

benefit. They are loving instructions for your happiness and your physical and spiritual well-being.

The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that obedience to the commandments leads to blessings from God. He said: “There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated—and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated” (D&C 130:20–21). King Benjamin also taught this principle. “I would desire that ye should consider on the blessed and happy state of those that keep the commandments of God,” he counseled. “For behold, they are blessed in all things, both temporal and spiritual; and if they hold out faithful to the end they are received into heaven, that thereby they may dwell with God in a state of never-ending happiness. O remember, remember that these things are true; for the Lord God hath spoken it” (Mosiah 2:41).

Our obedience to the commandments is an expression of our love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. The Savior said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). He later declared: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love” (John 15:10).

Additional references: Joshua 24:14–15; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Matthew 7:21; John 7:17; 1 Nephi 3:7; D&C 58:21–22; 82:8–10

See also Agency; Plan of Salvation

Ordinances

In the Church, an ordinance is a sacred, formal act performed by the authority of the priesthood. Some ordinances are essential to our exaltation. These ordinances are called saving ordinances. They include baptism, confirmation, ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood (for men), the temple endowment, and the marriage sealing. With each of these ordinances, we enter into solemn covenants with the Lord.

Original Sin

Other ordinances, such as naming and blessing children, consecrating oil, and administering to the sick and afflicted, are also performed by priesthood authority. While they are not essential to our salvation, they are important for our comfort, guidance, and encouragement.

Ordinances and covenants help us remember who we are. They remind us of our duty to God. The Lord has provided them to help us come unto Him and receive eternal life. When we honor them, He strengthens us.

You may receive many opportunities to participate in priesthood ordinances. Whenever you have such an opportunity, do all you can to prepare yourself, whether you are performing the ordinance or receiving it. You can prepare by praying, fasting, counseling with priesthood leaders, and studying the scriptures and the words of latter-day prophets. If you are a priesthood holder, you should always be spiritually prepared to perform an ordinance. Live a clean, worthy life, and strive to receive the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost.

Additional references: D&C 84:19–21; Articles of Faith 1:3–5

See also Covenant; Gospel; Priesthood

Original Sin

Because of the Fall of Adam and Eve, all people live in a fallen condition, separated from God and subject to physical death. However, we are not condemned by what many call the “original sin.” In other words, we are not accountable for Adam’s transgression in the Garden of Eden. The Prophet Joseph Smith said, “We believe that men will be punished for their own sins, and not for Adam’s transgression” (Articles of Faith 1:2).

Through the Atonement, the Savior paid the price for the transgression in the Garden of Eden (see Moses 6:53). He has given us the assurance of resurrection and the promise that,