

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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### Attention Muggles

If you don't know what a "Muggle" is, you probably don't need to read any more. Muggles are us. Muggles are people who are not witches, wizards or warlocks. The term "muggle" was coined by the author of the Harry Potter books and describes people without magical powers. You may not have an opinion on this series of books, but the books have surely produced some strong opinions, both for and against this type of literature.

Without getting into a discussion of whether we should allow our children to read books like Harry Potter, I would like to make an observation. According to the media hype, people stood in line from 9:00 P.M. until midnight to buy a copy at about \$20.00 per book. Some people then spent the rest of the night reading. The least that can be said is that these books definitely appeal to young and old in our world community.

What is the appeal? Why are "modern" people so caught up with an imaginary story about a school for witches? Perhaps it is because many yearn for the power that comes from the right spell or incantation. The sad thing is, no matter how interesting these books, they depict an imitation of the real power that can only come from the Holy Spirit. Earth citizens are again trading a fiction for the real thing.

One good thing that has come out of these stories is the number of young people that have shut off the TV, their video games and music, and are reading! What would be the effect if these same young people had that kind of desire to read their scriptures? Wouldn't it be great if our people got so excited about the Scriptures that they stayed up all night reading. Perhaps that is exactly what the Psalmist had in mind. (Psalm 1:2)

## TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

### Finding Liberty

Elder Michael Jordison chose to lead his Communion service sermon June 1 with a speech given many years ago.

Give Me Liberty Or Give Me Death - March 23, 1775

"No man thinks more highly than I do of the patriotism, as well as the abilities of the very worthy gentlemen who have just addressed the house. But different men often see the same subject in different lights; and, therefore, I hope it will not be thought disrespectful to those gentlemen, if, entertaining as I do opinions of a character very opposite to theirs, I should speak forth my sentiments freely, and without reserve. This is no time for ceremony. The question before the house is one of awful moment to this country. Should I keep back my opinions at such a time, through fear of giving offense, I should consider myself as guilty of treason towards my country, and of an act of disloyalty toward the majesty of heaven, which I revere above all earthly kings.

"Mr. President, it is natural to man to indulge in the illusions of hope. We are apt to shut out eyes against a painful truth -- and listen to the song of that siren, till she transforms us into beasts. Is this the part of wise men, engaged in a great and arduous struggle for liberty? Are we disposed to be of the number of those, who having eyes, see not, and having ears, hear not, the things which so nearly concern their temporal salvation? For my part, whatever anguish of spirit it may cost, I am willing to know the whole truth; to know the worst, and to provide for it.

"If we wish to be free -- if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending -- if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon, until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained -- we must fight! -- I repeat, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left us!

"They tell us, sir, that we are weak -- unable to cope with so formidable an adversary. But when shall we be stronger? Will it be the next week or the next year? Shall we gather strength by irresolution and inaction? Shall we acquire the means of effectual resistance by lying supinely on our backs, and hugging the delusive phantom of hope, until our enemies shall have bound us hand and foot? Sir, we are not weak, if we make a proper use of those means which the God of nature hath placed in our power. Millions of

people armed in the holy cause of liberty, and in such a country as that which we possess, are invincible by any force which our enemy can send against us. Besides, sir, we shall not fight our battles alone. There is a just God who presides over the destinies of nations; and who will raise up friends to fight our battles for us. The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we are base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat, but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged. Their clanking may be heard on the plains! The war is inevitable -- and let it come! I repeat, sir, let it come!

"It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace -- but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery. Forbid it, Almighty God! -- I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

"The words of Patrick Henry have rung in the ears and hearts of many a patriot since that day of 1775 where they were delivered to the third Virginia convention in St. Johns Church. A lawyer, congressman, colonel, Governor of Virginia and considered one of the greatest orators of all time, Patrick Henry was instrumental in the persuasion of the colonies to rebel in arms against King George. He was also a key figure in the drafting of the United States Bill of Rights and the religious freedom act of Virginia. However, one thing I believe stands out most notably about his life:

"Nearly ten years previous, when King George declared all 13 North American colonies to be in a state of open rebellion, Lord Dunsmore, the Royal Governor of Virginia, ordered all the gunpowder in Williamsburg seized and stored aboard his ship which had been anchored in the Virginia harbor. Patrick Henry, then a Virginia militia Colonel, with his militia troops forced Lord Dunsmore to return the gunpowder which had been set aside for the Virginia militia by the Colonial legislature. It was for this action that Patrick Henry became "Public Enemy No. 1" in the eyes of the British.

