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James E. Talmage and the Doctrine of the Godhead

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The quest to understand God continues in the hearts and minds of people across the world. This journey spans a diversity of denominations and an assorted collection of cultures. Jesus Christ said, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent” (John 17:3). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that “it is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God” and that “if men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves.”¹ Craig L. Blomberg, a New Testament professor at Denver Seminary, wrote, “Christians have usually insisted that a correct formulation of the doctrines of God and Christ is important because the possibility of eternal life depends on it.”² For The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the effort to describe the Godhead has been a gradual process. It began when Joseph Smith entered the Sacred Grove in the spring of 1820. Subsequent leaders slowly added to Latter-day Saint understanding as it was received through revelation. Such leaders include Brigham Young, John Taylor, Orson Pratt, Wilford Woodruff, Joseph F. Smith, and many others.

This article explores the influence of Elder James E. Talmage on Latter-day Saint theology with regard to this sacred topic. It provides a brief history of LDS teachings on the subject from the time that Joseph Smith entered the Sacred Grove in 1820 until the late 1890s, when James Talmage first started writing doctrinal books at the request of the First Presidency. Elder Talmage made three major contributions from 1894 to 1916: he wrote *Articles of Faith*, *Jesus the Christ*, and the doctrinal exposition “The Father and the Son,” each in response to a specific request from the President of the Church, and each was then published under the name of the Church. James Talmage was not the only individual speaking on the topic at the time, but for the purposes of this paper, his teachings will be highlighted.

Development of the Doctrine of the Godhead in Latter-day Saint Thought

At times, there are those that stumble because of what they perceive as changes in the Church’s teachings, especially in significant areas such as the Godhead. Understanding how God reveals truth “line upon line” (Isaiah 28:10), however, prepares individuals to receive additional revelation and avoid confusion when further lines of understanding are revealed. Mormonism is based on continuous revelation. Additional revelation brings additional understanding. As such, members of the Church should anticipate supplementary revelations, which at times may refine current understanding. Elder Talmage wrote:

In view of the demonstrated facts that revelation between God and man has ever been and is a characteristic of the Church of Jesus Christ, it is reasonable to await with confident expectation the coming of other messages from heaven, even until the end of man’s probation on earth. . . . Current revelation is equally plain with that of former days in predicting the yet future manifestations of God through this appointed channel. The canon of scripture is still open; many lines, many precepts, are yet to be added; revelation, surpassing in importance and glorious fulness any that has been recorded, is yet to be given to the Church and declared to the world.³

In a 1932 letter to Leland E. Anderson, Elder Talmage explained his personal view on continuous revelation: “The revelation of fundamental truths through the prophets is progressive and additional light is given through successive revelations.”⁴ President Joseph F. Smith said, “It seems to me that it would be a very sad comment upon the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and her people to suppose for a moment that we are at a standstill, that we have ceased to grow, ceased to improve and to advance in the scale

of intelligence.”⁵ In his own day, the Prophet Joseph Smith tried to prepare the Church—and its critics—for the eventual addition of more scripture and greater understanding. He told his attorney, “The Latter-day Saints have no creed, but are ready to believe all true principles that exist, as they are made manifest from time to time.”⁶ The Church’s teachings about the Godhead have expanded since the death of Joseph Smith. This is not only a fulfillment of these words but also is in line with the established pattern of revelation set forth in sacred scripture.

The Church did not break away from an existing religion. The doctrinal restoration in this, the last dispensation, was placed in new bottles (see Mark 2:22). Latter-day Saint leaders received the doctrines according to the Lord’s timing. Robert L. Millet noted that “a moment’s reflection suggests that there would have been very little Mormon doctrine”⁷ when Joseph Smith organized the Church in 1830. In the very early days of the Church, it is easier to identify what Mormons did not believe than what they did believe. The same can be said of early Christianity.⁸ Each additional revelation or discourse dealing with doctrine at this time was, in essence, an expansion on Latter-day Saint thought and a new layer on the doctrinal foundation.

Joseph Smith and the First Vision

The seeds of Latter-day Saint understanding about the Godhead were planted in 1820 in the Sacred Grove. From that experience, Joseph Smith learned “that not all truth [was contained] in the Bible.”⁹ Joseph learned—among other things—that God the Father and Jesus Christ are two distinct personages and that man was created in the express image of God (see Joseph Smith—History 1:15–19). This singular experience started Joseph Smith down a path that would lead him and the Latter-day Saints away from traditional Trinitarian doctrine. In 1844, he said, “I have always declared God to be a distinct personage, Jesus Christ a separate and distinct personage from God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost was a distinct personage and a Spirit: and these three constitute three distinct personages and three Gods.”¹⁰ Following the First Vision, Joseph Smith was left to wait “until further directed” (Joseph Smith—History 1:26). Knowledge and understanding would come in God’s time. The boy Joseph Smith became the Prophet Joseph Smith “grace for grace” (D&C 93:12), “precept upon precept,” “line upon line” (Isaiah 28:10), and revelation by revelation. Similar to the Prophet Joseph Smith, the Church did not

receive all understanding at once, but progressed one revelation at a time as the prophets have received them from God and according to his timing.

A close study of the Latter-day Saint beliefs early in the history of the Church uncovers a doctrinal migration from beliefs held by other denominations in the early nineteenth century. Combine the integration of people from different religious backgrounds with a lack of a professional clergy and no established creed; the result is a slow acclimation to new doctrine. There were no seminaries or missionary training centers to train and indoctrinate those that would fill the leadership positions in the Church. Beliefs and practices from previous religious backgrounds continued with the convert after baptism until they were addressed and corrected. Leman Copley is a great case study of this phenomenon. In March of 1831, Joseph Smith wrote, "At about this time came Leman Copley, one of the sect called Shaking Quakers, and embraced the fulness of the everlasting Gospel, apparently honest-hearted, but still retaining the idea that the Shakers were right in some particulars of their faith."¹¹ Joseph Smith corrected Leman's beliefs and instructed him on topics such as the eternal nature of Christ, the Second Coming, baptism, and eating habits (see D&C 49). Leman's migration, unfortunately, ended prematurely, as he returned to his previous faith and never came back to the Church.

