



A New Witness for the Articles of Faith

Bruce R. McConkie

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In his monumental work *A New Witness for the Articles of Faith*, completed shortly before his death in 1985, Elder Bruce R. McConkie examines each article in great, inspiring detail. He sheds new light on many subjects, including faith and belief, the nature of the Father and the Son, the mission of the Holy Ghost, the Atonement, spiritual gifts, and more.

A New Witness for the Articles of Faith Details

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Adam says

I got this little version of NWAoF and love it. It's compact enough to fit in with the Scriptures and good for travel. His powerful last GC talk is great and wrought with emotion from a man that had been going through the last chapters of his life and was one of life's reflection. This last book he wrote has the same emotion. Very poetic and very bold at times.

Erin says

I took me a while to read this book, but it was worth every minute. I love Bruce R. McConkie's writings. This book is so helpful in understanding the articles of faith. This reads like a text book not a story. This will be a great reference book to add to my library.

Allister says

It enhances my knowledge of the 12 articles of faith

Scott says

Good reference book...reads like a textbook. Not for those seeking spiritual fluff.

Matt says

With the exception of the scriptures, no other book has had a greater impact on me than this one. A year after we were married, my wife and I moved to Salt Lake City in an effort to get our lives in spiritual order. When we arrived we had very little. One day we were in Deseret Book and as I browsed this book I felt a very strong prompting to purchase this book. My first thought was, "My wife will never believe this" but she was supportive.

When I brought it home and read his final testimony as found in the Preface of this book, I received a sure witness from the Holy Ghost that his words were true. Later, I read a perfect description of this gift that I had received in the Doctrine and Covenants: "To some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world. To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue faithful." (D&C 46:13-14.)

This witness became the foundation on which my study of the gospel was built. The book itself provided me with a framework for a new, enlivened study of the gospel. It led me to a more diligent study of the

scriptures and the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Dave says

How do you criticize a book without demeaning the man who wrote it? Yes, McConkie was a divisive figure, but I'll try to just focus on his writing here.

It's impossible to get through. I don't mean "Ulysses" - impossible. James Joyce knew how to write. McConkie's prose reads like John Galt's 50-page manifesto in *Atlas Shrugged*: a pedantic, supremely confident barrage of ultimatums and assertions. The tone is just really, really off-putting, as McConkie spends chapter after chapter putting you in your place.

If I want an overly-detailed, rambling summary of traditional LDS doctrine, I'll stick to the original Talmage.

Anita says

I read this book to fulfil the goal read a book by a person you admire. As one of my church leaders Bruce R. McConkie definitely fits that qualification. I got this book on our yearly trip to Palmyra. I'm a little disappointed that I didn't really learn anything new. Although it was enlightening to have all the stuff that I learned from the various church books and programs in one place. The last chapter is the best, and it kind of made me want to reread the book again. I believe in the articles of faith put forward by our church, and I am excited to see what else the Lord has in store for us to learn.

Michael says

Elder McConkie's testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, as presented in the Preface to this book, is one of the most powerful that I have had the privilege of reading. He was an Apostle and the calling, and his dignity in fulfilling during his life demands the utmost respect. However, as the Publisher's Note states, general authorities of the church do not write books as general authorities. They write them as individuals sharing with the world what they know. With that in mind, I offer some words of criticism for this book. My biggest point of criticism is that McConkie was a wordy writer. His prose seems to be infused with flowery and superfluous words, sometimes even repeating the same superfluous word. I also found this book redundant. Multiple chapters were used to say what one chapter could have said, and multiple chapters seemed to say the same things. At times his tone came off as pretentious and condescending, which also put me off. With all of this criticisms, I think that I will pick up a different book the next time I want to learn about the Articles of Faith.

John says

This book was published posthumously. The author's writing style can be a combination of dry, flowery, and authoritative, yet the best part the book is in the introductory material. There the author's last sermon, given

at the April 1985 LDS General Conference, is printed. I recommend those two pages to everyone. McConkie's witness of Christ is as profound and moving now as it was when he first gave it.

Bdabbling says

This is the culmination of a magnificent life of scholarship and discipleship — the best exposition on the articles of faith. I have also read and learned a great deal from Elder James Talmage's Articles of Faith, but it would be hard to overstate how much McConkie benefited from the JST and other new scholarship. These additions, coupled with McConkie's powerful yet beautiful writing style raise this book just a notch for me.

Heather says

This is a good book containing some of Elder McConkie's insights about the Articles of Faith - a foundational document of beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Joseph Smith penned the thirteen Articles of Faith in 1842 in a letter to John Wentworth. Each one is worth studying in depth.

