

# Doctrine and Covenants 14-16

## The Whitmer's



*“And ye shall be hated  
of all men for my  
name’s sake: but he  
that endureth to the  
end shall be saved.”  
Matthew 10:22*



# Zealous Friends and Neighbors

Late May 1829

The threats caused Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery to move from Harmony, Pennsylvania, to Fayette, New York

David Whitmer helped them move to his home



The Whitmer family took great interest in the unfolding events of the Restoration.

They were “anxious to know their respective duties”

Their roles were received in a revelation to Joseph Smith in D&C 14-16

# David Whitmer

He was born on January 7, 1805, near Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

He was the son of Peter Whitmer Sr. and brought up as a Presbyterian

He learned in 1828 of the mission of Joseph Smith

He became one of the three witnesses of the Book of Mormon

He was one of the original 6 members of the Church when it was organized on April 6, 1830 and ordain an elder that day

While the translation of the Book of Mormon went on in the Whitmer home he and his brothers, John and Peter, were anxious to know the will of God concerning them

He was president of the Clay County high council in 1834, and President of the Church in Missouri

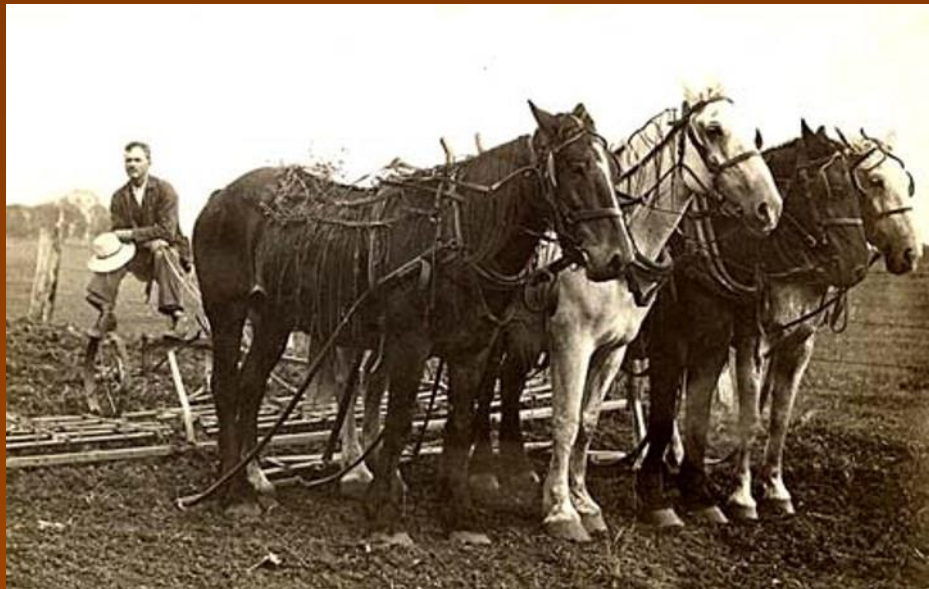
He fell prey to pride and apostasy and on April 13, 1838 he was excommunicated and moved to Richmond, Missouri where he set up a business and community service. He was known as honest and was respected

He died January 25, 1888 and consistently confirmed his witness of the Book of Mormon



# 2 Days of Heavy Work

“David Whitmer needed to plant wheat seed on the family farm and spread plaster of paris, which was used as a fertilizer. He felt inspired that he should help Joseph and Oliver after he had completed those tasks.



“David went to the field, and found that he had two heavy days’ work before him. ... He then fastened his horses to the harrow, and instead of dividing the field into what is, by farmers, usually termed lands, drove around the whole of it, continuing thus till noon, when, on stopping for dinner, he looked around, and discovered to his surprise, that he had harrowed in full half the wheat. After dinner he went on as before, and by evening he finished the whole two days’ work.

# The Sowing Is Done

“His father, on going into the field the same evening, saw what had been done, and he exclaimed, ‘There must be an overruling hand in this, and I think you would better go down to Pennsylvania as soon as your plaster of paris is sown.’



“The next morning, David took a wooden measure under his arm and went out to sow the plaster, which he had left, two days previous, in heaps near his sister’s house, but, on coming to the place, he discovered that it was gone! He then ran to his sister, and inquired of her if she knew what had become of it. Being surprised she said, ‘Why do you ask me? was it not all sown yesterday?’

# Three Men

“Not to my knowledge,’ answered David.  
“I am astonished at that,’ replied his sister,  
‘for the children came to me in the forenoon,  
and begged of me to go out and see the men  
sow plaster in the field, saying, that they  
never saw anybody sow plaster so fast in  
their lives.



