

*Teachings Concerning
The Celestial Glory*

D&C 76

50 And again we bear record--for we saw and heard, and this is the testimony of the gospel of Christ concerning them who shall come forth in the resurrection of the just--

51 They are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried in the water in his name, and this according to the commandment which he has given--

52 That by keeping the commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of him who is ordained and sealed unto this power;

53 And who overcome by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.

54 They are they who are the church of the Firstborn.

55 They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things--

56 They are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory;

57 And are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son.

58 Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God--

59 Wherefore, all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

60 And they shall overcome all things.

61 Wherefore, let no man glory in man, but rather let him glory in God, who shall subdue all enemies under his feet.

62 These shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever.

63 These are they whom he shall bring with him, when he shall come in the clouds of heaven to reign on the earth over his people.

64 These are they who shall have part in the first

resurrection.

65 These are they who shall come forth in the resurrection of the just.

66 These are they who are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly place, the holiest of all.

67 These are they who have come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of Enoch, and of the Firstborn.

68 These are they whose names are written in heaven, where God and Christ are the judge of all.

69 These are they who are just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood.

70 These are they whose bodies are celestial, whose glory is that of the sun, even the glory of God, the highest of all, whose glory the sun of the firmament is written of as being typical.

92 And thus we saw the glory of the celestial, which excels in all things--where God, even the Father, reigns upon his throne forever and ever;

93 Before whose throne all things bow in humble reverence, and give him glory forever and ever.

94 They who dwell in his presence are the church of the Firstborn; and they see as they are seen, and know as they are known, having received of his fulness and of his grace;

95 And he makes them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion.

96 And the glory of the celestial is one, even as the glory of the sun is one.

Joseph Smith (Poetic Version)

40. And again I bear record of heavenly things,
Where virtue's the value, above all that's pric'd--
Of the truth of the gospel concerning the just,
That rise in the first resurrection of Christ.

41. Who receiv'd and believ'd, and repented
likewise,

And then were baptis'd, as a man always was,
Who ask'd and receiv'd a remission of sin,
And honored the kingdom by keeping its laws.

42. Being buried in water, as Jesus had been,
And keeping the whole of his holy commands,
They received the gift of the spirit of truth,
By the ordinance truly of laying on hands.

43. For these overcome, by their faith and their works,
Being tried in their life-time, as purified gold,
And seal'd by the spirit of promise, to life,
By men called of God, as was Aaron of old.

44. They are they, of the church of the first born of God,--

And unto whose hands he committeth all things;
For they hold the keys of the kingdom of heav'n,
And reign with the Savior, as priests, and as kings.

45. They're priests of the order of Melchisedek,
Like Jesus, (from whom is this highest reward,) Receiving a fulness of glory and light; As written:
They're Gods; even sons of the Lord.

46. So all things are theirs; yea, of life, or of death;

Yea, whether things now, or to come, all are theirs,
And they are the Savior's, and he is the Lord's,
Having overcome all, as eternity's heirs.

47. 'Tis wisdom that man never glory in man,
But give God the glory for all that he hath;
For the righteous will walk in the presence of God,
While the wicked are trod under foot in his wrath.

48. Yea, the righteous shall dwell in the presence of God,

And of Jesus, forever, from earth's second birth--
For when he comes down in the splendor of heav'n,
All these he'll bring with him, to reign on the earth.

49. These are they that arise in their bodies of flesh,

When the trump of the first resurrection shall sound;
These are they that come up to Mount Zion, in life,
Where the blessings and gifts of the spirit abound.

50. These are they that have come to the heavenly place;

To the numberless courses of angels above:

To the city of God; e'en the holiest of all,

And to the home of the blessed, the fountain of love:

51. To the church of old Enoch, and of the first born:

And gen'ral assembly of ancient renown'd.

Whose names are all kept in the archives of heav'n,
As chosen and faithful, and fit to be crown'd.

52. These are they that are perfect through Jesus' own blood,

Whose bodies celestial are mention'd by Paul,

Where the sun is the typical glory thereof,

And God, and his Christ, are the true judge of all.

[*Times and Seasons* 4:82-85]

Baptism, Gate to the Celestial Kingdom

D&C 76:51

Joseph Fielding Smith

Baptism is the door into the celestial kingdom. All the ordinances of the gospel pertain to the celestial kingdom, and any person who is faithful to the covenant of baptism will be entitled to enter there, but no person can receive an exaltation in the celestial kingdom without the ordinances of the temple. The endowments are for advancement in that kingdom, and the sealings for our perfection, provided we keep our covenants and obligations.

People baptized, and who are not endowed in the temple of the Lord, may enter the celestial kingdom. But that does not mean that a baptized person is going to get the exaltation in that kingdom. He is not going to pass on to the fulness just by being baptized. He will not pass on to the fulness even after he has been baptized and received an endowment in the temple. He has also to receive the other ordinances so that he can become through his faithfulness and obedience a son of God. . . .

The first principles of the gospel are principles that save. By obedience to them we enter the celestial kingdom of God. Then, when we get into that kingdom, if we have received the other covenants, have been true and faithful to other obligations, we will advance until we shall become like God -- his sons, his daughters, receiving a fulness of his kingdom. That is the promise. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:45-46)

Bruce R. McConkie

Baptism serves four purposes: 1. It is for the remission of sins. (D. & C. 13; 19:31; 20:37; 33:11; 49:13; 68:27; 84:27, 64, 74; 107:20.) 2. It admits the repentant person to membership in the Church and

kingdom of God on earth. (D. & C. 20:37, 71-74.) 3. It is the gate to the celestial kingdom of heaven, that is, it starts a person out on the straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life. (2 Ne. 9:23-24; 31:13-21.) 4. It is the means whereby the door to personal sanctification is opened. "Repent, all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me and be baptized in my name," the resurrected Lord proclaimed to the Nephites, "that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day." (3 Ne. 27:20.) [*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 70]

Lorenzo Snow

There is but one way in which men can receive salvation, exaltation, and glory, and that is through the order of baptism and the ordinances connected therewith. No mortal man or woman will ever receive celestial glory unless he or she has been baptized, receiving this ordinance personally or by proxy. That is the order that God has established. (*Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, p.96)

Spencer W. Kimball

The celestial world can only be entered by unlocking the doors with the proper keys -- the first key being baptism by immersion for the remission of sins and then the reception of the Holy Ghost follows, by those in authority to give it. Then we must continue with our church and temple work, serving others, loving the Lord with all our heart, might, mind, and strength, and loving our fellowmen more than ourselves. (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.28)

Three Degrees in the Celestial Glory

D&C 131

1 In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

Marriage is the Gate into the Third Glory of the Celestial Kingdom

D&C 131

1 In the celestial glory there are three heavens or

degrees;

2 And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

3 And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

4 He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase.

Spencer W. Kimball

One young man said that he expected to reach exaltation in the celestial kingdom as one of the Lord's messengers, without having to marry. He does not understand. No one who rejects the covenant of celestial marriage can reach exaltation in the [page 6] eternal kingdom of God.

"In the celestial glory there are three heavens or degrees;

"And in order to obtain the highest, a man must enter into this order of the priesthood [meaning the new and everlasting covenant of marriage];

"And if he does not, he cannot obtain it.

"He may enter into the other, but that is the end of his kingdom; he cannot have an increase." (D&C 131:1-4.)

He cannot have an increase! He cannot have exaltation!

The Lord says further in the 132nd section of the Doctrine and Covenants:

"No one can reject this covenant and be permitted to enter into my glory" (D&C 132:4).

No one! It matters not how righteous they may have been, how intelligent or how well trained they are. No one will enter this highest glory unless he enters into the covenant, and this means the new and everlasting covenant of marriage.

These are the words of the Lord. They were said directly to us.

"And as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fulness of my glory; and he that receiveth a fulness thereof must and shall abide the law. ...

"Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants [they may be worthy and righteous, but they are ministering servants], to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and

an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory.

“For these angels did not abide by 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.” (D&C 132:6, 16–17.)

Some might say, “Well, I’d be satisfied to just become an angel,” but you would not. One never would be satisfied just to be a ministering angel to wait upon other people when he could be the king himself. (“The Importance of Celestial Marriage,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1979, 5–6)

Bruce R. McConkie

Baptism is the gate to the celestial kingdom; celestial marriage is the gate to an exaltation in the highest heaven within the celestial world. (D. & C. 131:1-4.) To gain salvation after baptism it is necessary to keep the commandments of God and endure to the end (2 Ne. 31:17-21); to gain exaltation after celestial marriage the same continued devotion and righteousness is required. Those who have been married in the temples for eternity know that the ceremony itself expressly conditions the receipt of all promised blessings upon the subsequent faithfulness of the husband and wife. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 117)

Celestial Glory For Those Who Keep The Whole Law

Joseph Fielding Smith

To enter the celestial and obtain exaltation it is necessary that the whole law be kept. The word of the Lord is that they of the celestial world are those sanctified from all unrighteousness. (D.C. 88:21, cf. verse 18.) To become sanctified there are certain definite covenants we must keep in faithfulness, living by “every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God.” “They are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name and were baptized after the manner of his burial, * * * That by keeping the commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins, and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands of him

who is ordained and sealed unto the power.” These are they “who overcome by faith and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.” (D.C. 76:51-53. See also verses 54-60.) And they who are not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise and who are not just and true, need not expect their great blessings. (*The Way to Perfection*, p.206)

Must Be Governed By Certain Laws, Principles, and Feelings

John Taylor

God is interested in the whole of the human family. He cannot take them all into the celestial kingdom, for they are not all prepared to go there, and you cannot prepare them and He cannot, because they have to be governed by certain laws and certain principles and certain feelings, and if they are not governed by these and will not be governed by a celestial law, they are not prepared for a celestial glory. There are some that may be governed by a terrestrial law, and may be prepared for a terrestrial glory, but not for a celestial glory. Still, they are God’s children, and He is doing the best by them He can. (*Journal of Discourses*, 24:194-195)

They are They Who Received the Testimony of Jesus D&C 76:51

Ezra Taft Benson

A most priceless blessing available to every member of the Church is a testimony of the divinity of Jesus Christ and His church. A testimony is one of the few possessions we may take with us when we leave this life.

To have a testimony of Jesus is to possess knowledge through the Holy Ghost of the divine mission of Jesus Christ.

A testimony of Jesus is to know the divine nature of our Lord’s birth—that He is indeed the Only Begotten Son in the flesh.

A testimony of Jesus is to know that He was the

promised Messiah and that while He sojourned among men He accomplished many mighty miracles.

A testimony of Jesus is to know that the laws which He prescribed as His doctrine are true and then to abide by these laws and ordinances.

To possess a testimony of Jesus is to know that He voluntarily took upon Himself the sins of all mankind in the Garden of Gethsemane, which caused Him to suffer in both body and spirit and to bleed from every pore. All this He did so that we would not have to suffer if we would repent. (See D&C 19:16, 18.)

To possess a testimony of Jesus is to know that He came forth triumphantly from the grave with a physical, resurrected body. And because He lives, so shall all mankind.

To possess a testimony of Jesus is to know that God the Father and Jesus Christ did indeed appear to the Prophet Joseph Smith to establish a new dispensation of His gospel so that salvation may be preached to all nations before He comes.

To possess a testimony of Jesus is to know that the Church, which He established in the meridian of time and restored in modern times is, as the Lord has declared, “the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth.” (D&C 1:30.)

Having such a testimony is vital. [“Valiant in the Testimony of Jesus,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1987, pp. 1-2]

Must Repent of Terrestrial and Telestial Behavior

Neal A. Maxwell

Repentance requires both turning away from evil and turning to God. (See Deut. 4:30; see also Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Repentance.”) When “a mighty change” is required, full repentance involves a 180-degree turn, and without looking back! (Alma 5:12–13.) Initially, this turning reflects progress from telestial to terrestrial behavior, and later on to celestial behavior. As the sins of the telestial world are left behind, the focus falls ever more steadily upon the sins of omission, which often keep us from full consecration. (“Repentance,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, p. 30)

Must Repent of Sins of Omission

Neal A. Maxwell

Consider three examples of how honorable people in the Church keep back a portion and thus prevent greater consecration (see Acts 5:1–4).

