like His divine personality. Yes, it is “by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23).<sup>119</sup>

**Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85)**

*God’s grace* consists in his love, mercy, and condescension toward his children. All things that exist are manifestations of the grace of God. The creation of the earth, life itself, the atonement of Christ, the plan of salvation, kingdoms of immortal

---

118. Ezra Taft Benson, *The Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1988), 71.

119. *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, 353–54.

glory hereafter, and the supreme gift of eternal life—all these things come by the grace of him whose we are.<sup>120</sup>

Christ is the *Author of Salvation*. This means that he made salvation available to all men in that he worked out the infinite and eternal atonement. Paul's statement that Christ is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9), as the marginal reading shows, means that he is the "cause" thereof, that is, salvation is possible because of his atoning sacrifice; without this sacrifice there would be no salvation. Paul's other statement that Christ is "the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2), also according to the marginal reading, means that he is the "leader" in the cause of salvation.<sup>121</sup>

*Since all good things come by the grace of God (that is, by his love, mercy, and condescension), it follows that salvation itself—in all its forms and degrees—is bestowed because of this infinite goodness. . . . The very opportunity to follow the course of good works which will lead to that salvation sought by the saints comes also by the grace of God.*<sup>122</sup>

---

120. Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed. (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966), 338.

121. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 66.

122. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, 670–71.

## Appendix C: Grace in Latter-day Saint Hymnology

### *A Collection of Sacred Hymns, for the Church of the Latter Day Saints* (1835)

Hymn 1: “Know then that every soul is free”<sup>123</sup>

“Our God is pleas’d when we improve His grace, and seek his perfect love.” (verse 4)

“To stubborn willers this I’ll tell, It’s all free grace, and all free will.” (verse 5)

Hymn 2: “Let ev’ry mortal ear attend”

“The gates of glorious gospel grace, Stand open night and day: Lord, we are come to seek supplies, And drive our wants away.” (verse 6)

Hymn 4: “Glorious things of thee are spoken”

“Grace which like the Lord, the giver, Never fails from age to age.” (verse 4)

“Bless’d inhabitants of Zion, Purchas’d with the Savior’s blood! Jesus whom their souls rely on, Makes them kings and priests to God.” (verse 7)

“Savior, since of Zion’s city I through grace a member am; Though the world despise and pity, I will glory in thy name.” (verse 9)

Hymn 8: “O happy souls who pray”

“God is the only Lord, Our shield and our defence; With gifts his hand is stor’d: We draw our blessings thence. He will bestow On Jacob’s race, Peculiar grace, And glory too.” (verse 3)

Hymn 10: “He died! the great Redeemer died!”

“Say, ‘Live forever wond’rous King! Born to redeem and strong to save!’ Then ask the monster—‘Where’s thy sting? And where’s thy vict’ry, boasting grave?’” (verse 6)

Hymn 20: “My soul is full of peace and love”

“The Spirit’s power has sealed my peace, And fill’d my soul with heav’nly grace; Transported, I with peace and love, Am waiting for the throngs above.” (verse 2)

---

123. The hymns do not appear with titles; the index gives the first line of the hymns, by which most hymns became identified.



Hymn 22: "The great and glorious gospel light"

"The great and glorious gospel light, Has usher'd forth my sight,  
Which in my soul I have receiv'd, From death and bondage being  
freed." (verse 1)

Hymn 24: "Gently raise the sacred strain"

"Sweetly swell the solemn sound, While we bring our gifts around,  
Of broken hearts, As a willing sacrifice, Showing what his grace  
imparts." (verse 3)

Hymn 40: "My God, how endless is thy love"

"My God, how endless is thy love, Descending like the morning  
dew; Thy glorious gifts come from above, And all thy mercies  
too." (verse 1)

Hymn 41: "Awake! for the morning is come"

"O Lord, thou good Shepherd and King—We want, through the  
day, to feed in thy pastures, And feast on thy bounteous goodness  
and grace." (verse 2)

Hymn 43: "Come let us sing an evening hymn"

"O thank the Lord for grace and gifts, Renew'd in latter days; For  
truth and light, to guide us right, In wisdom's pleasant ways."  
(verse 3)

Hymn 44: "Lord thou wilt hear me when I pray"

"I pay this evening sacrifice; And when my work is done, Great  
God, my faith and hope relies Upon thy grace alone." (verse 3)

Hymn 46: "Great God! to thee my evening song"