I accordingly went, and saw three men at  
work in the field, as the children said, but,  
supposing that you had hired some help, on  
account of your hurry, I went immediately  
into the house, and gave the subject no  
further attention.’

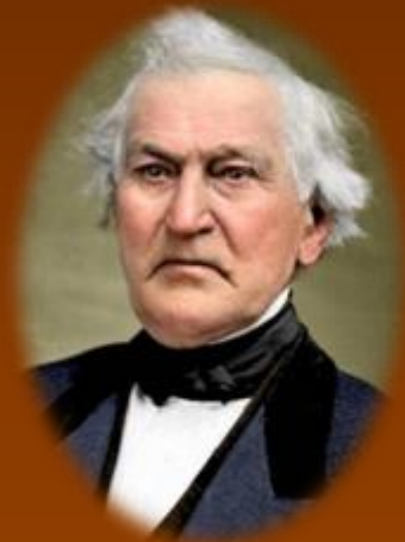
“David made considerable inquiry in regard  
to the matter, both among his relatives and  
neighbors, but was not able to learn who had  
done it”

Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother,*



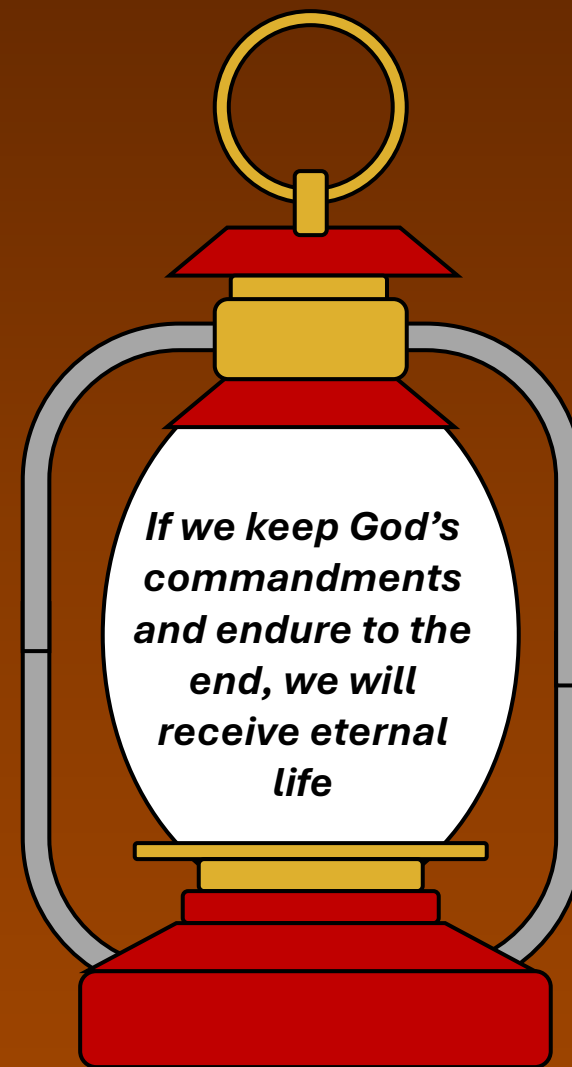
# Promises and Blessings to David Whitmer

In order for David Whitmer or any of God's children to have eternal life they must endure to the end, that is, remain faithful throughout their mortal probation.



*“But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”  
Matthew 24:13*

*“Beareth all things, believeth all things,  
hopeth all things, endureth all things.”  
1 Corinthians 13:7*



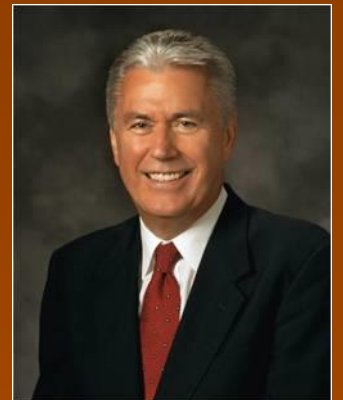


Enduring to the end, or remaining faithful to the laws and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout our life, is a fundamental requirement for salvation in the kingdom of God. ...

... Enduring to the end is not just a matter of passively tolerating life's difficult circumstances or "hanging in there."

Ours is an active religion, helping God's children along the strait and narrow path to develop their full potential during this life and return to Him one day.

Dieter F. Uchtdorf





Why do you think keeping the commandments and enduring to the end are required to obtain eternal life?