A sister gives commendable, visible civic service. Yet even with her good image in the community, she remains a comparative stranger to Jesus’ holy temples and His holy scriptures, two vital dimensions of discipleship. But she could have Christ’s image in her countenance (see Alma 5:14).

An honorable father, dutifully involved in the cares of his family, is less than kind and gentle with individual family members. Though a comparative stranger to Jesus’ gentleness and kindness, which we are instructed to emulate, a little more effort by this father would make such a large difference.

Consider the returned missionary, skills polished while serving an honorable mission, striving earnestly for success in his career. Busy, he ends up in a posture of some accommodation with the world. Thus he forgoes building up the kingdom first and instead builds up himself. A small course correction now would make a large, even destinal, difference for him later on.

These deficiencies just illustrated are those of omission. Once the telestial sins are left behind and henceforth avoided, the focus falls ever more on the sins of omission. These omissions signify a lack of qualifying fully for the celestial kingdom. Only greater consecration can correct these omissions, which have consequences just as real as do the sins of commission. Many of us thus have sufficient faith to avoid the major sins of commission, but not enough faith to sacrifice our distracting obsessions or to focus on our omissions.

Most omissions occur because we fail to get outside ourselves. We are so busy checking on our own temperatures, we do not notice the burning fevers of others even when we can offer them some of the needed remedies, such as encouragement, kindness, and commendation. The hands which hang down and most need to be lifted up belong to those too discouraged even to reach out anymore. (“Swallowed Up in the Will of the Father,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, p. 23)

Only the Valiant of the Church Will Go to the Celestial Kingdom

D&C 76:79

D&C 121

29 All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Ezra Taft Benson

But of even greater importance is being valiant in our testimony.

A testimony of Jesus means that we accept the divine mission of Jesus Christ, embrace His gospel, and do His works. It also means we accept the prophetic mission of Joseph Smith and his successors and follow their counsel. As Jesus said, "Whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same." (D&C 1:38.)

Speaking of those who will eventually receive the blessings of the celestial kingdom, the Lord said to Joseph Smith:

"They are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name and were baptized after the manner of his burial, being buried in the water in his name, and this according to the commandment which he has given." (D&C 76:51.)

These are they who are valiant in their testimony of Jesus, who, as the Lord has declared, "overcome by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true." (D&C 76:53.) ["Valiant in the Testimony of Jesus," *Ensign*, Feb. 1987, p. 2]

Brigham Young

Who will [go to the Celestial Kingdom]? Those who are valiant and inspired with the true independence of heaven, who will go forth boldly in the service of their God, leaving others to do as they please, determined to do right, though all mankind besides should take the opposite course. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p. 383)

Spencer W. Kimball

- The terrestrial kingdom will not be enjoyed by the very wicked, for they shall obtain only the

telestial. Neither will the terrestrial be given to the valiant, the faithful, the perfected, for they will go into the celestial kingdom prepared for those who live the celestial laws. But into the terrestrial will go those who do not measure up to the celestial. Speaking of one category of terrestrial people, the Lord says: "These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God." (D&C 76:79.) The "unvaliant" Latter-day Saint will find himself there. (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.48)

- As I read the seventy-sixth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, the great vision given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, I remember that the Lord says to that terrestrial degree of glory may go those who are not valiant in the testimony, which means that many of us who have received baptism by proper authority, many who have received other ordinances, even temple blessings, will not reach the celestial kingdom of glory unless we live the commandments and are valiant. There are many people in this Church today who think they live, but they are dead to the spiritual things. And I believe even many who are making pretenses of being active are also spiritually dead. Their service is much of the letter and less of the spirit. (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.183)
- Only the valiant will be exalted and receive the highest degree of glory, hence "many are called, but few are chosen." (D&C 121:40.) As the Savior put it, "... strait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." And conversely, "... wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." (Matt. 7:13, 14.) It is true that many Latter-day Saints, having been baptized and confirmed members of the Church, and some even having received their endowments and having been married and sealed in the holy temple, have felt that they were thus guaranteed the blessings of exaltation and eternal life. But this is not so. There are two basic requirements every soul must fulfill or he cannot attain to the great blessings offered. He must receive the

ordinances and he must be faithful, overcoming his weaknesses. Hence, not all who claim to be Latter-day Saints will be exalted. (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, p.9)

Bruce R. McConkie

- Only the valiant are saved. Members of the Church who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus, not valiant in the cause of Christ, not valiant in defense of his prophets and in preaching his word are not heirs of the celestial kingdom. (“The Caravan Moves On,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, p. 85)
- Members of the Church who have testimonies and who live clean and upright lives, but who are not courageous and valiant, do not gain the celestial kingdom. Theirs is a terrestrial inheritance. Of them the revelation says, “These are they who are not valiant in the testimony of Jesus; wherefore, they obtain not the crown over the kingdom of our God.” (D&C 76:79.) [“Be Valiant in the Fight of Faith,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, p. 34]

Mark E. Petersen

- The only way to save our souls is to put God first in our lives. If we reverse the process and relegate him to second, third, or fourth place, we make an exchange that we will rue throughout the eternities. It is possible to lose our salvation by default. Realizing this, can we afford to be other than active in the Church? Can we afford to neglect our families? Can we afford to mix worldliness and Godliness, knowing very well that they will not blend and knowing, too, that Jesus said we cannot serve both God and mammon? The Lord teaches that unless we are valiant in his service, we surrender the opportunity for celestial glory. To be valiant means to be anxiously engaged in the good cause. It means to serve him in all diligence, with an eye single to his glory, and to labor in his kingdom with all our heart, might, mind, and strength. But it must be in his kingdom, not in some other group, religious or otherwise. (“What Will a Man Give?” *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, p. 111)
- The Lord has told us plainly that only those who

are valiant in the testimony of Jesus will inherit celestial glory. It is the valiant who keep their testimonies aglow, and this they do by constant activity in the Church and continuous study of the gospel. (“Sunday School Is Everybody’s Business,” *Ensign*, Dec. 1974, p. 11)

The Just and True

D&C 76:53

Ezra Taft Benson

“Those who are just and true.” What an apt expression for those valiant in the testimony of Jesus! They are courageous in defending truth and righteousness. These are members of the Church who magnify their callings in the Church (see D&C 84:33), pay their tithes and offerings, live morally clean lives, sustain their Church leaders by word and action, keep the Sabbath as a holy day, and obey all the commandments of God.