"My days unclouded as they pass, And ev'ry onward rolling hour,  
Are monuments of wonderous grace, And witness to thy love and  
power." (verse 2)

"Seal my forgiveness in the blood Of Christ, my Lord; his name  
alone I plead for pardon, gracious God, And kind acceptance at  
thy throne." (verse 4)

Hymn 57: "O God th' eternal Father"

"When Jesus, the anointed, Descended from above, And gave  
himself a ransom To win our souls with love; With no apparent  
beauty, That men should him desire—He was the promis'd Savior,  
To purify with fire." (verse 3)

“How infinite that wisdom, The plan of holiness, That made sal-  
vation perfect, And veil’d the Lord in flesh, To walk upon his  
footstool, And be like man, (almost,) In his exalted station, And  
die—or all was lost!” (verse 4)

Hymn 58: “’Twas on that dark and solemn night”

“What wondrous words of grace he spake!” (verse 2)

“‘This is my body broke for sin; Receive and eat the living food.’”  
(verse 3)

Hymn 59: “Arise, my soul, arise”

“Arise, my soul, arise, Shake off the guilty fears, The bleeding  
sacrifice In my behalf appears; Before the throne my Sur’ty stands,  
My name is written on his hands.” (verse 1)

“He ever lives above, For me to intercede, His all-redeeming love,  
His precious blood to plead; His blood aton’d for all our race, And  
sprinkles now the throne of grace.” (verse 2)

“Five bleeding wounds he bears, Receiv’d on Calvary; They pour  
effectual prayers, They strongly speak for me; Forgive him, O  
forgive, they cry, Nor let that ransom’d sinner die!” (verse 3)

“The Father hears him pray, His dear anointed One: He cannot  
turn away The presence of his Son: His Spirit answers to the blood,  
And tells me I am born of God.” (verse 4)

“My God is reconcil’d, His pard’ning voice I hear: He owns me for  
his child, I can no longer fear; With confidence I now draw nigh,  
And Father, Abba Father, cry.” (verse 5)

Hymn 61: “Alas! and did my Savior bleed!”

“Was it for crimes that I have done, He groan’d upon the tree?  
Amazing pity! grace unknown! And love beyond degree.” (verse 2)

Hymn 66: “Let Zion in her beauty rise”

“Alas! the day will then arrive, When rebels to God’s grace, Will call  
for rocks to fall on them, And hide them from his face.” (verse 5)

Hymn 67: “Jesus the name that charms our fears”

“He speaks—and list’ning to his voice, Sinners new life receive,  
The mournful broken hearts rejoice, The humble poor believe.”  
(verse 2)

“O for a thousand tongues to sing, My great Redeemer’s praise; The glories of my God and King, The triumphs of his grace.” (verse 5)

Hymn 72: “Before this earth from chaos sprung”

“He prophesied of this our day, That God would unto Israel say, The gospel light you now shall see, And from your bondage be set free.” (verse 5)

Hymn 75: “Oh Jesus! the giver Of all we enjoy”

“We now are enlisted In Jesus’ bless’d cause, Divinely assisted To conquer our foes; His grace will support us Till conflicts are o’er, He then will escort us To Zion’s bright shore.” (verse 4)

Hymn 78: “The Lord into his garden comes”

“The glorious time is rolling on, The gracious work is now begun, My soul a witness is; Come, taste and see the pardon free To all mankind, as well as me; Who comes to Christ may live.” (verse 3)

Hymn 79: “I know that my Redeemer lives”

“He lives and grants me daily breath, He lives, and I shall conquer death, He lives my mansion to prepare, He lives to bring me safely there.” (verse 6)

Hymn 81: “Let thy kingdom, blessed Savior”

“He both comforts us and frees us, The good shepherd feeds his sheep.” (verse 4)

“Christ alone, whose merit saves us.” (verse 6)

Hymn 82: “How firm a foundation”

“In every condition—in sickness, in health, In poverty’s vale, or abounding in wealth, At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea, As thy days may demand, so thy succor shall be.” (verse 2)

“Fear not, I am with thee; O be not dismay’d! For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid; I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.” (verse 3)

“When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply; The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.” (verse 5)

“The soul that on Jesus hath lean’d for repose, I will not, I cannot  
desert to his foes; That soul, though all hall should endeavor to  
shake, I’ll never—no, never, no never forsake!” (verse 7)

Hymn 84: “How pleased and blest was I”

