

Taking upon Us the Name of Jesus Christ

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On this Easter Sunday we rejoice in the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. This is a holy day for all of Christianity. Countless Christians attend worship services on this day to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which many call communion. (See 1 Cor. 10:16.)

Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are commanded to partake of the sacrament each week. (See D&C 59:9, 12.) In doing so, they witness unto God the Eternal Father, as stated in the prayer on the bread, that they are "willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them." (D&C 20:77; Moro. 4:3.) We should ponder these sacred covenants during the sacrament service.

On this Easter Sunday it is appropriate to reflect on what it means to partake of the sacrament. I will focus on the first of these solemn "witnesses" to God the Eternal Father: that we are willing to take upon us the name of his Son. What does this mean?

Our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ has several different meanings. Some of these meanings are obvious, and well within the understanding of our children. Others are only evident to those who have searched the scriptures and pondered the wonders of eternal life.

One of the obvious meanings renews a promise we made when we were baptized. Following the scriptural pattern, persons who are baptized witness before the Church that they have truly repented of all their sins, and are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end." (D&C 20:37; see also 2 Ne. 31:13; Moro. 6:3.) When we partake of the sacrament, we renew this covenant and all the other covenants we made in the waters of baptism. (See Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation*, comp. Bruce R. McConkie, 3 vols., Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-56, 2:341, 346.)

As a second obvious meaning, we take upon us our Savior's name when we become members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. By his commandment, this church bears his name. (See D&C 115:4; 3 Ne. 27:7-8.) Every member, young and old, is a

member of the "household of God." (Eph. 2:19.) As true believers in Christ, as Christians, we have gladly taken his name upon us. (See Alma 46:15.) As King Benjamin taught his people, "Because of the covenant which ye have made ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters; for behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you." (Mosiah 5:7; see also Alma 5:14; Alma 36:23-26.)

We also take upon us the name of Jesus Christ whenever we publicly proclaim our belief in him. Each of us has many opportunities to proclaim our belief to friends and neighbors, fellow workers, and casual acquaintances. As the Apostle Peter taught the Saints of his day, we should "sanctify the Lord God in [our] hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh [us] a reason of the hope that is in [us]." (1 Pet. 3:15.) In this, we keep the modern commandment: "Take upon you the name of Christ, and speak the truth in soberness." (D&C 18:21.)

A third meaning appeals to the understanding of those mature enough to know that a follower of Christ is obligated to serve him. Many scriptural references to the name of the Lord seem to be references to the work of his kingdom. Thus, when Peter and the other Apostles were beaten, they rejoiced "that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." (Acts 5:41.) Paul wrote certain members who had ministered to the Saints that the Lord would not forget the labor of love they had "shewed toward his name." (Heb. 6:10.) According to this meaning, by witnessing our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, we signify our willingness to do the work of his kingdom.

In these three relatively obvious meanings, we see that we take upon us the name of Christ when we are baptized in his name, when we belong to his Church and profess our belief in him, and when we do the work of his kingdom.

There are other meanings as well, deeper meanings that the more mature members of the Church should understand and ponder as he or she partakes of the sacrament.

It is significant that when we partake of the sacrament we do not witness that we take upon us the name of Jesus

Christ. We witness that we are willing to do so. (See D&C 20:77.) The fact that we only witness to our willingness suggests that something else must happen before we actually take that sacred name upon us in the most important sense.

What future event or events could this covenant contemplate? The scriptures suggest two sacred possibilities, one concerning the authority of God, especially as exercised in the temples, and the other—closely related—concerning exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

The name of God is sacred. The Lord's Prayer begins with the words, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name." (Matt. 6:9.) From Sinai came the commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." (Ex. 20:7, Deut. 5:11.) Latter-day revelation equates this with using the name of God without authority. "Let all men beware how they take my name in their lips," the Lord declares in a modern revelation, for "many there be who ... use the name of the Lord, and use it in vain, having not authority." (D&C 63:61–62.)

Consistent with these references, many scriptures that refer to "the name of Jesus Christ" are obviously references to the authority of the Savior. This was surely the meaning conveyed when the seventy reported to Jesus that "even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." (Luke 10:17.) The Doctrine and Covenants employs this same meaning when it describes the Twelve Apostles of this dispensation as "they who shall desire to take upon them my name with full purpose of heart." (D&C 18:27.) The Twelve are later designated as "special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world," and as those who "officiate in the name of the Lord, under the direction of the Presidency of the Church." (D&C 107:23, 33.)

By way of further illustration, the Old Testament contains scores of references to the name of the Lord in a context where it clearly means the authority of the Lord. Most of these references have to do with the temple.