"Ten years before his famous, "Give me liberty, Or give me death!" speech, he showed to the New World his tenacity by placing his own life on the line in turning the British Empire against him. His speech was more than inspiring rhetoric, it was an expression of the commitment that he'd already made. Much like what we're saying here today in the communion prayers.

"Now I didn't want to come here and tell you about Patrick Henry, and heaven knows there is much more that could be shared about him, or about his contemporaries. I read excerpts of his most famous speech because I believe he eloquently speaks of a foreboding temporal war in terms borrowed from the Bible. I endeavored to read only parts of it as a speech that might be given today in the Christian arena. Every Christian today faces an imperial enemy called sin, led by the master and father of it.

"Brother Winkler last week, as I read, shared about 'winning the race'. And to win it, one must first finish it. The Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul wrote to Timothy and said,

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" 2 Tim 4:7

"The race of life can only be won by fighting the good fight and persevering through the keeping of our faith. Sin is something that must be fought against. It is a never-ending struggle (while in this

life) of life and death to overcome. And eternal life is only given to those who overcome sin's grasp. At the climax of his speech Patrick Henry said, "Give me Liberty or Give me death!" I believe we understand what he meant by that, but I would say that true Liberty only comes as a result of death and that the cost of liberty is slavery and submission. But to whom?

"Webster's 1828 dictionary defines liberty as such: 1. Freedom from restraint, in a general sense, and applicable to the body, or to the will or mind. The body is at liberty, when not confined; the will or mind is at liberty, when not checked or controlled. A man enjoys liberty, when no physical force operates to restrain his actions or volitions.

"A man is at liberty when no physical force operates to restrain his actions or volitions -- when he's not confined or controlled. A man is at liberty when he's completely free to make his own decisions by his own free will. To do as he pleases. Now the definition from the Inspired Version:

Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 2 Corinthians 3:17

"According to the scriptures, liberty is defined simply as 'where the Spirit of the Lord is'. From this we might rewrite Daniel Webster's definition to say 'A man enjoys liberty, when no physical or evil spiritual force operates to restrain his actions or volitions.' Although physical liberty is freedom from bondage and compelled servitude, true liberty (which I believe is spiritual) requires bondage and servitude. How can one be influenced by sin, when one is inhabited by the Spirit of the Lord? Now I don't think that because one is inhabited by the Spirit of God, that there is no operation underway by the enemy of mankind to restrain him from acting righteously. You can take my life as a very good example that that is not the case.

#### **Mission of the devil and the mission of Christ**

"Timothy and Isaiah teach us that those who follow the devil are gathered as prisoners and placed in a pit otherwise known as hell. (2 Tim 2:26; Isaiah 24:22) They are no longer free, but are slaves to the will of the devil. But Isaiah goes on to say this about the mission of Jesus Christ:

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;

Isa 42:6 I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

Isa 42:7 To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

"It is the devil's mission to lead us away captive at his will as prisoners. He is the author and father of all misery and woe. But it is Jesus, mission to bring us out of that prison; to set us at liberty - free from the influences of the devil, to which we so easily succumb. And that is why we have come here today -- to remember and to commemorate by the eating of the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ -- that we have been set free from the chains of hell.

"I said earlier that true liberty only comes as a result of death. And that is true. Our sins and desires to follow the devil were placed on Jesus Christ the moment we accepted Him as Lord and Master of our lives. And the penalty of those sins was paid by Christ as he hung upon that cross at Calvary. It is the result of the death of the God of the Universe that we can say we ultimately have liberty.

"And what a terrible price it is. Do you realize that the price for

our sins is still being paid for? The act of Sacrifice that Jesus committed is still in effect, because it is an Eternal Sacrifice. It has no beginning, and no end. It simply is. And without it the universe would shrivel and implode into nonexistence, because the power of the cross is what enabled the creation of it in the first place."