“Zion, thrice happy place, Adorn’d with wondrous grace.” (verse 2)

Hymn 85: “Though in the outward church below”

“No! This will aggravate their case, They perish’d under means  
of grace.” (verse 3)

Hymn 86: “O God! our help in ages past”

“Under the shadow of thy throne; Still may we dwell secure;  
Sufficient is thine arm alone, And our defence is sure.” (verse 2)

Hymn 87: “Hark! from the tombs a doleful sound”

“Grant us the pow’r of quick’ning grace, To fit our souls to fly;  
Then, when we drop this dying flesh, We’ll rise above the sky.”  
(verse 4)

***The Latter-day Saints’ Psalmody* (1889)<sup>124</sup>**

Hymn 4: “And I am Thine by sacred ties, Thy son, Thy servant bought  
with blood. . . . And felt the power of sovereign grace.” (verses 2  
and 3)

Hymn 5: “Our hopes for bliss on Thee depend.” (verse 1)

Hymn 12: “He’ll burst the portals of the tomb, And bring their sleep-  
ing dust to light.” (verse 2)

Hymn 16: “The Lord, who built the earth and sky, In mercy stoops to  
hear thy cry; His promise all may freely claim: ‘Ask and receive in  
Jesus’ name.’” (verse 2)

Hymn 17: “Hope, hope eternal brings relief; Faith sounds a triumph  
o’er the tomb.” (verse 2)

Hymn 20: “Rememb’ring God’s incarnate Son, Who suffered on  
th’accursed tree To set the contrite sinner free.” (verse 3)

Hymn 22: “Make our enlarged souls possess And learn the height and  
breadth and length And depth of thine unmeasured grace.” (verse 2)

---

124. The hymn titles in this book function as the names of hymn tunes and do not reflect the words of the hymn.

Hymn 26: "Thy mercy has preserved my soul." (verse 3)

Hymn 37: "Blest is the man whose shoulders take My yoke, and bear it with delight: My yoke is easy to his neck, My grace shall make the burden light." (verse 3)

Hymn 38: "Behold the great Redeemer comes To bring his ransomed people home." (verse 1)

Hymn 40: "'Tis you, ye children of the light. . . . Come, come, ye subjects of his grace." (verse 2)

Hymn 41: "O Lord, our Father, let thy grace Shed its glad beams on Jacob's race. . . . Their mis'ry let thy mercy heal." (verses 1 and 2)

Hymn 43: "And when like wand'ring sheep we stray'd He brought us to his fold again." (verse 2)

Hymn 46: "When God's own people stand in need, His goodness will provide supplies. . . . For nature's course shall sooner change Than God's dear children be forgot." (verses 1 and 3)

Hymn 49: "Lord, spread the triumphs of thy grace." (verse 3)

Hymn 50: "Man broke the law of his estate, And Jesus came to expiate, Atoned and rescue fallen man, According to Jehovah's plan." (verse 3)

Hymn 58: "Happy the man who finds the grace, . . . Who knows 'The Savior died for me.'" (verses 1 and 2)

Hymn 60: "Foolish . . . despise the proffered grace." (verses 1 and 3)

Hymn 61: "The spirit's power has sealed my peace, And filled my soul with heav'nly grace." (verse 2)

Hymn 72: "Salvation! precious, priceless boon! Gift of the Gods by God the Son!" (verse 3)

Hymn 80: "Lift up your heads, ye Saints, in peace, The Savior comes for your release." (verse 3)

Hymn 88: "O Father, give us grace in store." (verse 3)

Hymn 90: "For all the faithful Christ will save, And crown with vict'ry o'er the grave." (verse 2)

Hymn 91: "Our weakness help, our darkness chase, And guide us by the light of grace!" (verse 2)

Hymn 94: "He saves th' oppress'd, he feeds the poor." (verse 2)

Hymn 95: "Our strength thy grace, our rule Thy word." (verse 1)

Hymn 99: “When we thy wondrous glories hear, And all thy suff’rings trace, . . . What sweetly awful scenes appear! What rich, unbounded grace!” (verse 2)

Hymn 112: “With plenteous grace their hearts prepare, To execute thy will.” (verse 3)

Hymn 132: “Gather the outcasts in, and save From sin and Satan’s pow’r; And let them now acceptance have, And know their gracious hour. . . . What thou hast bought so dear.” (verses 2 and 3)

Hymn 142: “For Jesus is the sinner’s friend; He died that we might live.” (verse 3)

