

#3: Apostasy, Reformation, and Joseph Smith

Monte F. Shelley, 1 Feb. 2009

Quotes

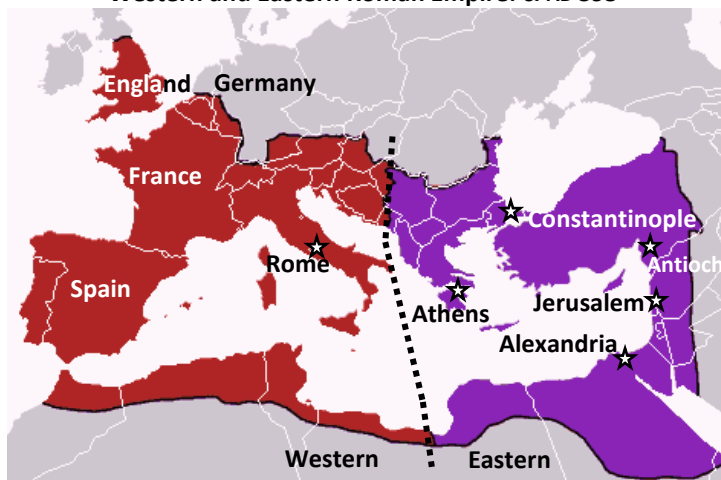
- What the caterpillar calls the end of the world the master calls the butterfly.
- After reading 1 Nephi 11:17 and Alma 7:11–12 with Kris and Owen Cherrington, Elder Maxwell said “Jesus Christ could have made the atonement by suffering only for our sins. He didn’t have to take upon Himself all of our infirmities, pains, and sicknesses. He did so because he wanted to understand our suffering, as only someone who has experienced it can, so He could ‘know according to the flesh how to succor his people.’” (Kris Cherrington)

1. New Testament Christianity

Apostasy, scattering, and restoration prophesied. Persecution. In AD 70, the Temple was destroyed. Jews were scattered.

2. What happened to Christianity after the apostles?

Western and Eastern Roman Empire: c. AD 395



Church	Headquarters	Language	People
Western	Rome	Latin	Gentiles +
Eastern	Constantinople	Greek	Gentiles +
Syriac	Antioch	Syriac/Aramaic	Jews +

3. How did God prepare people for the restoration?

“I believe these reformers were inspired to create a religious climate in which God could restore lost truths and priesthood authority.” (Ballard, Nov 1994)

4. How did God prepare a country for the restoration?

“God inspired the earlier explorers and colonizers of America and the framers of the Constitution of the United States to develop a land and governing principles to which the gospel could be restored.” (Ballard, Nov, 1994)

5. How did God prepare Joseph Smith?

Joseph Smith’s parents and grandparents were religious, patriotic, educationally minded, and of strong moral convictions. His grandfather, Asael Smith, stated years before Joseph was born, “It has been borne in upon my soul that one of my descendants will promulgate a work to revolutionize the world of religious faith” (Joseph Fielding Smith, *Essentials in Church History*, 25).

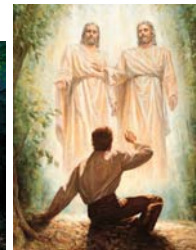
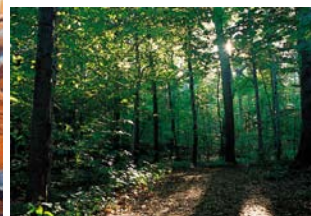
Joseph Smith’s parents were deeply devoted to God. They were also devoted parents, teaching their children the principles of faith and righteousness. Joseph Sr. had several dreams that gave him assurances that he would enjoy the blessings of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Once while Lucy was critically ill as a young mother, she made a covenant with God that she would

serve Him completely if He would let her live to care for her family. Soon afterward she heard a voice comfort her, and she made a remarkable recovery. (See Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith*, 33–35, 47–50, 64–66)

Joseph Sr. and Lucy searched actively for religious truth. Both of them felt that none of the existing churches was consistent with the Church that Jesus Christ had established. For this reason, Joseph Sr. did not join any church. Lucy felt it was her duty to be baptized, so she joined the Presbyterian Church. When the gospel was restored, they both recognized the truth and embraced it.