To these the Lord has promised that “all thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ” (D&C 121:29). [“Valiant in the Testimony of Jesus,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1987, p. 2]

Marion G. Romney

But whether a testimony comes of a sudden or whether it comes by degrees, it does something to a person. One is different after he receives a testimony than he was before he received one. Good men, great men, are different. . . . My father use to tell me that the difference between a man when he has a testimony and when he does not have one is the difference between a living, growing tree and a dry stump. (*Look to God and Live*, Salt Lake: Deseret Book, 1973, pp. 42-43).

Who Overcome by Faith

D&C 76:53

D&C 63:20

Nevertheless, he that endureth in faith and doeth my will, the same shall overcome, and shall receive

an inheritance upon the earth when the day of transfiguration shall come

Joseph Smith

You need an endowment, brethren, in order that you may be prepared and able to overcome all things . . . (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.91)

Brigham Young

- The men and women, who desire to obtain seats in the celestial kingdom, will find that they must battle every day. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.392)
- As for a person being saved in the celestial kingdom of God without being prepared to dwell in a pure and holy place, it is all nonsense and ridiculous; and if there be any who think they can gain the presence of the Father and the Son by fighting for, instead of living, their religion, they will be mistaken, consequently the quicker we make up our minds to live our religion the better it will be for us. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.392)

Neal A. Maxwell

- The Church would grow much faster now, numerically and spiritually, if it were not for the wickedness of the world (see 1 Ne. 14:12). It would also grow much faster if you and I were better by taking up the Christian cross daily (see Luke 9:23). Part of taking up the cross is denying ourselves the lusts and appetites of the flesh. “For it is better,” the resurrected Jesus said, “that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross” (3 Ne. 12:30). Thus, the daily taking up of the cross means daily denying ourselves the appetites of the flesh. (“Overcome ... Even As I Also Overcame,” *Ensign*, May 1987, p. 71)
- Meanwhile, let us remember “what manner of persons [we] ought ... to be” (2 Pet. 3:11; 3 Ne. 27:27). Attributively, we are to become even as Jesus, with His virtues being increasingly replicated in our lives. Even in the midst of our obvious imperfections, a sacred process is to be underway—if slowly, nevertheless resolutely. Whatever one’s unfolding agendum, he can be overcoming if he is becoming more like Christ!

(“Overcome ... Even As I Also Overcame,” *Ensign*, May 1987, p. 72)

- For us to overcome requires us to reach that point at which, in words translated by Joseph, there is a “yielding [of our] hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35). [*But for a Small Moment*, p.103]
- There is no other way for us to overcome the world (John 16:33; D&C 76:53) unless we live in the world. While in it, we have been repeatedly warned about the diverting and addicting nature of riches, power, and praise. The warning phrase “the eye of a needle,” with regard to the risk of riches, along with the “almost all” phrase concerning the abuse of authority and power, are stern warnings indeed (Matthew 19:24; D&C 121:39). [*Not My Will, But Thine*, p.75]
- A temple provides a sanctuary away “from the madding crowd” and from the pressing cares of the world. Perhaps more than any other place, the temple reminds us that although as mortals we are in the world, we are not to be of the world. It helps us to function in the world without being overcome by the world. The more we come to the temple, the less likely we are to be overcome by the world. It is we, not the world, who are to do the overcoming (D&C 76:53). [*Not My Will, But Thine*, p.134]
- Each step toward single-mindedness in our worship of God squeezes out some of our selfishness, for so much of the overcoming of this world consists of overcoming selfishness. (*Notwithstanding My Weakness*, pp.28-29)
- The only way to avoid being overcome by the cares of the world, therefore, is to stop caring for the world. We must let go of the old world and not look back, and this is so much easier if we press forward with a steadfastness in Christ. (*Wherefore Ye Must Press Forward*, pp.19-20)
- Obedience to correct and true principles helps us to overcome this world and fits us for a better world. (*Wherefore Ye Must Press Forward*, p.47)

Sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise

D&C 76:53

Joseph Fielding Smith

I will make an explanation of the expression, "Sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise." This does not have reference to marriage for time and all eternity only, but to every ordinance and blessing of the gospel. Baptism into the Church is sealed by this Spirit, likewise confirmation, ordination, and all ordinances as well as marriage for time and all eternity.

The meaning of this expression is this: Every covenant, contract, bond, obligation, oath, vow, and performance, that man receives through the covenants and blessings of the gospel, is sealed by the Holy Spirit with [page 95] a promise. The promise is that the blessing will be obtained, if those who seek it are true and faithful to the end. If they are not faithful, then the Holy Spirit will withdraw the blessing, and the promise comes to an end. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:94)

Harold B. Lee

I shall inject here another phrase that is oft discussed (and I think is misunderstood) and to which we try to attach some mysteries. This phrase, where the Lord directs that all of these things are to be eternal, is: "must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise." Let me refer first to the 76th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. Speaking of those who are candidates for celestial glory, the Lord says:

"They are they who received the testimony of Jesus, and believed on his name and were baptized after the manner of his burial That by keeping the commandments they might be washed and cleansed from all their sins and receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of the hands . . . And who overcome by faith, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true" (D&C 76:51-53.)