Jesus said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John 6:47

"And it is by the grace of God that those who believe in Jesus Christ submit themselves to the same act of self-sacrifice in obedience to His will. God,s grace empowers those who will accept it by faith -- by "believing" -- to be obedient to His commandments. The price of liberty is not free. It cost the God of Heaven is own earthly life, but it costs us something too. Liberty can only be achieved when we submit to do the will of God. When we were baptized, we were baptized into the death of Jesus Christ. And Jesus died in doing the will of the Father. His life was one complete act of submission -- from the beginning to the end.

"And when we lay claim upon that death -- a death to our sin, we are buying liberty at the price of our own submission to the Father of Heaven. We have become slaves, subject to do His bidding. And what's more, we are "compelled to do it". There is nothing inside of ourselves that enables us to do it. Even our very act of our submission is accomplished through the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

#### **Grace --From the Greek "charis"**

"The Greek word for grace, 'charis' means, "the divine influence upon the heart and the reflection of it in the life."

"God,s grace is what enable us to humble ourselves just enough to begin to hear His will. His grace enables us to even choose -- to have our agency. He really does it all.

"Once we have submitted ourselves to his first commandment, "Repent and be baptized for the remission of your sins" and have received the Holy Ghost, we are born into the Kingdom of God having His spirit to always be with us. We were set at liberty by our submission to Christ's death, and the power it has over us. And we should never again need to buy in to the temptations of the devil - - to be gathered again as a prisoner to his will. We should be ever mindful that as heirs of Christ's Kingdom, and recipients of His Spirit we are free from those wrong choices, which do easily beset us. We are at true Liberty.

#### **All to Jesus I Surrender**

"There is a song that goes, 'All to Jesus, I Surrender. All to Him I freely give. I will ever love and trust Him. In His presence daily live. I surrender all. I surrender all. All to Thee, my blessed Savior. I surrender all.'

"I'll have to be honest here. There are times when I should probably change the words to "A little bit to Jesus, I hesitatingly give." Do you ever feel that way? I don't get up in the morning and decide, "today, I'm going to do things my way and God will just have to step aside". But what does happen, I think, is that I have allowed myself to be in certain situations by my life-style and choices I've already made, which open the door for me to start singing that selfish song.

"I often tell Julie that I've got too much to do, and really I do. Our whole society has got us by the foot and is pulling us in forty different directions. Sometimes I lie awake at night and wonder what it would be like to have nothing to really do. I could really go for a life where all I had to do was pick up after myself and mow the lawn. Sometimes it seems that it would be a relief to go away on vacation and come home to a house that was destroyed by fire.

Things might be simpler after that? (Not really, but it's a nice idea.)

"When I'm distracted by this world is when I fall in to temptation, and really only leave a piece of me tied to God. One small distraction can start a chain of events that leads me to a point of alienation from God. And that's when misery steps in for me. I can easily identify with the author of Amazing Grace who refers to himself as "a wretch".

"It's times like this that I need to remember my purpose here in life. All I really need to do is serve God. And when I serve God, all things are put in their proper perspective. When focused upon the Lord and drawing His spirit to me I find that I am free from the despair of the devil and his work in keeping me distracted with a multitude of other things. This is the liberty that I desire.

#### **I should always be at liberty**

"Now looking back to 2 Corinthians "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty", because I have exercised faith in Jesus Christ and received the baptism of water and fire by the laying of hands, I have the assurance of His Spirit always being with me, therefore I should always be at liberty -- free from the devils influence. Right? But why is it that I'm still tempted?

"King Mosiah sheds some light on why this might be: And now, I say unto you, my brethren, that after ye have known and have been taught all these things, if ye should transgress, and go contrary to that which has been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you to guide you in wisdom's path, that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved.

"It is I that withdraw myself from God,s Spirit, not His Spirit withdrawing from me that enables me to be subject to the temptations of the devil. Mosiah then goes on with some pretty strong words about this situation:

I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open rebellion against God; Therefore he listeth to obey the evil spirit, and becometh an enemy to all righteousness; Therefore, the Lord has no place in him, for he dwelleth not in unholy temples. Therefore, if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God, the demands of divine justice doth awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, Which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord, and doth fill his breast with guilt, and pain, and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flames ascendeth up for ever and ever. And now I say unto you, that mercy hath no claim on that man; therefore, his final doom is to endure a never ending torment. Mos 1:79-85

"But Alma gives a key in order to avoid this situation:

And now my brethren, I wish from the inmost part of my heart, yea, with great anxiety, even unto pain, that ye would hearken unto my words, and cast off your sins, and not procrastinate the day of your repentance; But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long suffering; having faith on the Lord; Having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life; having the love of God always in your hearts, that ye may be lifted up at the last day, and enter into his rest; Alma 10:27-29

"Prayer is the answer. Prayer must be my first defense to remain vigilant in the battle. Alma says we must pray continually that we are not tempted above that which we can bear. When I accepted Christ and subjected myself to His will, He took the chains of sin off me, and I became free to do His will. But in those times when my thoughts turn to myself -- when I feel that liberty is choosing to do

what I WANT, it's like putting the shackles right back on. I'm placing myself back in the prison yard as one of the devil's prisoners.

"And though it may appear that I'm free, I'm really a slave to sin. Being a slave is what comes natural to us. It seems right, and feels right to do as we please. But the natural man is an enemy to God and all righteousness. Sin has made me a natural creature, but God has made me a supernatural creature. Who wants to go back to being something ordinary -- once they've been made "extraordinary"?"

"Evidently I do at times. This is part of a purifying process for me -- to see the wickedness in my life. I can't repent until I've first confronted the sin in my life.

"We're all confronted by sin every day. However, if we've chosen to follow God and have been baptized into His death -- and purified by His fire -- we have already been set free from it. We have been forgiven -- the debt has been remitted -- and God has taken off our chains and given us wings. And what's neat is that even if we haven't yet made that choice, there's still a chance to do it. There's still time.

"And the best part is that the liberty we've been given can't be taken from us by death. And it can't be taken from us if every king of the world conquered us and brought us into bondage, because we're already slaves. Slaves to Jesus Christ. In truth we're always going to be slaves, the only difference is in whom is to be our master. And today many of us are remembering that decision to subject ourselves to Jesus Christ by partaking of the bread and wine -- a representation of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which was shed on the cross. It was Jesus who was made a slave of sin for us, suffering the consequence of it in our place. Our communion is a commemoration of our liberty -- with our payment of remembrance and obedience to the Lord's commandments. That allows His Spirit to always be with us, and therefore keeps us constantly at liberty.

"The scriptures teach that we are not to take the sacrament unworthily nor if we've not repented of sin in our life. How could we commemorate this event when the chains of hell had not been taken from us? Or in the instance where we have been baptized but sin still has control of our lives, how can we celebrate the removing of these chains by Jesus, while we continue to shackle and bind ourselves?"

"Communion is a Holy experience and when we partake unworthily -- with no real intent to turn from sin, it becomes pointless. It serves only as a deception with grave consequences.

"The real answer we must give to all this -- is to recognize that sin has no sway but over the natural man. And as children of Christ, we have been recreated into the supernatural -- in the likeness of God. Therefore we do not have to listen and give way to sin. We have already been set free. We must merely finish the course, fight the good fight and partake of the liberty which has already been given to us."

## The Gospel of Jesus Christ

Elder Gerry Bolingbroke of Lamoni brought the sermon Sunday, June 9, at the Mount Ayr Restoration Branch, talking about the gospel of Christ. He opened by reading scriptures from Genesis 4: 7-9 and 5: 44, 45

"The inspired Version of the Holy Scriptures states that after Adam transgressed by eating the forbidden fruit and was cast out of

the Garden of Eden, he was commanded to offer sacrifices. He did not know at first what was the meaning of this. He was told by the Holy Ghost that it was a similitude of the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The work that was begun with Adam has continued through time. There was a persistent effort by God to bring men to a stable goodness but this was continually opposed by sin. Each new revelation was succeeded by a falling away from that which was revealed.

"We catch glimpses in the Scriptures of some of the spiritual heroes of the early dispensation of time. Enoch the seventh from Adam, walked with God. He had a direct communion with Divinity so that he could see the end of time and could prophesy of that which was to come in the future in the day of judgment. In the book of Jude says it this way in verse 14-22 "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying. Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints. To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among the of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts, and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts. These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost. Keep yourselves in the Love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And some have compassion making a difference.

"We do not want to be like these described in the book of Jude. We live in a time in which these sayings are true. We must always be diligent and stay close to God. There are some in our own community who do not believe the scriptures. They say they are just stories made up by men and not from God.

"Noah, also, "walked with God" Gen 8:3-7 --"And the Lord said unto Noah, The daughters of thy sons have sold themselves, for behold, mine anger is kindled against the sons of men, for they will not hearken to my voice. And it came to pass that Noah prophesied, and taught the things of God, even as it was in the beginning. And the Lord said unto Noah. My spirit shall not always with man, for he shall know that all flesh shall die, yet the his days shall be an hundred and twenty years; and if men do not repent, I will send in the floods upon them. And in those days there were giants on the earth, and they sought Noah to take away his life. But the Lord was with Noah, and the power of the Lord was upon him; and the Lord ordained Noah after his own order, and commanded him that he should go forth and declare his gospel unto the children of men, even as it was given unto Enoch.'

"Thus we see the gospel was plainly taught in the beginning. The Apostle Paul seems to have been deeply aware of the unity of the Gospel in every age. When he wrote to the saints in Galatia, he reminded them of the importance of obedience Gal 1:7-12 "Paul, reminded them that he was not an apostle by the action of men but that he was called of God through his son Jesus Christ. Then he greeted the church in Galatia; He told them grace and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ who gave his life for our sins and that he might deliver us from this evil world according to the will of God, according to the will of God and our Father. Then he gave the glory to God forever and ever, Amen. Then he was astounded that they had left the true gospel and gone into another

gospel. He told them that there are some that are perverting the gospel and giving the saints trouble. Then he told them if Paul and the others with him or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Then to emphasize this he repeated the same thing, . He told them that he would not please men but that if he did so, he would not be the servant of Christ. I He told them that the gospel which he had preached was not from man nor taught it but that he received it by revelation from Jesus Christ., that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. He also told them that this gospel which he was preaching had already been delivered to Abraham. Gal 3:6-9 "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying , In thee shall all the nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

"On another occasion the Apostle Paul wrote to the saints in Corinth:

'Moreover, brethern, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that rock was Christ ' I Cor. 10: 1-4.

"That the gospel referred to is the same gospel is quite clear from a parallel reference in the epistle to the Hebrews where we are assured that the same gospel was preached to their ancestors, but did not profit them. Heb. 4:2 "For unto us was the rest preached, as well as unto them; but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. In Hebrews 11:25, 26 we find Paul was speaking of Moses "By faith Moses , when he was come to the years of discretion, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, that to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.'

"Our heavenly Father has loved men from the beginning and he has made repeated attempts to reveal himself unto them. But the people were not ready for the fullness of his trust. There was an apostasy after the days of Paul and now there is an apostasy in our day too.

"The word Gospel comes from God and Spell from the Anglo-Saxon and means good tidings. In Rom. 10:15 it is said this way. "And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."

## Motivation Counts With God

Luke 18:9-13 was Priest Ed Anderson's choice of scripture with which he introduced his sermon June 15. Jesus "spake a parable unto certain men who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: 'God, I thank thee that I am not

as other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers; or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' But the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying 'God, be merciful to me a sinner.'

After commenting that he usually speaks either on Communion Sunday or Mothers' Day, he noted this is Father's Day, and there are no special flowers and no dinner is being prepared as on the other days.

"I want to talk about how we see ourselves", he said. "I want to talk about motivation. I do a little coaching of little league, and now days they have a new technology that we can even use for the little kids. Mini cams are great. When we go and have batting practice, we can take a picture of them and see their form. You can tell them, 'Don't step back,' or 'You need to step to the pitcher,' or "You need to follow through pitching', and they say, 'Coach, I'm doing that! I doing that! I'm doing that!' Then you take a mini cam and showing them off and they say, 'Well, maybe I'm not doing what I think I'm doing.'

