

# SECTION 76 (MODERN D&C 79)

FAITH: Mormonism | TEXT: Doctrine and Covenants | VOLUME: 1835 Edition | AUTHOR: Joseph Smith

## OVERVIEW

This text, identified as Section 76 in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants (renumbered as Section 79 in modern editions), is a specific missiological directive given through Joseph Smith to Jared Carter in March 1832. The revelation commands Carter to travel to the 'eastern countries' (the eastern United States) to preach the 'everlasting gospel.' It emphasizes the necessity of his specific priesthood ordination as the source of his power to preach. The text promises the companionship of the 'Comforter' (Holy Spirit) to guide his path and teach him truth. It concludes with a conditional promise: if Carter is faithful in this assignment, he will be 'crowned again with sheaves,' a metaphor for converts and spiritual harvest. Theologically, it establishes the pattern of the Prophet receiving specific logistical commands for subordinates directly from Jesus Christ, reinforcing the hierarchical nature of Mormon missiology.

## KEY FIGURES

Jesus Christ (The Speaker), Jared Carter (The Recipient), The Comforter (The Holy Spirit)

## DOCTRINES ANALYZED

### 1. ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY IN EVANGELISM

**Assertion:** Preaching the gospel requires specific 'power of the ordination' rather than just faith or a call from the Spirit.

"go... in the power of the ordination wherewith he has been ordained"

**Evangelical Comparison:** In Evangelical theology, the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) applies to all believers by virtue of their faith and the indwelling Spirit (1 Peter 2:9). No specific ritual ordination is required to proclaim the Gospel. This text, however, ties the efficacy and authorization of preaching to a specific priesthood ordination received within the LDS hierarchy, suggesting that without this specific ritual authority, the preaching lacks the necessary 'power.'

### 2. CONDITIONAL REWARD

**Assertion:** Spiritual crowning and harvest are contingent upon the individual's faithfulness in fulfilling the assignment.

"inasmuch as he is faithful I will crown him again with sheaves"

**Evangelical Comparison:** While Evangelicals believe God rewards faithfulness (1 Corinthians 3:8), the phrasing 'inasmuch as he is faithful' introduces a conditional clause common in Mormon scripture. It places the burden of the harvest on the missionary's performance. In contrast, Evangelical theology emphasizes that God gives the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6-7) and that our standing/crowning is based on Christ's finished work, not the volume of our 'sheaves' or the perfection of our labor.

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

**Divergence Status:** Yes

**Theological Gap:** The fundamental gap lies in the source of authority. For the Evangelical, authority to preach comes from the Great Commission recorded in the Bible and the internal call of the Holy Spirit. For the adherent of this text, authority is mediated through a hierarchy: Joseph Smith receives the revelation, and Jared Carter must have a specific 'ordination' to possess power. Furthermore, the text presents the 'everlasting gospel' not merely as the news of Christ's atonement, but as the specific message of the Mormon restoration which Carter is sent to proclaim.

**Shared Values:**

Zeal for evangelism; Reliance on the Holy Spirit (Comforter); Joy in the Gospel; Jesus Christ as Lord

**Friction Points:**

- 1. [Critical] Sola Scriptura – The text presents a modern dictation from Jesus as binding scripture.
- 2. [Major] Universal Priesthood – Restricts the power to preach to those with specific 'ordination.'
- 3. [Moderate] Sola Gratia – Implies rewards ('crown') are contingent on the missionary's 'faithfulness' (performance).

**Semantic Warnings:**

**"Ordination"**

**In Text:** Conferral of specific Melchizedek Priesthood authority necessary to act in God's name.

**Evangelical:** Often a public recognition of a call (laying on of hands), but not a transmission of mystical power required for the Gospel to be valid (1 Timothy 4:14).

**Example:** *In this text, Carter preaches 'in the power of the ordination.' In Evangelicalism, one preaches in the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8).*

**"Everlasting Gospel"**

**In Text:** The restored gospel as taught by Joseph Smith (often implying the specific ordinances and church structure).

**Evangelical:** The good news of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Revelation 14:6, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4).

**Example:** *Carter is sent to preach the 'everlasting gospel,' which in 1832 context included the Book of Mormon and Joseph Smith's prophetic claims.*

**SOTERIOLOGY**

**Salvation Defined:** In this specific text, salvation/reward is framed as a 'crown' received after faithful labor.

**How Attained:** Through faithfulness in the assigned mission and the exercise of priesthood power.

**Basis of Assurance:** Assurance is linked to the 'Comforter' and the promise of a crown \*if\* faithful.

**Comparison to Sola Fide:** The text focuses on active labor ('go', 'proclaim') as the prerequisite for the crown, contrasting with the passive reception of righteousness through faith in Christ (Romans 4:5).

**MANDATES & REQUIREMENTS**

**Explicit Commands:**

- 1. Go again into the eastern countries
- 2. Go from place to place, and from city to city
- 3. Proclaim glad tidings of great joy
- 4. Let your heart be glad
- 5. Fear not

**Implicit Obligations:**

- 1. Submit to the logistical direction of the Prophet
- 2. Rely on the specific ordination received
- 3. Produce converts ('sheaves') as a sign of faithfulness

**Ritual Requirements:**

- 1. Ordination (presupposed as the basis for the mission)

**EVANGELISM TOOLKIT**

**Discovery Questions:**

- 1. When this revelation speaks of the 'power of the ordination,' do you feel that a person without this specific ordination can effectively lead someone to salvation in Christ?
- 2. The text says 'inasmuch as he is faithful I will crown him.' How do you handle the pressure of wondering if you have been 'faithful enough' to earn that crown?

3. How does the promise of the Comforter here compare to the biblical promise that the Spirit is a seal of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13-14) rather than a conditional guide based on mission performance?

#### **Redemptive Analogies:**

1. The desire for 'Sheaves' (Fruit) – Just as Carter desired to bring a harvest to God, we all long to be fruitful. In the Gospel, Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches; fruit is a natural result of abiding in Him, not a forced production to earn a crown. [John 15:5]
2. Guidance of the Comforter – The text highlights a longing for divine guidance. The Gospel assures us that the Holy Spirit dwells in every believer permanently, guiding us into all truth without the need for a new prophetic revelation for every journey. [John 16:13]

#### **Spiritual Weight:**

1. Performance Anxiety [Moderate] – The believer must perform (go, preach, get sheaves) to be considered 'faithful' and receive the crown. This creates a burden where spiritual standing is measured by external results.
2. Dependency on Hierarchy [Moderate] – The believer cannot simply go and preach; they must wait for 'ordination' and specific direction from the leader (Joseph Smith), creating a spiritual dependency on the institution rather than direct reliance on Christ.

### **EPISTEMOLOGY**

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**Knowledge Source:** Prophetic Revelation (Mediated)

**Verification Method:** The text promises the 'Comforter' will teach him, implying experiential verification through feelings or guidance during the mission.

**Evangelical Contrast:** Evangelicals discern God's will primarily through illuminated Scripture (Psalm 119:105) and wisdom, rather than awaiting new, binding first-person revelations from a prophet for personal travel plans.

### **TEXTUAL CRITICISM**

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**Dating:** March 12, 1832

**Authorship:** Joseph Smith (dictated)

**Textual Issues:** In the 1835 edition, this was Section 76. In the modern (1981/2013) edition, this text is Section 79. The modern Section 76 is the 'Vision of the Degrees of Glory,' which was Section 91 in the 1835 edition. This analysis focuses strictly on the text provided (Jared Carter revelation).