

The Testimony of Jesus - *the Great and Last Promise – of Eternal Life*

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God desires a relationship with us. He desires that we receive a fullness of His love, light, and spiritual gifts. He wants us to know Him. The first gift He lists for us, in the thirteen gifts of the Spirit found in D&C 46, is Himself – the Heavenly Gift. He is our Second Comforter, the living God as our mentor, comforter, and friend. According to the Prophet Joseph, if you have not “the testimony of Jesus” then you have little assurance of salvation or eternal life in this world. The testimony of Jesus is a Sacrament meeting testimony of Christ but His testimony to you that you have eternal life. It is one of three types of “testimony” tied to our Lord Jesus. The first two are testimonies of Him. The third is of Him and by Him.

(1) Many good Christians believe that Jesus is our loving Savior. They read about Him, but haven’t come to know Him. Religion teaches us about Him, but a real relationship with God requires more.

(2) The second is a surer witness of Him as provided by the Holy Ghost. Its primary role as “the first comforter” is to bear witness of truth in all things, including the Father and the Son. When we bear witness of Christ or the Father under the influence of the Spirit, we do so speaking with greater power of the Holy Ghost or “the tongue of angels.” The Holy Ghost is received after one is baptized by fire.

(3) A third testimony of our LORD is the most desirable. It is to receive Christ as our “Second Comforter,” or when we ascend into our Lord’s presence and there develop real knowledge, beyond belief - that He is real. We must be completely cleansed from “the blood and sins of this generation” (see Rev. 12:17, 19:10; D&C 46:13-14; 76:51, 101 & 88:4, 74-75). The baptism of fire and Holy Ghost is part of the sanctifying process. Christ’s blood in the Atonement completes this process. Brought to heaven, as King Benjamin says, we “are sealed his.” There we have opportunity to see and feel the marks of the atonement in our LORD’s body and become a witness for Him, like so many did in 3rd Nephi 11. It is to enter His “rest” (D&C 84:24) or to receive Him as “the heavenly gift” in this life (4 Ne. 1:3; Ether 12:8; Heb. 6:44). It has ties to receiving salvation at His hands, or receiving “the more sure word of prophecy,” from Him that we have eternal life. It is a prophetic statement from Jesus as THE PROPHET and the Great HIGH PRIEST, He who went into the Holy of Holies of Gethsemane alone, treading the winepress with no other, for you and I. It is to have the day of judgment advanced in this life, and be judged by Him, pronounced clean here in mortality via His mercy and His blood (not our good works). Our calling and election is then made sure.

Such are then sealed up to eternal life and have the testimony of Jesus. It becomes an “anchor to the soul” in difficult times and trials. It is the sealing we should seek, a sealing to God directly (see Mosiah 5:15). Most all scriptures using the word “seal” are tied to this concept, not our connection to family, but a sealing to God Himself, via His promise of eternal life (see John 6:27; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13, 4:30; Rev. 7:3-4; Mos. 5:15; Hel. 10:7; Alma 34:35; D&C 1:8, 68:12, 76:51-54). Addressing this important promise, our LORD said:

“Wherefore, I now send upon you another Comforter, even upon you my friends, that it may abide in your hearts, even the Holy Spirit of promise; which other Comforter is the same that I promised unto my disciples, as is recorded in the testimony of John. This Comforter is the promise which I give unto you of eternal life, even the glory of the celestial kingdom; Which glory is that of the church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ his Son” (D&C 88:3-5).

John provides us a second witness. Quoting the Lord, he stated:

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you” (John 14:16-20).

Jesus is the light, life, and truth of the world.

“The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth, and John bore record of me, saying: He received a fulness of truth, yea, even of all truth” (D&C 93:26).

Christ is “the Spirit of truth” and thus the “other” comforter according to D&C 88:3. The Holy Ghost is the first comforter and our Lord the second comforter - the Holy Spirit of Promise. The Prophet Joseph Smith clarified these concepts further. After quoting John 14:16-23, he stated:

“Now what is this other comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God” (HC, p. 381).

Thereafter, a new journey begins, where one is mentored by the LORD personally for their particular mission.