"We have a kind of a little tweak at our house. When a storm shuts the electricity off, it turns on the phone recorder. So if we are home, even if we answer the phone, the recorder is kicked on. My Mom called me one day after a storm. The electricity had been off during the night. I didn't know it, but the recorder was on. So we had the whole conversation with the recorder on. I went back and listened to that conversation just out of curiosity, checking to see if there were any other messages. When I listened to myself I said, 'That can't be me!' I remember the first time I ever listened to myself on a recording and I said, 'That can't be me! I can't sound that bad, can I?'"

### **We Don't See Ourselves As Others See Us**

"We have a problem. Because we are human, we don't see ourselves necessarily as other people see us. It's important to recognize that. It is important to review and to make sure that we come up with a relatively accurate assessment of the way we are. We are called to be the light of the world. What is that? People are looking to the light, right? And if the light isn't quite as bright as we think it should be - if we say and do things that don't represent what we really think - maybe we need to reevaluate who we are as an individual. Maybe we need to take a video camera with us and record everything we do in a day. I think we might be surprised at what we found out about ourselves. On the recorder, my tone to my Mom wasn't necessarily complimentary. She can be irritating at times, but I didn't realize that I was that way on the phone to her - not until I listened to myself again.

"We say things beyond our words with our body language. We can pretend that we are anything we would like to be, but when it comes down to it sometimes that body language betrays us. I kind of get a charge out of a chat room, AOL chat, MSN and a few of the others, all you have is a name. That's all anybody knows about you unless you want to tell them something different. You pick a name that you want to represent you - how you think that you want to be viewed by the people you are talking to. They can't see your body language. You can tell them anything. You can tell them that you are the most beautiful person in the world, that you are a star athlete, that you are rich, that you are famous, that you drive a Ferrari, and little do they know. It's a kind of pretend world if you chose to do it that way. There are a few on there, I think, that probably represent accurately or try to be accurate. The disadvantage for people talking to others who are telling them all the good things about themselves

is you really can't see them. You don't know how they dress. They might be in rags. They might be a little child saying they are an adult. You have no clue to what they are like. But in real life, we see. There is no hiding, and more than hiding from each other, we can never hide from God. There is no way possible that we can put on a facade and tell God that we are a certain person. He knows differently!

### **What Is Your Motivation?**

"When it comes to our activities that we go about through the day, look at our motivation. I read a newspaper occasionally, just out of curiosity, to see if anybody I know has been fined for speeding or for a seat belt or whatever. The government looks at you and says, 'Money motivates, so if you do something wrong, we take the money away from you.' That's not necessarily what motivates people. Some people could have millions of dollars and throw away thousands at a time. No big deal. If they are caught speeding and have to pay a three hundred dollar fine, well, 'I just needed to get there faster'. Three hundred dollars was not a motivation to them. It was not a penalty to them.

"Some people are motivated by peer pressure. What other people expect out of you, that's what you are going to do. If your friends expect something out of you, you perform that way if you want to remain friends with them; and some people are motivated by peer pressure to have certain friends - popularity.

"Some people are motivated by recognition. Some people just love to come up front and receive their award - whatever it might be. Whether it a medal for performing in sports. Whether it's for donating a certain amount of money or donating time for a project. But they live for the recognition, not necessarily for what they need to be doing. So far as service is concerned, we should do things because we want to do them. We don't want the recognition necessarily, but the things that need to be done get done because there is no one else who will do them. We can be involved in all the right endeavors for all the wrong reasons. The scripture says that it is not everybody who cries 'Lord! Lord!' that enters into heaven. I'm sure that those people who are crying 'Lord! Lord!' Have done all of the necessary things. They have paid their tithes. They have prayed. They have helped their neighbor. They have given money; but if you do it for all the wrong reasons, God doesn't recognize that. God makes another statement in the scriptures - 'An evil person cannot give a good gift.' There are a lot of gifts given that I know the giver doesn't want to give but feel like they have to. They'd feel like a heel if they didn't give the wedding gift or if they didn't give something to somebody that asked them. But if your heart says, 'I really don't want to give this gift,' you might as well not have given the gift as far as God is concerned. People appreciate the gift, of course, but as far as God is concerned, you probably did not give the gift. Now, I am not a judge, and I don't know all the situations here, but God is a judge, and He does know all of the situations.

