

in undeveloped countries to supplement their savings and serve full-time missions. Whether laboring at home or abroad, Latter-day Saints are constantly admonished that the witness and testimony of the gospel are only effective if they reflect genuine and continual discipleship of Jesus Christ. The gospel is to be taught in mildness and in meekness, in demonstration of the Spirit, and in love unfeigned (D&C 38:41; 99:2; 121:41).

The command of the Lord to preach the gospel to all nations has a twofold purpose: to bring people to an understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and also to sound the warning voice to leave mankind without excuse (*see* VOICE OF WARNING).

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Smith, Joseph Fielding. *DS* 1:307–324.

MAX L. PINEGAR

---

## PREDESTINATION

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints rejects the belief in predestination—that God predetermines the salvation or the damnation of every individual. The gospel teaches that genuine human freedom and genuine responsibility—individual AGENCY in both thought and action—are crucial in both the development and the outcome of a person's life. Church doctrine rejects the strict dual option providing only heaven or hell as an outcome, since people vary widely in their levels of spiritual attainment. At the same time, Latter-day Saints recognize both the indispensable need for the grace of God manifested through Jesus Christ and the effective spiritual guidance that comes through divine FOREORDINATION.

The LDS position is based in part on the teachings of Paul that God “will render to every man according to his deeds” and that “there is no



California Mission meeting by the Cliff House, near San Francisco, May 1897, Mission President Ephraim H. Nye speaking. Latter-day Saints strive to preach the gospel in every land, in every place, and to every person.

respect of persons with God” (Rom. 2:6, 11). These two principles provide a basis for understanding Paul’s use of the term “predestination.” The term apparently connoted “to be ordained beforehand for godly labor.” In the sense that one’s potential or calling has been recognized and declared, this interpretation conforms with the Greek term Paul used, *proorizō*, and does not denote an irreversible or irresistible predetermination.

Latter-day Saints are to “look unto God in every thought” (D&C 6:36), because no person can save himself. But neither can God redeem anyone without that person’s effort and collaboration. All are free to accept or reject God’s help and powers of redemption. It is clearly taught in scripture that with his help both justification and sanctification will be “just and true” (D&C 20:30). “But there is a possibility that man may fall from grace and depart from the living God; therefore let the church take heed, and pray always, lest they fall into temptation; yea, and even let those who are sanctified take heed also” (D&C 20:32, 33).

RICHARD D. DRAPER

---

## PRE-EXISTENCE (PRE-EARTHLY EXISTENCE)

*[The term “pre-existence,” or more accurately, “pre-mortal existence,” refers to a period of individual conscious and accountable life before birth into mortality on this earth. It is Latter-day Saint doctrine that living things existed as individual spirit beings and possessed varying degrees of intelligence in an active, conscious spirit state before mortal birth and that the spirit continues to live and function in the mortal body. The revelations teach that premortal spirit bodies have general resemblance to their physical counterparts.]*

*Articles pertaining to the premortal existence are Animals; Birth; Council in Heaven; Devils; First Estate; Foreordination; God the Father; Intelligences; Jehovah; Jesus Christ: Firstborn in the Spirit; Mother in Heaven; Premortal Life; Soul; Spirit; Spirit Body; War in Heaven.]*

---

## PREMARITAL SEX

Throughout the centuries, the Lord has declared very clearly that sexual relations outside of marriage are sin (cf. Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; 22:13–30; 2 Sam. 13:12; Matt. 5:27–30; 19:18; Acts 15:20; 21:25; 1 Cor. 5:1; 6:18–20; Alma 39:3–6; D&C

42:22–26). In like manner, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that premarital sex is sin and counsels its members to abstain from it. Recognizing that the “new morality,” which advocates that consenting partners may do whatever their appetites urge them to do, is nothing more than the “old immorality,” the Church rejects the popular view that sex before marriage is not sinful and is justifiable as “normal and natural.” Rather, the Church teaches that sex should be a sacred expression of love between a husband and wife and that both men and women should abstain from sexual activity until their marriage. It teaches that sex before marriage is an expression of lust, not love, and admonishes its members not to participate in it or in any other kinds of activities that excite sexual desires. The Church teaches that those who have participated in premarital sex may repent of their sin, reminding them that true repentance requires that they abstain from sexual relations except with their legal spouse.

[See also Chastity; Marriage; Repentance.]

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Kimball, Spencer W. *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp. 213–32. Salt Lake City, 1969.

H. REESE HANSEN

---

## PREMORTAL LIFE

Prior to mortal BIRTH individuals existed as men and women in a spirit state and thus coexisted with both the Father and the Son. That period of life is also referred to as the FIRST ESTATE or PRE-EXISTENCE.

The Bible presents the concept that mankind had a preparation period prior to mortal birth. The Lord said to Jeremiah: “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations” (Jer. 1:5), and the “Preacher” asserted “The spirit shall return unto God who gave it” (Eccl. 12:7). In other scriptures, such as Alma 13:3, it is written that priests were “called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works.”

There is indeed indication that the INTELLIGENCE dwelling in each person is coeternal with God. It always existed and never was created or