The freewill gift of Christ’s blood is what John tells us qualified Him to open the seven seals of the book of life in Revelation chapters 4 and 5. There we read that He who "sat on the throne" had a *rainbow* all around Him (Rev. 4:3, 10:1; Ezek. 1:28; 3 Enoch 22:4). This was not only a visual *sign* that He is "the *light* and the *life* of the world" (3 Ne. 11:10-11; D&C 11:3, 34:2), but He who fulfilled *the everlasting covenant* by coming to earth as "the Righteous" to be "lifted up" as "the lamb." He was and is the Creator who sanctifies not only man, but mother earth too - from all unrighteousness (see Moses 7:45-53). In John's vision, our Lord held in His hands a book "sealed with seven seals" (Rev. 5:1). John tells us that there was no "man in heaven, nor in the earth, neither under the earth...able to open the book, neither to look thereon." John thus wept much, "because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon," except He who sat on the throne. John then added that, "the Lion of the tribe of Juda[h], the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." He alone as "a lamb as it had been slain" was *worthy* to do so. In this ascent vision experience, John said that those who surrounded the Lord's throne then, "sung a new song, saying, Thou are *worthy* to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (verses 4-10).

Later in chapter 19, an angel appearing to John told him to:

"Write, *blessed* are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb...And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not. I am they fellow servant, and of thy brethren *that have the testimony of Jesus*: worship God; *for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*" (Revelation 19:10).

John the Revelator spoke of things he knew to be true. He had real knowledge of our Lord having seen Him throughout his own ministry with the Lord, and on multiple occasions after His death too, including John's ascension into heaven (chapters 4 and 5 of Revelation), where he may have been translated. In the last part of chapter 12 of Revelation, addressing the anger the serpent had towards the Lord's chosen ones on the last-days exodus in the wilderness, we read, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman [the church of the Firstborn], and went to make war with **the remnant** of her seed, *which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*" (Rev. 12:17; see also Rev. 19:10; D&C 46:13-14; 76:51, 101; 88:4, 74-75; Moroni 10:8).

Having the testimony of Jesus is tied to having knowledge about our standing before Christ. Joseph Smith and others have given us the definition of what real *knowledge* is in scripture.

"A man is saved no faster than he gets *knowledge*, for if he does not get *knowledge*, he will be brought into captivity by some evil power in the other world, as evil spirits will have more *knowledge*, and consequently

more power" (TPJS, p. 217).

What is this knowledge? It is *knowledge of Jesus Christ - that He lives, and that we are clean before Him!* The Prophet Joseph stated:

"1st Key: **Knowledge is the power of salvation.** 2nd key: *Make your calling and election sure.* 3rd key: It is one thing to be on the mount and *hear the excellent voice*, etc., and another to hear the voice declare to you, *You have a part and lot in that kingdom*" (TPJS, p. 306).

He then added these important, clarifying statements:

"Now, there is some grand secret here, and keys to unlock the subject. Notwithstanding the apostle [Peter] exhorts them to add to their faith, virtue, *knowledge*, temperance, etc., yet he exhorts them to make their *calling and election sure*. And though they had heard an audible voice from heaven bearing testimony that Jesus was the Son of God, yet he says we have a ***more sure word of prophecy***, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed as unto a light shining in a dark place. Now, wherein could they have a *more sure word of prophecy* than to hear the voice of God saying, This is my beloved Son. Now for the secret and *grand key*. Though they might hear the voice of God and know that Jesus was the Son of God, this would be no evidence that their *election and calling* was made sure, that they had part with Christ, and were joint heirs with Him. They then would want that ***more sure word of prophecy***, that they were *sealed* in the heavens and had ***the promise of eternal life*** in the kingdom of God. Then, having this promise *sealed* unto them, it was an *anchor to the soul*, sure and steadfast. Though the thunders might roll and lightnings flash, and earthquakes bellow, and war gather thick around, yet this *hope and knowledge* would support the soul in every hour of trial, trouble and tribulation. Then **knowledge** [of and] through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ ***is the grand key that unlocks the glories and mysteries of the kingdom of heaven***" (TPJS, p. 298).

The washing of feet ordinance is a sealing ritual. In John 13 our Savior sealed those worthy to Him as the Father of their salvation via His own blood. In D&C 88 the Lord told those in the School of the Prophets in Kirtland Ohio to, "assemble yourselves together, and organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves, and sanctify yourselves; yea purify your hearts, and *cleanse your hands and your feet before me*, **that I may make you clean. That I may testify unto your Father, and your God, and my God, that you are clean from the blood of this wicked generation;** that I may fulfill this promise, this great and last promise [of eternal life, 88:1-5] which I have made unto **when I will**" (D&C 88:74-75, bold & italics added).

