

FAITH OF OUR FATHER

EXCERPTS FROM ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT DIETER F. UCHTDORF

We honor and respect sincere souls from all religions, no matter where or when they lived, who have loved God, even without having the fulness of the gospel. We lift our voices in gratitude for their selflessness and courage. We embrace them as brothers and sisters, children of our Heavenly Father. We believe that it is a fundamental human right to worship “Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may.” As the restored Church of Jesus Christ blossoms throughout the globe, “the faith of our fathers” has an expanded meaning. For some, it could refer to their family’s heritage in one of the hundreds of Christian faiths; for others, it could refer to Middle-Eastern, Asian, or African faiths and traditions.

What, then, is the faith of our fathers? Is it the religion of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents? But what of the faith of the ancient ones before them? What of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Are they not our fathers? Are we not of the house of Israel? What of Noah and Enoch and our first parents, Adam and Eve? What of the Savior and those disciples who followed Him?

The faith of our Father in Heaven has been consistent since the beginning of time, even from before the foundation of this world. John the Revelator described a great war in heaven. The issue was moral agency, as it is today. All who have ever lived on this earth were among those who fought against Satan and stood with the Son and the Father. Therefore, do we not owe our allegiance to God, our Heavenly Father?

As members of the Church of Jesus Christ, “we believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost.” And “we believe that through the Atonement of Christ, all mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.” We believe in the great plan of happiness, the plan of redemption, the plan of salvation, whereby God’s children may experience mortality and return to the presence of the Father – a merciful plan established from before the foundation of this earth. This is the plan and the faith of our Father!

I testify that the doctrine of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ is the faith of our Heavenly Father. It is His truth, revealed to His servants the prophets from the days of Father Adam until our own time. The Father and the Son appeared to Joseph Smith to restore the faith of our Father on this earth, never to be taken away again. God desires that all of His children receive it, irrespective of their background, culture, or tradition. True religion should not originate from what pleases men or the traditions of ancestors, but rather from what pleases God, our Eternal Father.

We joyously proclaim that the faith of our Father is on the earth today. We invite everyone on this beautiful planet to taste of His doctrine and see if it is not sweet and good and precious. We ask those of sincere heart to learn of this doctrine and ask their Father in Heaven if it is not true. And by doing so, all can discover, embrace, and walk in the true faith of their Father, which faith will make them whole. That is our message to the world.

For the full address given at the 178th Annual General Conference in April 2008, please visit www.lds.org and click on “Gospel Library”.