

What We Believe

We Believe in Following the Prophet

Like the original Church that Jesus Christ established during His mortal ministry, the Church today is “built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone” (Ephesians 2:20). We have twelve Apostles, as well as the President of the Church and his counselors, who are prophets, seers, and revelators. They are called to testify of Jesus Christ and preach His gospel throughout the world.

The Savior chooses His prophets and prepares them through many experiences to direct the Church. When Church members speak of the prophet, they are referring to the President of the Church, the only person on earth who receives revelation for the whole Church.

Because the President of the Church speaks for the Lord (see D&C 1:38), it is not wise to pick and choose just the parts of his counsel that we want to follow. Rather, we treat his counsel and invitations as if we had received them directly from Jesus Christ, “in all patience and faith” (D&C 21:5).

As we choose to listen to and follow the prophet and the other apostles, we are blessed in our efforts to become like Jesus Christ, and we are protected from the insecurity and deceptions of the world (see Ephesians 4:11–14).

For example, we find spiritual safety in a world of shifting morals and values by living the unchanging standards that the prophet and apostles teach. We also find temporal security in following prophetic counsel to avoid debt, set aside savings, and store food.

As the President of the Church and the Apostles give their lives to the Lord’s work—traveling the world testifying of Christ, teaching the Saints, and overseeing the administration of the worldwide Church—He sustains and blesses them and their families. We also sustain them as we pray for them, obey their counsel, and seek to have the Holy Ghost confirm to us the truths they teach.

As we sustain the prophet and apostles, we gain a testimony of them as servants of God. Even though they are not perfect, Heavenly Father will not allow them to lead us astray (see Deuteronomy 18:18–20).

You can learn more about following the prophet by reading “Sustaining the Prophets” (*Ensign*, Nov. 2014, 74–76) by President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

These are some of the blessings that have come to us through living prophets:

The Prophet Joseph Smith (1805–44) translated the Book of Mormon “by the gift and power of God” (see introduction to the Book of Mormon). Since its publication in 1830, it has blessed the lives of millions of people.

In 1915, President Joseph F. Smith (1838–1918) and his counselors invited Church members to begin holding family home evening. Families still reap the great blessings they promised would result.

In 1936, during the Great Depression, President Heber J. Grant (1856–1945) announced what would become the Church’s welfare program. Today this program assists people of all faiths around the world.

In April 1998, when the Church had 51 temples in operation, President Gordon B. Hinckley (1910–2008) announced a program to build many small temples. These temples now bless more and more members of the Church throughout the world.

In 2012, President Thomas S. Monson announced that the missionary service ages for men and women were lowered to 18 and 19, respectively. Thousands of families and missionaries have been blessed by the resulting expansion of the missionary force.

Guidance through a Living Prophet

“God has spoken anew and continues to provide guidance for all his children through a living prophet today. We declare that [God], as promised, is with his servants always and directs the affairs of his Church throughout the world.”

Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Howard W. Hunter (2015), 115.