I need to read James E. Talmage's *Articles of Faith* as well, but I appreciated Elder McConkie's insights. I particularly appreciated the organization of the book. I loved how it started out talking about the importance of Joseph Smith's role and calling and then jumping into talking about belief to lead off. These really are remarkable truths and I'm grateful for the hope and purpose and direction they bring to my life.

Here are a few of my favorite quotes from the book:

"Salvation--blessed, hallowed, wondrous word--salvation is available to men on earth today because of Joseph Smith, the prophet and seer of the latter days. He is the one to whom the Lord revealed anew the fulness of the everlasting gospel in the dispensation of the fulness of times. He is the one who received anew the keys of the kingdom of heaven so that mortal men might have power once again to bind and loose on earth and in heaven. He is a new witness for the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel (p. 1)."

"In every age when the Lord has a people on earth, the great question confronting all mankind is whether they will believe and obey the prophet who presides over their dispensation. He is the one sent of God to reveal the truths of salvation to people on earth and to perform with heavenly power the ordinances that seal them up unto eternal life. Salvation is always in Christ. He alone is the Savior and Redeemer. But Christ is revealed to and made manifest by his prophets (p. 11)."

"No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing; persecutions may rage, mobs may combine, armies may assemble, calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth nobly, boldly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished, and the Great Jehovah shall say the work is done (Joseph Smith, p. 15)."

"The Articles of Faith are part of an eternal fulness of everlasting truth that was then and is now in process of being revealed by the Lord to his people (p. 16)."

"Belief, humble belief, is the foundation of all righteousness and the beginning of spiritual progression. It

goes before good works, opens the door to an eternal store of heavenly truth, and charts the course to eternal life (p. 21)."

"True belief is the father of repentance (p. 30)."

"Life itself comes from God and has a purpose.... Thus, a knowledge of God and of his laws is essential to salvation. No one can be saved in ignorance of God, of Christ, and of their everlasting gospel. All are saved as rapidly as they gain a knowledge of God and of his laws (p. 43)."

"It is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God (Joseph Smith, p. 64)."

"It is the design and the purpose of Deity to keep man's attention everlastingly center in the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The more man knows about God and Christ and the fall and the eternal plan of redemption, the greater will be his desire to be reconciled to God and to receive the blessings offered by the great Mediator (p. 114)."

"Faith is the first principle in revealed religion, and the foundation of all righteousness (Joseph Smith, p. 165)."

"In this mortal probation, as pilgrims far from their heavenly home, the saints are called upon to put first in their lives the things of God's kingdom and to let the things of this world sink into a place of relative insignificance. If their hearts are set upon worldly things...their reward will come in the currency of the world. It is only when men's hearts are set on heavenly things, when they lay up treasures in heaven.... The trials and tests of mortality are designed to determine whether men will use their time and talents in worldly or spiritual pursuits (p. 188)."

"Faith and sacrifice go hand in hand. Those who have faith sacrifice freely for the Lord's work, and their acts of sacrifice increase their faith (p. 189)."

"When men begin to live by faith they begin to draw near to God; and when faith is perfected they are like him; and because he is saved they are saved also; for they will be in the same situation he is in, because they have come to him; and when he appears they shall be like him, for they will see him as he is (Joseph Smith, p. 195)."

"An account of the faith of the ancients has been preserved in holy writ to serve as a pattern for us. What God did for them, he will do for us; in like circumstances and when importuned with like faith, the same unchangeable God will always respond in the same way. A miracle today need be no different than a miracle anciently.... By faith, Adam, dwelling in the peace and serenity of Eden, chose to fall that mortal man might be; this he did knowing that such a course opened the door to immortality and eternal life... (p. 197)."

"We do not know all of the judgments of God, nor could we understand them even if they were revealed. Our knowledge about sins unto death is limited, but providentially there are relatively few who cannot be redeemed from spiritual death through repentance (p. 231)."

"Can we be reconciled to the Lord and remain at variance with our brethren? Jesus says we cannot..... The whole system of salvation under which we operate is one of being reconciled to God through the cleansing blood of Christ.... And we cannot be so reconciled and made free from our sins unless and until we first reconcile ourselves with our brethren. As we seek reconciliation with the Lord, how often must we forgive one another? There is no limit.... (p. 238)."

"Baptism is for the remission of sins; it is the ordinance, ordained of God, to cleanse a human soul... The actual cleansing of the soul comes when the Holy Ghost is received. The Holy Ghost is a sanctifier whose divine commission is to burn dross and evil out of a human soul as though by fire.... The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is the ordinance, ordained by God, in which baptized saints are privileged, repeatedly and often, to renew the covenant of baptism (p. 239)."