Hymn 149: “To all who seek and serve him right Will give a free reward.” (verse 2)

Hymn 155: “O sing the fervor of his love, The wonders of his grace Who sent the Savior from above To save a dying race.” (verse 2)

Hymn 169: “Great God, my faith, my hope relies Upon thy grace alone.” (verse 3)

Hymn 171: “And guide their feet in paths that lead To Israel’s chosen race, And let their remnants now behold The plan of saving grace.” (verse 2)

Hymn 176: “A son of peace dwells here—Thy grace to him be giv’n, On earth may he thy law revere, And dwell with thee in heav’n.” (verse 3)

Hymn 190: “Arise, my soul, arise, thy guilty fears; The bleeding sacrifice In my behalf appears; Before the throne my surety stands, My name is written on his hands.” (verse 1)

Hymn 195: “O Lord, our Sovereign King, Our infant charge now bless; Him to thee now we bring, O grant him now thy grace. And to us, Lord, may grace be giv’n To train this gift of thine for heav’n. . . . Sustain’d by grace divine, may he Be taught, O Lord, our God, by thee.” (verses 1 and 2)

Hymn 196: “He will bestow On Jacob’s race Peculiar grace, And glory too.” (verse 3)

Hymn 198: “Then all his ransom’d heirs Will find their promised rest.” (verse 3)

Hymn 208: “In the blood of yonder Lamb—Blood that washes white  
as snow.” (verse 2)

Hymn 224: “May we ev’ry grace inherit: Lord, we seek a boon divine.”  
(verse 1)

Hymn 229: “Go and publish free salvation.” (verse 1)

Hymn 240: “God himself shall loose thy bands.” (verse 1)

Hymn 262: “His love and grace adore, Who all our sorrows bore.”  
(verse 1)

Hymn 267: “One only thing resolved to know, To square our useful  
lives below, By reason and by grace.” (verse 3)

Hymn 268: “With diligence we’ll still pursue Those acts of grace and  
mercy due To toil-worn, lab’ring men!” (verse 2)

Hymn 299: “We shall sing Emanuel’s praise; Freed from all that now  
encumbers.” (verse 3)

Hymn 306: “I sing of thy grace from my earliest days, Ever near to  
allure and defend: Hitherto thou hast been my preserver from sin;  
And I trust thou wilt save to the end.” (verse 3)

***Latter-day Saint Hymns (1927)***<sup>125</sup>

Hymn 9: “Again We Meet Around the Board”

Hymn 11: “He Died! The Great Redeemer Died”

Hymn 12: “While of These Emblems We Partake”

Hymn 15: “Behold the Great Redeemer Die”

Hymn 19: “All needful grace will God bestow, And crown that grace  
with glory too; He gives us all things, and withholds No blessings  
due to upright souls.” (verse 4)

“Might I enjoy the meanest place Within Thy house, O God of  
grace.” (verse 2)

Hymn 20: “O Lord of Hosts”

Hymn 25: “The sacred lessons of Thy grace, Transmitted thro’ Thy  
word, repent, And train us up in all Thy ways, To make us in Thy  
will complete, To make us in Thy will complete; Fulfill Thy love’s  
Redeeming plan, And bring us to a perfect man.” (verse 4)

---

125. The hymn titles in this hymnal usually reflect the first lines of the hymns.

Hymn 28: "We'll Sing All Hail to Jesus' Name"

Hymn 30: "I pay this evening sacrifice, And when my work is done, Great  
God, my faith, my hope relies Upon Thy grace alone." (verse 3)

Hymn 32: "How Great the Wisdom and the Love"

Hymn 36: "The opening heav'ns around me shine With beams of  
sacred bliss, . . . If Jesus shows His mercy mine, And whispers, I  
am His!" (verse 3)

Hymn 37: "Know This, That Every Soul Is Free"

"Our God is pleased when we improve His grace, and seek His  
perfect love." (verse 4)

"It is my free will to believe: 'Tis God's free will me to receive; To  
stubborn willers this I'll tell, 'Tis all free grace and all free will."  
(verse 5)

Hymn 40: "No; while His love for me extends, The pattern makes my  
duty plain; I'll sound to earth's remotest ends, His Gospel to the  
souls of men." (verse 5)

Hymn 45: "God of all consolation take The glory of Thy grace; Thy gifts  
to Thee we render back In ceaseless songs of praise." (verse 1)