- How did adversity or trials prepare Joseph?
- How did God get Joseph to Palmyra near the golden plates?
- How did the religious atmosphere prepare Joseph?
- What revelations did Joseph have before the First Vision?

6. Joseph’s First Vision



7. What truths were revealed in the First Vision?

President Hinckley said, “I submit that in the few minutes that Joseph Smith was with the Father and the Son, he learned more of the nature of God the Eternal Father and the risen Lord than all the learned minds in all their discussions through all centuries of time” (*Church News*, 24 Oct. 1998, 6).

In the Sacred Grove, Joseph learned:

- a. God the Father and Jesus Christ live.
- b. The Father and the Son are real, separate beings with glorified bodies of flesh and bones.
- c. We are created in the image of God.
- d. Satan and his power are real, but God’s power is greater.
- e. God hears and answers prayers and cares for us.
- f. None of the churches had the fulness of Christ’s gospel.
- g. Revelation has not ceased.

President McKay testified that the First Vision “answers all the [questions] regarding God and his divine personality. ... His relation to his children is clear. His interest in humanity through authority delegated to man is apparent. The future of the work is assured. These and other glorious truths are clarified by that glorious first vision” (*Gospel Ideals* [1954], 85).

Quotes

President Hinckley: “A most remarkable manifestation occurred on a spring morning in the year 1820 when the Father and the Son appeared to the boy Joseph Smith. ... A testimony of [that vision] has touched the hearts of millions in many lands. I add my own witness, given me by the Spirit, that the Prophet’s description of that marvelous event is true, that God the Eternal Father and the risen Lord Jesus Christ spoke with him on that occasion in a conversation as real and personal and intimate as are our conversations today” (*Be Thou an Example* [1981], 10).

Questions

1. How do these things apply to me now in my circumstances?
2. As I read, do I “remember how merciful the Lord hath been, and ponder it in [my] heart” and ask God if it is true?

See bbquotes.byu.edu/bbquotes/stories.htm for copies.

