

Why It Was Necessary for Joseph Smith to Re-establish Christ's Church on the Earth?

The reason why Christ's church had to be restored to the earth was because the true priesthood and its members were slain and martyred for their beliefs until there were not any members or true priesthood left upon the earth. For proof of this, we have to go back into history and see what happened to the former saints.

First, let us look in the Bible to show that there are passages that prophesy that the true gospel and church would be taken from the earth until the last days when it would be restored again. Isaiah 60:2-3, "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness of the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings shall be seen upon thee." The darkness that is spoken of here is referring to the light of God preached in its purity with his gospel truths vanishing from this earth resulting in his church and priesthood disappearing from the earth. This period of time is known historically as the Dark Ages. Men were taught by the precepts of unauthorized men instead of God's true priesthood whom he had called and ordained. They were taught by man's version of the gospel according to their

own wisdom, and in so doing changed many of the ordinances and laws that pertained to salvation. The Gentiles, who are mentioned in the above passage who are bringing light into the world, refers to the dispensation of the gospel that Joseph Smith ushered in when he restored it to the earth again.

Amos 8:11-12 is another passage that foretells the loss of the true gospel from the earth. “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord. And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.” If the gospel has been preached since the beginning of time and has never ceased from being preached, why does it say in this verse that men should search the world over and not find the gospel or the word of God? It is because the word of God that was being preached to the men on earth was not the original and pure gospel of Christ as was taught by the men whom he had sent prior to the loss of the gospel and his church.

During Paul's travels to the Galatians, he tells how people over time have a tendency to change the pure gospel of Christ into something different than

the way it was originally preached. Let's look at Galatians 1:6-8: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel. Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." The teachings of these other men who were not sent of God taught regarding Christ, but changed things that were not how it was originally taught by Christ and his disciples.

In 2nd Timothy 4:3-4 it foretells that after Christ and the Apostles are gone from the earth, the pure gospel shall be polluted. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." These fables that are mentioned are the pagan traditions of celebrating holidays that were practiced by the Roman Empire and indoctrinated into the Christian church in the Fourth Century. They mixed Christian concepts and teachings with pagan ideology and the practice of celebrating pagan rituals and holidays of their gods and goddesses.

As a result of these changes, Jeremiah the prophet foretells of a time in the last days when the people will discover that what they have been taught about the nature of Christ and how they practice his sacraments and ordinances are not correct. Jeremiah 16:19 says in part that the people will say, “Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.” The reason there is no profit is because their baptisms are not valid because they were not administered by God's proper authority. Therefore, they will not receive their salvation.

Isaiah prophesied regarding these unauthorized changes that will be made in Christ's name: “The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore, hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left” (Isaiah 24:5-6.) The ordinance mentioned here that was changed is baptism, it went from baptism by immersion of eight years and older to the sprinkling of infants who are not capable of sin or repenting thereof.

Perhaps the most telling passage regarding this subject is in 2nd Thessalonians 2:9-11,15: “Yea, the Lord, even Jesus, whose coming is not

until after there cometh a falling away, by the working of Satan with all power, and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness... Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.”

The above passages should be sufficient that the purity of Christ's doctrine would become polluted, which brings us to the passage in the Bible that foretells that Christ's church would have to be restored upon the earth because it had been taken away. Let us now read Revelations 14:6. “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” The question is, why is the angel flying in the midst of heaven with the gospel to be preached to the people on the earth if the gospel was already being preached in its purity by an authorized priesthood sent by God? It only stands to reason that the pure gospel was not being taught in its original form by an authorized priesthood established by God. That is why it was necessary for the angel of God who was in the midst

of heaven to bring down again to the earth a new dispensation of the true gospel of Jesus Christ and restore his true church. This is what occurred when the angel of God gave Joseph Smith the keys to the dispensation of the fulness of times and commanded him to restore his church upon the earth on April 6, 1830, in fulfillment of the prophecies that are recorded in the 12th, 13th, and 14th chapters of the Book of Revelations.