When the children of Israel were still on the other side of the Jordan, the Lord told them that when they entered the promised land there should be a place where the Lord their God would "cause his name to dwell." (Deut. 12:11; see also Deut. 14:23–24; Deut. 16:6.) Time after time in succeeding revelations, the Lord and his servants referred to the future temple as a house for "the name" of the Lord God of Israel. (See 1 Kgs. 3:2; 1 Kgs. 5:5; 1 Kgs. 8:16–20, 29, 44, 48; 1 Chr. 22:8–10, 19; 1 Chr. 29:16; 2

Chr. 2:4; 2 Chr. 6:5–10, 20, 34, 38.) After the temple was dedicated, the Lord appeared to Solomon and told him that He had hallowed the temple "to put my name there for ever." (1 Kgs. 9:3; 2 Chr. 7:16.)

Similarly, in modern revelations the Lord refers to temples as houses built "unto my holy name." (D&C 124:39; D&C 105:33; D&C 109:2–5.) In the inspired dedicatory prayer of the Kirtland Temple, the Prophet Joseph Smith asked the Lord for a blessing upon "thy people upon whom thy name shall be put in this house." (D&C 109:26.)

All of these references to ancient and modern temples as houses for "the name" of the Lord obviously involve something far more significant than a mere inscription of his sacred name on the structure. The scriptures speak of the Lord's putting his name in a temple because he gives authority for his name to be used in the sacred ordinances of that house. That is the meaning of the Prophet's reference to the Lord's putting his name upon his people in that holy house. (See D&C 109:26.)

Willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ can therefore be understood as willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ. According to this meaning, by partaking of the sacrament we witness our willingness to participate in the sacred ordinances of the temple and to receive the highest blessings available through the name and by the authority of the Savior when he chooses to confer them upon us.

Another future event we may anticipate when we witness our willingness to take that sacred name upon us concerns our relationship to our Savior and the incomprehensible blessings available to those who will be called by his name at the last day.

King Benjamin told his people, "There shall be no other name given nor any other way nor means whereby salvation can come unto the children of men, only in and through the name of Christ, the Lord Omnipotent." (Mosiah 3:17; see also 2 Ne. 31:21.) Peter proclaimed "the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" to the leaders of the Jews, declaring that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts 4:10, 12; see also D&C 18:21.)

The scriptures proclaim that the Savior's atoning sacrifice was for those who "believe on his name." Alma taught that Jesus Christ, the Son, the Only Begotten of the Father, would come "to take away the sins of the world, yea, the sins of every man who steadfastly believeth on his name." (Alma 5:48; Alma 9:27; Alma 11:40; Hel. 14:2.) In the words of King Benjamin, "Whosoever doeth this

shall be found at the right hand of God, for he shall know the name by which he is called; for he shall be called by the name of Christ.” (Mosiah 5:9.)

Thus, those who exercise faith in the sacred name of Jesus Christ and repent of their sins and enter into his covenant and keep his commandments (see Mosiah 5:8) can lay claim on the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who do so will be called by his name at the last day.

When the Savior taught the Nephites following his resurrection, he referred to the scriptural statement that “ye must take upon you the name of Christ.” He explained, “For by this name shall ye be called at the last day; And whoso taketh upon him my name, and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved at the last day.” (3 Ne. 27:5–6.) That same teaching is repeated in a modern revelation, which adds the caution that “if they know not the name by which they are called, they cannot have place in the kingdom of my Father.” (D&C 18:25; see also Alma 5:38.)

The Book of Mormon explains the significance of being called by the name of Jesus Christ. When the Savior showed his spirit body to the brother of Jared, he introduced himself as the Father and the Son, declaring that through his redeeming sacrifice all mankind who believed on his name should have life eternal through him, “and they shall become my sons and my daughters.” (Ether 3:14.) Abinadi said of those who believed in the Lord and looked to him for a remission of their sins “that these are his seed, or they are heirs of the kingdom of God.” (Mosiah 15:11.) He continued this explanation as follows:

“For these are they whose sins he has borne; these are they for whom he has died, to redeem them from their transgressions. And now, are they not his seed?” (Mosiah 15:12.)

Speaking through the prophet Alma, the Lord explained the significance of this relationship: “For behold, in my name are they called; and if they know me they shall come forth, and shall have a place eternally at my right hand.” (Mosiah 26:24.)

In these great scriptures from the Book of Mormon, we learn that those who are qualified by faith and repentance and compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel will have their sins borne by the Lord Jesus Christ. In spiritual and figurative terms they will become the sons and daughters of Christ, heirs to his kingdom. These are they who will be called by his name in the last day.