In other words, baptism is only efficacious, and the initiary ordinance is applicable, when it is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. We have that same phrase repeated in section 132, verse 19, for the Lord is speaking now of celestial marriage.

"... if a man marry a wife by my word and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of Promise, they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things. . . .

And with reference to the priesthood, when the

Lord discusses in the 84th section the oath and covenant, exactly the same principle is implied. By the laying on of hands we get the promise of power and authority, but it will not be ours -- worlds without end -- unless we keep our part of the covenant.

In the following verse, in explaining still further the mission of the Holy Ghost, the Lord said:

"Therefore it is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things; and hath power according to wisdom, merrily, truth, justice, and judgment." (Moses 661.)

Now with that in mind, let me refer to two other scriptures. In the twentieth chapter of Revelation, John said:

"And I saw the dead small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which was the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works [done in the flesh]" (Revelation 20:12.)

And in the 128th section of the Doctrine and Covenants: "... and the book which was the book of life is the record which is kept in heaven. . ." (D&C 128:7.)

Now, who is the keeper of that record kept in heaven? I ask you to think about that.

Here is an explanation one of the brethren made about this phrase "sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. Elder Melvin J. Ballard, in his *Three Degrees of Glory* pamphlet, said:

"We may deceive men but we cannot deceive the Holy Ghost, and our blessings will not be eternal until they are also sealed by the holy spirit of promise, the Holy Ghost, one who reads the thoughts and hearts of men and gives his sealing approval to the blessings pronounced upon their heads. Then it is binding, and of full force" (*Sermons and Missionary Service of Melvin J. Ballard*, Deseret Book Co., 1949, p. 237.) [*Stand Ye In Holy Places*, p.53]

Cree-L Kofford

The covenants, commitments, and promises that each of you make (D&C 132:7 calls them

“covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations”) must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise.

The Holy Spirit of Promise is another way of saying the Holy Ghost. What the scriptures mean when they say that something must be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is that it must receive the approval of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost can see into the heart of each of us and can consequently discern deceit, half-truths, or misrepresentations. Thus, when a sealing ordinance is “sealed by the Holy Spirit,” the Holy Ghost is satisfied that the parties to the sealing ordinance have been obedient in order to enter into the sealing ordinance and afterward obedient to the covenants they have made. (“Marriage in the Lord’s Way, Part One,” *Ensign*, June 1998, p. 12)

James E. Faust

I wish to say a word about the Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the sealing and ratifying power of the Holy Ghost. To have a covenant or ordinance sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is a compact through which the inherent blessings will be obtained, provided those seeking the blessing are true and faithful (see D&C 76:50–54).

For example, when the covenant of marriage for time and eternity, the culminating gospel ordinance, is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise, it can literally open the windows of heaven for great blessings to flow to a married couple who seek for those blessings. Such marriages become rich, whole, and sacred. Though each party to the marriage can maintain his or her separate identity, yet together in their covenants they can be like two vines wound inseparably around each other. Each thinks of his or her companion before thinking of self.

One of the great blessings available through the Holy Spirit of Promise is that all of our covenants, vows, oaths, and performances, which we receive through the ordinances and blessings of the gospel, are not only confirmed but may be sealed by that Holy Spirit of Promise. However, that sealing may be broken by unrighteousness. It is also important to remember that if a person undertakes to receive the sealing blessing by deceit, “then the blessing is not sealed, notwithstanding the integrity and authority of

the person officiating” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954–56, 2:98–99).

To have a covenant or ordinance sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise means that the compact is binding on earth and in heaven. [“The Gift of the Holy Ghost—A Sure Compass,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1996, pp. 5-6]

Bruce R. McConkie

- One of our revelations speaks of “the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true” (D&C 76:53), meaning that every person who walks uprightly, does the best that he can, overcomes the world, rises above carnality, and walks in paths of righteousness will have his acts and his deeds sealed and approved by the Holy Spirit. He will be, as Paul would have expressed it, “justified ... by the Spirit.” (See 1 Cor. 6:11.) . . . In order to get a proper marriage one must do this: first, search for and seek out celestial marriage—find the right ordinance; second, look for a legal administrator, someone who holds the sealing power—and that power is exercised only in the temples that the Lord has had built by the tithing and sacrifice of his people in our day; and third, so live in righteousness, uprightness, integrity, virtue, and morality that he is entitled to have the Holy Spirit of God ratify and seal and justify and approve, and in that event his marriage is sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise and is binding in time and in eternity. (“Celestial Marriage,” *New Era*, June 1978, pp.16-17)
- To seal is to ratify, to justify, or to approve. Thus an act which is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise is one which is ratified by the Holy Ghost; it is one which is approved by the Lord; and the person who has taken the obligation upon himself is justified by the Spirit in the thing he has done. The ratifying seal of approval is put upon an act only if those entering the contract are worthy as a result of personal righteousness to receive the divine approbation. They “are sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which the Father sheds forth upon all those who are just and true.” (D. & C. 76:53.) If they are

not just and true and worthy the ratifying seal is withheld.

When any ordinance or contract is sealed by the Spirit, it is approved with a promise of reward, provided unrighteousness does not thereafter break the seal, remove the ratifying approval, and cause loss of the promised blessing. (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 1, p. 55; vol. 2, pp. 94-99) Seals are placed on contracts through righteousness.

The operation and power of the Holy Spirit of Promise is best illustrated by the ordinance and contract of baptism. An unworthy candidate for baptism might deceive the elders and get the ordinance performed, but no one can lie to the Holy Ghost and get by undetected. Accordingly, the baptism of an unworthy and unrepentant person would not be sealed by the Spirit; it would not be ratified by the Holy Ghost; the unworthy person would not be justified by the Spirit in his actions. If thereafter he became worthy through repentance and obedience, the seal would then be put in force. Similarly, if a worthy person is baptized with the ratifying approval of the Holy Ghost attending the performance, yet the seal may be broken by subsequent sin.