Key Dates in Christianity*	
1st Century (AD 1–100)	
New Testament, apostles, apostasy, persecution. MORALITY focus Baptism by immersion, Lord's Supper; Temple destroyed	
2nd Century (AD 100–200)	
No apostles: visions and prophecy cease, persecution In response to Gnostic and Marcion heresies, the “catholic” (universal) church defined the core of the New Testament, developed the Apostles’ creed, and accepted only teachings of bishops as the successors of the apostles. CREEDS → heretics. <i>Infant baptism</i> starts Baptism for the dead (1 Cor. 15:29) ceased <i>ca</i> AD 200 Work of “great and abominable church” completed	
3rd Century (AD 200–300)	
<i>Baptism by aspersion or sprinkling</i> starts. THEOLOGY focus. Alexandrian School: friendship of Christianity and Greek philosophy. Origen “gave Christianity full scientific standing”	
4th Century (AD 300–400): Constantine	
“Christmas” moved from May to Dec. 25, a pagan sun festival. First Christian <i>monastery</i> . 313: Emperor Constantine becomes Christian, religious toleration 325: 1 st council of Nicaea (Christ of one substance with the Father, beginnings of Trinitarian or “3 in 1” doctrine, *Arias) Marriage of church and state; force used to suppress heresy Clergy: <i>paid, celibacy</i> encouraged, <i>social status</i> ; new RITUALS <i>Great churches built with baptisteries for immersion</i> 381: 2 nd council (Holy Ghost divine, *Apollinaris) Prayer to <i>martyrs</i> as intercessors, <i>relics</i>	
5th Century (AD 400–500)	
General agreement on accepted scripture including Revelations. Augustine: Trinity (“3 in 1”), <i>original sin, infant baptism, predestination, grace, sacraments</i> necessary for salvation, six sacraments. 431: 3 rd council (Virgin <i>Mary</i> foremost saint, *Nestorius) <i>Armenian, Syrian, Coptic, Abyssinian churches</i> 451: 4 th council (Christ divine and human, *Eutyches) Marriage of Christianity and Greek philosophy: “Platonic Christianity” Bishop of Rome recognized as <i>Pope</i> of Western Church	
6th Century (AD 500–600)	
553: 5 th council (condemned “Three Chapters”, *Origen’s pre-existence of souls) Pope Gregory: <i>purgatory, penance, confession, intercessors</i> (saints), <i>remissions</i> (alms) <i>Infant baptism</i> universal	
7th–10th Centuries (AD 600–1000)	
680: 6 th council (condemned monothelism [Christ had divine will not human will] and *Pope Honorius 787: 7 th council (<i>images</i> venerated not worshiped, condemned destroyers of images) 870: 8 th council	
11th Century (AD 1000–1100)	
Crusades: Roman Catholic wars to recapture Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Muslims <i>Indulgences</i> (e.g., money, pilgrimages, Crusades) could remit penalties for “deadly” sins. 1054: <i>Greek Orthodox Church</i>	
12th Century (AD 1100–1200)	
1123: 9 th council 1139: 10 th council (compulsory <i>clerical celibacy</i>) 1179: 11 th council (method of papal election)	
13th Century (AD 1200–1300)	
1215: 12 th council (<i>Transubstantiation</i> , annual confession and communion, regulated inquisition, *Waldensians, *Albigensians) <i>Inquisition</i> , heretics killed Forbade laity to possess Bible, translations denounced. <i>Baptism by aspersion</i> or sprinkling becomes common. 1245: 13 th council 1274: 14 th council (Papal elections)	
14th Century (AD 1300–1400)	
Italian Renaissance 1311: 15 th council	
15th Century (AD 1400–1500)	
Spanish inquisition, forced conversions 1431: 17 th council 1448: Gutenberg press invented 1455: Gutenberg’s Bible (Latin Vulgate) published 1492: Columbus discovered America	
16th Century (AD 1500–1600)	
Reformation and English Renaissance 1517: Luther’s 95 Theses, beginning of <i>Lutheran Church</i> 1525: Tyndale’s English New Testament 1534: <i>Church of England</i> 1536: Calvin’s <i>Institutes</i> 1545–63: 19 th Council of Trent; *many protestant doctrines; Aquinas theology, Latin Bible official; tradition, seven sacraments, Apocrypha official Protestants killed as heretics. Bible translations banned or burned <i>Inquisition</i> , forbidden books listed	
17th Century (AD 1600–1700)	
1611: King James Version of the Bible. New Testament based primarily on Byzantine Greek manuscripts 1647: Westminster Confession (Protestant Creed) Pilgrims and other protestants come to America. State religions. <i>Puritans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Quakers</i> Kepler, Galileo, Newton	
18th Century (AD 1700–1800)	
1789: U.S. Constitution- divorce of marriage and nation, 6 of 13 states still had state religions John Wesley (<i>Methodists</i>) Rationalism	
19th Century (AD 1800–1900)	
1820: Joseph Smith’s First Vision 1830: The Book of Mormon printed, <i>The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints</i> 1854: <i>Immaculate conception of Mary</i> proclaimed by Pope 1870: 20 th council: <i>Pope infallible</i> : 1881: Revised Standard Version (RSV) of the Bible. NT based primarily on Alexandrian Greek manuscripts	
20th Century (AD 1900–2000)	
1901: <i>Pentecostal churches (Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ)</i> 1962–65: 21 st council (common languages used in rites & Masses)	
* <i>Italicized words</i> indicate Catholic doctrines rejected by many Protestants as being based on tradition, not scripture. An asterisk identifies people or doctrines (e.g., *Arius) declared to be heretical by the Catholic Church. <i>Bold Italics</i> (e.g., <i>Church of England</i>) identify the beginning of major Christian religions which include the denominations listed in the top ten largest Christian bodies in the US. The dates of the 21 universal Catholic councils are listed with key decisions. (Adapted from Monte F. Shelley, “Our Judeo-Christian Heritage,” unpublished)	