



## **INTRODUCING THE CHURCH**

### *A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles*

What is your first reaction when someone, anyone, asks you one or both of these questions: what denomination are you associated with and what church do you attend? For some of us it is no doubt an exciting question full of potentially engaging discussions with perhaps someone we can help understand the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. For others it may be among our least favorite questions because we do not feel capable of defending the entire belief system of The Church of Jesus Christ and do not know the entire history of the restoration. The purpose of this article is to simplify our response and give all a common denominator for these questions.

Up front know this one true and very important fact: not one of us will *EVER* convert another person on our own. This is confirmed very well by scripture found in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 3:7 "So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase". It is only God operating on people through the wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit that can convert a man or woman *IF* they have a willing heart to listen. Our desire is that all members and friends of The Church of Jesus Christ understand some basics to introduce our denomination and church. Our goal is to utilize the learnings that God has given each of us, in varying forms, for the honor and Glory of Jesus Christ and His Church, The Church of Jesus Christ.

#### What is the Denomination of the Church?

Please know you belong to a 100% authentic Christian faith that as our Church Website states, is 'Rooted in Truth and Guided by the Spirit'. The Church of Jesus Christ was restored and is separate from all other denominations on earth. As a separate denomination, our congregations throughout the world share the same doctrine, teachings and common leadership.

We do believe completely in the Holy Bible and we fully believe in the Book of Mormon as another record of God's dealing with mankind, in particular with the native inhabitants of the Americas (North, Central and South). As people will often ask what we mean by "the Church was restored", it is to your advantage to state we have a wonderful core set of beliefs we can share with them via our website or we can provide that information at the appropriate time. (We urge all to familiarize ourselves and refresh our knowledge of what we believe with the assurance that the Faith and Doctrine was not developed by man but by the revelation of God.)

What Church do we attend?

Our first response should be that we attend The Church of Jesus Christ, a worldwide organization with headquarters in Monongahela, Pennsylvania. Then, we should identify the location of our local Branch or Mission. Further, we may advise whomever we speak with that The Church of Jesus Christ is not affiliated or in alliance with any other church on the earth. We may wish to add that the membership of the church is over 23,000 around the world and on a given Sunday, as many as 50,000 members and friends of the Church could be in attendance. The Church of Jesus Christ continues to expand and currently has 74 locations in the United States of America and Canada and is in 22 additional countries worldwide.

Basics of the Gospel

Please advise whomever you interact with that your church follows the pattern exactly laid down by Jesus Christ when He established His Church in Palestine before ascending to His Father. The Church has as its foundation 12 Apostles chosen of God to lead the Church just like the Lord established with the calling of Peter, James, John and the others apostles including Paul and Barnabas. Likewise we have the others offices that are listed in the Bible as referenced in Ephesians 4:11 “And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers”. We have also the offices of deacons and deaconesses as found in the New Testament.

It is very important to know that The Church of Jesus Christ is also no respecter of race or color in membership and ordained office requirements, and that we solely follow the commandments of Christ regarding membership and ordinations. The steps to become a member are 1) belief in and having faith in God and Jesus Christ, 2) repentance for your actions before God, 3) baptism by immersion in water and 4) reception of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Regarding the attitude Jesus wants from each of us in coming to His Church, note His directive as found in III Nephi 9:20 “And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and contrite spirit. And whoso cometh unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, him will I baptize with fire and with the Holy Ghost”.

While we have given some basics on questions regarding our denomination and Church, it is unlikely any of us will have all the answers during each conversation. If we come across a question that you believe is relevant and the other party is truly interested then simply state ‘I don’t know, can I find the answer and get back to you?’ At that point our answers can be found by inquiring of one another and we collectively will either know the answer or we will ask the Lord and He will give us the understanding.

Walk the Talk

After we have presented the gospel ... now the actual real test begins as we need to walk the talk that we have just proclaimed. We all should strive to as is stated in Romans 12:1-2: “... present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...” We will *HINDER or BLOCK* people from truly seeking and perhaps finding the Lord’s church *IF* our conduct,

speech, tweets, pictures, on-line profiles and many other daily choices we make simply are not congruent with the example that Christ has directed us to become as members. Our goal is to show our faith by our lifestyle and actions.

In conclusion, if and when you share the Gospel story and someone comes to a knowledge of the truth, rejoice and praise God. Likewise, if someone rejects your words continue on praising God and remember what was told to Nephi after he did his best and no one listened as found in Helaman 10:4 “Blessed art thou, Nephi, for those things which thou has done; for I have beheld how thou hast with unwearyingness declared the word”. Nephi was blessed for doing his best which is a great example to us all to share: 1) the wonderful love of Jesus, 2) who we are and what we believe and 3) the marvelous work and wonder Christ is performing in The Church of Jesus Christ.

In the Love of God,

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

**To learn more about *The Church of Jesus Christ*, with Headquarters in Monongahela, PA, please visit our web site. The World Operations Center for world-wide missionary efforts is in Greensburg, PA**