

# Be Not Deceived



Joseph Fielding Smith, 10th President of the Church, was born on July 19, 1876. He was ordained an Apostle on April 7, 1910, and was sustained as President of the Church on January 23, 1970. In this address, given in 1953, President Smith taught youth how to not be deceived by the world's false theories.

By President Joseph Fielding Smith (1876–1972)

***As some are modifying their standards to conform to worldly trends, we must stand firm in the scriptures and revealed truths of the gospel.***

**W**e are living in a very troubled world, and I am going to talk plainly: we are living in a world that has discarded God or is rapidly doing so. We are living in a world where the Christian ministers of various denominations have been frightened by the philosophies of men and, therefore, because they lack the Spirit of the Lord, have tried to modify the scriptures, or the meaning of the scriptures, so that they can make them harmonize with the false theories so prevalent in the world today, theories which are in absolute conflict with divine revelation; and yet these people, afraid, dominated by the influence of

false philosophy, are modifying the doctrines to make them conform to these theories and ideas which are godless in their foundation. We cannot afford to do that. . . .

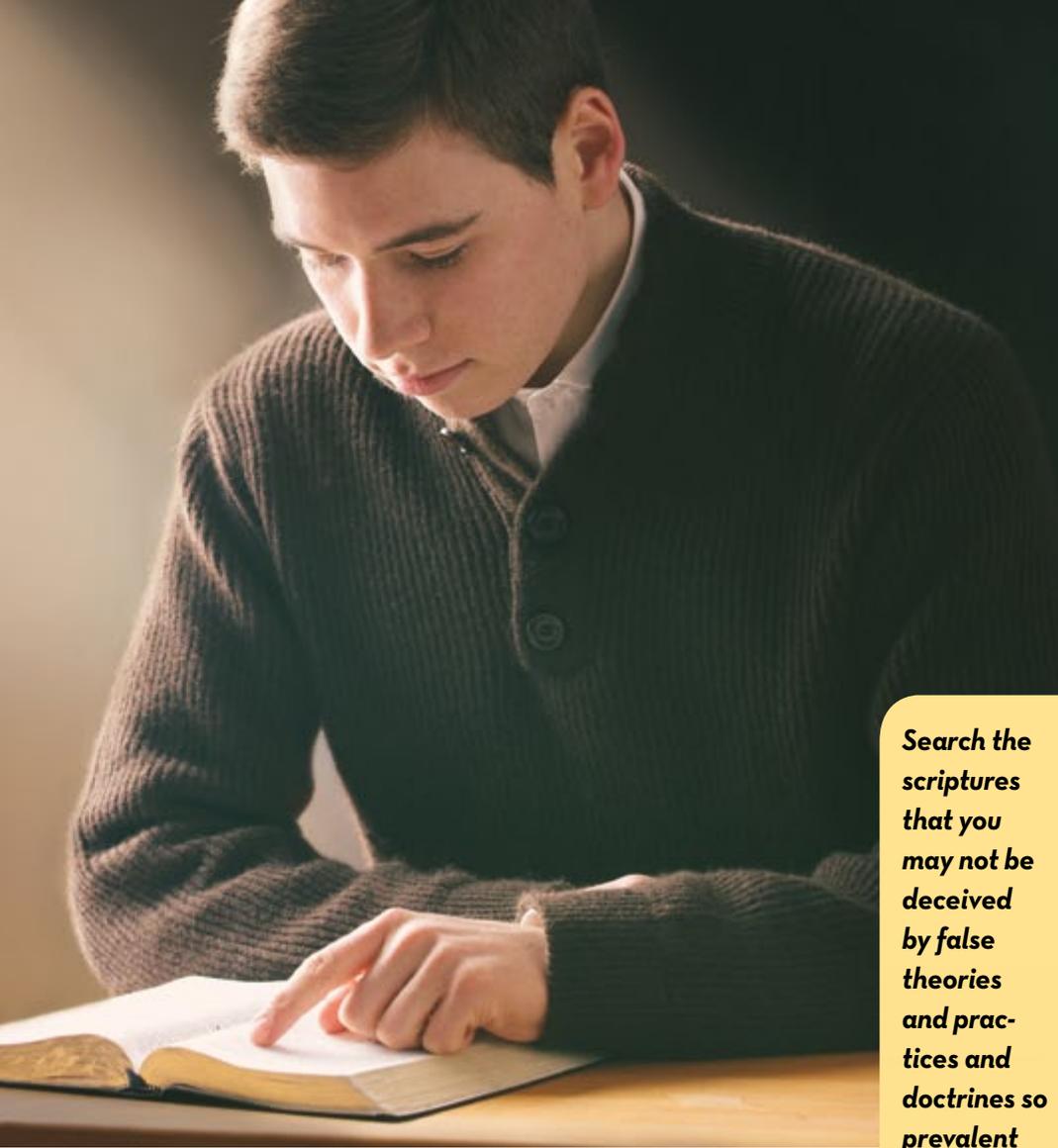
“The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; never-theless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God, being quickened in him and by him.

“Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me; otherwise ye could not abound” (D&C 88:49–50).

This is a wonderful revelation. It covers so many things

of vital importance to every member of the Church. I wonder how many of us have read section 88? Do not stop by just reading this one section. Take it as your theme—there is none better—but read the whole revelation. No! Read the whole book. The Lord commanded in the very first section of the Doctrine and Covenants, which is the preface of this book, the Lord's preface:

“Search these commandments, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in



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them shall all be fulfilled” (D&C 1:37). “Search these commandments.” How much do we love the Lord? What is the greatest of all the commandments? The Lord has told us here, in section 59 of the Doctrine and Covenants, what it is, as He applies it to the members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in this dispensation of the fulness of times:

“Wherefore, I give unto them [the members of the Church] a commandment, saying thus: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy

might, mind, and strength; and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him” (D&C 59:5). . . .

So the first of all the commandments is to love God with all our soul and, in the name of Jesus Christ, serve Him, and He has commanded us to make ourselves familiar with these truths which have been revealed to us in the dispensation of the fulness of times.

How many of us have done it? So I say to you, and all the members of the Church for that matter, do not let your understanding rest upon one verse

[D&C 88:86, that year’s Mutual theme], which is a very excellent theme, but search the scriptures that you may not be deceived by false theories and practices and doctrines so prevalent in the world today. If you will do this, if you will have in your hearts the guidance of the Spirit of the Lord which every member of the Church has a right to have, the companionship of the Holy Ghost, you will not be led astray by the theories of men because the Spirit of the Lord will tell you they are false, and you will have the spirit of discernment that you may understand. . . .

Now, if you understand the gospel of Jesus Christ, it will make you free. If your softball, your volleyball, your basketball, your foot racing, your dancing, your other entertainments are devoid of the Spirit of the Lord, they will be of no value to you. Let everything be done in the spirit of prayer and in faith. I think that is the case—maybe it is unnecessary for me to say it—but so let it be. Do everything with an eye single unto the glory of God, and let us teach to build up and strengthen ourselves and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. ■

*From “Entangle Not Yourselves in Sin,” Improvement Era, Sept. 1953, 646–47, 671–72, 674, 676–78; capitalization and punctuation standardized.*