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DESERET NEWS PUBLISHING CO.
TRUSTEES IN TRUST.

SAVING OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND THE GRAVE.

Recently a friend in the News media inquiry of an eastern publishing firm regarding some genealogical information he desired to obtain. In replying to his communication those publishers ask our friend, by letter, why he took an interest in matters pertaining to family pedigrees. He sent a written explanation, and as the subject of the application of the plan and principles of the Gospel to the dead who departed without obeying it, is one of both general and special interest, we hereWith present the greater portion of the gentleman's exposition of the sublime theme:

The basis of my interest in the subject in question is that I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, commonly known as the "Mormon" Church.

It becomes necessary now to explain why this Church membership should cause me to take an interest in family genealogies. To make this matter clear involves a statement of some of the prominent features of the faith of the Saints. The latter claim to have the same organization and doctrines as those which characterized the Church established by Jesus on the eastern hemisphere; hence their body-religious includes "Apostles and Prophets," High Priests, Seventies, Elders, Priests, Teachers, Deacons and all other officers and authorities of which the New Testament makes mention. These are organized into quorums, those High Priests, constituting the First Presidency, being at the head, with the Twelve Apostles ranking next in order, and so on. The duties of each grade are clearly and specifically defined, so as to operate in admirable harmony each with all the others.

In relation to doctrine, it may be said that it embraces "truth wherever found," and so wide a range will only admit of a limited explanation. However, faith in the atonement of Jesus Christ may be regarded as the basic principle, and in a general way it may be stated that the faith of the Saints demands obedience to the teachings of the savior and all His inspired servants, ancient and modern; hence it includes the doctrine of faith, repentance of sin, baptism by immersion in water for the remission of sins and the laying on of the hands of the authorized servants of God for the imparting to the honest seeker after salvation, of the Holy Ghost. Thus serving laid the foundation for a godly life, and, by the Divine Spirit, they are required to press forward to the perfect day.

I do not suppose that any person familiar with the Scriptures will have the temerity to dispute the claim that these are scriptural doctrines. But they involve points which could not be established without new revelation, as divine authority can only be imparted through that channel. He who acts as an agent for God must be authorized to assume that position, otherwise what he does in the name of the Divine Master will stand in danger of being repudiated, as can be sustained reality by analogical reasoning associated with human affairs. Divine concerns are much more sacred than those that are merely human and they must be much more closely guarded. It is claimed by the Saints that a Prophet (Joseph Smith) was raised up in modern times to establish anew the true Church of Christ in its fullness of organization, ordinances, principle and power. I do not expect that you will believe this, but I am not writing the belief of those who may peruse this statement, nor let him or myself and my intelligence.

You may ask what all this has to do with my interest in genealogy. I will shortly show that what is already stated is merely preliminary to the main point of my explanation, which will follow.

The Church with which I am identified claims that the rite of baptism was not ordained in the divine mind for the benefit of any more than a number of persons, but for the salvation of the race, as a whole. Now a question could not be more alone. If its saving effects and benefits would be confined to those who have opportunities of enjoying its privileges in this life, Mankind just through the bounds of probationary state without ever having heard the name of Christ uttered. To bring them under consideration for cause they did not comply with conditions of which they never heard, would be a parody on fairness, not to say citizen justice.

Notwithstanding this, it is evident that salvation, according to the true Christian conception, can only be obtained through belief in Christ and obedience to His laws and commandments. This involves continuity by the believer in the ordinances of the Gospel. As an instance, the Savior said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Here is a case where a change of state is necessary. Jesus therefore declares that unless this change be made no one shall enter into the kingdom of God. Of the necessity of obedience to the principle of baptism for the remission of sins there can be no question. Peter, the chosen apostle of Christ, say "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus, "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Jesus Himself, after His resurrection, said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Paul said, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Peter said, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Paul said, "Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead." Jesus said, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Ananias said to Saul