How is Jesus Christ an example of keeping the commandments and faithfully enduring to the end?

How can this knowledge help us keep an eternal perspective when dealing with life's challenges?



# What Blessings Can We Receive?

Stand as a Witness:

The Lord counseled David Whitmer to ask in faith and to be believing so that he would receive the Holy Ghost and also that he might see, hear, and know the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

*Student Manual*

In what ways has the Lord asked you to assist in His work?

What blessings have come into your life as you have assisted in the Lord's work?





If we give our heart to God, if we love the Lord Jesus Christ, if we do the best we can to live the gospel, then tomorrow—and every other day—is ultimately going to be magnificent, even if we don't always recognize it as such.

Why? Because our Heavenly Father wants it to be! He wants to bless us.

A rewarding, abundant, and eternal life is the very object of His merciful plan for His children!

It is a plan predicated on the truth “that all things work together for good to them that love God”,

So, keep loving. Keep trying. Keep trusting. Keep believing. Keep growing. Heaven is cheering you on today, tomorrow, and forever.

Jeffrey R. Holland



# Who Are The Gentiles?

“We are all Gentiles. The Latter-day Saints are all Gentiles in a national capacity. The Gospel came to us among the Gentiles.

We are not Jews, and the Gentile nations have got to hear the Gospel first.

The whole Christian world have got to hear the Gospel, and when they reject it, the law will be bound and the testimony sealed, and it will turn to the house of Israel.

Up to the present day we have been called to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, and we have had to do it.

For the last time we have been warning the world, and we have been engaged in that work for forty-five years.”

President Wilford Woodruff



# John Whitmer

He was born on August 27, 1802, at Fayette Township, New York, third son of Peter Whitmer Sr.

He learned in 1828 of the mission of Joseph Smith and assisted as scribe in the translation of the Book of Mormon

He was baptized by Oliver Cowdery

He was one of the 8 witnesses of the Book of Mormon

Tirelessly he engaged in missionary work for the restored gospel

He wrote segments of the history of the Church and assisted in the care for and published the revelation of the Lord as part of the covenant obligation of the Church leadership

He became a member of the presidency of the Church in Missouri. Later, in Kirtland, he became editor of the *Messenger and Advocate* publication

He helped in the financial transactions for purchasing tracts of lands...because of allegations concerning irregularities in these transactions...he was excommunicated on March 10, 1838

He died on July 11, 1878..he was bitter against Joseph Smith but never recanted his testimony of the Book of Mormon



# Peter Whitmer

He was born on September 27, 1809 at Fayette Township, New York. He was the 5<sup>th</sup> son of Peter Whitmer Sr.

He learned in 1828 of the mission of Joseph Smith and baptized in June 1829 by Oliver Cowdery and ordained an elder

He served as a scribe and became one of the 8 witnesses of the Book of Mormon

He was sent with Parley P. Pratt , Oliver Cowdery, and Zeba Peterson on a mission to the Lamanites

He established a trade as a tailor

He was ordained a high priest on October 25, 1831

Because of mob persecution he relocated to Clay County, Missouri

He took an active part in the Saints and had a charitable nature

He remained faithful to the end and because of his health he died on September 22, 1836 at Liberty, Clay County, Missouri

His revelation is revealed in D&C 16 and identical to John Whitmer's in D&C 15



# Same Message

The Lord reveals the same message to different individuals because they may have similar needs, circumstances, or desires.

**However**

We can be sure that He knows us individually. In this example, He called John Whitmer and Peter Whitmer Jr. by name and revealed His will to them one at a time.



Hearken—Listen to the words you have asked for

Sharpness—two edge sword—the word of the Lord

My arm—God’s power, all over the earth, and He has made known

Declare repentance—to engage in the ministry...which eventually John forgot

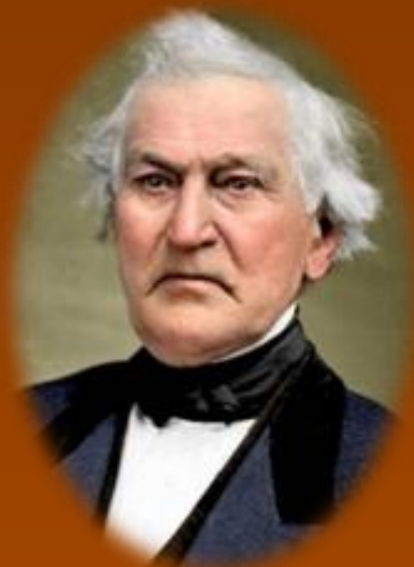
# Testimonies of David and John Whitmer

“I will say once more to all mankind, that I have never at any time denied that testimony or any part thereof. I also testify to the world, that neither

Oliver Cowdery nor Martin Harris ever at any time denied their testimony. They both died affirming the truth of the divine authenticity of the

Book of Mormon.”