Hymn 49: "Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, But trust Him for His  
grace; Behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face."  
(verse 4)

Hymn 51: "Thou wilt accept our humble prayer, And all our sins for-  
give; For Jesus' sake, the sinner spare, He died that we might live."  
(verse 3)

Hymn 56: "Afflicted Saint, to Christ draw near, Thy Saviour's gracious  
promise hear; His faithful word declares to thee That 'as thy day,  
thy strength shall be.'" (verse 1)

Hymn 57: "Now Jesus, now Thy love impart, To govern each devoted  
heart, And fit us for Thy will; Deep founded in the truth of grace,  
Build up the rising Church, and place The city on the hill." (verse 5)

Hymn 73: "Blest is the man whose shoulders take My yoke, and bear it  
with delight; My yoke is easy to his neck, My grace shall make the  
burden light." (verse 3)



Hymn 76: “Beneath the shadow we abide—The cloud of Thy protecting love. Our strength, Thy grace, our rule, Thy word, Our end, the glory of the Lord.” (verse 1)

Hymn 89: “Zion, thrice happy place, Adorned with wondrous grace, High walls of strength embrace thee round.” (verse 2)

Hymn 91: “Thy works of grace, how bright they shine!” (verse 3)

Hymn 99: “Brightly beams our Father’s mercy.” (verse 1)

Hymn 105: “Reverently and Meekly Now”

## Appendix D: Relevant Occurrences of “Save” or “Saved” in Latter-day Saint Scriptures

### Book of Mormon

For the fulness of mine intent is that I may persuade men to come unto the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and be saved. (1 Nephi 6:4)

And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of Nephi and also of Sam; for I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved. (1 Nephi 8:3)

Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer. (1 Nephi 10:6)

And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost; and if they endure unto the end they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; and whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be. . . .

And the angel spake unto me, saying: These last records, which thou hast seen among the Gentiles, shall establish the truth of the first, which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which have been taken away from them; and shall make known to all kindreds, tongues, and people, that the Lamb of God is the Son of the Eternal Father, and the Savior of the world; and that all men must come unto him, or they cannot be saved. (1 Nephi 13:37, 40)

And at that day shall the remnant of our seed know that they are of the house of Israel, and that they are the covenant people of the Lord; and then shall they know and come to the knowledge

of their forefathers, and also to the knowledge of the gospel of their Redeemer, which was ministered unto their fathers by him; wherefore, they shall come to the knowledge of their Redeemer and the very points of his doctrine, that they may know how to come unto him and be saved. (1 Nephi 15:14)

Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it so be that the fulness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, they shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire. . . .

Wherefore, ye need not suppose that I and my father are the only ones that have testified, and also taught them. Wherefore, if ye shall be obedient to the commandments, and endure to the end, ye shall be saved at the last day. And thus it is. Amen. (1 Nephi 22:17, 31)

Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise.

Wherefore, he is the firstfruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved. (2 Nephi 2:8–9)

And blessed are the Gentiles, they of whom the prophet has written; for behold, if it so be that they shall repent and fight not against Zion, and do not unite themselves to that great and abominable church, they shall be saved; for the Lord God will fulfil his covenants which he has made unto his children; and for this cause the prophet has written these things. (2 Nephi 6:12)

And he cometh into the world that he may save all men if they will hearken unto his voice; for behold, he suffereth the pains of all men, yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women, and children, who belong to the family of Adam. . . .

And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God. (2 Nephi 9:21, 23)

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not to the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember, after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved. (2 Nephi 10:24)

And my soul delighteth in proving unto my people that save Christ should come all men must perish. (2 Nephi 11:6)

Behold, they will crucify him; and after he is laid in a sepulchre for the space of three days he shall rise from the dead, with healing in his wings; and all those who shall believe on his name shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, my soul delighteth to prophesy concerning him, for I have seen his day, and my heart doth magnify his holy name. . . .

And now, my brethren, I have spoken plainly that ye cannot err. And as the Lord God liveth that brought Israel up out of the land of Egypt, and gave unto Moses power that he should heal the nations after they had been bitten by the poisonous serpents, if they would cast their eyes unto the serpent which he did raise up before them, and also gave him power that he should smite the rock and the water should come forth; yea, behold I say unto you, that as these things are true, and as the Lord God liveth, there is none other name given under heaven save it be this Jesus Christ, of which I have spoken, whereby man can be saved. . . .