These principles also apply to every other ordinance and performance in the Church. Thus if both parties are “just and true,” if they are worthy, a ratifying seal is placed on their temple marriage; if they are unworthy, they are not justified by the Spirit and the ratification of the Holy Ghost is withheld. Subsequent worthiness will put the seal in force, and unrighteousness will break any seal. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p.362)

Melvin J. Ballard

We may deceive men but we cannot deceive the Holy Ghost, and our blessings will not be eternal until they are also sealed by the holy spirit of promise, the Holy Ghost, one who reads the thoughts and hearts of men and gives his sealing approval to the blessings pronounced upon their heads. Then it is binding, and of full force, (*Sermons and Missionary Service of Melvin J. Ballard*, Deseret Book Co., 1949, p. 237.)

They are the Church of the Firstborn

D&C 76:54, 94

Joseph Fielding Smith

- Those who gain exaltation in the celestial kingdom are those who are members of the Church of the Firstborn; in other words, those who keep all the commandments of the Lord. There will be many who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who shall never become members of the Church of the Firstborn.

The higher ordinances in the temple of God pertain to exaltation in the celestial kingdom. . . . In order to receive this blessing, one must keep the full law, must abide the law by which that kingdom is governed; for, “He who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory.”

So being ordained an elder, or a high priest, or an apostle, or even President of the Church, is not the thing that brings the exaltation, but obedience to the laws and the ordinances and the covenants required of those who desire to become members of the Church of the Firstborn, as these are administered in the house of the Lord. To become a member of the Church of the Firstborn, as I understand it, is to become one of the inner circle. We are all members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by being baptized and confirmed, and there are many who seem to be content to remain such without obtaining the privileges of exaltation. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:41-42)

- Eternal life is life in the presence of the Father and the Son. Those who receive it become members of the “Church of the Firstborn” and are heirs as sons and daughters of God. They receive the fulness of blessings. They become like the Father and the Son and are joint-heirs with Jesus Christ. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:9)
- Each person baptized into the Church is under obligation to keep the commandments of the Lord. He is under covenant, for baptism is a “new and an everlasting covenant.” (D.C. 22:I.) When he has proved himself by a worthy life, having been faithful in all things required of him, then it is his privilege to receive other

covenants and to take upon himself other obligations which will make of him an heir, and he will become a member of the “Church of the Firstborn. (*The Way to Perfection*, p.208)

Bruce R. McConkie

- The Church of the Firstborn is the church among exalted beings in the highest heaven of the celestial world. It is the church among those for whom the family unit continues in eternity. In a sense it is the inner circle within the Lord’s church on earth. It is composed of those who have entered into that patriarchal order which is called the new and everlasting covenant of marriage. As baptism admits repentant souls to membership in the earthly church, so celestial marriage opens the door to membership in the heavenly church.

The purpose of the church on earth is to prepare us for an inheritance in the church in heaven. Those who so obtain having overcome all things, shall pass by the angels and the gods and enter into their exaltation. “They are they who are the church of the Firstborn. They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things -- they are they who are priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory; and are priests of the Most High, after the order of Melchizedek, which was after the order of Enoch, which was after the order of the Only Begotten Son. Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods, even the sons of God -- wherefore, all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs and they are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” (D&C 76:54-59.) [*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.337]

- Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who so devote themselves to righteousness that they receive the higher ordinances of exaltation become members of the Church of the Firstborn. Baptism is the gate to the Church itself, but celestial marriage is the gate to membership in the Church of the Firstborn, the inner circle of faithful saints who are heirs of exaltation and the fulness of the Father’s kingdom. (D. & C. 76:54, 67, 71, 94, 102; 77:11; 78:21; 88:1-5; Heb. 12:23.)

The Church of the Firstborn is made up of the sons of God, those who have been adopted into the family of the Lord, those who are destined to be joint-heirs with Christ in receiving all that the Father hath. “If you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; . . . And all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn.” (D. & C. 93:20-22; *Doctrines of Salvation*, vol. 2, pp. 9, 41-43.) [*Mormon Doctrine*, p.139]

Temple Ordinances Necessary to Enter the Church of the Firstborn

Joseph Smith

I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is in my private office * * * in council with General James Adams, of Springfield, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and President Brigham Young and Elders Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the highest order of the Melchizedek Priesthood, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which any one is enabled to secure the fullness of those blessing which have been prepared for the Church of the Firstborn, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.237)

Brigham Young

The ordinances of the house of God are expressly for the Church of the Firstborn. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.397)

Joseph Fielding Smith

The Lord has made it possible for us to become members of the Church of the Firstborn, by receiving the blessings of the house of the Lord and

overcoming all things. Thus we become heirs, “priests and kings, who have received of his fulness, and of his glory,” who shall “dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever,” with full exaltation. Are such blessings worth having?

I have said that only one man at a time on the earth holds the keys of this sealing power of the priesthood, but he may, and does, delegate power to others, and they officiate under his direction in the temples of the Lord. No man can officiate in these sealing ordinances until he receives the authority to do so by being set apart by the one who holds the keys, notwithstanding he may hold the priesthood. All the authority exercised in the temples is then, after all, the authority centered in one man. He has the power and calls upon others to officiate, and they seal upon us the keys and powers which, through our obedience, entitle us to become sons and daughters and members of the Church of the Firstborn, receiving all things in the kingdom. This is what we can get in the temple, so that we become members of the family, sons and daughters of God, not servants. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:42-43)

Into Whose Hands the Father Has Given All Things

D&C 76:56

Joseph Fielding Smith

If the faithful, who keep the commandments of the Father, are his sons, then they are heirs of the kingdom and shall receive of the fulness of the Father’s glory, even until they become like the Father. And how can they be perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect if they are not like him? . . .

