



## Background

### Religion was going through a dark period in the United States in the early 1800's

The state of churches in the early 1800's was much different than now. Virtually every church subscribed to their own creed. In many cases, they required members to sign the creed. There were many instances where two nearby churches of the same "denomination," but slightly different creeds, would not recognize each other's members because they had not signed "their creed." Numerous people, (Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Benjamin Franklin, to name a few) made statements about the poor state of the clergy and doctrines promoted by the churches of that time.

### Joseph Smith Jr.

Through divine revelation, restored the church from 1830 to 1836. Explanation given in 1843 - "I cannot believe in any of the creeds of the different denominations, because they all have some things in them I cannot subscribe to, though all of them have some truth... I believe the bible, as it ought to be, as it came from the pen of the original writers." He did write a letter to John Wentworth that included a short synopsis of beliefs from the Scriptures:

## An Epitome of Faith and Doctrine

**We believe in God the Eternal Father, and in his Son Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.** (Many scriptural references)

**We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam's transgressions.**

- Exo 32:31-33, Deu 24:16, 2 Kings 14:6, 2 Chr 25:4, Prov 28:10, Jer 31:27-30, Eze 14:13-20, Eze 16:52-54, Eze 22:30-31, Eze 33:2-6 & 13, Luke 6:44, 1 Cor 3:8, Gal 6:2-5, James 1:12-15, Rev 20:12, **Book of Mormon** Alma 9:38-55

**We believe that through atonement of Christ all mankind may be saved by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel.**

- Deu 4:1-2, Mat 19:16-17, Mark 7:7-13, John 14:15, Phil 2:5-9, 1 John 2:3-5, 1 John 5:1-3, Rev 22:14; **BoM** 2 Nephi 1:34, 3 Nephi 5:68, Mosiah 1:88-90

**We believe that these ordinances are, first, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; second, repentance; third, baptism by immersion for the remission of sins; fourth, laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost.**

- Faith first: Eph 4:5, Mat 5:4, Mat 9:28, Mat 9:35, Mat 15:27, Mat 17:19-20, Mat 21:19, Mark 2:5, Mark 16:15, Luke 16:10-13, Acts 8:12, Acts 18:8, Rom 4:13-16, **BoM** Helaman 5:96, 3 Nephi 4:50, 3 Nephi 8:8, 3 Nephi 12:32
- Repentance before baptism: Mat 3:28, Mat 4:16, Mat 7:9, Mark 6:10-12, Mark 16:15-16, Luke 13:2-5, Luke 15, Acts 2:37-41, Acts 3:18-21, Acts 8:34-39, **BoM** Moroni 8:9-29 (includes no infant baptism)
- Baptism by immersion: Rom 6:3-5, Col 2:12, Greek *Baptisma* (Mat 3:7, 20:22, 20:23, 21:25; Mark 1:4, 10:38, 10:39, 11:30; Luke 3:3, 7:29, 12:50, 20:4; Acts 1:22, 10:37, 13:24, 18:25, 19:3, 19:4; Rom 6:4; Eph 4:5; Col 2:12; 1 Peter 3:21) and *Baptizo* (Mat 3,

20, 28, Mark 1, 6, 7; Luke 3, 7, 11, 12; John 1, 3, 4, 10; Acts 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19, 22; Rom 6; 1 Cor 1, 10, 12, 15; Gal 3). Commentary: *Baptisma* is always used for immersion (even in non-biblical Greek documents). *Bapto* means dip and never used to refer to baptism (i.e. conversion of faith).

- o Book of Mormon: 3 Nephi 5:23-26 [23] And he said unto them, On this wise shall ye baptize; and there shall be no disputations among you. [24] Verily I say unto you, that whoso repenteth of his sins through your words, and desireth to be baptized in my name, on this wise shall ye baptize them: Behold, ye shall go down and stand in the water, and in my name shall ye baptize them. [25] And now behold, these are the words which ye shall say, calling them by name, saying: Having authority given me of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. [26] And then shall ye immerse them in the water, and come forth again out of the water.

- Baptism of the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:37-41, Hebrews 10:16-22 (Commentary: In Judaism, the heart held wisdom, and wisdom can only come from God through His Holy Spirit. The phrase, "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," refers to the Holy Spirit pouring on evil hearts and not the sprinkling of water). **BoM** 3 Nephi 4:50

**We believe that a man must be called of God by "prophecy, and by laying on of hands" by those who are in authority to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances thereof.**

- Called of God: Deu 18:1-7, Exo 19:3-6 (repeated in 1 Peter 2:4-9), Num 16:1-3, 10-11, 20-21 (God's response to self-chosen priesthood, also Psalm 106:13-17), 1 Saml 16:1-13, 2 Chr 26:3-4, 17-21, Psalm 105:26,

Isaiah 51:2, Mat 12:17-18, John 15:15-16, Acts 9:3-12 (Paul called as Aaron), Acts 9:15, 22:10-14, Heb 7:1-2, 8-11, 1 Cor 7:17-24, 1 Cor 12:13-28 (God "sets"), Heb 5:4-10, 1 Peter 2:4-9, Rev 17:14, **BoM** Mosiah 11:18, Alma 8:10

- Laying on of Hands:

- o Ordaining: ("semikah" - "This is my property, which I dedicate to God."). All Jewish religious leaders who were not Aaronic priests (Kohanim) had to be ordained before they were permitted to perform certain judicial functions and to decide practical questions in Jewish law. The Bible relates that Moses ordained Joshua by placing his hands on him, thereby transferring a portion of his spirit [Holy Spirit] to Joshua (Num. 27:22, 23; Deut. 34:9). Num 11:16-17, Num 11:24-25, Num 27:18-23, Deu 34:9, 1 Sam 16:11-13, Acts 6:2-6, Acts 13:2-3, 1 Tim 4:11-16, **BoM** Alma 4:1, Moroni 2:1-3, Moroni 3:1-3
- o Baptism of the Holy Ghost (Gift to disciples): Exo 24:3-8, Ezek 39:21-22, John 7:39, Acts 8:14-17, Acts 19:4-6, Heb 6:1-3, **BoM** Moroni 2:1
- o Administration of the sick: Mark 6:4-5, Luke 4:40, Luke 13:12-13, Acts 28:8, **BoM** Mormon 4:86-87
- o Blessing of children: Mat 19:13-15, **BoM** 3 Nephi 8:12-26

**We believe in the same organization that existed in the primitive church; viz., apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists, etc.**

- God's priesthood existed before Aaron: Gen 14:18, Exo 3:1 & 18:12, Exo 12:21, Exo 19:20-22, Psa 110:4, Col 1:12-19, Heb 7:11-12, Heb 7:22-24
- Prophets: Acts 13:1, 1 Cor 12:28-29, Eph 4:11-12, **BoM** 1 Nephi 1:3, 1 Nephi 1:162, 1 Nephi 5:226