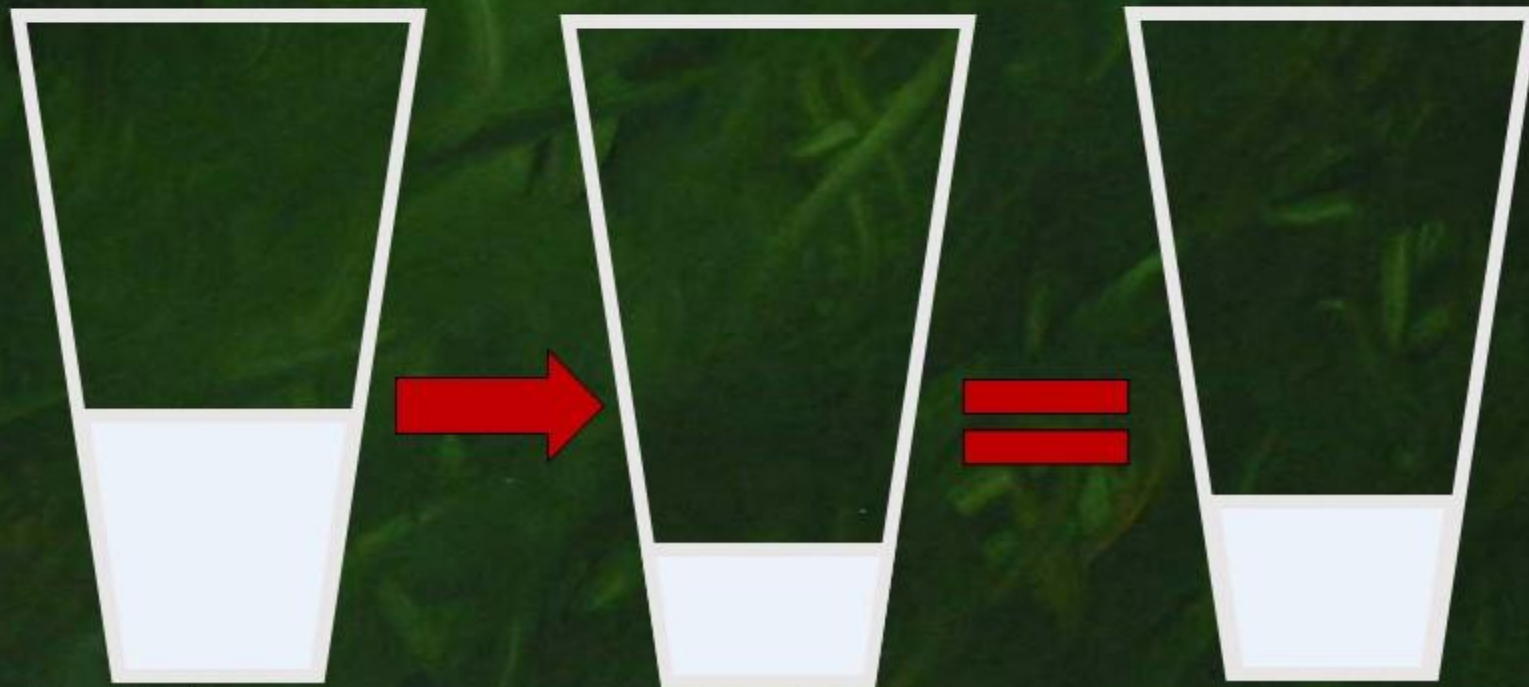


"...Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Matthew 25:40

Law of Consecration

Doctrine and Covenants 42:30-42



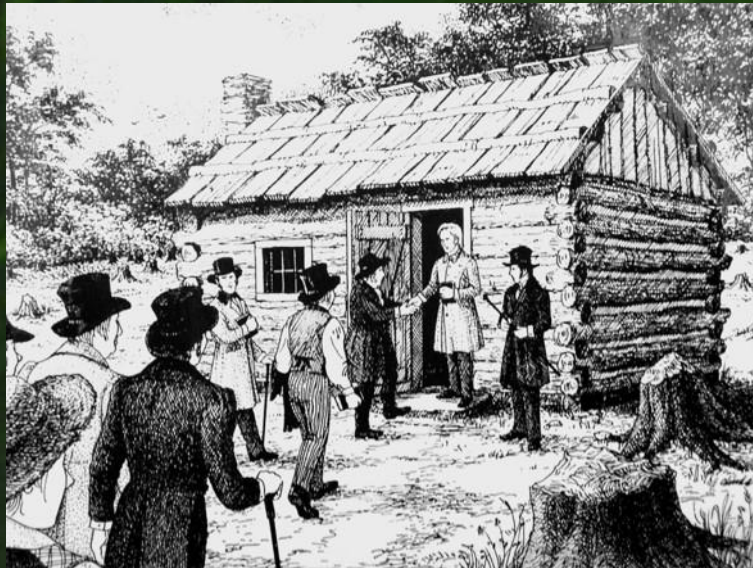
Early Communal Systems

During Joseph Smith's day, some groups of people attempted to form communal systems in which the group shared ownership of all the wealth and resources.