Now, if they overcome all things, then there are not some things which they do not overcome. If these are to receive “of his fulness and of his glory,” and if into their “hands the Father has given all things,” then the Father has not withheld some of the fulness of his glory, or some things. And if they receive his fulness and his glory, and if “all things are theirs, whether life or death, or things present, or things to come, all are theirs,” how can they receive these blessings and not become gods? They cannot. (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:39)

Melvin J. Ballard

“They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things--“ Is there anything that you have ever dreamed of that you wanted, that you longed for? Into the hands of those who attain this glory shall all things be given. What a world of meaning! You can ponder over that all the rest of your lives and every thought and aspiration of the human heart in righteousness that it is possible for men to conceive of will be but a fraction of that which is comprehended in this statement, that ‘unto them shall be given all things, because it is not possible for mortals to think of a thousandth part of what this means. (*Three Degrees of Glory*, p.8)

They are Priests and Kings

D&C 76:56

Joseph Smith

- What was the power of Melchizedek? ‘Twas not the Priesthood of Aaron which administers in outward ordinances, and the offering of sacrifices. Those holding the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact, that Priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.322)
- Here, then, is eternal life -- to know the only wise and true God; and you have got to learn how to be Gods yourselves, and to be kings and priests to God, the same as all Gods have done before you, namely, by going from one small degree to another, and from a small capacity to a great one; from grace to grace, from exaltation to exaltation, until you attain to the resurrection of the dead, and are able to dwell in everlasting burnings, and to sit in glory, as do those who sit enthroned in everlasting power. And I want you to know that God, in the last days, while certain individuals are proclaiming his name, is not trifling with you or me. (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p.346)

Brigham Young

We understand that we are to be made kings and

priests unto God; now if I be made the king and lawgiver to my family, and if I have many sons, I shall become the father of many fathers, for they will have sons, and their sons will have sons, and so on, from generation to generation, and, in this way, I may become the father of many fathers, or the king of many kings. This will constitute every man a prince, king, lord, or whatever the Father sees fit to confer upon us. In this way we can become king of kings, and lord of lords, or father of fathers, or prince of princes, and this is the only course, for another man is not going to raise up a kingdom for you. (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.195)

John Taylor

- Thus shall we also become legitimately and by right, through the atonement and adoption, kings and priests -- priests to administer in the holy ordinances pertaining to the endowments and exaltations; and kings, under Christ, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, to rule and govern, according to the eternal laws of justice and equity, those who are thus redeemed and exalted. (*The Gospel Kingdom*, p.138)
- We find that after the days of Noah an order was introduced called the patriarchal order, in which every man managed his own family affairs. And prominent men among them were kings and priests unto God, and officiated in what is known among us as the priesthood of the Son of God, or the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek. Man began again to multiply on the face of the earth, and the heads of families became their kings and priests, that is, the fathers of their own people. And they were more or less under the influence and guidance of the Almighty. We read, for instance, in our revelations pertaining to these matters, of a man called Melchizedek, who was a great high priest. We are told that there were a great many high priests in his day, and before him and after him; and these men had communication with God, and were taught of him in relation to their general proceedings, and acknowledged the hand of God in all things with which they were associated. (*The Gospel Kingdom*, p.139)
- Have you forgotten who you are, and what your object is? Have you forgotten that you profess to

be Saints of the Most High God, clothed upon with the holy priesthood? Have you forgotten that you are aiming to become kings and priests to the Lord, and queens and priestesses to him? Have you forgotten that you are associated with the Saints of God in Zion, where the oracles of truth are revealed, and the truths of God are made manifest, and clearly developed; where you and your posterity after you can learn the ways of life and salvation; where you are placed in a position that you can obtain blessings from the great Elohim, that will rest upon you and your posterity worlds without end? Have you forgotten these things, and begun to turn again to the beggarly elements of the world, and become blind, like others we have spoken of, turning like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire? We ought to reflect sometimes upon these things, and understand our true position. (*The Gospel Kingdom*, p.139)

Bruce R. McConkie

- Holders of the Melchizedek Priesthood have power to press forward in righteousness, living by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God, magnifying their callings, going from grace to grace, until through the fulness of the ordinances of the temple they receive the fulness of the priesthood and are ordained kings and priests. Those so attaining shall have exaltation and be kings, priests, rulers, and lords in their respective spheres in the eternal kingdoms of the great King who is God our Father. (Rev. 1:6; 5:10.) [*Mormon Doctrine*, p.425]
- Women do not have the priesthood conferred upon them and are not ordained to offices therein, but they are entitled to all priesthood blessings. Those women who go on to their exaltation, ruling and reigning with husbands who are kings and priests, will themselves be queens and priestesses. They will hold positions of power, authority, and preferment in eternity. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 594)
- If righteous men have power through the gospel and its crowning ordinance of celestial marriage to become kings and priests to rule in exaltation forever, it follows that the women by their side

(without whom they cannot attain exaltation) will be queens and priestesses. (Rev. 1:6; 5:10.) Exaltation grows out of the eternal union of a man and his wife. Of those whose marriage endures in eternity, the Lord says, “Then shall they be gods” (D. & C. 132:20); that is, each of them, the man and the woman, will be a god. As such they will rule over their dominions forever. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 613)

Duty of Parents to Train Their Children To Be Kings and Priests

Spencer W. Kimball

Children have destiny equal to our own. We do not rear children just to please our vanity. We bring children into the world to become kings and queens, and priests and priestesses for our Lord. (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.331)

After the Order of Melchizedek, Enoch, Only Begotten Son

D&C 76:57

Ezra Taft Benson

To enter into the order of the Son of God is the equivalent today of entering into the fulness of the Melchizedek Priesthood, which is only received in the house of the Lord. (“What I Hope You Will Teach Your Children About the Temple,” *Ensign* 15 [August 1985]: p. 8.; *Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson*, p.25)

Just Men Made Perfect

D&C 76:69

Bruce R. McConkie

- Part of the “innumerable company of angels” in “the heavenly place” are the “spirits of just men made perfect.” (D. & C. 76:66-69; Heb. 12:22-24) These are the spirits of men who have worked out their salvation, but are awaiting the day of the resurrection. (D. & C. 129.) [*Mormon Doctrine*, p.36]