A successful example of this doctrinal migration from previously held beliefs was the adoption of doctrines in Doctrine and Covenants 76. Brigham Young wrote, "My traditions were such, that when the Vision came first to me, it was so directly contrary and opposed to my former education, I said, wait a little; I did not reject it, but I could not understand it."¹² Every convert, similar to Brigham Young, brought previous traditions and experiences that all influenced the conversion process.¹³ Nobody converted to the Church with a clean slate. In the introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord said, "These commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding. And inasmuch as they erred it might be made known" (D&C 1:24–25). Weaknesses and errors included false traditions and beliefs that men learned and accepted before finding the fullness of the gospel.

The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible

In discussing the theological education of Joseph Smith, one cannot ignore the vital role of the Joseph Smith Translation (JST) of the Bible. In June 1830, Joseph Smith recorded the first addition to the Bible. The process of

translating the Bible was unique in comparison to what we typically consider “translating.” It was not a process of revealing new scripture from ancient texts; rather, the King James Version (KJV) was already in English and in the hands of the people in Joseph Smith’s day.¹⁴ The effort served multiple purposes. For example, it helped clarify what was already available. Over and beyond simple clarifications, the JST corrected and added to the KJV. Robert J. Matthews wrote, “There is no substantive difference between the revelations in the Doctrine and Covenants and the revelations in the Joseph Smith Translation, even though the latter are labeled a ‘translation.’ They are a ‘translation’ in the sense of being a clarification or restoration of a text, but not in the usual sense in which the word *translation* is used, meaning the rendering of a subject from one language to another.”¹⁵ This clarifying process served as a filter and a teacher for the Prophet Joseph Smith in that it corrected erroneous theological ideas that he may have accepted as true earlier in life while attending religious meetings of other faiths. Andrew C. Skinner said, “The translation . . . was a major means of educating the Prophet—so that more doctrine could be restored. . . . The Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible was a catalyst for, and the seed-bed of, other major revelations and doctrines.”¹⁶

Among the changes in the Bible, many dealt with the Godhead. Consider the following verses: Exodus 33:20; John 1:18; and 1 John 4:12. These verses describe man as incapable of ever beholding his Creator or of enduring his presence. The KJV of Exodus 33:20, for example, reads, “And [Jehovah] said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.” Joseph Smith had learned, by his own experience, that these verses were not accurate. Seeing God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, was not impossible. The JST adds the following clarification: “And [Jehovah] said unto Moses, Thou canst not see my face at this time, least mine anger is kindled against thee also, and I distroy thee, and thy people; for there shall no man among them see me at this time and live, for they are exceding sinful, and no sinful man hath at any time, neither shall there be any sinful man at any time that shall see my face and live.”¹⁷ Through the translation process, Joseph Smith became familiar with other truths regarding the Godhead, such as the corporeal nature of the Father and the mission of Jesus Christ.

The Lectures on Faith and the Godhead

The Godhead was the focus of a lecture in *Lectures on Faith*. The fifth lecture reads, “There are two personages who constitute the great, matchless,

governing, and supreme power over all things. . . . They are the Father and the Son—the Father being a personage of spirit, glory, and power, possessing all perfection and fullness, the Son, who was in the bosom of the Father, a personage of tabernacle, made or fashioned like unto man.”¹⁸ Some have suggested that this passage conflicts with the 1843 revelation that declared God the Father to be a being of flesh and bone (see D&C 130:22). Noel B. Reynolds, a former president of FARMS, pointed out that this conflict has “often been associated with the 1921 decision to delete the lectures from the Doctrine and Covenants.”¹⁹ Joseph Fielding Smith, however, stated that the lectures were removed not due to any false doctrines but because they were not revelations to the Prophet Joseph Smith. The lectures were merely helps that accented the actual revelations. The leaders of the Church, however, never intended the lectures to be considered equal to the revelations themselves.²⁰

Elder Bruce R. McConkie addressed the conflict in *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*. After quoting the above text from the fifth lecture, Elder McConkie stated: “[The Father and the Son] are exalted men. Each is a personage of spirit; each is a personage of tabernacle. Both of them have bodies, tangible bodies of flesh and bones. They are resurrected beings. Words, with their finite connotations, cannot fully describe them. A personage of tabernacle, as here used, is one whose body and spirit are inseparably connected and for whom there can be no death. A personage of spirit, as here used and as distinguished from the spirit children of the Father, is a resurrected personage. Resurrected bodies, as contrasted with mortal bodies, are in fact spiritual bodies.”²¹ Elder McConkie then quoted 1 Corinthians 15:44 and D&C 88:27 as scriptural usage of the term “spiritual” in reference to a resurrected body.

On April 2, 1843, Joseph Smith revealed what became the canonized declaration regarding the corporeal nature of God. “The Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man’s; the Son also; but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of Spirit” (D&C 130:22). This revelation clearly separated the Latter-day Saints from more traditional Trinitarian religions. Subsequent teachings have continued to affirm the Latter-day Saint theology that God the Father and Jesus Christ are immortal beings with bodies of flesh and bone. Brigham Young said, “Our God and Father in Heaven, is a being of tabernacle, or, in other words, he has a body, with parts the same as you and I have. . . . His Son Jesus Christ has become a personage of tabernacle, and has a body like his Father.”²² Parley P. Pratt, one of the original members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, taught that

both the Father and the Son possess “a perfect organization of spirit, flesh, and bones.”²³

The Roles of Jesus Christ in the Early Church

The title page of the Book of Mormon states that its purpose is to convince the children of God that “Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God.” The Book of Mormon prophet Abinadi said, “God himself shall come down among the children of men, and shall redeem his people” (Mosiah 15:1). The record of John the Beloved notes, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:1). Jesus Christ declared to Joseph Smith on May 6, 1833, that the “Word” in these verses referred to the Son of God (see D&C 93:6–8). For Latter-day Saints, these verses establish a separation between God the Father and the Word. John Taylor said, “If, as stated, Jesus was with the Father in the beginning, there certainly was more than God—God the Father, and God the Son.”²⁴

Brigham Young taught that Jesus Christ was “appointed, from the beginning, to die for our redemption, and he suffered an excruciating death on the cross.”²⁵ The idea that Christ was “appointed” to perform the Atonement suggests a power, or an authority above himself, in the premortal existence. The situation of mankind following the Fall required a power above his own in order to be elevated back to the presence of God. Joseph Smith, speaking of the fallen state of mankind, said, “That man was not able himself to erect a system, or plan with power sufficient to free him from a destruction which awaited him, is evident from the fact that God, as before remarked, prepared a sacrifice in the gift of His own Son who should be sent in due time, to prepare a way, or open a door through which man might enter into the Lord’s presence, whence he had been cast out for disobedience.”²⁶ Jesus Christ was sent to earth by the Father to counteract the consequences of the Fall. “For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive” (1 Corinthians 15:21–22). Brigham Young and Willard Richards wrote an article in the *Millennial Star* that Joseph Smith referred to as “one of the sweetest pieces that has been written in these last days.”²⁷ In that article, the authors stated that God the Father had “ordained [Christ] to the work of creating the world and all things upon it.”²⁸ This statement again suggests the Father’s authority over the Son and the Son’s humility in accepting the Father’s will.

When the Savior visited the Nephites in the Western hemisphere, he said, “I . . . have glorified the Father in taking upon me the sins of the world, in the which I have suffered the will of the Father in all things from the beginning” (3 Nephi 11:11). In March 1830, the Savior revealed his own first-person account of what happened in the Garden of Gethsemane: “For behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; But if they would not repent they must suffer even as I; which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men” (D&C 19:16–19).

Jesus Christ will be responsible for the judgment of all mankind. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son” (John 5:22). John Taylor, third President of the Church, declared, “We may here state that Christ is called the judge of the quick and the dead, the judge of all the earth.”²⁹ Another important role of Jesus Christ is that of Creator. This topic alone could fill volumes. The attempt to encapsulate the mission of the Savior in one article is impossible. For the purpose of this article, it is sufficient to point out that early in the history of the Church, the leaders began to solidify the Church’s doctrinal position as they declared and then expounded on the many roles of Jesus Christ in the Father’s plan to exalt his children.

Distinct Roles of Father and Son

The clarification between the Father and the Son was one of the doctrinal pieces that took the longest to fall into place for the Latter-day Saints. This may be because it is through those roles that God interacts with men. The intimate nature of those interactions can make it difficult to let go of previous traditions and beliefs. Brigham Young described how difficult it was to accept the revelation known as Doctrine and Covenants 76. “It was a great trial to many, and some apostatized because God was not going to send to everlasting punishment heathens and infants, but had a place of salvation, in due time, for all, and would bless the honest and virtuous and truthful, whether they ever belonged to any church or not. It was a new doctrine to this generation, and many stumbled at it.”³⁰ Although Brigham Young’s comment deals with a different subject—the three degrees of glory—it provides an insight to the

difficult nature of letting go of previous religious understanding in the face of new insights.

When people misunderstand accurate revelations, they can also be held back from accepting additional revelation. Scriptures in the Book of Mormon, for example, can confuse a reader about the identity of the Father and the Son. “And because he dwelleth in flesh he shall be called the Son of God, and having subjected the flesh to the will of the Father, being the Father and the Son—the Father, because he was conceived by the power of God; and the Son, because of the flesh; thus becoming the Father and Son—and they are one God, yea, the very Eternal Father of heaven and of earth” (Mosiah 15:2–4). Professor Craig Blomberg was surprised when he read the Book of Mormon for the first time. He said that he “found more instances of seemingly clear trinitarian language in the Book of Mormon than in the Old and New Testaments put together.”³¹ If a scholar as notable as Professor Blomberg interprets the Book of Mormon as Trinitarian, what can be said for lay members of the Church in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries?

At times, even the leaders of the Church intermingled the titles and roles of the Father and the Son. Joseph Smith, for example, wrote, “O Thou who seest and knowest the hearts of all men—Thou eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent Jehovah—God—Thou Eloheim.”³² Elder Franklin D. Richards taught, “The Savior said He could call to His help more than twelve legions of angels; more than the Roman hosts; but He knowing the great purposes of Jehovah could go like a lamb to the slaughter.”³³ Brigham Young and Willard Richards wrote, “The Lord (Jehovah) hath spoken through Isa. (42, 1) saying, behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; evidently referring to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God chosen or elected by the Father.”³⁴

President Wilford Woodruff commented on questions being sent to his office related to the Godhead. He said the following in general conference in 1895:

Cease troubling yourselves about who God is; who Adam is, who Christ is, who Jehovah is. For heaven's sake, let these things alone. Why trouble yourselves with these things? God has revealed Himself, and when the 121st section of the Doctrine and Covenants is fulfilled, whether there be one God or many gods they will be revealed to the children of men, as well as all thrones and dominions, principalities, and powers. Then why trouble yourselves about these things? God is God. Christ is Christ. The Holy Ghost is the Holy Ghost. That should be enough for you and me to know. If we want to know any more, wait till we get where God is in person. . . . The Lord is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He changes not. The Son of

God is the same. He is the Savior of the world. He is our advocate with the Father. We have had letter after letter from Elders abroad wanting to know concerning these things. . . . God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, are the same yesterday, to-day and forever. That should be sufficient for us to know.³⁵

James R. Clark wrote, “It is always dangerous to try to ‘second guess’ circumstances in the absence of direct evidence. . . . Revelation from God is not established or justified by human reason, but explanation of possible circumstances is sometimes helpful in understanding it.”³⁶ Clark suggested that misunderstandings regarding the Church’s doctrine on the Godhead might have also encouraged attacks from other faiths. In an attempt to correct these misunderstandings, the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve issued the document “The Father and the Son.” President Joseph F. Smith and Charles Penrose, member of the First Presidency, both alluded to questions being sent to the Church leaders regarding the topic of the Godhead in the April 1916 general conference, just four months before “The Father and the Son” was printed in the *Deseret News*. President Penrose stated, “I am sorry that has not been rectified long ago, because plain answers have been given to brethren and sisters who write and desire to know about it, and yet it still lingers, and contentions arise in regard to it.”³⁷ The focus of President Penrose’s talk was the distinct roles and personages of God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Ghost, and Adam. This talk seemed to be the perfect preface to the document “The Father and the Son,” which focused specifically on the second member of the Godhead, Jesus Christ.

The Important Role of James E. Talmage

In the early twentieth century, President Joseph F. Smith became concerned over the lack of clarity concerning the Latter-day Saint concept of the Godhead and specifically the Only Begotten Son. Seeking to bring light to the issue, he enlisted the aid of James E. Talmage. The following sections summarize how Elder Talmage helped clarify Church doctrine regarding the Godhead at the request of the First Presidency.

Some have asserted that early Mormon theology on the Godhead was basically Trinitarian and that Elder Talmage’s work effectively gave birth to a new Mormonism.³⁸ This claim overlooks what was being taught as early as 1836 in Kirtland, Ohio. Reverend Truman Coe wrote an article to the editor of *The Ohio Observer* in 1836, in which he reported that Joseph Smith was teaching that God was a “material being, composed of body and parts;



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Elder Talmage affirmed what the Prophet Joseph Smith had already taught: both the Father and the Son have bodies of flesh and bone while the Spirit “is a personage of spirit.”

and that when the Creator formed Adam in His own image, he made him about the same size and shape of God himself.”³⁹ These teachings would have raised the hair on the neck of any man from an orthodox Trinitarian background. Strict Trinitarians from past centuries would have raised a cry of heresy against the Prophet Joseph Smith as early as 1820, but by the 1836 Kirtland period, they would have branded him a heretic and exiled him from the churches of their day.

It should be recognized, however, that even though Talmage was not the creator of a new religion, he did play a critical role in defining and clarifying the nature of the Godhead in Mormon theology through his writings and teachings. At the request of the First Presidency, and under their supervision, James E. Talmage authored four books that were published by the Church, from 1899 to 1915. Two of those books dealt, at least in part, with the basic doctrines of the Church: *Articles of Faith* and *Jesus the Christ*. The initial request for Talmage to write a theological book came from President Wilford Woodruff in 1891. Talmage recorded a summary of a meeting between himself and President Woodruff. He wrote, “It is the intention of the brethren to cause to be published a class work in Theology for use in Church schools, and in Religion classes generally. The need of such a work has long been felt among the teachers of the Latter-day Saints. . . . Several preliminaries have to be arranged before the work is begun; but the First Presidency have expressed to me their intention of appointing me to do the labor.”⁴⁰ Two years later the official request came signed by Wilford Woodruff and Joseph F. Smith, the second counselor in the First Presidency (George Q. Cannon was out of the state). “It is our desire that a book suitable for the purposes named should be placed in the hands of our people as soon as possible. Knowing your experience in this direction we should be pleased to have you prepare such a work.”⁴¹

Talmage suggested that a theology class be offered as a way of organizing and preparing the foundation for such a book. Following several delays, the class was organized and finally offered on the campus of the Church University. The first class was held on October 29, 1893. A month later, the First Presidency requested that classes be printed in full in the *Juvenile Instructor*. Because it was going to be printed, Talmage requested that the First Presidency form a committee to advise him throughout the writing process. The committee consisted of Francis M. Lyman and Abraham H. Cannon of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, President George Reynolds and Elder John Nicholson of the First Council of the Seventy, and Karl G. Maeser. Often

the committee would meet with the First Presidency to council on doctrinal matters. In one instance when James was performing ordinances for the dead in the Salt Lake Temple with his wife, May, he was summoned to a committee meeting that lasted several hours. Following additional meetings among the Quorum of the Twelve, a member of that quorum authorized Talmage to declare what he had written as official doctrine in an upcoming class.⁴²

The class was held only through April 1894, due to James Talmage's appointment as president of the University of Utah—it was seen as improper for Talmage to be directing the affairs of the nonsectarian state-funded school and teaching the sectarian theological courses concurrently. Although the class was short-lived, it gave James Talmage the basis for the book the First Presidency had asked him to write. It was finally prepared and printed in 1899. At the time of completion the First Presidency suggested that the Church, rather than Talmage as an individual author, take responsibility for the publication.

Jesus the Christ had very similar beginnings, only in reverse order. In 1904, Talmage began a series of lectures that focused on the life of Jesus Christ. In the summer of 1905, Joseph F. Smith, as President of the Church, contacted Talmage regarding the possibility of turning the lectures into a book that would be made available to the Church in general. The organizing process began, but its progress was impeded by several interruptions including a subpoena to testify in Washington at the Reed Smoot trials. Talmage had started a private consulting practice around May 1900, and by 1905 his business occupied much of his time. More than once, he requested that the First Presidency accept his resignation from the Deseret Professorship of Geology at the University of Utah.⁴³ His initial requests were denied until, finally, in 1907 the First Presidency granted him permission to resign from the university so that he could make consulting a full-time job. The career expanded very quickly once Talmage was able to give it his primary attention, and it was not long before he was making regular trips to Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and even Oregon to visit mines, investigate smelters, or testify in courtrooms.⁴⁴

James E. Talmage was called into the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles in 1911, and in 1914 he was asked to finish the book “with as little delay as possible.”⁴⁵ The book was finished in a matter of only seven months and five days. Elder Talmage was able to accomplish the feat largely because the preparation work was already in place and the First Presidency provided him with a room in the Salt Lake Temple where he could write hidden from the

normal interruptions of his office. There have been rumors over the years that Elder Talmage slept in the temple while writing the book. These, however, are not accurate. Elder Talmage returned home each night, albeit at a late hour.⁴⁶

President Lorenzo Snow felt a strong desire that the general members of the Church make a serious effort to study *Articles of Faith*. When it was published, he published the following announcement in the *Deseret Evening News*:

During the early part of April there will be issued by the Deseret News a Church work, entitled "The Articles of Faith," the same being a series of lectures on the principal doctrines of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, by Dr. James E. Talmage. The lectures were prepared by appointment of the First Presidency, and the book will be published by the Church. It is intended for use as a text book in Church schools, Sunday schools, [Mutual] Improvement associations, quorums of the Priesthood, and other Church organizations in which the study of Theology is pursued, and also for individual use among the members of the Church. The work has been approved by the First Presidency, and I heartily commend it to the members of the Church.⁴⁷

Joseph F. Smith published a similar request when *Jesus the Christ* was published. He wrote, "We desire that the work, 'Jesus The Christ' be read and studied by the Latter-day Saints, in their families, and in the organizations that are devoted wholly or in part to theological study. We commend it especially for use in our Church schools, as also for the advanced theological classes in Sunday schools and priesthood quorums for the instruction of our missionaries, and for general reading."⁴⁸ According to Elder Talmage, when *Jesus the Christ* was published, there was an increased attention given to the life of the Savior. Following its publication, James wrote in his journal, "The interest manifest by our people in the study of the life of the Savior is one of the most gratifying evidences of the blessing of the Lord attending our recent publication."⁴⁹

In these books, Talmage began to clearly distinguish between the personages of the Godhead. "The scriptures specify three personages in the Godhead; (1) God the Eternal Father, (2) His Son Jesus Christ, and (3) the Holy Ghost. These constitute the Holy Trinity, comprizing three physically separate and distinct individuals, who together constitute the presiding council of the heavens."⁵⁰ In *Articles of Faith*, James Talmage affirmed what the Prophet Joseph Smith and others had already taught: both the Father and the Son have bodies of flesh and bone while the Spirit "is not tabernacled in a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of spirit; yet we know that the Spirit has manifested Himself in the form of a man."⁵¹ This was not an

attempt to downplay the unity of the Godhead. Talmage emphasized that the scriptures touching on the oneness of the Godhead were accurate. Such scriptures were simply misapplied, or overemphasized by other teachers of religion. The unity of the Godhead should not be interpreted, according to Talmage, as a unity in person. Rather, the unity is better described as “a type of completeness.”⁵²

The Teachings of James Talmage

Elder Talmage distinguished between the Father and the Son when he wrote, “*Elohim*, as understood and used in the restored Church of Jesus Christ, is the name-title of God the Eternal Father, whose firstborn Son in the spirit is *Jehovah*—the Only Begotten in the flesh, Jesus Christ.” Talmage continued, “During the antemortal period there was essential difference between the Father and the Son, in that the former had already passed through the experiences of mortal life, including death and resurrection, and was therefore a Being possessed of a perfect, immortalized body of flesh and bones, while the Son was yet unembodied.”⁵³ While emphasizing the distinction, Elder Talmage remained constant to explain the unity in the Godhead as described in the scriptures.

The Godhead is a type of unity in the attributes, powers, and purposes of its members. . . . This unity is a type of completeness; the mind of any one member of the Trinity is the mind of the others; seeing as each of them does with the eye of perfection, they see and understand alike. Under any given conditions each would act in the same way, guided by the same principles of unerring justice and equity. The one-ness of the Godhead, to which the scriptures so abundantly testify, implies no mystical union of substance, nor any unnatural and therefore impossible blending of personality. Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are as distinct in their persons and individualities as are any three personages in mortality. Yet their unity of purpose and operation is such as to make their edicts one, and their will the will of God.⁵⁴

According to Elder Talmage, even the titles given to Jesus Christ in the scriptures were significant and pointed to his premortal divinity.

In the nomenclature of the Gods every name is a title of power or station. God is righteously zealous of the sanctity of His own name and of names given by His appointment. . . . Jesus is the individual name of the Savior, and as thus spelled is of Greek derivation. . . . In the original the name was well understood as meaning “Help of Jehovah” or “Savior.” Though as common an appellation as John or Henry or Charles today, the name was nevertheless divinely prescribed, as already stated. . . . *Christ* is a sacred title, and not an ordinary appellation or common name; it is of Greek derivation, and in meaning is identical with its Hebrew equivalent *Messiah*

or *Messias*, signifying the *Anointed One*. Other titles, each possessing a definitive meaning, such as *Emmanuel*, *Savior*, *Redeemer*, *Only Begotten Son*, *Lord*, *Son of God*, *Son of Man*, and many more, are of scriptural occurrence; the fact of main present importance to us is that these several titles are expressive of our Lord's divine origin and Godship.⁵⁵

The book *Jesus the Christ* points to the experiences of the Messiah's life as testimony of his divinity and his role in the plan of salvation. Miracle after miracle testified of Christ's command over the elements of the earth and even over the spirits of men and demons. In reference to the experience of calming the sea, Elder Talmage wrote, "The Lord of earth, air, and sea spoke and was obeyed. He it was who, amidst the black chaos of creation's earliest stages, had commanded with immediate effect—Let there be light; Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters; Let the dry land appear—and, as He had decreed, so it was."⁵⁶

Jehovah, the Creator of the world, willingly accepted the appointment to come to earth and voluntarily sacrificed his own life so that mankind might, if they followed the steps outlined for them by prophets and apostles, return to live with, and become like, their spirit Father, following their days of probation. All men "have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). The only possible avenue for men and women to escape this fallen state is to understand and rely on the Atonement and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The need of a Redeemer lies in the inability of man to raise himself from the temporal to the spiritual plane, from the lower kingdom to the higher."⁵⁷

"The atonement, as wrought out by Jesus Christ, further signifies that He has opened up the way for man's redemption from his own sins, through faith in Christ's sufferings, death, and resurrection."⁵⁸ This path was opened for man when Christ traveled the path through Gethsemane to Calvary and on to the empty garden tomb. To emphasize the importance of the events on Calvary, James Talmage said, "It seems, that in addition to the fearful suffering incident to crucifixion, the agony of Gethsemane had recurred, intensified beyond human power to endure. In that bitterest hour the dying Christ was alone, alone in most terrible reality."⁵⁹ That experience, taken together with what happened before in Gethsemane and all that was to follow in the approaching hours and days, opened the door to exaltation for all mankind.

Like the Savior, the Holy Ghost is given different titles in holy writ: "The term Holy Ghost and its common synonyms, Spirit of God, Spirit of the Lord, or simply, Spirit, Comforter, and Spirit of Truth, occur in the scriptures

with plainly different meanings, referring in some cases to the person of God the Holy Ghost, and in other instances to the power or authority of this great Personage, or to the agencies through which He ministers.”⁶⁰ The influence or power of the Holy Ghost that men and women experience is not actually the Holy Ghost any more “than the light and heat and actinic energy of the sun are the sun itself.”⁶¹ Failure to make this distinction of person and power leads to most of the misunderstandings regarding the third member of the Godhead. The Holy Ghost is sent forth from the Father to his children in order to bring them to Christ. The Spirit will teach, minister, console, guide, testify, command, commission, reprove, and speak in order to accomplish this mission.⁶² Talmage referred to the Holy Ghost as “the minister of the Godhead, carrying into effect the decision of the Supreme Council.”⁶³ In carrying out the various activities associated with his mission, the Holy Ghost has at his disposal the use of the different forces of nature, including but not limited to gravity, heat, light, air, and electricity.

“The Father and the Son”

Even with the combined efforts of Elder Talmage and other members of the governing quorums of the Church, the First Presidency continued to receive letters asking for clarification regarding the Godhead. The First Presidency felt it was necessary to officially address the role of Jesus Christ—specifically with regard to his titles “Father” and “Son.” James E. Talmage mentioned in his journals meeting with the First Presidency on multiple occasions throughout his life. He did not, however, make it a habit of recording the purpose of those meetings. Several such meetings took place between April and June of 1916. On June 14, for example, Talmage recorded, “Yesterday and today I have been engaged in the President’s office a good portion of the time.”⁶⁴ His membership in the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles may explain the meetings, and they could have touched on any number of topics. On June 23, 1916, however, Talmage recorded, “I . . . had an interview with the First Presidency and presented to them an outline for proposed publication relating to the status of Jesus Christ as both the Father and the Son.”⁶⁵ It is likely that in at least some of the meetings held before June 23 the First Presidency addressed the need for the article, extended the assignment, and provided input as to what it should include.

In July 1916, the First Presidency published the document titled “The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by the First Presidency and the

Twelve.” The purpose of the document was twofold: first, it clearly—and more importantly, officially—distinguished between the personages Elohim and Jehovah and permanently established the use of these name-titles within the Church. Second, the document addressed the status of Jesus Christ as both the Father and the Son as found in the Book of Mormon. According to James R. Clark, the secretaries or recorders for the First Presidency did not mention the document in any of the official minutes of the First Presidency meetings.⁶⁶ The conversations related to the publishing of the article and its contents may have been done in private or less formal meetings. It is clear from Elder Talmage’s journal that the First Presidency reviewed the document at least once and offered suggestions before Talmage sent the final draft to print. Unfortunately, there is no indication as to what alterations or feedback the First Presidency offered in the June 23 meeting. Seven days later, the final document was printed in the *Deseret News*. Elder Talmage felt that the document was significant enough to include in the notes section of the 1924 edition of *Articles of Faith*.

The second purpose of the document was to clarify why Jesus Christ can be referred to as both “Father” and “Son” in the Book of Mormon, while maintaining a separation between Elohim and Jehovah. In Ether 3:14, for example, Jehovah said, “Behold, I am Jesus Christ. I am the Father and the Son.” The document declared that the word “father,” as it is used in reference to God the Father, or Elohim, pertains to his being a literal parent. “God the Eternal Father, whom we designate by the exalted name-title ‘Elohim,’ is the literal Parent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and of the spirits of the human race.”⁶⁷ In this sense, it is clearly acceptable to refer to Jesus Christ as the Son of God, being both spiritually and physically begotten of the Father. Nevertheless, there are scriptures that use the word “father” but have no reference to literal sireship. Ether 4:7, for example, reads, “Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of the heaven and of the earth, and all things that in them are.” This verse can in no way imply that Jesus Christ was the *literal* parent of the heavens.

“The term ‘Father’ as applied to Deity occurs in sacred writ with plainly different meanings.”⁶⁸ The leaders of the Church asserted three reasons why Jesus Christ is qualified for the title of “Father.” First, Christ is qualified to bear the title of Father because of his role as the Creator. “He shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning” (Mosiah 3:8). This is the same logic that

allows us to refer to George Washington as the father of the United States. Paul wrote to the Hebrews, “God . . . hath . . . spoken unto us by his Son . . . by whom also he made the worlds” (Hebrews 1:1–2). Christ was the Creator, and “since His creations are of eternal quality He is very properly called the Eternal Father of heaven and earth.”⁶⁹

Another reason that Christ can be called Father is because of his role as Savior. Through the Atonement, Jesus Christ becomes the Father of mankind’s spiritual rebirth. “Even so will I give unto as many as will receive me, power to become my sons” (D&C 39:4). When Christ spoke to Nicodemus about baptism, he used the analogy of being reborn. Through that sacred ordinance, the literal spiritual offspring of Elohim become symbolically reborn. Christ is the author, or father, of the covenant which Elohim’s children must enter in order to receive a celestial glory (see 2 Nephi 31). In this sense, yet tragic in its contrast, Satan is also called “father” because all who do not follow Christ will become the children of the devil (see Matthew 13:38). “Thus Satan is designated as the father of the wicked, though we cannot assume any personal relationship of parent and children as existing between him and them.”⁷⁰ In Noah’s day, the Lord gave the people an opportunity to become his spiritually begotten children through covenants and subsequent obedience. They chose disobedience and, as a result, the Lord declared, “Satan shall be their father” (Moses 7:37). The choice between good and evil is not so much a choice about what to do as it is what to become, or who to become like: the Savior or Satan. In this spiritual sense, God’s children decide who will become their father when they choose between obedience and disobedience.

“[Another] reason for applying the title ‘Father’ to Jesus Christ is found in the fact that in all His dealings with the human family Jesus the Son has represented and yet represents Elohim His Father in power and authority.”⁷¹ This permission to speak as though he were Elohim is called divine investiture of authority. It permits one to deliver a message as though he were the actual author of the message, using words such as “I” and “mine” rather than “his.” This was the case when Jehovah appeared to Moses and declared, “Thou art in the similitude of mine Only Begotten; and mine Only Begotten is and shall be the Savior” (Moses 1:6) and “by the Son I created them, which is mine Only Begotten” (Moses 1:33). These scriptures are easily misunderstood because Jehovah is speaking in the place of Elohim and, therefore, references to himself are in the third person. Christ is not the only being given the authority to speak in the name of another. Angels have, at times, also been

given similar status when directing or speaking to Heavenly Father's children. An angel, sent by the Lord, visited John the Revelator to give him the vision that became the book of Revelation in the New Testament. As John was about to worship the angel, the angel said, "See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God" (Revelation 22:9). Then, speaking for the Lord, the angel said, "And, behold, *I* come quickly; and *my* reward is with *me*, to give every man according as his work shall be. *I* am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Revelation 22:12–13; emphasis added). Talmage explained that the Savior "had placed His name upon the angel sent to John, and the angel spoke in first person . . . though he meant that Jesus Christ would come, and that Jesus Christ was Alpha and Omega."⁷²

The significance of the document cannot be taken too lightly. It was a major step toward clarifying the Church's official stand on the Godhead. The general membership of the Church finally had an official statement that distinguished between Elohim and Jehovah and then detailed the role of the Savior as the Father of the new and everlasting covenant and explained scriptural passages that had gone relatively unexplained since the publication of the Book of Mormon over eighty years earlier. It stands as yet another evidence of how God works "line upon line" (Isaiah 28:10).

Concerning his own role in the process, Talmage held that he was an instrument in the hands of those whom the Lord had placed at the head of the Church. He would refute any suggestion that he had rewritten or changed the teachings of the early leaders of the Church. His teachings were applied to the foundation left by Joseph Smith and other leaders. The publisher's preface to *Jesus the Christ* states, "There is abundant evidence in the notes at the end of each chapter of the completed volume that Elder Talmage drew inspiration from all the standard works of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and from such Latter-day writers as the Prophet Joseph Smith, President John Taylor, and Elder Franklin D. Richards."⁷³ He was an instrument in the hands of the Lord as the fullness of the gospel was unrolled to the Church.

Latter-day Saints have the fulness of the gospel, but that should not be equated with having a full knowledge of all things. Revelations yet to come will shed light on topics that to this point have been kept from the Church. Some of those revelations will likely provide even more insights related to the Godhead. James Talmage discussed the Holy Ghost with the committee that

was formed to help with his theological class, which was meant to prepare the text for *Articles of Faith*. Talmage recorded President George Q. Cannon's thoughts on the subject: "Pres. Cannon in commenting on the ambiguity existing in our printed works concerning the nature or character of the Holy Ghost expressed his opinion that the Holy Ghost was in reality a person, in the image of the other members of the Godhead—a man in form and figure: and that what we often speak of as the Holy Ghost is in reality but the power or influence of the Spirit. However the Presidency deemed it wise to say as little as possible on this as on other disputed subjects."⁷⁴

Leaders of the Church have always understood that God does not reveal all things at once. Eventually, the day will come when men have all things given to them in full, but it will be in the Lord's time and in the Lord's way. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught that men would never understand such things "unless it is given by the inspiration of the Almighty."⁷⁵ Latter-day Saints should be looking forward to the day when additional scripture is revealed. Elder Neal A. Maxwell said, "The day will come . . . when we will have other books of scripture which will emerge to accompany the Holy Bible and the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants and the Pearl of Great Price. Presently you and I carry our scriptures around in a 'quad'; the day will come when you'll need a little red wagon."⁷⁶

In 1915, Elder James Talmage wrote in *Jesus the Christ*, "Unto Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses the Father revealed Himself, attesting the Godship of the Christ, and the fact that the Son was the chosen Savior of mankind."⁷⁷ Talmage referenced Moses 1:6 as the scriptural account of the Father appearing unto Moses. Since then, President Joseph Fielding Smith taught, "All revelation since the fall has come through Jesus Christ, who is the Jehovah of the Old Testament. In all of the scriptures, where God is mentioned and where he has appeared, it was Jehovah who talked with Abraham, with Noah, Enoch, Moses and all of the prophets. . . . The Father has never dealt with man directly and personally since the fall, and he has never appeared except to introduce and bear record of the Son."⁷⁸ The Church's institute manual regarding the Moses 1 account states that Jehovah was the divine guest, speaking through what the 1916 document referred to as "divine investiture," or "as if He were God the Father."⁷⁹ It is important to not be upset about the additional clarifications that have been set forth; it is also important to remember that we expect even more clarifications in the future. "Current revelation is equally plain with that of former days in predicting the

yet future manifestations of God through this appointed channel [revelation]. The canon of scripture is still open; many lines, many precepts, are yet to be added; revelation, surpassing in importance and glorious fullness any that has been recorded, is yet to be given to the Church and declared to the world.”⁸⁰ Regardless of the instrument that brings additional revelation and scripture—Joseph Smith, Orson Pratt, James Talmage, Thomas S. Monson, or another—the author of all truth has always been and will continue to be God, the Eternal Father of all mankind. **RE**

Notes

1. *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, ed. B. H. Roberts, 2nd ed. rev. (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1980), 303, 305.
2. Craig L. Blomberg and Stephen E. Robinson, *How Wide the Divide? A Mormon & an Evangelical in Conversation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1997), 117.
3. James E. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith: Being a Consideration of the Principal Doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1982), 311.
4. James E. Talmage to Leland E. Anderson, January 29, 1932. A copy of the letter is in the possession of the author.
5. Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1915, 3.
6. *History of the Church*, 5:215.
7. Robert L. Millet, “Hard Questions about the Joseph Smith Translation,” in *Plain and Precious Truths Restored: The Doctrinal and Historical Significance of the Joseph Smith Translation*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Robert J. Matthews (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1995), 147.
8. Brian W. Ricks, “James E. Talmage and the Nature of the Godhead: The Gradual Unfolding of Latter-day Saint Theology” (master’s thesis, Brigham Young University, 2007), 118.
9. Kent P. Jackson, “The Scriptural Restoration,” in *Joseph Smith and the Doctrinal Restoration: The 34th Annual Sidney Sperry Symposium* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2005), 222.
10. *History of the Church*, 6:474.
11. *History of the Church*, 1:167.
12. Quoted in Robert J. Woodford, “The Historical Development of the Doctrine and Covenants” (PhD diss., Brigham Young University, 1974), 2:929.
13. Casey Paul Griffiths, “Universalism and the Revelations of Joseph Smith,” in *The Doctrine and Covenants: Revelations in Context*, ed. Andrew H. Hedges, J. Spencer Fluhman, and Alonzo L. Gaskill (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center; Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2008), 169.
14. Jackson, “Scriptural Restoration,” 226.
15. Robert J. Matthews, “The Prophet Translates the Bible,” *The Prophet Joseph Smith: Essays on the Life and Mission of Joseph Smith*, ed. Larry C. Porter and Susan Easton Black (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1988), 177.
16. Andrew C. Skinner, “Doctrinal Contributions of the JST of the New Testament,” *Plain and Precious Truths Restored: The Doctrinal and Historical Significance of the Joseph*

- Smith Translation*, ed. Robert L. Millet and Robert J. Matthews (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1995), 74, 76.
17. Scott H. Faulring, Kent P. Jackson, and Robert J. Matthews, eds., *Joseph Smith's New Translation of the Bible: Original Manuscripts* (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 2004), 701.
 18. *Lectures on Faith* (American Fork, UT: Covenant Communications, 2000), 57.
 19. Noel B. Reynolds, "Book Reviews," *BYU Studies* 32, no. 1–2 (1992): 288.
 20. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Seek Ye Earnestly . . .* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1970), 194.
 21. Bruce R. McConkie, *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1985), 72–73.
 22. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, ed. John A. Widtsoe (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1946), 24.
 23. Parley P. Pratt, *Key to the Science of Theology* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1973), 41.
 24. John Taylor, "How Holy Men of Old Were Taught," in *Journal of Discourses* (London: Latter-day Saints' Book Depot, 1854–86), 25:214.
 25. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 27.
 26. *History of the Church*, 2:15.
 27. *History of the Church*, 4:256.
 28. Brigham Young and Willard Richards, "Election & Reprobation," ed. Parley P. Pratt, *Millennial Star*, January 1841, 218.
 29. John Taylor, *An Examination into and an Elucidation of the Great Principle of the Mediation and Atonement of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ*, photo reprint of original edition (Salt Lake City: Deseret News, 1998), 155.
 30. *Discourses of Brigham Young*, 390–91.
 31. Blomberg, "Christ & the Trinity," in Blomberg and Robinson, *How Wide the Divide?*, 124.
 32. *History of the Church*, 5:127.
 33. Franklin D. Richards, in *Journal of Discourses*, 26:172.
 34. Young and Richards, "Election & Reprobation," 1.
 35. Wilford Woodruff, "The Power of Evil," in *Collected Discourses Delivered by President Wilford Woodruff, His Two Counselors, the Twelve Apostles, and Others*, ed. Brian H. Stuy (Woodland Hills, UT: BHS Publishing, 1988–92), 4:292.
 36. James R. Clark, ed., *Messages of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1971), 5:24.
 37. Charles W. Penrose, in Conference Report, April 1916, 17; see also Joseph F. Smith, in Conference Report, April 1916, 4–5.
 38. Kurt Widmer, *Mormonism and the Nature of God: A Theological Evolution, 1830–1915* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland, 2000), 7.
 39. Milton V. Backman Jr., "Truman Coe's 1836 Description of Mormonism," *BYU Studies* 17, no. 3 (1977), 352. Reverend Coe was a minister of the Presbyterian faith who lived among the Latter-day Saints in Kirtland, Ohio, for a period of four years. The aforementioned article was written while Coe was serving the Old South Church in Kirtland. Backman surmised that Coe based his account "primarily on his personal observations and on concepts he had learned from others" (see p. 347).
 40. James E. Talmage Journals, September 14, 1891, Church History Library, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Salt Lake City.
 41. Talmage Journals, February 22, 1893.
 42. John R. Talmage, *The Talmage Story* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1972), 156–57.

43. The University of Utah was on the verge of being closed in 1894 due to the national financial crisis. The Territorial Legislature contemplated combining the school with the Agriculture College in Logan. The school in Logan received a land grant trust from the federal government, and the Legislature hesitated to lose that assistance to their educational budget. The acting President of the University of Utah approached President Wilford Woodruff for help. President Woodruff consented to close the Church University in Salt Lake City, thus removing competition to the state-funded school. Additionally, the Church donated \$60,000 to the state school in a “desperately needed additional classroom and laboratory space and extensive scientific apparatus and equipment that had been provided for the newly established Church University. . . . To legitimize the reception of gifts of endowment by the University of Utah together with certain special provisions in the contemplated agreement [between Kingsbury and President Wilford Woodruff], the Legislature in 1894 passed an act on ‘Endowing the University of Utah.’” Ralph V. Chamberlin, *The University of Utah: A History of Its First Hundred Years, 1850 to 1950* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1960), 203–4. This bill gave the Literary and Scientific Association power to establish a professorship and nominate the person to fill that position. James E. Talmage was nominated and took the position in 1894.

44. Talmage, *Talmage Story*, 167.

45. Talmage Journals, September 14, 1914.

46. Talmage, *Talmage Story*, 182.

47. Lorenzo Snow, “Official Announcement,” *Deseret Evening News*, March 10, 1899.

48. Joseph F. Smith, Anthon L. Lund, and Charles W. Penrose, “Official Announcement,” *Deseret Evening News*, August 14, 1915.

49. Talmage Journals, February 13, 1916.

50. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission according to Holy Scriptures Both Ancient and Modern* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 32.

51. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 42.

52. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 41.

53. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 38–39.

54. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 40–41.

55. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 35–36.

56. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 309.

57. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 27.

58. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 478.

59. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 661.

60. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 159.

61. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 488.

62. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 159.

63. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 160.

64. Talmage Journals, June 14, 1916.

65. Talmage Journals, June 23, 1916.

66. *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:24.

67. “The Father and the Son: A Doctrinal Exposition by The First Presidency and the Twelve,” in *Messages of the First Presidency*, 5:26.

68. “Father and the Son,” 5:26.

69. “Father and the Son,” 5:27.

70. "Father and the Son," 5:30.
71. "Father and the Son," 5:31–32.
72. "Father and the Son," 5:32.
73. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, xii.
74. Talmage Journals, January 5, 1894. The religion class was the series of lectures that eventually were compiled into the book *Articles of Faith*.
75. *History of the Church*, 6:303.
76. Neal A. Maxwell, "The Children of Christ," in *The Book of Mormon: Mosiah, Salvation Only Through Christ*, ed. Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate Jr. (Provo, UT: Religious Studies Center, 1991), 1.
77. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ*, 39.
78. Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation: Sermons and Writings of Joseph Fielding Smith*, ed. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954), 1:27.
79. Church Educational System, *The Pearl of Great Price Student Manual: Religion 327* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000), 4.
80. Talmage, *Articles of Faith*, 311.