The washing of feet ordinance, done in this solemn assembly setting, is a symbolic earthly ritual prefiguring the actual *sealing* by Jesus Christ, *the sealing up to eternal life* by **the Holy Spirit of Promise**. He kneels before us tenderly cleansing us, as He did in John 13 to those whom He trusted at the Last Supper, just before He and His disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane. There His blood was first shed willingly on their and our behalf. His torture and execution followed.

Our Need of Cleansing The great prophet Isaiah, whose words the Lord commanded us to "diligently search" in 3 Nephi 23:1-3, said that we, the Lord's people - His children, are guilty of *idolatry, injustice* to one another, and *covenant-breaking*. Idolatry is to worship things or the arm of flesh rather than God (see 2 Ne. 4:34; Jer. 17:5). Some bear testimony that church presidents are prophets, or that "the church is true," yet leave out the greater testimony that Jesus or *Yahshua* is the Christ who hath redeemed us, the only one worthy to open "the book of life." It is a greater testimony to bear witness of Him, and a much greater testimony still to have obtained *His testimony of us*, given before the Father that we are clean, **sanctified by His blood**. This testimony is the greatest and most *blessed* of them all. It is the Great High Priest's "*more sure word of prophecy*" to you and I - that through His grace (the Atonement and Resurrection), and our humility and repentance, we may have *eternal life*. This is "*the great and last promise*" (D&C 88:75). We then have the promise of real "*Salvation*," and by He who *is* Salvation. Such souls become members of *the church of the Firstborn*. They are *sanctified*, having their names written in *the Lamb's Book of Life*. They possess *eternal life*.

Note how D&C 76 and 88 reference the "*testimony of Jesus*" multiple times. In both Sections we read of "hidden mysteries." In verses 51-70 of Section 76 we read of those blessed to be part of the greater church of the Firstborn, "*they who received the testimony of Jesus.*" Verses 74, 101, and 116-119 address it too, as do verses 74-75 of D&C 88. Note that those who receive "not the gospel [of Christ], *neither the testimony of Jesus*" are not gathered nor caught up to *the church of the Firstborn* (Celestial glory), but must inherit a lesser glory and kingdom. They are those who have trusted in the arm of flesh rather than God, even good men and their precepts, and thus they inherit a lesser kingdom. They were "*blinded by the craftiness of men*" (see vs. 75 98-102). John tells us in Revelation 19:10 that the angels who came to teach him in chapter 19 of his book had "*the testimony of Jesus,*" which is "*the spirit of prophecy.*" They were his "brethren," each of whom possessed this blessed "testimony" personally. Collectively, these important verses provide understanding of what "*the testimony of Jesus*" is.

Additional scripture encourages us to seek this testimony - real *redemption* - at the Lord's hands, via seeking *His face* (D&C 101:38). A young Joseph Smith was motivated by James 1:5 to go into a grove to pray to know his standing before God. He later taught the Saints that all should seek to have their "*calling and election made sure.*" He said:

"Oh! I beseech you to go forward, go forward and make your *calling and election sure*; and if any man preach *any other Gospel* than that which I have preached, he shall be *cursed*" (TJPS, p. 366).

He added:

"Brethren **never cease struggling** until you get this evidence...Take heed both before and after obtaining this *more sure word of prophecy.*"

He concluded, summarizing, stating;

"Third and last is how to make *our calling and election sure*. Ans[wer], it is to obtain a promise from God for myself that I shall have *Eternal life*. **That is the more sure word of prophecy**" (Words of Joseph Smith, pps. 208-09).

As expressed earlier, following the personal promise of *eternal life*, is yet another blessed gift, Christ as "*the Heavenly Gift*" (Ether 12:8). In the first five verses of D&C 88 we read of the Prophet Joseph Smith's "*sealing up*" of a number of brethren to "*eternal life.*" They were then promised that in time they would receive "*another comforter*" in addition to the Holy Ghost. This other or additional "comforter" is "the promise **which I [Christ] give unto you** of *eternal life*, even the glory of the celestial kingdom" (or the "church of the Firstborn," D&C 88:3-4). It is to receive Him as the "*Second Comforter,*" where this promise is then literally given or *sealed* upon them. This occurs in a personal audience with *the Light and Life of the world*, Jesus of Nazareth. Those so *blessed* then have a powerful connection to Him as the "*true vine*" (see John 15). These individuals then have power to become *fruitful* "*branches*" of the *stem* of the Tree of Life (see D&C 113:1).

The Lord Jesus or *Yeshua* alone *saves* us through His miraculous and merciful Atonement and Resurrection. He tread the winepress alone. No man or institution can substitute for His great work as Savior. Scripture tells us that there is no other *name* under heaven whereby salvation cometh, but only in and through the name of Christ (Mos. 3:17; 2 Ne. 31:16-21; 2 Ne. 25:20). He is "Salvation." In D&C 76, verses 99-107 we read of the *curse* of those who worship the arm of flesh instead (see 2 Ne. 4:34; Jer. 17:5, 7, 7:8, 4, 8:20). Another way of saying this is that Christ alone is "*the keeper of the gate*" to heaven (John 14:6), to the presence of Father and Mother. **He employs no servant there** (2 Ne. 9:41), as He alone is our Judge, the Father committing all judgment into His hands (John 5:22). As John told us, this is because He tread the winepress alone in Gethsemane, the place of His freewill sacrifice on our behalf. The scourging and cross experiences were later forced upon Him, though He willingly endured them too - that both the Law He gave, and the words of the prophets He inspired - might be *fulfilled*. This is how He *fulfilled* the Law He gave, *and* the words of the Prophets.

Ministers Sent of Christ

True messengers have always pointed to Christ as our Savior, not men who seek acclamation and honor. True messengers have **the testimony of Jesus**. The Prophet Joseph Smith has informed us that, “**No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he was the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy**” (TPJS, p. 160). The Prophet Joseph and Oliver Cowdery made this clear in reference to the Twelve in their day – that they all needed to be “**special witnesses**” of the Lord, **true messengers** or **ministers** who had “**the testimony of Jesus**.” Elder Cowdery, speaking to the Twelve of his day, stated, “**...it is necessary that you receive a testimony from heaven for yourselves...never cease striving until you have seen God face to face. Your ordination is not full and complete till God has laid His hand upon you.** We require as much to qualify us as did those who have gone before us; God is the same. If the Savior in former days laid His hands upon His disciples, why not in latter days?”¹ The Prophet Joseph, in speaking to all Saints, added, “It is your privilege to purify yourselves and come up to the same glory, and see yourselves, and know for yourselves” (TJPS, p. 13). Today’s definition of “*special witnesses*” is a different one.

Angels, and those inspired with the "tongue of angels" address our need to come to "**know**" Him, that we might be redeemed from the fall through his atoning blood. Knowledge *about* God is not enough. We must have a different kind of "*knowledge*" to be saved, a personal audience with God - that we may come to **know** that He literally lives, and that He was pierced for our sake. This occurs as we see and feel the nail prints in His hands, wrists, and feet - as He kneels before us to wash our feet and remove the blood and sins of this generation. Such an experience surpasses all belief, faith, and works. His reality has become knowledge by first-hand experience. Note also the following scriptures:

- James 1:5-6 (promise of an answer by God, given Joseph as he sought to know his standing before Him)
- Revelation 19:7-10 (the brotherhood [or sisterhood] of those with the "testimony of Jesus")
- D&C 46:13-14 (the *first* of 13 gifts of the Spirit, “the testimony of Jesus,” also 1 Cor. 12:3; Moroni 10:7)
- D&C 88:74-75 (the definition of "*the testimony of Jesus*")
- D&C 88:1-5 (the promise of *eternal life* and *another comforter*)
- D&C 93:1 (the blessing of those *sanctified* by His blood)
- D&C 76:51-70 & 99-107 (the cursing for those who look not to Christ for their redemption, but to another)

A Charge to You and I Redemption through Christ is *the* central component of the Gospel He taught (3 Ne. 27:13-14). To receive *the testimony of Jesus* (a pronouncement before the Father of our cleanliness), and *the more sure of word of prophecy* (the promise of eternal life) should be a primary focus for us *in this life* (see D&C 132:22-24), a goal the Prophet Joseph Smith repeatedly taught the Saints of his day to pursue with great vigor. It *is* the core of the Gospel of Christ. Any other doctrine brings curses upon us, according to the Prophet Joseph (TJPS, p. 366). These priceless gifts are only obtained by great effort, however, not belief only. In the important Lectures on Faith, once a part of the Doctrine and Covenants, we read:

"It is vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have *offered their all in sacrifice*, and by this means obtain faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain *eternal life*, unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the *same sacrifice*, and through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of Him. (Lecture 6, verse 8).

Too many have sought salvation by praising men, by worshipping the fallen arm of flesh, and by seeking salvation at their hands. God alone saves us according to His word - *the more sure word of His prophecy* as *the Holy Spirit of Promise*. Joseph Smith taught that we must not neglect the duty of the great sacrifices necessary to obtain God's greater word, *His testimony of us*. He stated:

"...the people should each one stand for himself, and *depend on no man or men* in that state of corruption... said **if the people departed from the Lord**, they must fall—that they were *depending on the Prophet*, hence were darkened in their minds, in consequence of neglecting the duties devolving upon *themselves*" (TPJS, pp. 237-238).

He then added;

"For a man to lay down his all, his character and reputation, his honor, and applause, his good name among men, his houses, his lands, his brothers and sisters, his wife and children and even his own life also – counting all things but filth and dross *for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ* – requires more than mere belief or supposition that he is doing the will of God; but actual *knowledge*, realizing that, when these sufferings are ended, he will enter into *eternal rest*, and be a partaker of the glory of God.... For, from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of [eternal] *life and salvation* never could be obtained ***without the sacrifice of all earthly things***. It was through this *sacrifice*, and this only, that God has ordained that men should enjoy *eternal life*; and it is through the medium of *the sacrifice of all earthly things* that men do actually *know* that they are doing the things that are well pleasing in the sight of God... Under these circumstances, then he can obtain the faith necessary for him to lay hold on *eternal life*... But those who do not make the *sacrifice* cannot enjoy this faith, because *men are dependent upon this sacrifice in order to obtain this faith*; therefore, they cannot lay hold upon *eternal life*, because the revelations of God do not guarantee unto them the authority so to do... But those who have not made this *sacrifice* to God do not know that the course which they pursue is well pleasing in his sight; for whatever may be their belief or their opinion, it is a matter of doubt and uncertainty in their mind" (Lectures on Faith, 6:5-12).

Living according to basic church standards or societal norms is not enough. It is not sufficient to make a covenant *to sacrifice*, as all endowed saints have done in temples. We must observe all covenants made to God ***by sacrifice***. We read in D&C 97;

"Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants ***by sacrifice***—yea, **every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command**—*they are accepted of me*" (D&C 97:8).

In Lectures on Faith 6, verse 9, we are reminded of Psalm 1:3-5:

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about him. He shall call to the heavens from above and to the earth, that *he may judge his people*. Gather **my saints** together unto me; *those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice* (LOF 6:9).

How do we obtain the voice of God testifying to us that we are His - "**my saints**," that we have become His sons and daughters? It is simple, by (1) hearing His voice individually and (2) doing His will. Doing our home and visiting teaching, or even mighty *works* before men in His name is not enough. It is vain. Matthew 7:21-23 makes this clear. It states:

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*. Many will say to me in that day, 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.

Christ alone bears testimony to His servants of their salvation. This testimony and His later testimony before the Father *is the more sure word of prophecy*. John called it simply, "the spirit of prophecy" in Revelation 19:10. Joseph Smith clarified these concepts. In addressing those who incorrectly profess that they have a testimony **of Jesus**, he stated:

"Many of the sects cry out O I have the testimony of Jesus, I have the spirit of God But away with Jo Smith he says he is a Prophet But their is to be no Prophets nor revelations in the last days; But stop sir the Revelator says that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy So by your own mouth you are condemned" (Words of Joseph Smith, p. 214).

The Prophet Joseph added;

"Salvation cannot come *without revelation*; it is in **vain** for anyone to minister without it. No man is a minister of Jesus Christ without being a *prophet*. No man can be a [true] minister of Jesus Christ except he has *the testimony of Jesus*; and *this is the spirit of prophecy*" (TPJS p. 160).

Moses stated, "would God that all the LORD'S people [men and women] were prophets, *and* that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!" (Num. 11:29).

Apostle Marion G. Romney admonished us, stating, "I should think that every faithful Latter-day Saint ' . . . would want that *more sure word of prophecy*, that they were *sealed* in the heavens and had *the promise of eternal life* in the kingdom of God" (DHC, 5:388, see also Marion G. Romney, Making our Calling and Election Sure, Conference Report, October 1965, pp. 20-23).