For we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do. (2 Nephi 25:13, 20, 23)

He doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world; for he loveth the world, even that he layeth down his own life that he may draw all men unto him. Wherefore, he commandeth none that they shall not partake of his salvation. . . .

For none of these iniquities come of the Lord; for he doeth that which is good among the children of men; and he doeth nothing save it be plain unto the children of men; and he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile. (2 Nephi 26:24, 33)

And there shall also be many which shall say: Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God—he will justify in committing a little sin; yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this; and do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God. (2 Nephi 28:8)

And I heard a voice from the Father, saying: Yea, the words of my Beloved are true and faithful. He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.

And now, my beloved brethren, I know by this that unless a man shall endure to the end, in following the example of the Son of the living God, he cannot be saved. . . .

And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask if all is done? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far save it were

by the word of Christ with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save. . . .

And now, behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. And now, behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen. (2 Nephi 31:15–16, 19, 21)

And I pray the Father in the name of Christ that many of us, if not all, may be saved in his kingdom at that great and last day. (2 Nephi 33:12)

And how merciful is our God unto us, for he remembereth the house of Israel, both roots and branches; and he stretches forth his hands unto them all the day long; and they are a stiffnecked and a gainsaying people; but as many as will not harden their hearts shall be saved in the kingdom of God. (Jacob 6:4)

And now, my beloved brethren, I would that ye should come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of his redemption. Yea, come unto him, and offer your whole souls as an offering unto him, and continue in fasting and praying, and endure to the end; and as the Lord liveth ye will be saved. (Omni 1:26)

And even if it were possible that little children could sin they could not be saved; but I say unto you they are blessed; for behold, as in Adam, or by nature, they fall, even so the blood of Christ atoneth for their sins. (Mosiah 3:16)

And this is the means whereby salvation cometh. And there is none other salvation save this which hath been spoken of; neither are there any conditions whereby man can be saved except the conditions which I have told you. (Mosiah 4:8)

But now Abinadi said unto them: I know if ye keep the commandments of God ye shall be saved; yea, if ye keep the commandments which the Lord delivered unto Moses in the mount of Sinai. (Mosiah 12:33)

But I finish my message; and then it matters not whither I go, if it so be that I am saved. . . .

And now, did they understand the law? I say unto you, Nay, they did not all understand the law; and this because of the hardness of their hearts; for they understood not that there could not any man be saved except it were through the redemption of God. (Mosiah 13:9, 32)

And now, ought ye not to tremble and repent of your sins, and remember that only in and through Christ ye can be saved? (Mosiah 16:13)

And he also testified unto the people that all mankind should be saved at the last day, and that they need not fear nor tremble, but that they might lift up their heads and rejoice; for the Lord had created all men, and had also redeemed all men; and, in the end, all men should have eternal life. (Alma 1:4)

And again I ask, were the bands of death broken, and the chains of hell which encircled them about, were they loosed? I say unto you, Yea, they were loosed, and their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love. And I say unto you that they are saved.

And now I ask of you on what conditions are they saved? Yea, what grounds had they to hope for salvation? What is the cause of their being loosed from the bands of death, yea, and also the chains of hell? . . .

And behold, he preached the word unto your fathers, and a mighty change was also wrought in their hearts, and they humbled themselves and put their trust in the true and living God. And behold, they were faithful until the end; therefore they were saved. . . .

Or do ye imagine to yourselves that ye can lie unto the Lord in that day, and say—Lord, our works have been righteous works upon the face of the earth—and that he will save you? . . .

I say unto you, can ye think of being saved when you have yielded yourselves to become subjects to the devil?

I say unto you, ye will know at that day that ye cannot be saved; for there can no man be saved except his garments are washed white; yea, his garments must be purified until they are cleansed from all stain, through the blood of him of whom it has been spoken by our fathers, who should come to redeem his people from their sins. . . .

Wo unto such an one, for he is not prepared, and the time is at hand that he must repent or he cannot be saved! (Alma 5:9–10, 13, 17, 20–21, 31)

Now I say unto you that ye must repent, and be born again; for the Spirit saith if ye are not born again ye cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore come and be baptized unto repentance, that ye may be washed from your sins, that ye may have faith on the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world, who is mighty to save and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. (Alma 7:14)

And at some period of time they will be brought to believe in his word, and to know of the incorrectness of the traditions of their fathers; and many of them will be saved, for the Lord will be merciful unto all who call on his name. (Alma 9:17)

And Zeezrom said again: Shall he save his people in their sins? And Amulek answered and said unto him: I say unto you he shall not, for it is impossible for him to deny his word.