In order to understand how Christ's church was removed from the earth, one must go back into history during the Roman Empire and read how the Christians were put to death because they would not practice the heathen and pagan beliefs that were being put upon the original church of Christ. Also, one must read the passages in the Bible that prophesy regarding Christ's church and priesthood being taking away by the pagan Romans and establishing their universal religion in its place. For this explanation, turn to the teachings of the prophet James J. Strang who succeeded Joseph Smith as his true successor. In the Book of the Law of the Lord, pages 239-240:40-50, James J. Strang explains how the gospel was lost after the time of Christ and his disciples.

“Apostles and Prophets looked for and prophesied of this falling away. Daniel, in his vision of the horn [powerful kingdom] which had eyes and a

mouth, (Daniel 7:20,) shows that he shall wear out the Saints of the Most High, and think to change times and Laws, and they shall be given into his hand; but, that, afterward, the judgment shall sit, and take away his dominion. (id. 25,26.)” This powerful kingdom which had eyes and a mouth is the Roman Empire that put to death over 60,000 Christians over the centuries until there were no members of Christ's church left upon the earth.

During this time, the Roman Empire changed “times and laws” in which they worshiped on Sunday the first day of the week in honor of the their Sun god instead of the 7th, Saturday. When incorporating Christian beliefs with paganism, they justified changing the Sabbath to Sunday to honor Christ rising from the dead on Easter Sunday, another pagan holiday, where their introduced celebrating Christ with bunnies, eggs, and baby chicks, originally meant to honor the pagan Fertility goddess. The Sabbath is kept in remembrance of the fact that God rested on the seventh day after he had created the earth and all living things. It is not represented by Christ's resurrection. The Sabbath day was never to be changed: “God is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (See Genesis 2:1-3. Also, Exodus 31:13-18).

One of the main laws that was changed was the law on baptism. Being buried under the water and rising up out of the water is symbolic to Christ's

death, burial and resurrection. The mode of baptism was changed to sprinkling by the Emperor Constantine because he was too sick on his death bed to get up and be baptized the proper way by immersion. Therefore, the practice of sprinkling has been adopted by many churches. The age of baptism was also changed from eight years old to infant baptism. The prerequisites to baptism are faith and repentance. How can infants have faith when they have no knowledge of God and his laws, and infants certainly cannot repent because they are innocent of sin. (For passages that show the mode of baptism, see Matthew 3:44-46, Romans 6:3-5, and Colossians 3:12, in the Holy Scriptures translation.)

In continuing with the teachings of James J. Strang in the Book of the Law, he writes the Apostle Paul's prophecy concerning the falling away of Christ's church in The Book of the Law, page 239:40: "To the same import Paul wrote to the Church at Thessalonica, warning them of so great a falling away, that the Man of Sin should exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped" (2nd. Thessalonians 2:3-4). The falling away that is mentioned above refers to the falling away of the true gospel and that the gospel of Christ would be changed and polluted. "41. John the Revelator prophesied the loss of the Priesthood, and the apostasy of the Church, by

some of those magnificently eloquent symbols so often used to inform the faithful, without imparting knowledge to unbelievers.”

42. “The Church is represented as a woman, clothed with the sun, the fountain of natural light; because the Church is clothed in the light of God's revealed word; and having the moon under her feet, because not guided by reflected light, or mere human wisdom. In respect to the Apostolic missions, the chief means of establishing and extending her dominion, she is represented with a crown of twelve stars” [Twelve Apostles] See Revelations 12:1.

