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Noyes grew intensely concerned about God's will for him. After tremendous study and what some believed to be an emotional breakdown, Noyes came to believe that God could not expect the impossible from his subjects, and that the perfection that he demanded was not only attainable, but that it could be accomplished by an inner sense of salvation. Noyes also believed that the millennium had actually arrived in 70 A.D. He based this on what he interpreted to be Christ's expectation that the millennium would arrive within one generation of His death. In Noyes' understanding, therefore, the saints had been separated from sinners for generations, and no longer needed to fear sin. These two ideas working in combination, led Noyes to the belief that the Kingdom of Heaven could be realized on earth. He wrote in 1847: "The church on earth is now rising to meet the approaching kingdom in the heavens, and to become its duplicate and representative on earth."

As Noyes said, beyond an inner sense of salvation, in order to attain the kingdom of heaven on earth he and his followers would have to duplicate Heaven, and to do this they would have to follow Christ's teaching on what the reign of God would be like. One important tenet was that the community must be truly communist economically. All the members were equal, and each had a job that help to support the community as a whole.

But the most famous rule that Noyes imposed was based on Christ's teaching that there would be no marriage in Heaven. Therefore, Noyes believed that on earth all men were married to all women, and that the men and women in the community should be sexually intimate with a variety of partners. Noyes called this practice complex marriage. Complex marriage was essential to Noyes, because he felt that it moved the community beyond the traditionally divisive commitments to one partner or the family, and raised this love and loyalty inherent in those commitments to the level of the community, just as he envisioned it in Heaven. The practice of complex marriage was regulated by the practice of what Noyes called "male continence", a highly successful form of birth control. Noyes needed to control pregnancy so he could control which members of the community parented children, and through this type of social engineering people his community with only the "best" individuals.