

# The First Vision

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Joseph Smith—History 1:14–20

*When the light rested upon me I saw two Personages, whose brightness and glory defy all description, standing above me in the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name and said, pointing to the other—This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him! Joseph Smith—History 1:17*

On a beautiful spring morning in 1820, Joseph Smith went into the woods near his home to pray. He did not know which church to join and decided to ask Heavenly Father. Joseph looked around to make sure he was alone, then knelt and began to pray. He was immediately overcome by some evil power. Thick darkness surrounded him, and he could not speak. Joseph thought he was going to be destroyed, but using all the energy he had, he asked God to deliver him from this unseen enemy. Just as Joseph was about to give up, he saw a pillar of light over his head, and he was released from the evil force that had held him. The light came down and rested on him, and Joseph saw two personages whose brightness and glory were beyond description. They were standing in the air above Joseph. (See Joseph Smith—History 1:14–17.)

One called Joseph by name, pointed to the other, and said, “*This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!*” (verse 17). These personages were Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

Joseph asked Heavenly Father and Jesus which church was right and which he should join. Jesus told Joseph that he should not join any of the churches, because they were all wrong. (See verses 18–19.) He said, “They draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me” (verse 19).

Jesus again told Joseph not to join any of the churches. He also told him many other things during the vision. After the vision Joseph was lying on his back looking up into heaven. As the bright light left, he found he was too weak to walk. Joseph’s strength gradually returned and he went home. (See verse 20.)

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## Summary

In the spring of 1820, when Joseph Smith was 14 years old, he went into the woods near his home to ask God which church to join. As Joseph knelt down and began to pray, he was overcome by an evil power that seemed about to destroy him. He used all his strength to ask God for help. Then Joseph saw a pillar of light over his head and was released from the evil power that held

him. When the light rested upon Joseph, he saw two personages standing in the air above him. Heavenly Father spoke to Joseph, calling him by name, and introduced His Son, Jesus Christ. When Joseph asked which church to join, Jesus told him not to join any, for they were all wrong. Joseph was told many other things before the vision ended.

THE CHURCH OF  
JESUS CHRIST  
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS