

# The Church of Jesus Christ Today



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## The Original Church of Jesus Christ

When Jesus lived on the earth, He organized His Church so that everyone could have a chance to understand the gospel and receive the ordinances. Through this organization, Christ brings the blessings of salvation to all people.

After the Savior ascended into heaven, some people changed the ordinances and doctrines that He and His Apostles had established. Eventually there was no longer any direct revelation from God and no true church on the earth. Different churches were organized that claimed to be true, but many people felt confused about religion.

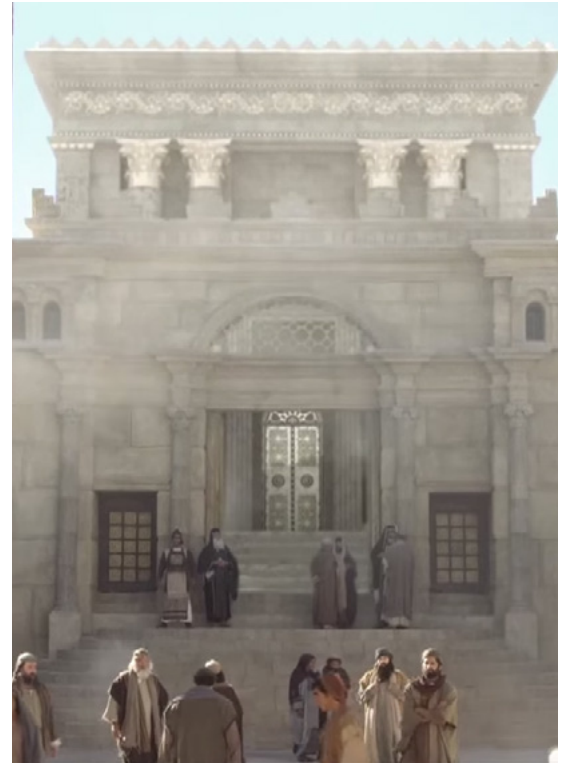
## New Revelation from God

In the spring of 1820, a young boy named Joseph Smith had a miraculous vision. He wanted to find the true Church of Jesus Christ, so he went into the woods near his home and prayed humbly to his Heavenly Father, asking which church he should join. Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ then appeared to Joseph Smith, and the Savior told him not to join any church because the true Church was not on the earth. This vision opened the world again to direct revelation from God. Jesus Christ had chosen a new prophet—Joseph Smith—to lead the Church. Since that time the heavens have not closed, and revelation continues today with each new prophet of the Church.

On April 6, 1830, the Savior again established His Church on the earth, with Joseph Smith as its prophet (see D&C 20:1, page 34). Christ is the head of His Church today, just as He was in ancient times, and He continues to call a prophet and twelve apostles to help teach the gospel and oversee the Church. The organization of Christ's Church today is the same as when He first established it.

## Important Truths Restored

The Church today teaches the same principles and performs the same ordinances as in the days of Jesus. The first principles and ordinances of the gospel are faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism by immersion, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost (see Articles of Faith 1:4, page 60).







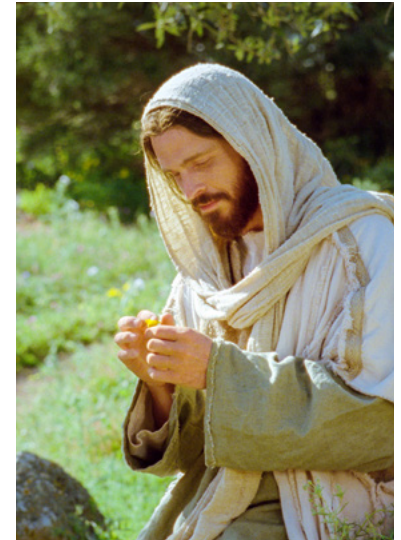
Other important truths that the Lord restored include the following:

1. Our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ are real beings with tangible, perfected bodies of flesh and bones. The Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit.
2. Before we were born, we lived with God as His spirit children.
3. The priesthood—the power and authority of God—is necessary to administer the ordinances of the gospel.
4. We will not be punished for the sins of others.
5. Children do not need to be baptized until they are accountable at eight years of age.
6. There are three kingdoms of glory in the heavens, and through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, people will be rewarded according to their actions and the desires of their hearts.
7. Family relationships can be eternal through the power of the priesthood.
8. Ordinances and covenants are required for salvation and are available for both the living and the dead.

### Additional Scriptures

- **Isaiah 2:2–4, page 863;**  
**Acts 3:19–21, page 1370;**  
**2 Nephi 3:6–15, pages 60–61**  
(the Restoration through the Prophet Joseph Smith foretold)
- **D&C 20–21, pages 34–41**  
(the organization of the Church)
- **D&C 110, pages 228–29**  
(the restoration of all priesthood keys is necessary to direct the Church of Jesus Christ)
- **Joseph Smith—History 1:1–20, pages 47–50** (the Prophet Joseph Smith tells of his experience with the First Vision)

LOOK  
THEM  
UP



“And [Jesus Christ] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith.”

Ephesians 4:11–13, page 1484

# Personal Experience

I grew up in the Church and went on a mission. I understood the restored gospel well. However, I developed various problems with sexual addictions. Years into my marriage and career, I committed a crime against a teenage girl. I was arrested and sentenced to state prison.

Fortunately, the Church was there for me in prison. There was a Church branch with volunteers and priesthood authority. I attended the institute classes and services offered by the branch. I counseled with my branch president and followed his direction in repenting of my sins. I will be forever grateful for what the Church did for me when I was in the penitentiary.

After my return home, I was called to be a facilitator for the Church's 12-step addiction recovery program. Eventually the Church published an official guide to this program. The booklet contains gospel principles and is based on the Atonement of Jesus Christ. Different components of the program assist people with problems like sexual addiction, alcohol and drug abuse, and pornography addiction.

I praise God that the Church provides assistance to any and all of God's children.

"I praise God that the Church provides assistance to any and all of God's children."





How has priesthood authority blessed you in your life? How have you been blessed by the Church organization?

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How do you plan to participate in the Church organization in the future?

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Read the list of restored truths that are unique to the Church. How have these truths blessed your life? What can you do to share these truths with others?

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Is there anything else that you have learned from this lesson that you would like to share?

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Offender # \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the questions on this response form, detach, and return to the address below:

**Correctional Services**  
 50 East North Temple Street  
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Please request the next lesson you would like to study: \_\_\_\_\_