David Whitmer in a proclamation to the American Cyclopedia and the Encyclopedia Britannica



Even though there was a falling out with John and Joseph he still had a testimony of the Book of Mormon

Statement made to Heber C. Kmball and Theodore Turley in Far West...

“I now say, I handled those plates; there were fine engraving on both sides, I handled them, they were shown to me by supernatural power.”

John Whitmer



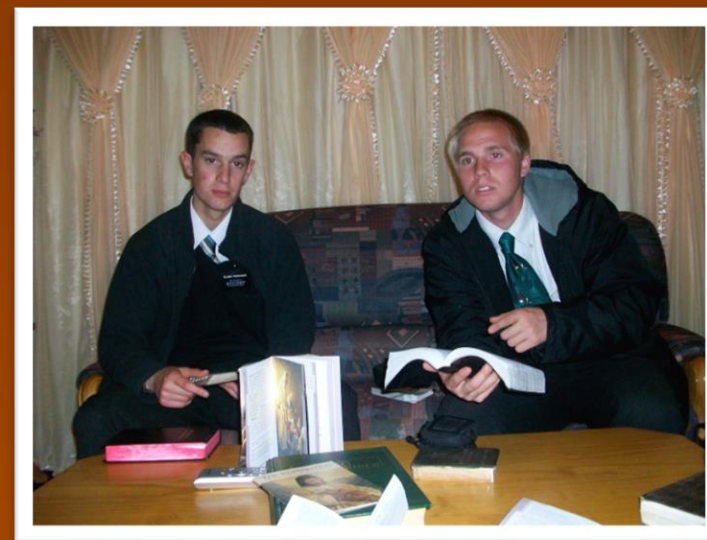


# “God Knows Who I Am”

“Some time ago I spoke with a priesthood leader who was prompted to memorize the names of all of the youth ages 13 to 21 in his stake. Using snapshots of the young men and women, he created flash cards that he reviewed while traveling on business and at other times. This priesthood leader quickly learned all of the names of the youth.



“One night the priesthood leader had a dream about one of the young men whom he knew only from a picture. In the dream he saw the young man dressed in a white shirt and wearing a missionary name tag. With a companion seated at his side, the young man was teaching a family. The young man held the Book of Mormon in his hand, and he looked as if he were testifying of the truthfulness of the book. The priesthood leader then awoke from his dream.



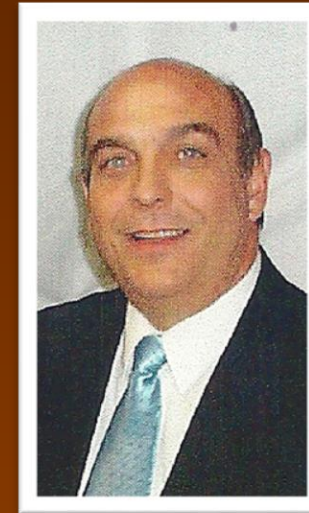
# “God Knows Who I Am”



“At an ensuing priesthood gathering, the leader approached the young man he had seen in his dream and asked to talk with him for a few minutes. After a brief introduction, the leader called the young man by name and said: ‘I am not a dreamer. I have never had a dream about a single member of this stake, except for you. I am going to tell you about my dream, and then I would like you to help me understand what it means.’

“The priesthood leader recounted the dream and asked the young man about its meaning. Choking with emotion, the young man simply replied, ‘It means God knows who I am.’ The remainder of the conversation between this young man and his priesthood leader was most meaningful, and they agreed to meet and counsel together from time to time during the following months”

David A. Bednar



# Enduring to the End



“Enduring to the end is the doctrine of continuing on the path leading to eternal life after one has entered into the path through faith, repentance, baptism, and receiving the Holy Ghost. Enduring to the end requires our whole heart. ...

“Enduring to the end means that we have planted our lives firmly on gospel soil, staying in the mainstream of the Church, humbly serving our fellow men, living Christlike lives, and keeping our covenants.