"Baptism is the covenant in which men promise to keep the commandments of God.... to forsake the world....to become a saint....to love and serve his fellowmen....to visit the fatherless and the widows in their afflictions....to proclaim peace....to preach the gospel....to serve the Lord (p. 245)."

"The gift of the Holy Ghost quickens all the intellectual faculties, increases, enlarges, expands, and purifies all the natural passions and affections, and adapts them, by the gift of wisdom, to their lawful use. It inspires, develops, cultivates, and matures all the fine-toned sympathies, joys, tastes, kindred feelings, and affections of nature. It inspires virtue, kindness, goodness, tenderness, gentleness, and charity. It develops beauty of person, form and features. It tends to health, vigor, animation, and social feeling. It invigorates all the faculties of the physical and intellectual man. It strengthens and gives tone to the nerves. In short, it is, as it were, marrow to the bone, joy to the heart, light to the eyes, music to the ears, and life to the whole being (Parley P. Pratt, p. 272)."

"Those whose hearts are broken and whose spirits are contrite are candidates for salvation (p. 301)."

"The kingdom--because it is the Lord's and because it is true--shall roll forward and increase in size and influence until it fills the whole earth, until every living soul on earth is embraced within its fold (p. 337)."

"The gifts of the Spirit are for believing, faithful, righteous people; they are reserved for the saints of God. They come from God in heaven to man on earth in a miraculous manner. Their receipt is a miracle, and faith precedes the miracle. Spiritual gifts are endless in number and infinite in variety (p. 371)."

"Prayer is the way ordained of God whereby mortal men can converse, by the power of the Spirit, with their Immortal Father. As a heaven-sent boon, it is offered to all without money and without price. It is a free gift. Those who receive the gift, who learn thereby how to communicate with their Maker, and who conform in full to the true law of prayer are on the path leading to the celestial kingdom of heaven (p. 378)."

"God alone can save; he only can create a celestial glory, and his plan--and his plan only--will lead fallen men to heights beyond the skies. He must speak; he must reveal; he must make known his laws. And what he speaks, the things he reveals, the laws he makes known--these are scripture (p. 389)."

"Either there is revelation or there is no purpose in life, no hope in the future, no glory in Christ or in his atonement. Revelation truly is the beginning and the end, the reality that makes all things possible, the great and grand principle that separates the saints from those in the world who are without God and without hope (p. 476)."

"Revelation for the Church and for the world generally, no matter what age is involved, always falls into two categories. First, the Lord reveals the truths of salvation; he tells fallen men of the salvation that is in Christ; and he charts for them the course leading to eternal life. This revelation is the revelation of the gospel, which gospel is the plan of salvation. Second, he gives the special, limited, and single-instance revelations that are needed for the temporal and spiritual salvation of those to whom they are addressed (p. 478)."

"Revelation is as eternal as God himself... Revelations came in days past; revelations come now; and

revelations will continue as long as the earth shall stand. Those saints whose souls are attuned to the Infinite believe all that God has revealed; they need only be taught that any particular truth came by revelation, and they automatically believe it (p. 481)."

"We know only droplets of truth taken from an immense ocean; we have drunk only a few swallows from the streams of living water; there is so much more to learn. Why, then, should we take offense if the God of Truth chooses to make more of his eternal word available to us (p. 483)?"

"We look forward to the future with joy...All thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, shall be revealed and set forth upon all who have endured valiantly for the gospel of Jesus Christ (p. 485)."

"There is more to the doctrine of revelation than the calling of apostles and prophets and the sending of them forth to proclaim the gospel to the world. The very gospel plan itself requires that every believing soul attune himself to the Infinite and get personal revelation in order to be saved. Personal revelation to the weak and the simple and the lowly is as essential to salvation as is the general revelation that comes to the spiritual giants who proclaim light to the world (p. 487)."

"What greater personal revelation could anyone receive than to see the face of his Maker? Is not this the crowning blessing of life? Can all the wealth of the earth, all of the powers of the world, and all of the honors of men compare with it? And is it an unseemly or unrighteous desire on man's part to hope and live and pray, all in such a way as to qualify for so great a manifestation (p. 492)?"

"The Lord be praised for the gathering of his people (p. 553)!"

"As far as the gathering of Israel is concerned, the Book of Mormon is the most important book that ever has been or ever will be written. It is the book that gathers Israel and that reveals, in plainness and perfection, the doctrine of the gathering of the chosen seed. It is the book, given of God, to prove the truth and divinity, of his great latter-day work. It contains the fulness of the everlasting gospel and carries with it the evidence of its own divinity (p. 554)."

