

# *The Church of Jesus Christ*



## *“Basic Principles” of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ*

*Zion's Branch Document  
“Basic Principles of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ”  
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*The Church of Jesus Christ, Zion's Branch  
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## Forward

There are many reasons an individual might choose to attend a specific church. A large church might offer the opportunity to worship while remaining anonymous and uninvolved. A small church might offer the opportunity for a more intimate fellowship experience.

In either case, the church must be a place where you can receive guidance in your daily walk on earth as well as guidance toward your eternal salvation.

It is essential that any guidance given must adhere to the principles Jesus Christ taught during his ministry upon this earth.

The booklet deals with the very specific principles that Jesus Christ established for the salvation of mankind.

The scriptures bear witness that Jesus Christ is the son of God and he is the head of the church.<sup>1</sup> Jesus Christ is our Savior and his way is the only way to salvation.<sup>2</sup> In order to be a part of his church we must believe the doctrine he brought to us from God the Father.<sup>3</sup> A church can only call its doctrine “truth” if it is in harmony with the word of God.<sup>4</sup> We must be united in doctrine here on earth and our doctrine must be in harmony with Jesus Christ’s.<sup>5</sup>

The doctrine of Jesus Christ has basic principles as its foundation.<sup>6</sup> These principles are:

- **Faith**
- **Repentance**
- **Baptism**
- **Laying on of hands**
- **Resurrection of the dead**
- **Eternal Judgment**

Many churches claim to have all or part of these principles in their doctrine, but without all of these principles being in harmony with the doctrine of Jesus Christ, a church cannot claim him as its head.

## **Faith**

The apostle Paul defines faith as “the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”.<sup>7</sup>

Some examples of faith include:

- Our confidence that God exists
- That Jesus Christ, the son of God, was born of a virgin
- That the gift of the Holy Spirit was sent after Jesus ascended to his Father
- That there is an eternal life after our physical body dies

These are all things which we have not seen, yet we are certain do exist, have happened, or will happen.

Paul also states that without faith it is impossible to please God.<sup>8</sup> Abraham showed his faith and found favor with God because he left the false gods he had worshipped<sup>9</sup> to do those things God commanded with only the hope of His promises as his initial reward<sup>10</sup>. Because of Abraham's faith and his obedience to God's commandments, his descendants of the house of Israel and the Gentile nations of the world have the possibility for salvation through Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Faith must be accompanied by works (deeds, acts), otherwise our faith is dead.<sup>12</sup> Just as Abraham's faith was tested when God told him to sacrifice his promised son Isaac, our faith is tested in that we must believe God and obey the commandments He has given us. One of those commandments is to repent and be baptized to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.<sup>13</sup>

## **Repentance**

In the beginning, God created Adam and Eve and gave them a commandment to not eat the fruit of a certain tree. Adam and Eve disobeyed the commandment, eating the fruit of the tree and as a consequence were cast out of the Garden of Eden and from God's presence. As time went on, mankind became so sinful that God destroyed them, with the exception of Noah and his family, through a flood.

Continually, mankind turns away from God and His commandments, showing that when left to our own devices, we are naturally sinful. However, God has shown His mercy toward us by sending His son to show us the way back into His presence if we would only believe him.<sup>14</sup>

To believe in Jesus Christ and to love him is to keep the commandments and words which He received of the Father.<sup>15</sup> Many times in the scriptures, Jesus showed the Jews that their ideas of how God wanted to be worshipped were out of harmony with God's actual desires. One example is found in Matthew 15:1-10.<sup>16</sup>

As in those times, mankind has ideas about what God requires for repentance today, such as, cleaning the church building or saying extra prayers or feeding a poor family. Repentance is not performing good works, because we were created to do good works.<sup>17</sup> Instead repentance is asking God's forgiveness when we have not followed His ways and then changing our natural sinful ways to conform to God's ways when we learn truth.

## **Baptisms and Laying on of Hands**

Jesus commanded that we be baptized: he told his apostles to baptize and to teach men to do the things they saw him do.<sup>18</sup> Jesus showed us the way by being baptized to fulfill all righteousness, or all right ways according to God.<sup>19</sup> John the Baptist heard a voice from heaven saying how God was pleased with the baptism of Jesus.<sup>20</sup> As God is not a respecter of persons, God is also pleased when we are baptized.

When Jesus ascended into heaven, he left his apostles as the representatives he authorized to baptize in his name.<sup>21</sup> Since, Jesus Christ is the same today as he was yesterday,<sup>22</sup> only those who have his authority can baptize today. Those who have his authority teach the same things which Jesus taught while here on earth.

The word baptism is derived from the Greek word *bapto* or *baptizo* which means to cover wholly or entirely with a fluid. When we are baptized, our body is immersed in water which is symbolic of our body being cleansed from sin. It also

symbolizes that we are burying our natural sinful self in the water and having our spiritual self resurrected, free from sin, when we come up out of the water.<sup>23</sup>

Baptism also provides the way for us to enter into a covenant relationship with God, just as God made a covenant with Abraham. When we are baptized we become part of that same covenant and become inheritors of the same promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and His chosen people Israel.<sup>24</sup> A covenant being a two way agreement: We promise to keep God's commandments and serve Him, God promises to give us the gift of the Holy Ghost<sup>25</sup> and the reward of everlasting life if we continue keeping His commandments until we die.

When we repent and are baptized for the remission of sins, we become a clean vessel to receive the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands by an authorized representative of Jesus Christ.<sup>26</sup> This is also called the baptism by fire or the baptism by the Holy Ghost.<sup>27</sup>

Since Jesus is not here on earth to teach us, he promised the Holy Ghost to guide us into all truth, to teach us, to bring God's commandments to our remembrance, and to comfort us.<sup>28</sup> God does not delay giving us this gift; He immediately rewards us for our act of faith. In return, God expects us to keep His commandments until we die if we are to be saved in His kingdom.<sup>29</sup>

### **Resurrection of the Dead and Eternal Judgment**

God raised up Jesus after his death on the cross, showing us through His son that we have hope of a life after our physical body dies.<sup>30</sup> All men will be raised from the dead, whether or not they are justified by keeping the commandments of God.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, all men will be judged of those things written in the scriptures according to their works or deeds.<sup>32</sup>

God has not changed since the days of Adam and Eve. He gives each of us the opportunity to choose whether we submit our will unto Him to serve Him and keep His commandments or whether we remain in our natural sinful state and serve the world and our own interests. Whichever we choose, when we are judged, we cannot rely on the works of anyone else, because each of us must work out our own salvation.<sup>33</sup>

If we choose to serve God, then the blood of the sacrifice Jesus Christ made is available to us as atonement for our sins, cleansing us so we can enter into the kingdom of God.<sup>34</sup> If we choose our sinful state, we cannot enter into His kingdom, for no unclean person can stand in the presence of God.<sup>35</sup>

Whether we choose God's way or our own way, the reward or the punishment at our judgment is everlasting and eternal.<sup>36</sup> There is no working our way into a reward after a punishment has been affixed, neither is there the capability to visit someone who is not received into God's kingdom.<sup>37</sup>

### **Authority**

For a church to be called the Church of Jesus Christ, its doctrine must be the same as that brought by Jesus Christ. The ministers of a church can only be authorized representatives of Jesus Christ if they teach his doctrine. His ministers will not add commandments which he did not give nor will they remove a commandment he gave because the world finds fault with it. His ministers will not compare themselves to one another, instead they will measure themselves against the standard which God set and Jesus Christ taught as well as lived.<sup>38</sup>

These are foreign concepts to most churches in the world. Most churches prefer to continue teaching traditions rather than examine themselves according to the word of God and change to conform to it. We believe we must compare our doctrine to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, otherwise we rob him of the respect owed him as our Savior.<sup>39</sup>

### **Conclusion**

God has left the choice to follow Jesus Christ to each of us. It is a choice we must make every day and that choice will ultimately determine our reward for as Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 states:

*13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.*

*14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*

To follow Jesus Christ is to follow a path which most of the world does not follow.<sup>40</sup> The way of mankind is broad, allowing them to change the commandments of God to adapt to their ideas of who God is and how they think He wants to be worshipped. The way of Jesus Christ is narrow, confined to the commandments of God, and he said there would be few who followed his way.

To follow Jesus Christ:

- We need to love the truth of God more than the lies of this world.<sup>41</sup>
- We need to believe there is a God and that His ways are worth following (faith).
- We need to humble ourselves when we learn the word of God and change our thoughts of Him so we are not worshipping an idol (repentance).
- We need to show our faith in God by acting on His commandments (baptism by immersion).
- We need to be guided by God so that we continue to learn truth (baptism by Holy Ghost).
- We need to have hope that we can one day enter into God's presence (resurrection of the dead).
- We need to fear God so we do not stray from His commandments to be cast out of His presence into everlasting darkness, but continue to press toward the promised reward of everlasting life (eternal judgment).

### **Pray For Guidance**

Ask God to reveal to you, through the power of the Holy Spirit whether, the statements presented here are true. Having experienced the goodness of God in our lives, we know He will answer the prayers of those who have a contrite heart and invite you to unite with us in the great work God has prepared for mankind.

We hope you will contact us with any questions or comments our beliefs have generated.

Sincerely,

The priesthood and members of The Church of Jesus Christ, Zion's Branch

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## **Services**

(Services subject to change on special occasions)

### ***First Sunday of each month:***

10:00 AM Worship and Sacrament Service

11:00 AM Sermon

(Fellowship lunch to follow)

### ***Remaining Sundays***

10:00 AM Worship and Scriptural Study

11:00 AM Sermon

### ***Sunday Evenings***

6:00 PM Scriptural Study

### ***Wednesday Evenings***

7:00 PM Prayer Service

## **References**

(Endnotes)

Scripture references are taken from the Inspired Version of the Bible.

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The King James Version of the Bible is also referenced  
and if the verse number differs, it is shown within brackets { }.

Scripture references only found in the Inspired Version are followed by (IV).

The words of Jesus Christ are in red.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Colossians 1:18

*18 And he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.*

<sup>2</sup> John 14:6

*6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

<sup>3</sup> John 7:16-17

*16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.*

*17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.*

<sup>4</sup> John 17:17

*17 Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.*

<sup>5</sup> John 17:20-21

*20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;*

*21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.*

<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 6:1-2

*1 Therefore not leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.*

*2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

<sup>7</sup> Hebrews 11:1

*1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

<sup>8</sup> Hebrews 11:6

*6 But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

<sup>9</sup> Joshua 24:2

*2 And Joshua said unto all the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor; and they served other gods.*

<sup>10</sup> Genesis 12:1-3

*1 Now, the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee;*

*2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee shall the families of the earth be blessed.*

*3 So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him. And Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran.*

<sup>11</sup> Galatians 3:14

*14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that they might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

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**12** James 2:17, 25

*17 Even so faith, if it have not works is dead, being alone.*

*25 For, as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead.*

**13** Acts 2:38

*38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

**14** John 3:16

*16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his Only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish; but have everlasting life.*

**15** John 14:15, 21, 23-24

*15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

*21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

*23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*

*24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.*

**16** Matthew 15:1-10

*1 Then came to Jesus, scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,*

*2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread.*

*3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?*

*4 For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother; and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death which Moses shall appoint.*

*5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to father or mother, By whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, it is a gift from me and honor not his father or mother, it is well.*

*6 Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.*

*7 O ye hypocrites! well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draw nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.*

*8 But in vain do they worship me, teaching the doctrines and the commandments of men.*

*9 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand.*

*10 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth the man.*

**17** Ephesians 2:10

*10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*

**18** Matthew 28:18-19

*18 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;*

*19 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen.*

**19** Matthew 3:41-45 {13-16}

*41 And then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him;*

*42 But John refused him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and why comest thou to me?*

*43 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer me to be baptized of thee, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him.*

*44 And John went down into the water and baptized him.*

*45 And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and John saw, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus.*

**20** Matthew 3:46 {17}

*46 And lo, he heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him.*

**21** Matthew 28:18 {19}

*18 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;*

**22** Hebrews 18:8

*8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*

**23** Romans 6:1-6

*1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?*

*2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

*3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*

*4 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.*

*5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection;*

*6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

**24** Galatians 3:27-29

*27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

*28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, here is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

*29 And if ye are Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

**25** Acts 2:38

*38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

**26** Acts 8:14-17

*14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John;*

*15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost.*

*16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them; only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)*

*17 Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.*

**27** Acts 1:5

*1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*

*2 Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen;*

*3 To whom also he showed himself alive after his sufferings by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God;*

*4 And, being with them when they were assembled together, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, **but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me.***

*5 For John truly baptized with water; **but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.***

**28** John 14:16-17, 26

*16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;*

*17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

**29** Matthew 24:11 {13}

*11 But he that remaineth steadfast, and is not overcome, the same shall be saved.*

**30** 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

*12 Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?*

*13 But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen;*

*14 And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.*

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15 Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not.

16 For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised;

17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

18 Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.

**31** Acts 24:15

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

**32** Revelations 20:12-13

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works.

**33** Philippians 2:12

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

**34** 1 John 1:7

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

**35** Ephesians 5:5

5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

**36** Matthew 25:47 {46}

47 *And these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal.*

**37** Luke 16:31 {26}

31 *And besides all this, between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed; so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.*

**38** 2 Corinthians 10:12-13

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

**39** John 10:1

1 *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*

**40** Matthew 7:22-23 {13-14}

22 *Repent, therefore, and enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat.*

23 *Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*

**41** 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12

10 Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe;

11 As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.