Those who endure are balanced, consistent, humble, constantly improving, and without guile. Their testimony is not based on worldly reasons—it is based on truth, knowledge, experience, and the Spirit”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin



## Sources:

## Videos:

**Inviting All to Come unto Christ: Sharing the Gospel (4:29)**

**God Knows Who I Am (1:55)**

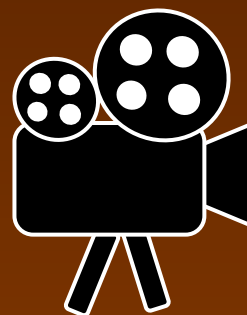
**God Will Lift Us Up (4:58)**

**Am I Good Enough (3:28)**

**Days of Harmony” (25:01) from time code 21:55 to 23:53**

**“A Day for the Eternities” (23:09) from time code 1:35 to 8:20**

**“Whitmer Farm: A Place of Miracles” (15:42) from time code 0:00 to 4:23**



*Who’s Who in the Doctrine and Covenants* by Ed J. Pinegar and Richard J. Allen pg. 165, 166-167, 168-169

Hyrum M. Smith *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary* pg. 71,74

(Lucy Mack Smith, *History of Joseph Smith by His Mother*, ed. Preston Nibley [1958], 148–49).

*Doctrine and Covenants Student Manual Religion* 324-325 pg. 30

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President Wilford Woodruff (In *Journal of Discourses*, 18:112.)

John Whitmer *Historical Record* p. 485 also found in Hyrum M. Smith *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary* pg. 75

David Whitmer’s proclamation to the American Cyclopaedia and the Encyclopedia Britannica

[http://www.fairmormon.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Book\\_of\\_Mormon\\_Witnesses\\_4.pdf](http://www.fairmormon.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Book_of_Mormon_Witnesses_4.pdf)

David A. Bednar (“The Tender Mercies of the Lord,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2005, 100).

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin (“Press On,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2004, 101).

Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Have We Not Reason to Rejoice?,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2007, 20

Jeffrey R. Holland, “Tomorrow the Lord Will Do Wonders among You,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, May 2016, 127

In 1833 when Missouri vigilantes were harassing the Mormons, a mob of about five hundred men put David's testimony to the test. The mob drove David and several others to the public square, stripped, tarred, and feathered them, aimed their guns then threatened these men to deny the Book of Mormon and confess it to be a fraud, or die instantly. David Whitmer raised his hands and bore witness to these angry men that the Book of Mormon was the Word of God. The mob trembled with fear and let them go. Afterwards, an unbelieving doctor told David that his fearless testimony and the fear that gripped the mob had made him a believer in the Book of Mormon...

Shortly after David and other notable Mormons had been excommunicated Sidney Rigdon preached his "Salt Sermon" (which was later criticized by the Brethren) warning dissenters to leave town. Other radical Mormons, such as Sampson Avard, enforced expulsion of those who did not leave on their own. Joseph Smith and the Twelve criticized Rigdon's aggressive speeches as well as the secret and unsanctioned actions of Avard. As Anderson noted, "David Whitmer could have received true spiritual comfort because of the unjust methods that his former associates were using against him...."

Whitmer claims that God told him to separate himself from the Latter-day Saints. This could easily have been inspired direction. Confrontation with some of the more radical characters within the Church (such as Sampson) might have caused Whitmer serious harm (physical, emotional, or spiritual). However Whitmer understood this direction from God, it did not conflict with his testimony of the truthfulness of the Book of Mormon.

David Whitmer left the Church in 1838 but continued to proclaim and assert his testimony and the truthfulness of what he had seen and heard. Although Whitmer never returned to Mormonism, in the fifty years he lived outside of the Church he insisted that he knew the Book of Mormon was divinely revealed. Anyone seriously interested in Whitmer's testimony should read Lyndon W. Cook's, David Whitmer Interviews: A Restoration Witness.

Cook documents seventy-two interviews with Whitmer concerning his experience with the angel and plates – the experience upon which his Book of Mormon testimony is based. All seventy-two interviews took place after David had left the Church. If he had lost his testimony following his excommunication, he would have had ample opportunity to deny his earlier proclamation. Instead, however, we find that Whitmer continued to assert its truthfulness.

Like Oliver Cowdery, and Martin Harris, David Whitmer bore the testimony to the truthfulness of reality of his encounter with the angel and the authenticity of the Book of Mormon until the day he died. Book of Mormon critics have not been able to impugn their testimonies but have instead resorted to character assassination. As history demonstrates, however, the honesty, integrity and reliability of these witnesses confound the critics every bit as much as the testimony of the three witnesses confounds those who refuse to accept the revealed word of God.

Excerpts from  
fairmormon.org  
on David  
Whitmer