Once we have kept our Lord's commandments and sacrifice all that He has required, how do we determine if we then "**know**" Christ? How do we know if we are a witness and prophet for Christ? He Himself tells us what it means to be a witness of Him and His resurrection. We read in 3 Ne 11:14-17:

"And it came to pass that the Lord spake unto them saying: 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. And it came to pass that the multitude went forth, and thrust their hands into his side, and did feel the prints of the nails in his hands and in his feet; and this they did do, going forth one by one until they had all gone forth, and did see with their eyes and did feel with their hands, and did **know** of a surety and did bear record, that it was he, of whom it was written by the prophets, that should come. And when they had all gone forth and had **witnessed for themselves**, they did cry out with one accord, saying: Hosanna! Blessed be the name of the Most High God! And they did fall down at the feet of Jesus, and did worship him."

The Book of Mormon is a manual for entering into our Lord's presence in this life, and receiving the "*great and last promise*" (D&C 88:75). In it we also read of Lehi's grandson Enos. He so hungered after *Righteousness* (another of our Lord's many name-titles), that he cried unto the Lord all day and night to receive a real "*remission*" of his sins, until finally, ". . . there came a voice saying: Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be **blessed**" (Enos 5). Enos became *blessed* and received this title thereafter because he too had received "*the testimony of Jesus*" in connection with "*the more sure word of prophecy*."

While re-translating John 5:29, Joseph Smith was given the vision of D&C 76 with Sidney Rigdon. There we read of three classes of people who are eventually judged and placed in three different realms in the next life, based on choices made here. Some choices lead to rejecting, denying, or forsaking Christ. Such never receive "*the testimony of Jesus*," here *or* in the next life (verses 81-86). They inherit *Telestial* glory only. They are **not** redeemed, but are thrust down to hell. Those who inherit *Terrestrial* glory (verses 71-78 & 88-91) do not come to **know** Jesus here. They have not heeded His wise counsel to "**repent**" and literally "**come unto me**" [Christ] *in this life* (see D&C 132:22-24). They do so later in the next life, however (vs. 74), there receiving "*the testimony of Jesus*." Thus, they receive a lesser reward, as they were not "*valiant*" in "*the testimony of Jesus* here and now." Most are *deceived by the false traditions and teachings of men* and their churches (see verses 75-79). Note also verses 99-102, where they and those of *Telestial* Glory are part of many "*who say*" they follow Christ, but are really following others like Moses, or Isaiah, or Paul, or some charismatic man (including current leaders). Though recognized leaders, they are nevertheless men. Those following them rather than Christ do not receive **Christ's doctrine, gospel, or church** here, but rather the teachings of men, and thus they "*receive not the gospel [of Christ] neither the testimony of Jesus, neither the prophets, neither the everlasting covenant*" (vs. 101). This is a very important concept. We must carefully choose who to believe, who to place our faith and trust in (see 2 Ne. 4:34; Psalm 118:8).

We are reminded of Martha and Mary in these things, and the marriage relationship given us throughout scripture, marriage to Christ the Bridegroom. Martha was very busy taking care of what she believed were needful things *for* Christ. Like her, too many today focus on the *deadness* of various laws and duties, rather than

being *alive in* and *with* Christ. Though Martha believed she was doing things *for* Christ and his guests, according to our Lord, Mary concentrated on receiving “*that good part*” (Luke 10:42). She valued Him personally and what He had to say and give. She focused on Him and a relationship *with* Him. She sat at His feet, being taught one on one, while Martha was very busy serving in the way she incorrectly thought was better. Mary eventually had the great honor of anointing His feet and head, an act symbolically tied to marriage. All of us are invited to awake, arise, and go out to meet the Bridegroom Jesus Christ. We are all invited into a deeper *relationship* with Him. *Religion*, on the other hand, has focus on learning about Him. He has repeatedly said, “**repent and come unto me**” (see D&C 10:67-68; 1 Ne. 10:18-19; 2 Ne. 9:23-24; 28:31-32; Jacob 1:7; Alma 5:33-34; D&C 93:1; 3 Ne. 9:14, 22, 51; 11:14; 12:19-20, 23-24; 27:5-21; 30:1-2).

Those who have “awakened” to His truths, turn to Him for their light rather than men (see 3 Ne. 18:24; 2 Ne. 26:29), and thus they receive the greater Celestial glory and its rewards (D&C 76:50-70, 92-96). They seek the face of God in this life and press into the veil until it is parted, coming into Christ’s presence, the fulness of His joyful *rest* (D&C 84:24) Thereafter, they have opportunity to be taught personally by Him in this life – the Second Comforter, and to dwell with Him and Father and Mother in the next life. Such inherit Celestial glory and are members of the church of the Firstborn.