"On the other hand, if you don't have the necessities to give gifts and you say, 'I would have given that gift if I had only had it,' that's motivation - the desire to serve, and I think God considers that the same as that you have given the gift. At least, that's what the scripture says. God judges the heart. We can build a facade. We can pretend to be anybody and anything that we want to be, but God knows the truth. You cannot hide yourself from God.

"I remember someone in Lamoni Stake who had a dream about individuals in Lamoni Stake, that the up and coming prominent people in the church and all of the other people of the church were being admitted to Zion. They were surprised that certain individuals did not automatically just buzz right through the door; and some of

the people they thought were less than spiritual were walking right through the door. Motivation! In that secret place in our hearts that we rarely if ever expose to the world. That place in our hearts that we probably do not expose to anyone - maybe to our spouses - maybe to our children - maybe in times of stress and need to Priesthood, but God knows it. God knows that spot in our hearts.

"In giving gifts, in achieving spiritual blessings, again, people are recognized. Some people seem to like to be named for things. That seems to be one of the things important people like - to have a building named after them or a football field, putting their name up on a plaque somewhere. It maybe for a monetary donation, a donation of time. Some are recognized just because of the good job that they do, and they do it in an excellent manner. But bragging on themselves, letting everybody know how good they are, is not necessarily good. I tell my players on the team, let somebody else tell you how good you are. Don't say it yourself. If you hit a home run, you don't need to tell everybody you hit a home run. I think they have already seen it. Let everybody else tell you that you did a good job. Don't brag on yourself.

### **To God Give the Glory**

"In the religious realm, God says something about fasting. He says something like it is to be done in secret - not to appear to fast. And what's the reward? The reward shall be openly given. We expound our wisdom. That's exactly what it is - our wisdom, not God's. We can pretend that we have the answers to everything, and we can puff ourselves up to all extremes. People can recognize you and people can say, 'Yes. He's a very spiritual man', or 'She's a very spiritual woman,' But God knows the heart. We should not boast of our goodness. What does Christ say about Himself? 'Why call ye me good? Only my Father who is in heaven is good.'

"Our whole being - our whole sustenance is given to us from God for us to be a steward over it to use it to build His kingdom. I know an individual who would pick out people in a store and put ten dollars in their shopping cart. That was their way - seeing the kid needed something they would drop an extra ten dollars in the shopping cart and they would find it in there. That's the kind of individual I would say doesn't need the recognition of the gift. That's the kind of giving, the kind of dedication that is necessary - people who are not seeking to be recognized but seeking to do the will of God in the lives of others with nobody else knowing. They seek out people who stand in need and meet their needs. People can serve - people can move out with motivation and someone else might be watching. We need dedicated people who serve because they love their fellowmen and they love God - unsung heroes.

"Let us all examine ourselves. Let us all take a mini video camera of our lives, of our days, our weeks, months, exactly what we say, how we say it, why we do things. Let's put a mini camera on our motivations. Why do we do the things we do? Is it because we want recognition or is it because we love our fellow man and love God? Do we give because we like that smile from the person who receives it? That's motivation to some people. Or do we give because that person actually needs it, and we don't really want them to know we gave? We don't really want them know we served that they can be blessed. Let's renew our covenant. Let's motivate ourselves to serve God because we love people and we love God that the Kingdom might be."

# You Don't Change The Message, The Message Changes You

Seventy Steve De Vera, one of the Seventy sponsoring the Missionary Family Reunion to convene at Graceland the afternoon of June 22, was the speaker at Mt. Ayr's morning worship that day. He opened with the familiar "Time" scripture found in Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 and ended with the first affirmation of verse 14. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; ... ." (Please read it for yourself.) He said he read it just because it was one of his favorite scriptures and he wanted us to enjoy it with him. Then he said, "This morning when I read that scripture, I did have sort of one of those ulterior motives. It's one of those times when I read scripture because I am selfish and want to soothe my soul. This morning that helped to soothe my soul.