- All those who heed the call and live the law become “just men made perfect through Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, who wrought out this perfect atonement through the shedding of his own blood.” (D&C 76:69.) [*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, p.125]
- These are in the paradise of God awaiting the day of their resurrection and final inheritance among exalted beings. “There are two kinds of beings in heaven,” the Prophet wrote, naming the first as “resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones,” and the second as: “The spirits of just men made perfect, they who are not resurrected, but inherit the same glory. When a messenger comes saying he has a message from God, offer him your hand and request him to shake hands with you. If he be an angel he will do so, and you will feel his hand. If he be the spirit of a just man made perfect he will come in his glory; for that is the only way he can appear -- Ask him to shake hands with you, but he will not move, because it is contrary to the order of heaven for a just man to deceive; but he will still deliver his message.” (D. & C. 129:1-7.) [*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3:232]

They Are Gods, Even the Sons of God

D&C 76:58

Gordon B. Hinckley

The whole design of the gospel is to lead us onward and upward to greater achievement, even, eventually, to godhood. This great possibility was enunciated by the Prophet Joseph Smith in the King Follet sermon (see *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, pp. 342–62); and emphasized by President Lorenzo Snow. It is this grand and incomparable concept: As God now is, man may become! (See *The Teachings of Lorenzo Snow*, comp. Clyde J. Williams, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1984, p. 1.)

Our enemies have criticized us for believing in this. Our reply is that this lofty concept in no way diminishes God the Eternal Father. He is the Almighty. He is the Creator and Governor of the universe. He is the greatest of all and will always be so. But just as any earthly father wishes for his sons

and daughters every success in life, so I believe our Father in Heaven wishes for his children that they might approach him in stature and stand beside him resplendent in godly strength and wisdom. (“Don’t Drop the Ball,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, p. 48)

Spencer W. Kimball

Man can transform himself, and he must. Man has in himself the seeds of godhood, which can germinate and grow and develop. As the acorn becomes the oak, the mortal man becomes a god. It is within his power to lift himself by his very bootstraps from the plane on which he finds himself to the plane on which he should be. It may be a long, hard lift with many obstacles, but it is a real possibility. (“The Abundant Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1985, p. 6)

Boyd K. Packer

What is in error, then, when we use the term Godhood to describe the ultimate destiny of mankind? We may now be young in our progression—juvenile, even infantile, compared with Him. Nevertheless, in the eternities to come, if we are worthy, we may be like unto Him, enter His presence, “see as [we] are seen, and know as [we] are known,” and receive a “fulness.” (D&C 76:94.) [“The Pattern of Our Parentage,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 68]

Equal in Power, Might, and Dominion

D&C 76:95

Bruce R. McConkie

- Though the Father is greater than the Son and takes precedence over him, yet the Son is equal with the Father in the sense that the Father has given all things into the hands of the Son, and that the Son has attained all power, all wisdom, all knowledge, all truth, and the fulness of all of the attributes of godliness. (D&C 93:6-26.) In this same sense, all men who gain exaltation shall “receive their inheritance and be made equal with” the Father and the Son. (D. & C. 88:107; 93:27-34.) [*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 1: 191]
- Exalted beings will enjoy eternal equality in

their high celestial status. “And he makes them equal in power, and in might, and in dominion.” (D. & C. 76:95.) “And then shall the angels be crowned with the glory of his might, and the saints shall be filled with his glory, and receive their inheritance and be made equal with him.” (D. & C. 88:107.) In other words, they all enjoy exaltation; all live the same kind of life; all exercise the same power, the power of God; all are possessed of the same Spirit, the Spirit of truth; all are gods and have eternal increase; all are joint-heirs with Christ, possessing all things with him, and being inheritors of all that the Father hath. (*Mormon Doctrine*, p.231)

Orson Pratt

- Did you ever think of that? It is only in one respect. Each one will be made joint heir of all things in heaven, and upon earth. What more can a person want, if he is made a joint heir of all things; and one revelation says, he that is a faithful and wise steward in time shall inherit all things; consequently they are equal in dominion, and in power, and in might, as the vision states. This don’t say that each one shall actually control, and govern, and manage all things; that is a very different thing; just as it is here in temporal things, though each person may be considered as the inheritor of all the properties of the Church; yet when he comes to the management of property, he has only a share, so in heavenly things, a person may have the management of only one world, or of two, or of three; or of as many as there are particles of dust that compose our globe, yet, after all, each can proclaim himself as the inheritor of all things, being a joint heir of the grand universal inheritance. (*Journal of Discourses*, 2:102)
- But says one, “Does not that oneness mean one person?” No; Jesus meant that those who believed in him through his servants, might be able to come up to that fullness and glory and power and exaltation which he inherited, even to the fulness of the celestial glory, to be crowned with God the Eternal Father, and with his Only Begotten, to be made equal, as it were, with them, in power and dominion; agreeing with some modern revelations God has given through

the Prophet Joseph Smith. He said all they that receive this Priesthood, that is, those who receive the testimony of the servants of God, they receive me; and whosoever receives my Father, receives my Father's kingdom; whereupon all that my Father hath shall be given to him. This is a glorious promise, to be joint heirs with the Son of God in the inheritance of all things, even the fullness and glory of the Celestial world, their bodies eventually to become glorified, spiritual bodies of flesh and bones, the same as God the Father. (*Journal of Discourses* 18:293)

Oneness in the Celestial Kingdom

Wilford Woodruff

There is a principle connected with this that I think is very important to us as a people and as a Church on the earth. With all the divisions, and all the discontent, and the quarrelings and opposition among the powers on earth, or that have been revealed from heaven, I have never heard that it has ever been revealed to the children of men that there was any division between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. They are one. They always have been one. They always will be one, from eternity unto eternity. Our Heavenly Father stands at the head, being the author of the salvation of the children of men, having created and peopled the world and given laws to the inhabitants of the earth. This principle is shown unto us by the revelation of the laws which belong to the different kingdoms. There is a celestial kingdom, a terrestrial kingdom, and a telestial kingdom. There is a glory of the sun; a glory of the moon, and a glory of the stars; and as one star differs from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead. *In the celestial kingdom of God there is oneness. -- there is union.* (*The Discourses of Wilford Woodruff*, p.127; emphasis added)