<i>Telestial</i>	<i>Terrestrial</i>	<i>Celestial</i>
Little interest in learning of God	Those that Learn about God	Those Engaged & Married to the Bridegroom
The Rebellious	Martha	Mary
No interest in God	Go to Church & the Temple	Come unto Christ
Satisfy the Flesh	Pay Tithing & Fast Offerings	Help the poor personally
Reject the Commandments	Keep Many of the Commandments	Keep All The Commandments
Reject, Deny, Forsake Jesus	Receive Testimony of Jesus in Next Life	Seek & Receive Testimony of Jesus Here
Embrace the world - Babylon	Deceived by crafty men in this life	Enlightened by God’s Light
Embrace the World	Eventually Embrace God in the next life	Embrace God in this Life

Note the three choices above. Many believe they are saved when they are *not* (exaltation in the highest kingdom is true “salvation”). We all must choose between *religion* - often polluted by men, or a *relationship* with God. Marriage symbolism throughout scripture suggests that God desires us to **know** and **love** Him. Any wise parent desires the same. The first, great commandment is to love God with all our heart, might, mind and strength (Matt. 22:34-40). To **know** God is to first seek a relationship with Him, to love Him and His other children. Our choices in this life reveal where our hearts are set.

Summary The important promise of eternal life, or being “sealed up to **eternal life**” is “**the testimony of Jesus**” - given **of** and **by the Lord** to us. It is an “*anchor to the soul*” always, but especially in difficult times and trials. It is the *sealing* we should seek, a *sealing* to God directly (see Mosiah 5:15). Virtually all scriptures using the word “*seal*” are tied to this concept, not to a marriage sealing or a connection to ancestors, but a *sealing* to God Himself via His promise of **eternal life** to us (see John 6:27; 2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13, 4:30; Rev. 7:3-4; Mos. 5:15; Hel. 10:7; Alma 34:35; D&C 1:8, 68:12, 76:51-54).

The Prophet Joseph Smith clearly taught that Christ – the author of our salvation through the atonement - is **the Holy Spirit of Promise** (see TPJS and Words of Joseph Smith). Today LDS publications and a number of leaders often teach that the Holy Ghost is the Holy Spirit of Promise, a concept not supported by Joseph Smith’s teachings, nor scripture. Note the nine similar concepts or phrases below all tied to being “**sealed up to eternal life**” or being *promised* “**eternal life**” by our Lord Jesus Christ – He who is **the Spirit of Truth** and **the Holy Spirit of Promise** – He who gives **the promise of eternal life**. These eight phrases include:

- The Holy Spirit of Promise is Christ Himself promising salvation to you, as He is the Spirit of Truth (D&C 93:9, 11, 16).
- To have your Calling and Election made Sure is to receive the promise of eternal life.
- To receive the More Sure Word of Prophecy is to receive the promise of eternal life.
- To be Sealed Up Unto Eternal Life is the promise of eternal life.
- The Spirit of Prophecy is Christ’s prophecy to you that you will have eternal life.
- The Testimony of Jesus is Christ’s testimony to you of your salvation – that you will receive eternal life.

To Know God is to know that you are and will be with Christ, because of His promise.

To be Sealed His is to be Sealed to God (Mosiah 5:15) and receive His promise of eternal life.

The Spirit of Elijah is another name for the Sealing Power, or being sealed up to eternal life by one with this power.

The Holy Spirit of promise is the Second Comforter or Jesus Christ as **the Spirit of Truth** (D&C 93:9, 11, 26) giving you the *promise* of **Eternal Life** in this life. It is God's greatest gift (D&C 14:7). It comes from the Father of our salvation (Jesus Christ) through His atonement and great love. He is this "**other comforter**" or "**another Comforter**" besides *the first comforter*, the Holy Ghost. This is made clear in John 14. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you **another Comforter**, that he may abide with you for ever; *Even the Spirit of truth*; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: **I will come to you**. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" (John 14:16-20).

In the 1989 version of the LDS scriptures that the author still uses, the footnote to John 14:6, addressing "*another comforter*" reads, "Jesus Christ, **Second Comforter**." In the newer 2013 version of the LDS scriptures, this same footnote now has been changed to read, "*the Holy Ghost*." After Joseph Smith quoted John 14:16-23, he stated, "Now what is this **other comforter**? **It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself [the Second Comforter]**; and this is the sum and substance of the whole matter; that when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear unto him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him, and they will take up their abode with him, and the visions of the heavens will be opened unto him, and the Lord will teach him face to face, and he may have a perfect knowledge of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God" (HC, 381).