Now Zeezrom said unto the people: See that ye remember these things; for he said there is but one God; yet he saith that the Son of God shall come, but he shall not save his people—as though he had authority to command God.



Now Amulek saith again unto him: Behold thou hast lied, for thou sayest that I spake as though I had authority to command God because I said he shall not save his people in their sins.

And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins; for I cannot deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; therefore, how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore, ye cannot be saved in your sins. (Alma 11:34–37)

But this cannot be; we must come forth and stand before him in his glory, and in his power, and in his might, majesty, and dominion, and acknowledge to our everlasting shame that all his judgments are just; that he is just in all his works, and that he is merciful unto the children of men, and that he has all power to save every man that believeth on his name and bringeth forth fruit meet for repentance. (Alma 12:15)

And the people went forth and witnessed against them—testifying that they had reviled against the law, and their lawyers and judges of the land, and also of all the people that were in the land; and also testified that there was but one God, and that he should send his Son among the people, but he should not save them; and many such things did the people testify against Alma and Amulek. Now this was done before the chief judge of the land. (Alma 14:5)

And it came to pass that she went and took the queen by the hand, that perhaps she might raise her from the ground; and as soon as she touched her hand she arose and stood upon her feet, and cried with a loud voice, saying: O blessed Jesus, who has saved me from an awful hell! O blessed God, have mercy on this people! (Alma 19:29)

But Ammon stood forth and said unto him: Behold, thou shalt not slay thy son; nevertheless, it were better that he should fall than thee, for behold, he has repented of his sins;

but if thou shouldst fall at this time, in thine anger, thy soul could not be saved. (Alma 20:17)

Thou also sayest, except we repent we shall perish. How knowest thou the thought and intent of our hearts? How knowest thou that we have cause to repent? How knowest thou that we are not a righteous people? Behold, we have built sanctuaries, and we do assemble ourselves together to worship God. We do believe that God will save all men. . . .

Now Aaron began to open the scriptures unto them concerning the coming of Christ, and also concerning the resurrection of the dead, and that there could be no redemption for mankind save it were through the death and sufferings of Christ, and the atonement of his blood. (Alma 21:6, 9)

And also, what is this that Ammon said—If ye will repent ye shall be saved, and if ye will not repent, ye shall be cast off at the last day? . . .

O God, Aaron hath told me that there is a God; and if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day. And now when the king had said these words, he was struck as if he were dead. (Alma 22:6, 18)

And now, my brethren, if our brethren seek to destroy us, behold, we will hide away our swords, yea, even we will bury them deep in the earth, that they may be kept bright, as a testimony that we have never used them, at the last day; and if our brethren destroy us, behold, we shall go to our God and shall be saved. . . .

And it came to pass that the people of God were joined that day by more than the number who had been slain; and those who had been slain were righteous people, therefore we have no reason to doubt but what they were saved. (Alma 24:16, 26)

Now when Ammon and his brethren saw this work of destruction among those whom they so dearly beloved, and among those who had so dearly beloved them—for they were treated as though they were angels sent from God to save them from everlasting destruction—therefore, when Ammon and his brethren saw this great work of destruction, they were moved with compassion. (Alma 27:4)

And now, because ye are compelled to be humble blessed are ye; for a man sometimes, if he is compelled to be humble, seeketh repentance; and now surely, whosoever repenteth shall find mercy; and he that findeth mercy and endureth to the end the same shall be saved. (Alma 32:13)

Yea, cry unto him for mercy; for he is mighty to save. (Alma 34:18)

And now, my son, I have told you this that ye may learn wisdom, that ye may learn of me that there is no other way or means whereby man can be saved, only in and through Christ. Behold, he is the life and the light of the world. Behold, he is the word of truth and righteousness. (Alma 38:9)

Now, the decrees of God are unalterable; therefore, the way is prepared that whosoever will may walk therein and be saved. (Alma 41:8)

For behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, none but the truly penitent are saved. (Alma 42:24)

O remember, remember, my sons, the words which king Benjamin spake unto his people; yea, remember that there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to redeem the world. (Helaman 5:9)

And wo unto him to whom he shall say this, for it shall be unto him that will do iniquity, and he cannot be saved; there-

fore, for this cause, that men might be saved, hath repentance been declared.

Therefore, blessed are they who will repent and hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God; for these are they that shall be saved. . . .

And I would that all men might be saved. But we read that in the great and last day there are some who shall be cast out, yea, who shall be cast off from the presence of the Lord. (Helaman 12:22–23, 25)

O ye people of the land, that ye would hear my words! And I pray that the anger of the Lord be turned away from you, and that ye would repent and be saved. (Helaman 13:39)

And this to the intent that whosoever will believe might be saved, and that whosoever will not believe, a righteous judgment might come upon them; and also if they are condemned they bring upon themselves their own condemnation. (Helaman 14:29)

Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin.

Therefore, whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive, for of such is the kingdom of God. Behold, for such I have laid down my life, and have taken it up again; therefore repent, and come unto me ye ends of the earth, and be saved. (3 Nephi 9:21–22)

And whoso believeth in me, and is baptized, the same shall be saved; and they are they who shall inherit the kingdom of God. (3 Nephi 11:33)

Therefore come unto me and be ye saved; for verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (3 Nephi 12:20)

And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day. (3 Nephi 27:6)

Know ye that ye must come unto repentance, or ye cannot be saved. (Mormon 7:3)

And he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mormon 9:23)

Therefore, repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and believe in my gospel, and be baptized in my name; for he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned; and signs shall follow them that believe in my name. (Ether 4:18)

Wherefore, I, Moroni, am commanded to write these things that evil may be done away, and that the time may come that Satan may have no power upon the hearts of the children of men, but that they may be persuaded to do good continually, that they may come unto the fountain of all righteousness and be saved. (Ether 8:26)

Now the last words which are written by Ether are these: Whether the Lord will that I be translated, or that I suffer the will of the Lord in the flesh, it mattereth not, if it so be that I am saved in the kingdom of God. Amen. (Ether 15:34)

And after that he came men also were saved by faith in his name; and by faith, they become the sons of God. And as surely as Christ liveth he spake these words unto our fathers, saying: Whatsoever thing ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is good, in faith believing that ye shall receive, behold, it shall be done unto you. . . .

And he hath said: Repent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, and have faith in me, that ye may be saved. . . .

Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them?

Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved? . . .

For no man can be saved, according to the words of Christ, save they shall have faith in his name; wherefore, if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man, for they are as though there had been no redemption made. . . .

And again, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning hope. How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope? (Moroni 7:26, 34, 36, 38, 40)

Behold I say unto you that this thing shall ye teach—repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children. . . .

Wherefore, if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an endless hell. (Moroni 8:10, 13)

But behold, my son, I recommend thee unto God, and I trust in Christ that thou wilt be saved; and I pray unto God that he will spare thy life, to witness the return of his people unto him, or their utter destruction; for I know that they must perish except they repent and return unto him. (Moroni 9:22)

And except ye have charity ye can in nowise be saved in the kingdom of God; neither can ye be saved in the kingdom of God if ye have not faith; neither can ye if ye have no hope. . . .

And wo unto them who shall do these things away and die, for they die in their sins, and they cannot be saved in the kingdom of God; and I speak it according to the words of Christ; and I lie not. (Moroni 10:21, 26)

### **Doctrine and Covenants (not a complete list)**

And as many as repent and are baptized in my name, which is Jesus Christ, and endure to the end, the same shall be saved.

Behold, Jesus Christ is the name which is given of the Father, and there is none other name given whereby man can be saved; . . .

And after that you have received this, if you keep not my commandments you cannot be saved in the kingdom of my Father. (D&C 18:22, 23, 46)

For these angels did not abide my law; therefore, they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition, to all eternity; and from henceforth are not gods, but are angels of God forever and ever. . . .

Go ye, therefore, and do the works of Abraham; enter ye into my law and ye shall be saved. (D&C 132:17, 32)

### **Pearl of Great Price**

And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved; and as many as believed not and repented not, should be damned; and the words went forth out of the mouth of God in a firm decree; wherefore they must be fulfilled. (Moses 5:15)

And Enoch also saw Noah, and his family; that the posterity of all the sons of Noah should be saved with a temporal salvation. (Moses 7:42)

But he that remaineth steadfast and is not overcome, the same shall be saved. . . .

And again, because iniquity shall abound, the love of men shall wax cold; but he that shall not be overcome, the same shall be saved. (Joseph Smith—Matthew 1:11, 30)

We believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel. (Article of Faith 3)