According to this meaning, when we witness our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ, we are signifying our commitment to do all that we can to achieve eternal life in the kingdom of our Father. We are expressing our candidacy—our determination to strive for—exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

Those who are found worthy to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ at the last day are described in the great revelations recorded in the ninety-third and seventy-sixth sections of the Doctrine and Covenants. Here the Savior revealed to Joseph Smith that in due time, if we keep the commandments of God, we can receive the “fulness” of the Father. (D&C 93:19–20.) Here the Savior bears record that “all those who are begotten through me are partakers of the glory of the [Father], and are the church of the Firstborn.” (D&C 93:22.) “They are they into whose hands the Father has given all things. . . . Wherefore, as it is written, they are gods” who “shall dwell in the presence of God and his Christ forever and ever.” (D&C 76:55, 58, 62.) “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” (John 17:3; see also D&C 88:4–5.) This is the ultimate significance of taking upon us the name of Jesus Christ.

When the priest offers the scriptural prayer on the bread at the sacrament table, he prays that all who partake may “witness” unto God, the Eternal Father, “that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son.” (D&C 20:77; Moro. 4:3.) This witness has several different meanings.

It causes us to renew the covenant we made in the waters of baptism to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ and serve him to the end. We also take upon us his name as we publicly profess our belief in him, as we fulfill our obligations as members of his Church, and as we do the work of his kingdom.

But there is something beyond these familiar meanings, because what we witness is not that we take upon us his name but that we are willing to do so. In this sense, our witness relates to some future event or status whose attainment is not self-assumed, but depends on the authority or initiative of the Savior himself.

Scriptural references to the name of Jesus Christ often signify the authority of Jesus Christ. In that sense, our willingness to take upon us his name signifies our willingness to take upon us the authority of Jesus Christ in the sacred ordinances of the temple, and to receive the highest blessings available through his authority when he chooses to confer them upon us.

Finally, our willingness to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ affirms our commitment to do all that we can to be counted among those whom he will choose to stand at his right hand and be called by his name at the last day. In this sacred sense, our witness that we are willing to take upon us the name of Jesus Christ constitutes our declaration of candidacy for exaltation in the celestial kingdom. Exaltation is eternal life, “the greatest of all the gifts of God.” (D&C 14:7.)

That is what we should ponder as we partake of the sacred emblems of the sacrament. As we do so, we glory in the mission of the risen Lord, who lived and taught and suffered and died and rose again that all mankind might have immortality and eternal life. Of this I testify in the sacred name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose witness I am, amen.

3. As we take upon us the Savior's name, we truly lay hold upon every good thing and become like Him. Talk summary: In order to access the Lord's saving power, individuals must take upon themselves the name of Jesus Christ. All who desire to take upon the Savior's name must first be baptized. By taking upon ourselves the name of Christ, we commit to take His teachings, His characteristics and ultimately His love, deep into our beings so that they become part of who we are. The cause of Christ and His Church are one and the same. The sacrament is a weekly reminder that taking upon the name of Names, Titles and Characters of Jesus Christ includes The Son, The Father, God, Jehovah, The Almighty, The Word, The Man, The Babe, Jesus, The Lamb of God... Recognizing the value of consistent reflection upon the Word of God in order to refocus one's mind and heart upon Christ and His Gospel of peace, we provide several reading plans designed to cover the entire Bible in a year. One-Year Plans. Canonical. Jesus and Emmanuel are two excellent names that are full of significance for us. Let's explore these names with the help of the notes. Note 1 on Jesus in verse 21 tells us: Jesus is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Joshua (Num. We can enjoy His salvation whenever we call upon the name of Jesus. How precious the name of Jesus is! Notes 2 and 3 on the name Emmanuel in verse 23 say this: Jesus was the name given by God, whereas Emmanuel, meaning God with us, was the name by which man called Him. When we believe in Him, we receive the resurrected Christ as the life-giving Spirit into us. He comes to live in us and be with us always, as part of His plan to fulfill His eternal purpose. If you haven't yet received the Savior, you don't have to wait any longer. We know Jesus' second coming will be a literal event and will be just like He went to heaven the first time. Acts 1:9-11 says the following, Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? When Jesus returns to earth the wicked who are left alive will call for the rocks and hills to fall on them because they cannot look upon the face of Christ (Revelation 6:15-17). The wicked will be destroyed with everlasting destruction because they did not know God or obey the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10). Who is Jesus Christ? His role is defined in part by hundreds of names and titles given to Him throughout the Holy Bible. Come to know Jesus Christ for yourself and why He is known by these 50 names. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:20). Author and Finisher of Our Faith. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:2). Although our visit will take place online, please fill in your address so your request can still be routed to the missionaries in your area. Country. Please choose a country.