“43. This woman is about to be delivered of a child [The Priesthood], who shall rule the nations, a power which pertains to the highest order of Priesthood; and a great red dragon [Roman Empire] stands ready to devour this child as soon as it is born, but the child [The Priesthood] was caught up to heaven, and thus preserved; that is, in plain, unsymbolical language, that Priesthood which shall rule the nations with a rod of iron, or an iron sceptre [with the word of God], was removed from earth, and taken up to God. See Revelations 12:2,3,5. The woman [The Church] flees from the dragon into the wilderness, where, instead of being nourished from the presence of the Redeemer, with the waters of life, as she ought, being his [Christ's] wife, she is nourished from the face of the serpent [Emperor Constantine],

(Revelations 12:14.) while the dragon went to make war with the rest of the children born of the woman, that is, the rest of the Priesthood, which God raised up in the Church. (id. 17.)

45. “In this persecution, the Saints were quite overcome, and all power over all kindreds, tongues and nations, passed into the hands of a ruler, represented as a terrible beast, [Papal Rome] which had already received the power of the dragon, and all who have not already had their names written in the Book of Life, go after and worship this beast; so that under his reign, no more become Saints; no new Priests could be raised up to fill the places of the dying, and a single generation made an end of the true Priesthood.

(Revelations 12:7.)

46. “It is difficult to read these symbolical prophesies, without seeing that the Pagan Roman Empire was the dragon; that the Emperor Constantine was the serpent which nourished the woman, and therefore, substantially the serpent and dragon were the same power; and, that, the beast was Papal Rome, the same thing, with a changed form, and a new name; Papal having grown out of, and received its power from Pagan Rome.”

47. “It is curious, therefore, that the next which is seen of this woman, she is mounted on a scarlet colored beast, corresponding with the dragon in color,

full of names of blasphemy, no longer clothed with the sun, or the light of God's word, but with purple, and scarlet, and gold, and precious stones, and pearls, which Constantine and his successors bestowed on her, when he nourished her with the spoils of Heathen Temples, and the riches of his Empire.” (Revelations 17:3-4.)

48. “She [The Church] now, in this new character, carries a cup full of abominations, and filthiness of her fornication, and has the name written upon her forehead, “Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and Abominations of the earth.” (Revelations 17:4-5.) She is now called a whore, (id.1,) because, having been in the symbolical sense the married wife of Christ, this woman now destitute of all Priesthood or authority from God has given herself to the embraces of Gentile Kings, and receives her support from the countenance of ungodly and usurping Emperors.”

49. “This being the Protestant view of this prophecy so far. How blind are they, not to see that, having sprung from her, they are the harlots, [As mentioned in Revelations 17:5] her daughters; being distinguished from her by the fact that as they were never married to Christ, their prostitution in an unlawful union with the Kings of the earth, makes them, not whores, but harlots. Most aptly do these symbols apply to those Churches which were separated from Rome as a matter of State policy, produced of whoredoms,

and incestuously prostituted to the corruptions, vices and tyrannies of the States which produced them.”

50. “Thus the Priesthood disappeared from the earth, and was reserved by the power of God in heaven, against the day when he should reveal it anew on earth, and commit a new and final dispensation of the Kingdom unto man. And all the religious sects have, in one way and another, become the witnesses that they have no true Priesthood of God.”

“The Protestant Churches upon establishing their new sects historically admit that they have no true priesthood of their own, but get their authority from the Catholic Church. If the Catholic Church usurped authority from Christ and the Apostles church, how can their authority be valid? How can they administer salvation to their members without proper authority from God? “How shall they preach except they be sent.” (See Romans 10:15.) Also, unless ye are called “as was Aaron” your authority is not valid. (See Hebrews 5:4-5, Exodus 3:14-16, Exodus 28:1,41-43.)

After carefully reading these passages, one can see that the true gospel of Christ was taken from the earth; therefore, it was necessary for it to be restored again upon the earth. Joseph Smith and James J. Strang re-established Christ's church with its true Priesthood set up in proper order. They also brought back the true teachings and ordinances of Christ and his

Apostles that were changed after they left the earth. These corrected teachings can be found in the Book of Mormon, Doctrine and Covenants, and the Book of the Law.

To further understand how the gospel and its ordinances were changed, please read the articles listed on this web-site titled “The True Sabbath” and the “Virgin Birth”.