

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

"It is a principle well known in civil law, and ought to be in ecclesiastical circles, that whenever a church is founded, its principles of faith formulated, its traditions fulminated from the forum and pulpit, those declarations become the *constitution* of its corporate and legal existence. If in the history of any church, anything out of harmony with, or antagonistic to *that constitution* is introduced, or a change is sought to be made in the creed and government, which is opposed and resisted, or denied by any of the members of the church, *that portion of the membership that remains in adherence to the faith, as it was before the change was attempted or made, is the church.* Nor does it make any difference in law how few this adhering portion may be, or how numerous the changing membership, *the church is that part of the members remaining true to the original tenets.*"

- Joseph Smith III

"And in the day that He shall set His hand again the second time to recover His people, is the day, yea, even the last time, that the Lord shall go forth in His power, to nourish and prune His vineyard; and after that, the end soon cometh. And how blessed are they who have labored diligently in His vineyard; and how cursed are they who shall be cast out into their own place!"

- Jacob 4:3,4

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

### A. AN AFFIRMATION OF THE DIVINITY OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE RESTORATION MOVEMENT:

1. **The Holy Scriptures:** The Bible is the divinely sanctioned Word of God, and it contains the gospel of salvation. The Inspired Version was produced under divine direction and is the standard version of the Church.
2. **The Book of Mormon:** The Book of Mormon is divinely revealed Scripture, and it contains the fulness of the gospel. It is a true account of God's dealings with the ancient Americans. The 1908 RLDS edition is the standard edition of the Church.
3. **The Doctrine and Covenants:** The Doctrine and Covenants (Sections 1-144) is divinely revealed Scripture and is to be used as the law of the Church. It is to be used instead of the Book of Commandments (DC 128:10b).
4. **The Law of the Church:** The Three Standard Books named above contain the law of the Church, and their teachings must be adhered to in matters of doctrine and practice. Any theological practice or doctrine which is not in harmony with those Books is false doctrine.
5. **The Church History:** The history of the Church is important as a guide for the church today, and the first four volumes of The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints give a correct rendition of that history up to 1890.

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

6. **The Epitome of Faith:** The Epitome of Faith is a correct and official statement of belief (see *Times and Seasons* 3:709-710; *RLDS History* 2:569-570).
7. **The Godhead:** God the Father, Christ the Son and the Holy Spirit are separate and equal personages. The belief that there is only one personage in the Godhead is false doctrine.
8. **Joseph Smith as a Prophet:** Joseph Smith, Jr., was a true prophet and his experiences, such as the vision in Palmyra's grove and the obtaining of the Book of Mormon, are actual facts of history.
9. **The Only True Church:** The church which God directed Joseph Smith to organize in 1830 is God's only true Church; it is Christ's New Testament Church restored.
10. **The RLDS Church is the Only True Church:**  
The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is the lawful continuation of the true Church founded in 1830, and is the same Church reorganized.
11. **The Unchangeability of Doctrine:** God is unchangeable, and so are the doctrines and structure of the Church. They are the same in every age when revealed in their fulness.

### B. AN ADMISSION THAT THE RLDS HIERARCHY IS IN APOSTASY:

12. **The Apostasy of the Church Leaders:** The present leaders of the World Church (the hierarchy) are in apostasy because they are leading the Church away from the true doctrine of Christ and the direction and calling of the church as restored through Joseph

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

12. **The Apostasy of the Church Leaders (Cont'd):**  
Smith, Jr. They have also rejected the Restoration Movement: the belief that Joseph Smith, Jr. was a true prophet; that the Three Standard Books of scripture are of divine origin; and a literal belief in Zion, the virgin birth of Christ, His millennial advent, and other doctrines.
13. **The Higher Quorums Spiritually Vacant:** The present leaders of the Church lost their last vestige of *God-given authority* when the Presidency presented the Presidential Papers in 1979 - and therefore, the higher quorums are now spiritually vacant and in disorder. The only God-given authority left in the Church is that held by the local priesthood who are still defending the original doctrines of the Restoration Gospel.
14. **The Loss of Authority:** Since the leading officials of the World Church are in apostasy, all who willingly follow them are also without authority - and all who remain under the jurisdiction of these apostate leaders will eventually lose their authority, if they have not already done so.
15. **The Removal of the Apostate Hierarchy:** The Lord has promised to set His hand again the second time to recover His people and to nourish and prune His vineyard (Jacob 4: 3, 4) , or cleanse it ( DC 105:9,10), and will yet use the RLDS Church to fulfill His promises concerning the building of Zion.

