

## **Proclamation & Invitation to the Faithful**

*On the 18 of May 1999, a day long to be remembered, twelve men, most of whom had been associated with the prayer and study group out of the Conference of Restoration Elders from its origin, having persevered against much criticism and many false accusations, gathered in response to the call of the Spirit in Carthage, Missouri. There they would affix their signatures to a document entitled "A Proclamation and Invitation to the Faithful," and testify of the spirit of revelation which had moved the scattered and fragmented Saints toward the beginning steps of renewing the true Church, as restored to the earth through Joseph Smith, Jr.*

*Acting under the direction of the spirit of revelation and their office and calling as Elders, Seventy, High Priests, and Patriarchs, each man present bore witness of the inspiration that had come by placing his signature on the document. The entire matter was then submitted to the body of High Priests, as provided by the law. (**Doctrine & Covenants 122:10**) The matter was now in the hands of those holding the highest authority to act.*

*The events that occurred thereafter are recorded on the following pages. They tell the story of how the Lord God has again heard and answered the earnest prayers of his covenant people. May the Holy Spirit of promise which touches our hearts, and by which we reaffirm our testimony, guide and bless the search of every faithful soul toward Zion the Beautiful which now, more than ever, beacons us on.*

## **A Proclamation & Invitation to the Faithful**

**May 18, 1999**

We, the undersigned, having deliberated long and prayerfully, hereby set our hands to faithfully uphold and diligently teach the commandments of God that brought forth and sustain the Latter Day Gospel. We are painfully aware of the numerous organizations and individuals that claim to represent the Lord and deplore the mounting confusion that is increasingly evident among once active members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Consequently, we feel compelled by a Higher Power to once again "*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints*" (Jude 1:3).

In response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit, we now call upon the Saints, wherever they may be, to receive with prayerful consideration this general epistle concerning a continuing movement to renew and sustain

the Church of Jesus Christ. We affirm that it has fallen into a condition of apostasy and confusion. Further, by direction of that same good Spirit we also declare, as was the case during the years following the martyrdom of Joseph and Hyrum, that among the many claims which have been and are being made to succession and authority in our day, there is not one which to our knowledge has Divine sanction that sustains and guides His Church.

It is now evident that the Conference of Restoration Elders is following a course of action different from that which will focus first on establishing a firm foundation on which the faithful Saints can stand together in Kingdom-building efforts, and from which we can reach out authoritatively and effectively to a needy world in response to the Lord's great commission. Therefore, pursuant to the laws and commandments contained in the Holy Scriptures, the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants, we raise this proclamation of commitment to faithfully work toward the restoration of order in the Church and, under divine direction, to hold high the banner of Christ's Church. We recognize that we must be especially directed by the Doctrine and Covenants and the binding Rules and Resolutions wherein they pertain to the sacred duty of the Melchisedec priesthood to govern and protect the affairs of the Church.

In sending forth this communication, we take our commission from the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, stated by the Prophet Isaiah as the "law and the testimony" (Isaiah 8:20). We also reaffirm our determination to remain faithful to the founding purposes of the Conference of Restoration Elders and believe ourselves and all others who are faithful to the commandments of God to be the Restored Church of April 6, 1830 & 1852-1860 in succession. We act in fear and trembling before Almighty God as we witness the disregard for Divine commandments and, with the Apostles Peter and John of old, we solemnly and humbly declare we must obey God and not man (Acts 5:29).

Our position is best stated by President Israel A. Smith in his sermon to the 1952 General Conference commemorating the Centennial of the Reorganization, from which we quote:

"And in such organized groups, indeed, was resident the power to reorganize the work; and from such integral units of the church the work of reorganizing began. The testimony of all concerned was that it was not a new organization. That was not necessary, for the original body had perpetual existence in and through its faithful adherents. Significantly, and as a matter of historical accuracy, in all the proceedings leading up to the reorganization of the presidency of the church, all references to the church read "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." That was the name of the organization for many years until public indignation became so aroused against Mormon polygamy and the Mormon Church that sponsored it, the name

"Reorganized" was added in order to minimize the confusion in the public mind respecting the two organizations. Besides the name of the church had no legal significance whatsoever- the whole controversy was in the domain of doctrine and tenets.