"I've had a pretty rough week and maybe I need to share some things with you for two reasons - one, because you would want to know and two, because our family needs your prayers. My wife's mother had a severe heart attack yesterday morning, and Karen has been over at the hospital with her since yesterday. When I sleep alone, I don't sleep well, and I know she didn't get a good night's sleep. They don't have very good facilities at the MCI hospital so she and her sister ended up sleeping on the floor in the waiting area of the ICU. If you have room in your prayer life, my wife and her sister would, I think, benefit by the prayers you would offer. (Note: Steven Smith, who was in charge of the service, asked for and received prayers in their behalf before the close of the service. Karen's mother, who had been an invalid for many years, died the following week, and Steve had to leave his class and ministry at the Reunion to care for events at home.)

## **Are You Ready To Strengthen Your Brethren**

"Other than that, we have had great things happening in our lives as usual, but that's not what I want to share this morning. We will have plenty of time to share testimonies and that sort of thing throughout the week. What I really would like to speak to this morning is our relationship with Jesus Christ - and not just our relationship but as when Jesus was speaking with His disciples and He turned to Peter and says, 'When you are converted, strengthen your brethren.' And the question I would pose this morning is, 'Are we going to take this opportunity this week to strengthen our brethren because we have been converted; or are we going to seek that conversion experience that Peter and Paul and Alma and others throughout history had as recorded in the scriptures, or even as people that we know and are associated with in these Latter Days have had? Are we going to do something different this next week that will cause us to be different the rest of our lives? Are we going to seek out that conversion experience or are we going to be the catalyst in someone's life that will cause them to have that experience with Jesus that will move them forward?

"As we read throughout the scriptures, we read accounts in the first four books of the New Testament - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and everyone is familiar with those and most everyone is familiar with what's in those as far as words. We know what they say and the life and the history of Jesus; and if we are Christian, we believe that those words of Jesus and the life of Jesus was so important that it changed our lives in some way. Was it a dynamic

conversion experience that we had? I can't say what you did - what happened in your lives. I'm hoping it was. Is it one of those things that was subtle and the Spirit moved in your life and it was quiet and throughout your life - little things that have taken place and you have become somewhat better than you were the day before and the week before and the month before and that continues to grow? Or was it one of those lightening bolts out of the sky that changed you from black to white and all of a sudden you became changed and others saw that dynamic change in your life, and it continued to grow and moved in your life? Or did you hear the words of Jesus and you just acknowledged that, 'Yes, Jesus was and Jesus possibly is and will be and I am not sure that it has changed my life in any dynamic way?'

## **The Record's In The Scriptures**

"In those four gospels are some of the things that Jesus taught to bring us to those steps in our lives that will cause that dynamic change in our lives. If we move on through the New Testament, there is one little book there after the four Gospels called the Acts of the Apostles. In that we see some of the things that took place in people's lives that were really dynamic in terms of change. After that there are a whole lot of other books, some large, some small, some very meaningful. Some of them questionable, and I'm speaking for myself. But they were incidents that took place in individual's lives as they were responding to what they learned and what they experienced through the words of Jesus.

"First, I want to take one of those dynamic changes that took place. I want to talk about Saul for a second. We are going to set aside all those things you read in the first four Gospels, then remember what took place in the first two or three chapters of Acts, and then - (I hope I don't have to explain what happened in those first chapters of Acts, for who in here is not a Christian, and who in here does not know the word of God to the point - and who in here -? OK. You've convinced me. Let's just keep going. I'm going to come back to that.) Once the gift of the Holy Spirit had been brought back here onto the earth at that day of Pentecost, as we call it, and that rushing wind and those cloven tongues of fire fell upon these men and all of a sudden they spoke with power and authority, having learned all of the lessons that Jesus taught - having known Jesus from the time that He started his discipleship to the time He was crucified to the time that He was buried and rose from the dead, and from the time that He ascended into heaven; and still those men who were there, walking this earth at that same time, experienced things like denial. They ran and hid in fear. They did things that you have to stop and scratch your head. