In applying the First Amendment’s free exercise clause, Chief Justice Morrison R. Waite concluded that “Congress was deprived of all legislative power over mere opinion, but was left free to reach actions which were in violation of social duties or subversive of good order” (98 U.S. 164). This distinction between protected religious belief and unprotected religious actions was followed for several decades, and this specific holding regarding plural marriage is still the law. Since 1940, however, the Court has said that religious conduct also may fall within the free exercise guarantee (Cantwell v. Connecticut, 310 U.S. 296).

The Morrill Act was not an effective weapon against polygamy because of the difficulty of obtaining testimony to prove the plural marriages. Nevertheless, the Reynolds decision paved the way for other, more enforceable federal laws that penalized “unlawful cohabitation,” disincorporated the Church, and forfeited its property. Ultimately at the direction of its Prophet, President Wilford Woodruff, the Church submitted to those laws and discontinued the practice of plural marriage.

[See also Antipolygamy Legislation, Manifesto of 1890.]

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ROBERT E. RIGGS

RICHES OF ETERNITY

Eternal riches come from God and are associated with wisdom and eternal life: “Seek not for riches but for wisdom; and behold, the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto you, and then shall you be made rich. Behold, he that hath eternal life is rich” (D&C 11:7). Latter-day Saints believe that the “voice of glory and honor and the riches of eternal life” is one of the voices used by Jesus to gather his people (D&C 43:25) and that God adversely judges those who fail to seek earnestly the riches of eternity (D&C 68:31).

Although the phrase “the riches of eternity” occurs in scripture only in the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C 38:39; 67:2; 68:31; 78:18), the distinction between earthly and heavenly rewards is also biblical. The Psalms, for example, point out: “A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked” (Ps. 37:16). In the sermon on the mount, Jesus admonished his followers to “lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, . . . but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matt. 6:19–20). In this life and in the world to come, the richest spiritual blessings come only from the eternal God.

These spiritual blessings include tangible as well as intangible gifts, for in the Lord’s eyes “all things” are spiritual (D&C 29:34). As Orson Pratt stated, “Heavenly riches and earthy riches are of the same nature, only one is glorified and made immortal, while the other is in a fallen, unglorified state. If we are not willing to be governed by the law of equality in regard to that which is of the least value, who shall entrust us with all the riches of eternity?” (pp. 596–97).

Obtaining eternal riches can be equated with receiving and enjoying eternal life. “There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches. The ransom of a man’s life are his riches” (Prov. 13:7–8). The word “ransom” (Hebrew kefer) refers to a payment made to redeem a person, suggesting to Latter-day Saints and other Christians that genuine riches are found in Christ’s atoning redemption. Thus, Paul relates the winning of God’s riches with repentance and eternal reward (Rom. 2:4–11), as well as with wisdom and knowledge (Rom. 11:33; Eph. 1:17–19). In Ephesians, Paul links them specifically to Christ: “Unto me . . . is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ” (Eph. 3:8).

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CATHERINE CORMAN PARRY

RICHMOND JAIL

When the Latter-day Saints at Far West, Caldwell County, Missouri, surrendered to the state militia in late October 1838, seven Church leaders—Joseph Smith, Hyrum Smith, Sidney Rigdon, Parley P. Pratt, Lyman Wight, Amasa Lyman, and George W. Robinson—were arrested (see