"Zion is a people--pure people; people who walk with God; people from whose souls sin and evil have been burned by the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost.... But Zion is also a place (p. 568)."

"How do we go about building up Zion and strengthening her cause in all the earth?.... Our work is to preach the gospel to every nation and kindred and tongue and people, in plainness and perfection, but the power of the Spirit, unto the convincing of those who hear our words.... Our work is to perfect the lives of the saints, leading them gently and quietly in the ways of righteousness.... Our work is to redeem our dead, to offer them through vicarious ordinances the same blessings.... Our work is to call more missionaries; to preach in more nations; to organize new stakes; to build more temples; to free ourselves from the blood and sins of this generation; to keep the commandments; to stand in holy places.... Our work is to prepare a people for the Second Coming.... Until then we have no choice but to use our means, talents, and time in the building up of the Lord's work on earth and the establishment of Zion (p. 577)."

"The righteous, the God-fearing, the meek--indeed, as we shall see, all those who are living at least a terrestrial law--these are the ones who shall continue to live on the new earth and breathe the air of the new heavens. They will include faithful members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and other upright and decent people who, following the light of Christ, have managed to rise above the world and walk in paths of decency and uprightness (p. 646)."

"After the Millennium, what? Can there be any social order greater than the one over which the Son of God himself, aided by the righteous from all ages, shall rule and reign? What more could man desire than to associate with the Lord Jesus and serve under his just and loving guidance for a thousand years? And yet in the providences of Almighty God, of that Elohim who made men that they might become as he is, there is more. Man may gain his own kingdom, serve as his own king and ruler, and have everlasting dominion--always under the Father!--over his own spirit children forever. Such shall be the reward of those who gain celestial exaltation (p. 651)."

"Freedom of worship is one of the basic doctrines of the gospel. Indeed, in one manner of speaking it is the most basic of all doctrines, even taking precedence over the nature and kind of being that God is, or the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God, or the vesting of priesthood and keys and saving power in the one true church. By this we mean that if there were no freedom of worship, there would be no God, no redemption, and no salvation in the kingdom of God (p 655)."

"Freedom of worship is thus one of the chief identifying characteristics of the true church. Religious freedom is of God; compulsion in religion is of the devil. It was so in the preexistence; it is so now; and it will be so everlastingly (p. 656)."

"Unless there is absolute freedom of religion and of worship, there is no salvation. Unless men have their agency--given of God in preexistence, given anew in the garden of Eden, and given again after the fall--unless men are free to choose, they cannot gain liberty and eternal life through the great Mediator of all men (p. 664)."

"Salvation is born of freedom of choice (p. 683)."

"In the case of a conflict between the requirements made by the revealed word of God, and those imposed by the secular law, which of these authorities would the members of the Church be bound to obey? In answer, the words of Christ may be applied--it is the duty of the people to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's (p. 692)."

"It is the hope and prayer of this disciple that the doctrines announced and the truths taught in the Articles of Faith may live in the hearts of the Latter-day Saints and of all who will yet join with them in striving to gain that eternal life which is the greatest of all the gifts of God. There is no salvation in an unused truth; it is only when men conform to the truth and make it a part of their very being that they advance and progress and finally qualify to return to the Eternal Presence. The Articles of Faith are themselves a living, growing, expanding standard of belief and doctrine and practice. That they set forth eternal truths that will not be altered in time or in eternity is clear to all (p. 702)."

Amanda says

My seminary teacher recommended this to me, and I loved it! I learned a lot, and McConkie's writing style is superb. Personally, I prefer Talmage, but to each her own. McConkie's chapters on the Tenth Article of Faith are worth the price of the book.

Clint says

Great as a reference book for Mormons, but tough to read all the way through. This book was written to provide a more current treatment of the Articles of Faith of the Mormon Church than that by James E. Talmage in Articles of Faith.

Graham Bradley says

A real brick of a book. I've tried reading it cover-to-cover and there's just so much to absorb, it's more effective to study it one subject at a time and digest all he has to say on a topic. I'll abstain from leaving it a rating (feels weird for some reason), but I do recommend it to members looking to get even deeper into pieces of the doctrine.

Nola Collier says

I read this wonderful book in preparation for a Relief Society lesson and gained a greater appreciation and insight into the basic ethics of Latter-day Saints. I believe that Elder McConkie wrote this book just before his death.

Want to know what we believe? Read this book!