The testimony of Jesus is not your testimony of Christ but His testimony to you that you have **eternal life**. Joseph Smith said, "Third and last is how to make our calling and election sure. Ans[wer], it is to **obtain a promise from God for myself that I shall have Eternal life**. That is **the more sure word of prophecy**. Peter was writing to those of like precious faith with them the Apostles First to be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise that is the testimony of Jesus" (WOJS p. 209, original text).

Christ bears testimony to His servants, of their salvation. This testimony to them is **the more sure word of prophecy**, and is also called "**the spirit of prophecy**" (see D&C 131:5). Revelation 19:10 tells us that the "testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy." Joseph Smith added, "Many of the sects cry out O I have the testimony of Jesus, I have the spirit of God But away with Jo Smith he says he is a Prophet But their is to be no Prophets nor revelations in the last days; But stop sir the Revelator says that **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of Prophecy** So by your own mouth you are condemned" (WOJS p. 214).

The Prophet Joseph also said, "Salvation cannot come without revelation; it is in vain for anyone to minister without it. No man is a minister of Jesus Christ without being a prophet. No man can be a minister of Jesus Christ except he has **the testimony of Jesus; and this is the spirit of prophecy**" (TPJS p. 160). **The more sure word of prophecy** referenced here by Joseph is the voice of Christ promising to you that you have a place and part with Him in the Kingdom. He must declare to you that you are sealed in the heavens and have the promise of eternal life in the Kingdom of God. Further clarifying this, Joseph Smith said, "It is one thing to receive knowledge by the voice of God, (this is my Beloved Son &c.) & another to know that you yourself will be saved, to have a positive promise of your salvation is **making your calling and election sure**. viz the voice of Jesus saying my beloved thou shalt have **eternal life**. Brethren never cease struggling until you get this evidence. Take heed both before and after obtaining this more sure word of prophecy" (WOJS, p. 208). He also added, "Third and last is how to **make our calling and election sure**. Ans[wer], it is to obtain a **promise from God for myself that I shall have Eternal life**. That is **the more sure word of prophecy** (WOJS, p. 209)

Christ Jesus is **the Second Comforter**, the **Holy Spirit of Promise**, and **the Spirit of Truth**. To receive His promise of **eternal life** is the scriptural meaning of being "*sealed*" as found in all scriptures tied to the word "*seal*." Such is one who has **the testimony of Jesus** in this life. Such is called "**blessed**" in scripture. Enos was one of them in the Book of Mormon. The Lord addressed the qualities that bring us into His presence in the

Beattitudes taught in chapter 12 of third Nephi. We should study them. May the Lord and these personal qualities become part of your focus from this point forward. The rewards are glorious.

End Notes

¹ *The Apostolic Charge* Historian D. Michael Quinn has suggested that the Twelve today have abandoned the charge to come to know the Lord, and now only require an inward prompting by the Holy Ghost to merit their calling as “special witnesses” of the Lord, rather than an actual audience with Christ, as required in the statements of Oliver Cowdery and Joseph Smith. Quinn states, “repeatedly, the message of the twentieth-century LDS church is that inward conviction rather than outward vision is the basis for being a special witness of Christ” (Michael D. Quinn, *Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power*, Signature Books, pps. 4-5). The obligation of revelation for the individual is often referred to as an “ascent vision experience.” It remains of paramount importance to all believers to seek the Lord’s face. Brigham Young said, “What a pity it would be if we were led by one man [or men – the arm of flesh] to utter destruction! Are you afraid of this? I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders that they will not inquire of themselves of God whether they are led by Him. I am fearful they settle down in a state of blind self-security, trusting their eternal destiny in the hands of their leaders with a reckless confidence that in itself would thwart the purposes of God in their salvation, and weaken that influence they could give to their leaders, did they know for themselves, by the revelations of Jesus, that they are led in the right way. Let every man and woman know, by the whispering of the Spirit of God to themselves, whether their leaders are walking in the path that the Lord dictates, or not. This has been my exhortation continually” (Journal of Discourses, vol. 9, pps. 149-50). For more on the topic of The Apostolic Charge (an actual witness of Christ), see, *A Sent One: The Apostolic Charge*, by the author.