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# Calling and Election

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## D&C 53:1

In the revelation given to the Prophet Joseph Smith at the request of Algernon Sidney Gilbert, Sidney was told, “I have heard your prayers; and you have called upon me that it should be known unto you, of the Lord Your God, concerning your calling and election in the Church” (D&C 53:1). This was the first time the phrase “calling and election” appeared in the Doctrine and Covenants. Calling and election means having the more sure word of prophecy and knowing that you are “sealed up unto eternal life, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood” (D&C 131:5).

Of this doctrine, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, “I would exhort you to go on and continue to call upon God until you make your calling and election sure for yourselves, by obtaining this more sure word of prophecy, and wait patiently for the promise until you obtain it.”<sup>1</sup> The Prophet Joseph suggested the way to receive your calling and election was to begin with the first principles of the gospel:

When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave.<sup>2</sup>

Joseph Smith also taught,

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<sup>1</sup> History, 1838–1856, volume D-1 [1 August 1842–1 July 1843], 1550. Joseph Smith Papers.

<sup>2</sup> Discourse, 7 April 1844, as Reported by *Times and Seasons*, 614. Joseph Smith Papers.

Though they might hear the voice of God and know that Jesus was the Son of God, this would be no evidence that their election and calling was made sure. ... They then would want that more sure word of prophecy, that they were sealed in the heavens and had the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God. Then, having this promise sealed unto them, it was an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast. Though the thunders might roll and lightnings flash, and earthquakes bellow, and war gather thick around, yet this hope and knowledge would support the soul in every hour of trial, trouble and tribulation.<sup>3</sup>

President Marion G. Romney in a general conference address in 1954 said,

The fullness of eternal life is not attainable in mortality, but the peace which is its harbinger and which comes as a result of making one's calling and election sure is attainable in this life. The Lord has promised that ... "he who doeth the works of righteousness shall receive his reward, even peace in this world, and eternal life in the world to come" (D&C 59:23).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> History, 1838–1856, 1549.

<sup>4</sup> Marion G. Romney, Conference Report, April 1954.