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

### C. AN AGREEMENT THAT THE RLDS CHURCH IS BEING PRESERVED BY THE RESTORATIONISTS:

16. **The Survival of the RLDS Church:** The RLDS Church *is not dead*, as some have claimed, but it is being preserved in and through the Restorationists - it continues to exist in all those who are defending and proclaiming the original beliefs while remaining *within* the Church.
17. **The Survival of Local Authority:** The local priesthood who openly proclaim the original doctrines of the Restored Gospel still have their full authority before God. They still have both the right and duty to preach the gospel, conduct services, and perform the ordinances. They should do these things in the name of the RLDS Church, even though they may have to use the name unofficially.
18. **The Survival of the Church Through Restoration Branches:** The saints in every locality should start their own Restoration Branch if the hierarchy prevents the teaching of true doctrine, or introduces Faith to Grow liberalism. Any such group may form a Restoration Branch if they have six or more members, and at least one of them is a priesthood member. Those groups which cannot organize as branches should meet regularly, nevertheless, for worship and study.

### D. A COURSE OF ACTION FOR INDIVIDUAL SAINTS:

19. **Withdraw Support from World Church Direction:** Since the men of the hierarchy lost all of their spiritual

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

19. **Withdraw Support (Cont'd):** authority when they rejected the Restoration Gospel, the saints should cease to support the hierarchy and World Church direction. They can best do this by withholding their influence, attendance, and finances.
20. **Believe the Restorationists Are "the Church":** The saints should insist that the "institutional Church" now resides in *the* Restorationists. They should staunchly proclaim: "We are the true RLDS Church, and the hierarchy is in apostacy."
21. **Ignore Priesthood Silences:** Since the World Church hierarchy is in apostasy, any priesthood member who has been silenced by them for defending *the original* Faith is not silenced at all, and he should be upheld and his ministry accepted by the Restorationists, as long as he remains worthy of his office otherwise.
22. **Ignore Expulsions:** Likewise, when members are, or shall hereafter be excommunicated or expelled from the Church by the hierarchy for defending the Restored Gospel, the Restorationists should consider them to be members of *the* RLDS Church in good standing, and they should be accepted into the Restoration Branches.
23. **Support the Restoration Branches Movement:** Since the RLDS Church is surviving through the Restoration Branches and shall continue to do so, the saints should take courage and renew their missionary efforts and spiritual activities, and should determine to carry on their Church work indefinitely

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

23. **Support (Cont'd):** determine to carry on their Church work indefinitely without World Church direction or interference.
24. **Pay Tithing:** The saints should continue to pay tithing and give offerings – but NOT to the World Church. They should give their tithes and offerings in ways that will help defend and promote the original Restoration Gospel. The Lord needs to have tithing paid to help save His true Church, and to sustain the needy – more in this time of apostasy than in normal times. Those who hesitate to call these monies "tithing," should give it as "contributions."
25. **Believe There Is Time to Return to the Restoration Gospel:** Though some are prophesying the immediate return of Christ, the Scriptures declare that many important events must yet occur before His great advent. Therefore, the saints should understand that Christ is granting sufficient time for the Restorationists to return the body of the saints (the body of Christ) to the Restoration Gospel, and to replace the hierarchy. For this reason the Restorationists should stop looking for a quick and easy end to the present crisis, and should vigorously renew their efforts in Christ's work.

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

### E. AN AGREEMENT REGARDING MEMBERSHIP AND PRIESTHOOD IN RESTORATION BRANCHES:

26. **No Withdrawal of Membership:** The saints should not withdraw from the RLDS Church, but should stay in the Church and work from *within* to preserve it. No person should be accepted as a member of a Restoration Branch unless he or she believes that the true Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (not the hierarchy) is God's only true Church.
27. **Reinstatement of Membership:** Those who have voluntarily surrendered their membership to the World Church headquarters should go to a Restorationist Branch and be reinstated by signing the Articles of Agreement of that Branch and publicly affirming that they intend to be loyal to the RLDS Church and to be an active member of the Branch.
28. **Authoritative Baptisms:** No person shall be accepted as a member of the Fort Worth Restoration Branch unless he or she has been baptized and confirmed by priesthood whose authority is recognized by the Fort Worth Restoration Branch. Persons who have been baptized and/or confirmed by women or by men who have been silenced by an elder's quorum must be rebaptized and reconfirmed.
29. **No Surrendering of Priesthood Licenses:** Priesthood should not turn in their priesthood cards to the World Church leaders. If a priesthood man has already surrendered his license, he shall not be allowed to function in his office in a Restoration Branch until such license has been restored.



# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

30. **Reinstatement of Priesthood Licenses:** A man who has surrendered his license may have it restored by (1) applying to the Restoration Branch of which he is a member, and asking to have said license restored, (2) affirming publicly that he believes that the true RLDS Church is God's only true Church, (3) affirming that he will consider himself a loyal priesthood member of the RLDS Church, (4) affirming that he will be an active priesthood member in the Branch, and (5) by disclaiming membership or priesthood in any other church or denomination (including those new churches or denominations recently formed by fundamentalists who have withdrawn from the RLDS Church). At such time that the priesthood quorums will be once again organized and operable, the Branch shall seek ways, according to the mind and will of God, to integrate existing licensing procedures into the priesthood quorum structure.
31. **Authoritative Ordinations:** The priesthood of a man shall not be accepted by a Restoration Branch if the man was ordained by a woman. When such a man joins a Restoration Branch, a new call and ordination shall be necessary before he can function as a member of the priesthood.

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

**32. Acceptance of Membership and Priesthood from Other Restoration Branches:** When two or more Restoration Branches endorse these Restorationists Principles, or their equivalent, they should accept each other's members and priesthood as being in good standing. However, the said saints shall have actual membership and voting rights only in the Branch which they have formally joined.

### F. A COURSE OF ACTION FOR THE RESTORATION BRANCHES:

**33. Remain Loyal to the RLDS Church:** Each Restoration Branch should consider itself a part of the true RLDS Church and remain loyal to it, while at the same time it should become completely independent of the hierarchy and the World Church.

**34. Remain Independent:** The Branch should remain independent of other fundamental groups which are (1) starting other denominations, (2) which declare that the RLDS Church is dead, (3) which require withdrawal of membership from the RLDS Church, (4) which have a one-man leadership, or are trying to fill the higher quorums with such officers as bishops, apostles, or a "prophet," or (5) which promote false doctrines. It would be better to stand alone than to be a part of a fundamental organization which is in itself in apostasy.

**35. Be Organized According to the Scriptures:** The Branch should be organized as the Doctrine and Covenants directs, and have a Branch President (who is elected annually) and two counselors, and should have the priesthood acting as a council.

# RESTORATIONIST PRINCIPLES

## FT. WORTH RESTORATION BRANCH

36. **Have a Definite Legal Organization:** The Branch should have a set of bylaws; and keep records of its history, business meetings, membership, and the ordinances performed.
37. **Observe Common Consent:** The final authority of the Branch resides in the membership and is expressed in the business meetings. All things should be done by common consent, and strictly in harmony with the Scriptures.
38. **Seek Stability:** The Restoration Branches throughout the Church should seek to become stable over a period of time. Later they should send delegate elders to their own General Conferences, to elect temporary officers to govern the RLDS Church on a temporary basis, without the higher quorums being filled. The Church should then function in this condition until the Lord shall provide new prophetic leadership in His own way and time.
39. **Quorum Affiliation:** The organization of the priesthood into their respective quorums is a principle established in Christ's church restored from the beginning. The Fort Worth Restoration Branch and its priesthood shall demonstrate a commitment to seeking out the mind and will of God as to the functions and authority of the quorums and shall teach the members in these matters.