"I have called your attention to the fact, and it should be reiterated, that notwithstanding the use of the word "reorganization" the name under which the church was called from the beginning was "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints." Thus it was officially named in all documents until 1866, when for reasons growing out of the efforts of national government to put a stop to polygamy, and to minimize the confusion in the public mind as to the two churches, the word "Reorganized" was added to the name. While enemies of the church have tried to make capital out of the use of the word, it has no bearing on the claim of the church as to being the lawful continuation of the original church.

"That schism-departure from doctrine-had brought spiritual cleavage, and great loss cannot be denied. But in law, civil and divine, and in good conscience and reason, only such portion of the body of Christ as remained faithful to the doctrines of the church would have the right to realign its forces bring them together, and reform the broken ranks. There could never be any support in law or common sense for the theory that they who had *abandoned original tenets*, changed the ordinances and machinery of government, and brought in heresy, could be held to be the trustees of the body or even held to be the church. Nor could they in any way prevent or hinder the faithful from carrying on under the law and the traditions of the original church." Conference Daily Edition, THE SAINTS HERALD, Mon., March 31, 1952.

In keeping with the foregoing statements of Brother Israel, it is our determined resolve to honor the historic pattern and to uphold the law as set forth in the Doctrine and Covenants by calling upon the "senior" (C.H., Vol. 3, pp 217-218 and see also D&C 104:4-7) among us to provide interim leadership in preparation for divine guidance toward further organization. This is in harmony with inspired counsel received at, or directed to, previous Conferences, and with the recommended restructuring to accept and to honor the presiding leadership of a "...*council of high priests*" (D&C 122:10a).

We believe, and we hereby testify, that the time has fully come and we are under judgment to heed the counsel the Lord has given us. It is our intention to devote ourselves with new resolve to obeying the Articles and Covenants of the faith. (See D&C 1:5; 17:13,25; 41:1; 42:4,5a,b; 58:4e; 90:3b,c; 137:6; and 140:5 as illustrative of countless others.)

We intend to carry on and we extend the invitation to all who are of like heart and mind, young and old, priesthood and member alike, to join with us in a faithful response to revive and restore, such as is in our power and authority, while confidently awaiting direction from our Lord which will set His Church fully in order once again. Prophets and seers have looked longingly to these latter days and for a faithful remnant who will covenant to keep all the commandments of God *"that the Kingdom of Heaven may come"* (D&C 65:1f).

The following summarizes the direction in which we believe ourselves called to proceed:

1. Reaffirm our commitment to the original purpose and intent of the Conferences of Restoration Elders while expressing our grave concern for any compromise which diminishes their validity under the law.
2. Stand fully behind and for the Statement of Faith and Doctrine approved by the 1993 Conference of Restoration Elders (Issue Number 16 - *Tidings of Zion*) as our foundational position regarding succession, reorganization and the role of the Melchisedec priesthood.
3. Formally acknowledge as spiritual guidance for present conditions the "Inspired Counsel" prepared for the 1997 Conference of Restoration Elders (as recommended by an overwhelming majority of active High Priests and Patriarchs) and printed in Issue No. 22, 1997, of *"Tidings of Zion,"* and "A Message of Invitation and Admonition" as printed in Issue No. 29, 1998, of *"Tidings of Zion."*
4. Urge recognition of the lawful role of faithful High Priests to select a temporary council to provide interim leadership for guiding and renewing the Church. Request the body of High Priests to choose an appropriate number from within their ranks to provide for a Chairman, two Counselors, and not less than seven additional brethren to form said council of High Priests.
5. Recognizing that a legal name is necessary to function under the laws of the state and nation - and in accordance with the guidance of President Israel A. Smith as quoted above-the name, "Remnant Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" will be used for identification and legal purposes, and as a means of emphasizing succession from the 1830 and 1852-1860 organizations.
6. Formulate the means for assembling faithful Melchisedec priesthood to work toward and prepare for a Conference, at the earliest appropriate time and place, which will provide for the inclusion of both Aaronic priesthood and the membership to act on behalf of the Church in legislative capacity.
7. Send forth far and wide a report of the outcome of the foregoing assembly, and extend an invitation to members, groups and branches to take their place-under the law-in the renewal and reconstruction of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints as we await further

Divine guidance and the coming of a Prophet-President.

Yours in the bonds of Christ,

*Jake F. Simmons  
Fred N. Larsen  
Rodney Williams.  
Jesse J. Basse*

*Conrad R. Faulk  
James L. Rogers  
Steve R. Church  
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