

4. A. Theodore Tuttle, in Conference Report, Oct. 1973, 87; or *Ensign*, Jan. 1974, 67.
5. Ezra Taft Benson, in Conference Report, Oct. 1986, 60; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 46.
6. Doctrine and Covenants 46:33.
7. Doctrine and Covenants 121:45–46.
8. Alma 13:3; see also verse 2.
9. Doctrine and Covenants 121:36.
10. Alma 23:6; see also Alma 19:16–17; 53:10–22.
11. “Rise Up, O Men of God,” *Hymns*, no. 323.
12. Alma 48:11, 13, 17.
13. In Harold B. Lee, “Be Loyal to the Royal within You,” in *Speeches of the Year: BYU Devotional and Ten-Stake Fireside Addresses 1973* (1974), 100.

Elder M. Russell Ballard

Elder Hales, on behalf of all of us, we extend our deepest love and are so grateful you are here this morning.

The importance of a name

Since last April’s general conference, my mind has repeatedly focused on the subject of the importance of a name. In these past few months, several great-grandchildren have come into our family. Although they seem to come faster than I can keep up with, each child is a welcome addition to our family. Each has received a special name chosen by his or her parents, a name to be known by throughout his or her lifetime, distinguishing him or her from anyone else. This is true in every family, and it is also true among the religions of the world.

The Lord Jesus Christ knew how important it was to clearly name His Church in these latter days. In the 115th section of the Doctrine and Covenants, He Himself named the Church: “For thus shall my church be called in the last days, even The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” (verse 4).

And King Benjamin taught his people in Book of Mormon times:

“I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives. . . .

“And I would that ye should remember also, that this is the name that I said I should give unto you that never should be blotted out, except it be through transgression; therefore, take heed that ye do not transgress, that the name be not blotted out of your hearts” (Mosiah 5:8, 11).

We take the name of Christ upon us in the waters of baptism. We renew the effect of that baptism each week as we partake of the sacrament, signifying our willingness to take His name upon us and promising always to remember Him (see D&C 20:77, 79).

Do we realize how blessed we are to take upon us the name of God’s Beloved and Only Begotten Son? Do we understand how significant that is? The Savior’s name is the only name under heaven by which man can be saved (see 2 Nephi 31:21).

As you will remember, President Boyd K. Packer discussed the importance of the name of the Church in last April’s general conference. He explained that “obedient to revelation, we call ourselves The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints rather than the Mormon Church” (in Conference Report, Apr. 2011, 28; or *Ensign*, May 2011, 30).

Because the full name of the Church is so important, I echo the revelations from the scriptures, the First Presidency’s instructions in letters of 1982 and 2001, and the words of other Apostles who have

encouraged the members of the Church to uphold and teach the world that the Church is known by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the name by which the Lord will call us at the last day. It is the name by which His Church will be distinguished from all others.

The meaning of the Church's name

I have thought a lot about why the Savior gave the nine-word name to His restored Church. It may seem long, but if we think of it as a descriptive overview of what the Church is, it suddenly becomes wonderfully brief, candid, and straightforward. How could any description be more direct and clear and yet expressed in such few words?

Every word is clarifying and indispensable. The word *The* indicates the unique position of the restored Church among the religions of the world.

The words *Church of Jesus Christ* declare that it is His Church. In the Book of Mormon, Jesus taught: "And how be it my church save it be called in my name? For if a church be called in Moses' name then it be Moses' church; or if it be called in the name of a man [like Mormon] then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel" (3 Nephi 27:8).

Of Latter-day explains that it is the same Church as the Church that Jesus Christ established during His mortal ministry but restored in these latter days. We know there was a falling away, or an apostasy, necessitating the Restoration of His true and complete Church in our time.

Saints means that its members follow Him and strive to do His will, keep His commandments, and prepare once again to live with Him and our Heavenly Father in the future. *Saint* simply refers to those who seek to make their lives holy by covenanting to follow Christ.

The name the Savior has given to His Church tells us exactly who we are and what we believe. We believe that Jesus Christ is the Savior and the Redeemer of the world. He atoned for all who would repent of their sins, and He broke the bands of death and provided the resurrection from the dead. We follow Jesus Christ. And as King Benjamin said to his people, so I reaffirm to all of us today: "Ye should remember to retain [His] name written always in your hearts" (Mosiah 5:12).

We are asked to stand as a witness of Him "at all times and in all things, and in all places" (Mosiah 18:9). This means that we must be willing to let others know whom we follow and to whose Church we belong: the Church of Jesus Christ. We certainly want to do this in the spirit of love and testimony. We want to follow the Savior by simply and clearly, yet humbly, declaring that we are members of His Church. We follow Him by being Latter-day Saints—latter-day disciples.

Nicknames of the Church

People and organizations are often given nicknames by others. A nickname may be a shortened form of a name, or it may be derived from an event or some physical or other characteristic. While nicknames do not have the same status or significance as actual names, they can be properly used.

The Lord's Church in both ancient and modern times has had nicknames. The Saints in New Testament times were called *Christians* because they professed a belief in Jesus Christ. That name, first used derogatorily by their detractors, is now a name of distinction; and we are honored to be called a Christian church.

Our members have been called *Mormons* because we believe in the Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ. Others may try to use the word *Mormon* more broadly to include and refer to those who have left the Church and

formed various splinter groups. Such use only leads to confusion. We are grateful for the efforts of the media to refrain from using the word *Mormon* in a way that may cause the public to confuse the Church with polygamists or other fundamentalist groups. Let me state clearly that no polygamist group, including those calling themselves fundamentalist Mormons or other derivatives of our name, has any affiliation whatsoever with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

While *Mormon* is not the full and correct name of the Church, and even though it was originally given by our detractors during our early years of persecution, it has become an acceptable nickname when applied to members rather than the institution. We do not need to stop using the name *Mormon* when appropriate, but we should continue to give emphasis to the full and correct name of the Church itself. In other words, we should avoid and discourage the term “Mormon Church.”

Through the years as I have filled assignments around the world, I have been asked many times if I belong to the Mormon Church. My response has been, “I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ. Because we believe in the Book of Mormon, which is named after an ancient American prophet-leader and is another testament of Jesus Christ, we are sometimes called Mormons.” In every instance this response has been well received and in fact has opened up opportunities for me to explain the Restoration of the fulness of the gospel in these latter days.

Use the full name when possible

Brothers and sisters, just think of what an impact we can have by simply responding by using the full name of the Church as the Lord has declared we should do. And if you cannot immediately use the full name, at least say, “I belong to the

Church of Jesus Christ” and later explain “of Latter-day Saints.”

Some may ask, what about the Internet sites such as Mormon.org as well as various Church-initiated media campaigns? As I said, referring collectively to members as *Mormons* is sometimes appropriate. As a practical matter, those outside of our faith come looking for us searching for that term. But once you open up Mormon.org, the proper name of the Church is explained on the home page, and it appears on each additional page on the site. It is impractical to expect people to type the full name of the Church when seeking to find us or when logging on to our website.

While these practicalities may continue, they should not keep members from using the full name of the Church whenever possible. Let us develop the habit within our families and our Church activities and our daily interactions of making it clear that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is the name by which the Lord Himself has directed that we be known.

A recent opinion poll indicated that far too many people still do not understand correctly that *Mormon* refers to members of our Church. And a majority of people are still not sure that Mormons are Christian. Even when they read of our Helping Hands work throughout the world in response to hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and famines, they do not associate our humanitarian efforts with us as a Christian organization. Surely it would be easier for them to understand that we believe in and follow the Savior if we referred to ourselves as members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In this way those who hear the name *Mormon* will come to associate that word with our revealed name and with people who follow Jesus Christ.

As the First Presidency asked in their letter of February 23, 2001: “The use of

the revealed name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints . . . , is increasingly important in our responsibility to proclaim the name of the Savior throughout all the world. Accordingly, we ask that when we refer to the Church we use its full name wherever possible.”

Back in 1948 at the October general conference, President George Albert Smith said, “Brethren and sisters, when you go away from here, you may be associating with various denominations of the world, but remember that there is only one Church in all the world that by divine command bears the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1948, 167).

Brothers and sisters, may we also remember this as we leave conference today. Let our testimonies of Him be heard and our love for Him always be in our hearts, I humbly pray in His name, the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

The choir sang “I’ll Go Where You Want Me to Go.”

President Uchtdorf

We express appreciation to those who have spoken to us this morning and to the Tabernacle Choir for the beautiful music they have provided.

It will now be our privilege to hear from President Thomas S. Monson, our beloved prophet. President Monson, we love, sustain, and pray for you and Sister Monson. Following President Monson’s remarks, the choir will sing “I Believe in Christ.” The benediction will then be offered by Elder James B. Martino of the Seventy, and the concluding session of this conference will begin at 2:00 this afternoon.

President Thomas S. Monson

My beloved brothers and sisters, we have heard fine messages this morning, and I commend each who has participated. We’re particularly delighted to have Elder Robert D. Hales with us once again and feeling improved. We love you, Bob.

Rapid change and moral decline

As I pondered what I would like to say to you this morning, I have felt impressed to share certain thoughts and feelings which I consider to be pertinent and timely. I pray that I may be guided in my remarks.

I have lived on this earth for 84 years now. To give you a little perspective, I was born the same year Charles Lindbergh flew the first solo nonstop flight from New York to Paris in a single-engine, single-seat monoplane. Much has changed during

the 84 years since then. Man has long since been to the moon and back. In fact, yesterday’s science fiction has become today’s reality. And that reality, thanks to the technology of our times, is changing so fast we can barely keep up with it—if we do at all. For those of us who remember dial telephones and manual typewriters, today’s technology is more than merely amazing.

Also evolving at a rapid rate has been the moral compass of society. Behaviors which once were considered inappropriate and immoral are now not only tolerated but also viewed by ever so many as acceptable.

I recently read in the *Wall Street Journal* an article by Jonathan Sacks, Britain’s chief rabbi. Among other things, he writes: “In virtually every Western society in the 1960s there was a moral revolution,