ing was given in part to fulfill material needs and to prepare the membership of the Church to live the material aspects of the law of consecration at some future time. Tithing has variously been described as the donation of (1) a tenth of what people owned when they converted; (2) a tenth of their "increase" or income each year; and (3) one workday in ten of their labor, teams, and tools to public projects. Today, tithers pay a tenth of their "increase," or income.

Although many in the early decades of the Church were slow to obey the principle and practice of tithing, leaders continued to affirm the obligatory nature of the commandment. In January 1845 the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles under the direction of President Brigham Young issued an epistle reminding the Saints of their duty to pay tithing (HC 7:358). In 1881 obedience to the law of tithing became a requirement for temple attendance (JD 22:207–208) for those with an income. In May 1899 a manifestation was given to President Lorenzo Snow that even though the Church was beleaguered by financial difficulties, it was nonetheless bound by the law of tithing, as were its members individually, and all would be blessed materially and spiritually by heeding it (Snow, p. 439).

As with all commandments, there is a correlation between observance of the law of tithing and blessings or punishments. The promises to the obedient are great, but the revelation also warns, "It shall come to pass that all . . . shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you" (D&C 119:5). President Joseph F. Smith taught that the disobedient "have cut themselves off from the blessings of Zion," but added that the Lord will fulfill his rich promises to the faithful tithe payers of the Church (GD, pp. 225–27). "A host of testimonies might be secured of the joy in life that follows obedience to this important law of the Lord" (Widtsoe, Vol. 1, p. 228). President Heber J. Grant counseled the Church that obedience to the law of tithing provides a protective shield (D&C 64:23–24) from economic distress (pp. 59–60).

[See also Bishop, History of the Office.]

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HOWARD D. SWAINSTON

TOBACCO

Devout Latter-day Saints do not use tobacco in any of its forms. They abstain because of an 1833 revelation known as the WORD OF WISDOM, which states that tobacco is "not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man," except as a poultice for bruises and treating "all sick cattle" (D&C 89:8).

The Word of Wisdom was originally given to show the will of God, but not as a commandment. Abstinence from tobacco was expected of all fully participating Church members by the early twentieth century (see DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS: SECTION 89).

Tobacco contains nicotine, which is a cerebral and vascular stimulant. The burning of the tobacco leaf also releases and produces a large number of chemicals, many of which are absorbed by the body and are known to cause cancer and other serious diseases.

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JOSEPH LYNN LYON

TOLERANCE

The LDS principles of tolerance are rooted in the teaching that all who have lived, now live, and will yet live on this earth are spirit children of God and are responsible only to God for their religious beliefs and practices. "We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of
our own conscience,” says Article of Faith 11, “and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship, how, where or what they may.”

A corollary of this statement is a declaration of belief regarding governments and law, adopted by the Church in 1835. It affirms that governments have no power to prescribe rules of worship to bind the consciences of men or to dictate forms for public or private devotion. In matters of religion, the declaration asserts, “men are amenable to God and to Him only for the exercise of their religious beliefs, unless their religious opinions prompt them to infringe upon the rights and liberties of others” (D&C 134). The Church has maintained these principles while accommodating to secular authority: “We believe in being subject to kings, presidents, rulers, and magistrates, in obeying, honoring and sustaining the law” (A of F 12; cf. D&C 134:1–12).

Related to this is a doctrine of primordial individual freedom. For Latter-day Saints agency is indestructible. All truth is “independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also” (D&C 93:30). The individual’s freedom to search for this truth should not be contravened, and in the last analysis it cannot be. Even God cannot coerce belief. The only power justified on earth or in heaven is loving persuasion (D&C 121:41).

Intolerance often arises from sectarian conviction. But contrary to stereotypes, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is neither a sect nor a cult. It has an extensive scriptural foundation, but no formalized creeds and no closed canon. As the Prophet Joseph Smith said to Stephen A. Douglas, Latter-day Saints are “ready to believe all true principles that exist, as they are manifest from time to time” (HC 5:215). They are taught to “gather all the good and true principles in the world and treasure them up” (TPJS p. 316). Commitment to truth in this inclusive sense is commitment to the view that all philosophies, religions, and ethical systems have elements of truth and that all persons have a portion of light. This is a buttress for tolerance, good will, and fellowship on a worldwide scale (see WORLD RELIGIONS [NON-CHRISTIAN] AND MORMONISM). “If ye will not embrace our religion,” Joseph Smith said, “embrace our hospitalities” (WJS 162).

The crucial need for tolerance has been impressed upon Latter-day Saints by the buffettings, persecutions, and drovings of their own history. In various places in the world they have sometimes been denied civil and even survival rights.

The Church itself has a long history of forbearance. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “the same principle that would trample upon the rights of the Latter-day Saints would trample upon the rights of the Roman Catholics, or of any other denomination. . . . If it has been demonstrated that I have been willing to die for a Mormon I am bold to declare before heaven that I am just as ready to die for a presbyterian, a baptist or any other denomination. It is a love of liberty which inspires my soul, civil and religious liberty. . . .” He added, “If I esteem mankind to be in error shall I bear them down? No. I will lift them up and in their own way, too, if I cannot persuade them my way is better” (TPJS, p. 313).

Within the Church two principles taught by Joseph Smith have prevailed: “I teach the people correct principles and they govern themselves” (JD 10:57–58), and, “It does not prove that a man is not a good man because he errs in doctrine” (HC 5:340).

Latter-day Saints today face the challenge of being a religious majority in some areas of the world and a minority in others. Tolerance is reinforced by its converts, who come from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds and by its hundreds of thousands of returned missionaries, who have, early in their lives, learned the languages, customs, and religious concerns of multiple cultures and peoples. Today as the Church grows in Latin America, Asia, and Africa, it faces new challenges to its commitment to tolerance and goodwill.

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GEORGE ROMNEY

TOPICAL GUIDE

The Latter-day Saint edition of the Bible, first published in 1979, includes a 598-page “Topical Guide with Selected Concordance and Index.” It is designed to aid SCRIPTURE STUDY and is considered by Latter-day Saints to be a major, unique reference tool.