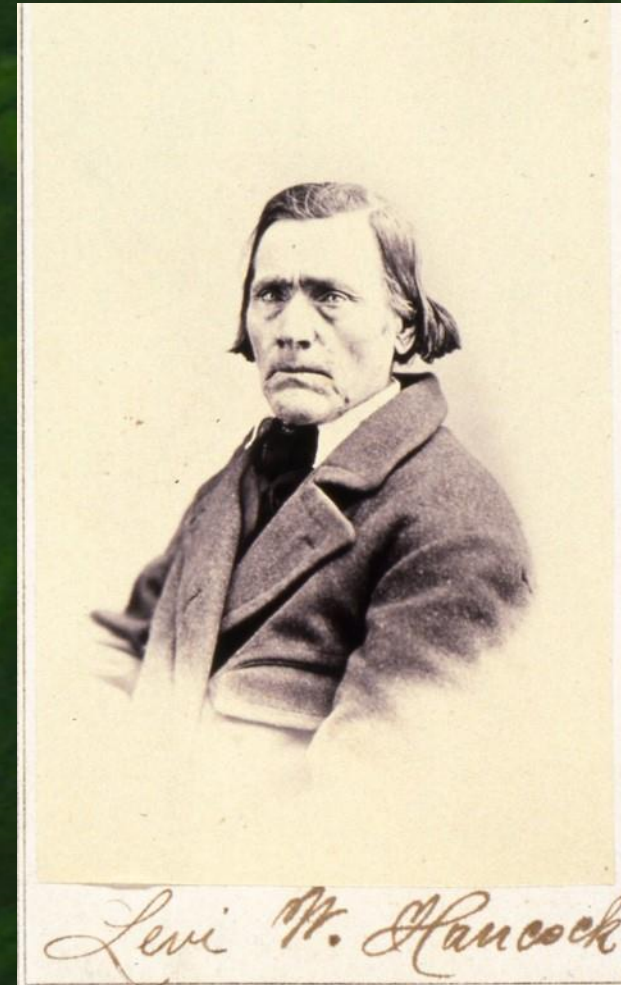
Prior to the revelation on the law of consecration, some members of the Church in Ohio had established such a group. Some of their practices were problematic:

“When [Joseph Smith] arrived in Ohio [he] discovered a group of about fifty people who had established a cooperative venture based on their interpretation of statements in the book of Acts, describing the early Saints as having all things in common.



This group, known as ‘the family,’ ... were members of the Church living on Isaac Morley’s farm near the village of Kirtland. When John Whitmer arrived in mid-January, he noted that what they were doing created many problems.

For example, Heman Bassett took a pocket watch belonging to Levi Hancock and sold it. When asked why, Heman replied, 'Oh, I thought it was all in the family.' Levi responded that he did not like such 'family doing' and would not endure it any longer.



Meeting the Growing Economic Needs

“The Prophet Joseph ... realized the need to establish a more perfect system to meet the growing economic needs of the Church.

Revenue was required to finance various Church undertakings, such as publishing revelations and missionary tracts. ... Money, goods, and property were needed to help the poor and to assist immigrants who were sacrificing much to gather to Ohio, so Joseph inquired of the Lord”

Church History

The revelation recorded in Doctrine and Covenants 42, which revealed the Lord’s law of consecration, was one of several revelations that came in response to Joseph’s inquiry.



Consecration

February 1831

The Lord commanded the Saints to consecrate their properties to support the poor



“To consecrate is to set apart or dedicate something as sacred, devoted to holy purposes”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson



All Things Are Mine

“The basic principle and the justification for the law of consecration ‘is that everything we have belongs to the Lord; therefore, the Lord may call upon us for any and all of the property which we have, because it belongs to Him. ...

President Marion G. Romney



I, the Lord, stretched out the heavens, and built the earth, my very handiwork; and all things therein are mine.

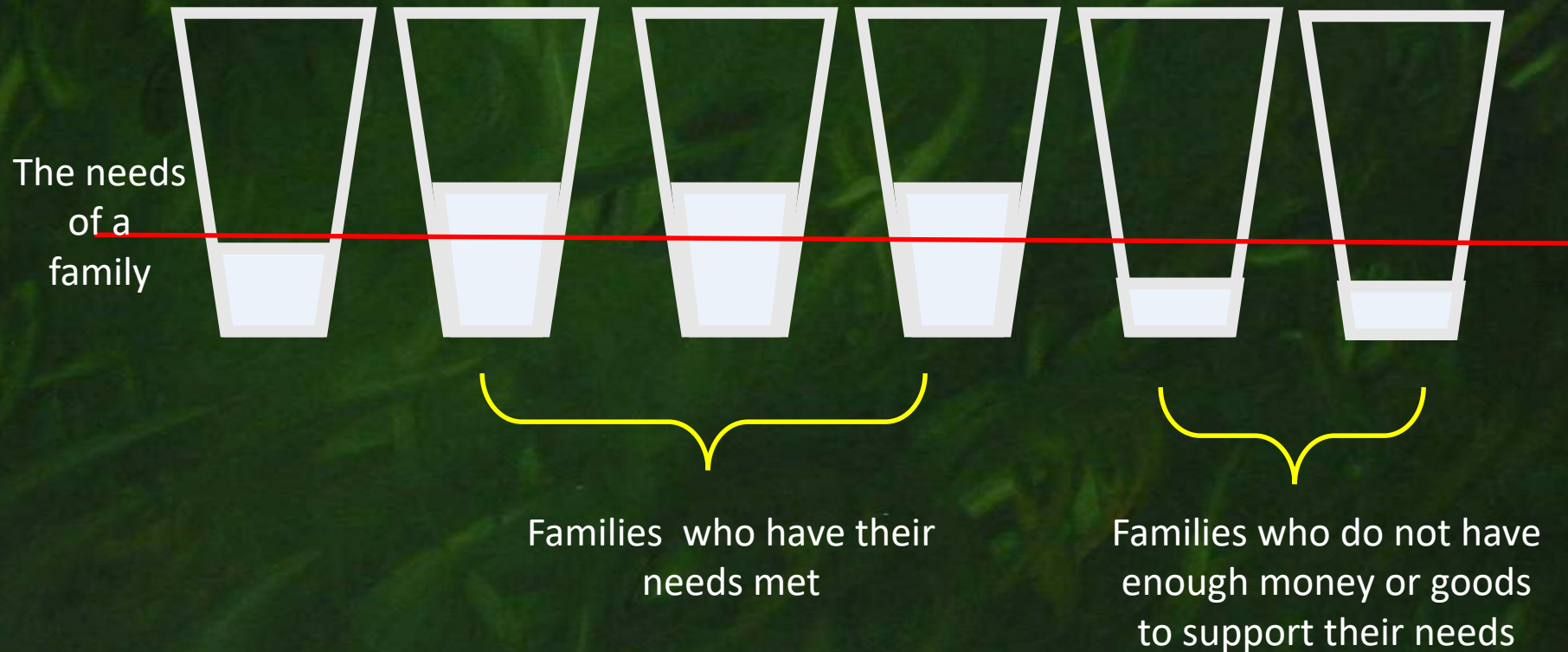
And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine.

But it must needs be done in mine own way; and behold this is the way that I, the Lord, have decreed to provide for my saints, that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.

For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things, and have given unto the children of men to be agents unto themselves.”

D&C 104:14-17

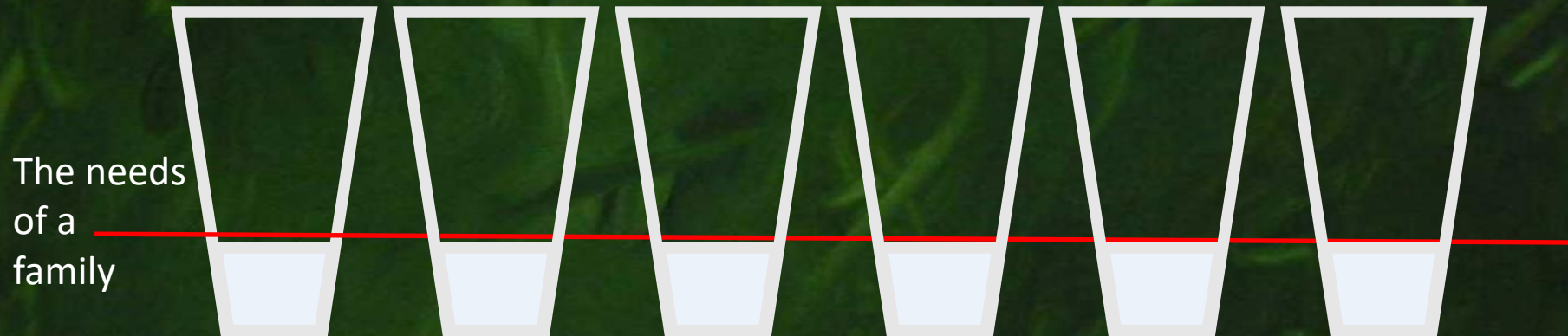
The Needs of a Family



Stewardship

Every family worked with the bishop and received what was called a “stewardship” (D&C 42:72). This means that each family was entrusted with property and resources from the Lord.

Each family was entrusted with property and resources from the Lord. Families had private ownership of the property and resources they received, and they were to use their agency to manage their stewardship.



As stewards of the Lord’s property and resources, they were accountable to Him and fully responsible for what He entrusted to them.

The Church modified this practice of Law of Consecration in 1833

Allocating Funds

Wherefore, let my servant Edward Partridge, and those whom he has chosen, in whom I am well pleased, appoint unto this people their portions, every man equal according to his family, according to his circumstances and his wants and needs."

D&C 51:3



The allocation of portions was based on each family's circumstances, wants, and needs.

Allocating Funds

What did the Lord require of people who declared their wants and needs to the bishop?

They were to be just, or, in other words, fair and honest



Residue

What did the Lord instruct the Saints to do with the leftover property, or the “residue”?

They were to use it to help the poor, finance Church buildings, and help members who were in need.



What do you think the pitcher represents in these verses?

The storehouse

Bishop's Storehouse

“More than 180 years later, bishops’ storehouses around the world continue to support bishops in the call to ‘be faithful; stand in the office which [the Lord has] appointed unto [them]; succor the weak, lift up the hands which hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees’.



“Whether it is a building containing food and other supplies or a set of resources in the ward a bishop can draw from, bishops’ storehouses are being used to care for those in need.

The Lord’s storehouse is available to every bishop and exists in every ward. Contrary to conventional wisdom, the Lord’s storehouse is not limited to a building or a warehouse filled with commodities awaiting distribution.’



Fast Offerings

“Where a brick and mortar storehouse is not available, bishops can purchase needed commodities from local merchants using fast offerings.”



Tithing and Other Offerings

Date _____ Ward or branch _____

Name (last, first, middle). Use the same spelling on all your forms. _____

Membership record number _____

Tithing		
Fast offering		
General missionary		
Ward missionary		
Humanitarian aid		
Other (specify)		
Total		
Check(s)	Currency	Coin

Though reasonable efforts will be made to use donations as designated, all donations become the Church's property and will be used at the Church's sole discretion to further the Church's overall mission.

WHITE—Place with tithing and other offerings in envelope. Give envelope only to _____

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, ... and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

Malachi 3:10

“The United Order, or law of consecration, does not contemplate that the idler shall eat the bread of the laborer.



While all shall share in common and none shall possess above another, yet all must give service and labor for the benefit of all”

President Joseph Fielding Smith



Doing Good To Others

“For inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me.”

As we do
good unto
others, we do
it unto the
Lord

Living Within Our Means

The Lord does not expect us to make our own clothing. However, He does want us to be neat and clean in our appearance.



Let us be more concerned about the adornment of our minds that are eternal, rather than adornment of our persons with things that are of no lasting benefit.”

George Albert Smith



Idleness

Lazy-- a term which generally refers to a lack of motion and/or energy.

“People say nothing is impossible, but I do nothing every day.”

— A.A. Milne, *Winnie-the-Pooh*



To the Seminary Student

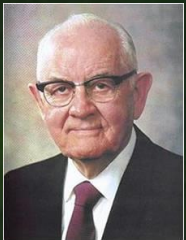
“The happiest part of a man's life is what he passes lying awake in bed in the morning.”

— Samuel Johnson



“Consecration is the giving of one’s time, talents, and means to care for those in need—whether spiritually or temporally—and in building the Lord’s kingdom”

President Spencer W. Kimball



Sources:

Videos:

They Gave Up Their Christmas(4:45)

Caring for the Poor and Needy(5:40)

Sacrifice Whatever the Lord Requires (1:11)



(Church History in the Fulness of Times Student Manual, 2nd ed. [Church Educational System manual, 2003], 95).

[Levi W. Hancock, “Levi Hancock Journal,” LDS Historical Department, Salt Lake City, p. 81.]”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson (“Reflections on a Consecrated Life,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 16).

President Marion G. Romney (J. Reuben Clark, Jr., in Conference Report, Oct. 1942, p. 55)” (“Living the Principles of the Law of Consecration,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1979, 3).

President Joseph Fielding Smith(*Church History and Modern Revelation*, 2 vols. [1953], 1:205).

George Albert Smith (In Conference Report, Apr. 1915, p. 97.)

Spencer W. Kimball (“Welfare Services: The Gospel in Action,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1977, 78).

“Bishops’ Storehouse Opens the Windows of Heaven,” Church News and Events, May 20, 2011, LDS.org).

Laws of Consecration compared to socialistic programs:

The Lord's law of consecration compared to socialistic programs

Some have suggested that the practice of the law of consecration and the system of the united order are only a religious kind of socialism or communism.

Others assert that it was a development either from the economic philosophies of Joseph Smith's day or from communal experiments within the new religion.

Such assumptions are false. In more recent times President Marion G. Romney of the First Presidency outlined the revealed system of the united order:

“(1) The cornerstone of the United Order is belief in God and acceptance of him as Lord of the earth and the author of the United Order. ...

“(2) The United Order is implemented by the voluntary free-will actions of men, evidenced by a consecration of all their property to the Church of God. ...

“(3) ... The United Order is operated upon the principle of private ownership and individual management. ...

“(4) The United Order is non-political. ...

“(5) A righteous people is a prerequisite to the United Order. ...

“The United Order exalts the poor and humbles the rich. In the process both are sanctified. The poor, released from the bondage and humiliating limitations of poverty, are enabled as free men to rise to their full potential, both temporally and spiritually. The rich, by consecration and by imparting of their surplus for the benefit of the poor, not by constraint but willingly as an act of free will, evidence that charity for their fellowmen characterized by Mormon as ‘the pure love of Christ.’ (Moro. 7:47.)” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1966, 97).

President J. Reuben Clark Jr. of the First Presidency said: “The United Order has not been generally understood. ... [It] was not a communal system. ... The United Order and communism are not synonymous” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1943, 11).

Personal Responsibility:

President Romney explained that we need to take personal responsibility for caring for the poor and needy: “In this modern world plagued with counterfeits for the Lord's plan, we must not be misled into supposing that we can discharge our obligations to the poor and the needy by shifting the responsibility to some governmental or other public agency. Only by voluntarily giving out of an abundant love for our neighbors can we develop that charity characterized by Mormon as ‘the pure love of Christ.’ (Moro. 7:47)” (“Caring for the Poor and Needy,” *Ensign*, Jan. 1973, 98).

Idleness: President Clark made the following statements about government **gratuities:**

“The dispensing of these great quantities of gratuities has produced in the minds of hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of people ... a love for idleness, a feeling that the world owes them a living. It has made a breeding ground for some of the most destructive political doctrines that have ever found any hold, ... and I think it may lead us into serious political trouble” (quoted in Marion G. Romney, “Church Welfare Services’ Basic Principles,” *Ensign*, May 1976, 121).

“Society owes to no man a life of idleness, no matter what his age. I have never seen one line in Holy Writ that calls for, or even sanctions this. In the past no free society has been able to support great groups in idleness and live free” (in Conference Report, Apr. 1938, 107).

Fast Offerings: In addition to paying tithing, we are commanded to give of our substance to assist the poor and needy. One way to do this is by fasting and going without food and drink for two consecutive meals. The Lord restored the principle of fasting through the Prophet Joseph Smith, and the Church designates one Sunday a month as a day of fasting. Fasting, which has always been an indication of the true church, is an opportunity for spiritual renewal and growing closer to our Heavenly Father. As part of the fast, members of the Church contribute a generous fast offering for the care of the poor and the needy. This offering should be at least the value of the two meals the Church member went without while fasting. These funds are used to provide food, shelter, and other necessities to people in need, both locally and worldwide. There is no standard donation amount for fast offerings. As you contribute generously to these funds, you will be blessed both spiritually and temporally for your desire to help others. *Tithing and Fast Offerings*, (2007), 1–14