

Seven Principles of *Personal and Civil Liberty*

DIVINE IDENTITY AND PURPOSE

God is our loving Heavenly Father. He has endowed each of His children with the gifts of life, the freedom to choose, and a divine identity and purpose. Civil liberty is founded on the truth that these are inalienable, God-given rights.

LIBERTY THROUGH CHRISTIAN SELF-GOVERNMENT

God has given us the freedom to choose liberty and eternal life through Jesus Christ, or captivity and death. As we seek to obey the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and receive His grace, we will experience liberty. Civil liberty can exist only when there is widespread adherence to moral law by self-governed individuals.

CHRISTLIKE CHARACTER

Jesus Christ is the standard of character and the model of all virtues. Through His Atonement, we can become like Him. America's heritage provides examples of men and women who were liberated by obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and who sought freedom to develop and express Christian character. America became the seedbed of civil liberty because of inspired reliance upon Christian principles.

CONSCIENCE, THE MOST SACRED OF ALL PROPERTY

God has granted each of us stewardship over our individual souls, labor, and possessions. The most sacred stewardship God has given us is our conscience. We experience liberty as we follow our conscience, which is the light of Christ within us. In the civil realm, liberty depends upon protection of the rights of property, including the property of conscience.

THE FAMILY, RELIGION, AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Personal and civil liberty depend upon the protection and vitality of three realms: the family, religion and its expression, and civil government. Internal restraints within civil government, such as representation, separation of powers, and federalism, are necessary to temper the exercise of governmental power. These internal restraints protect individual accountability, the rights and responsibilities of families, and religion and its expression.

CULTIVATING SELF-GOVERNMENT IN OTHERS

Individuals who experience liberty through Christ seek to bless others with liberty. Christ's followers are obligated to cultivate and protect the right of self-government for all mankind. Civil liberty is best protected when the decision-making authority of government resides at the level that is closest to those affected by its decisions.

FULLNESS OF LIBERTY THROUGH UNITY WITH GOD AND MAN

The ultimate purpose of God's plan of happiness is to enable us to experience a fullness of liberty. This is possible only through unity with God, our families, and our fellowmen as we experience the atoning power of Jesus Christ. Uniting as self-governed individuals enables and strengthens civil and personal liberty, and magnifies the potential of all.