

Joseph Smith Seeks Wisdom in the Bible

Joseph Smith—History 1:3, 5–15

Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again. Joseph Smith—History 1:12

Young Joseph Smith moved with his family from Vermont to Palmyra, New York, when he was about 10 years old. When he was 13, the family settled on a farm near Palmyra. Shortly after the Smiths moved there, Joseph said, the people in the area became very excited about religion. Preachers from several churches were trying to win converts. The Smith family was caught up in the excitement, for they were a sincere, God-fearing family.

Joseph, then 14 years old, worried a great deal about which church to join. He carefully tried to find the truth. He visited the different church meetings and studied the Bible, reading often from its pages. One day when he was reading in the book of James in the New Testament, he

noticed especially the fifth verse in chapter 1: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” (See Joseph Smith—History 1:7–11.)

Joseph pondered the words of this scripture, “knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, [he] did” (verse 12).

Finally Joseph decided to ask God which church to join. He went to a grove of trees and knelt in prayer. The Father and Son appeared to him, and the Savior told him that the true Church of Jesus Christ was not on the earth and had to be restored. As time went on, Joseph received authority and instructions to restore the true Church of Jesus Christ to the earth.

Summary

Young Joseph Smith worried about which church was right. He carefully studied the Bible as he searched for truth. One day he read in the book of James that a person who wants to know the truth should ask God, who will help those who ask Him. Joseph felt great power in the words of this scripture and thought about them again and again. He decided he would ask God

which church to join. He went to a grove of trees and prayed. In answer to Joseph’s prayer, the Father and the Son appeared to him. The Savior told him to join none of the churches because none of them was the true Church. Later, Joseph received authority and instructions to restore the true Church of Jesus Christ.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS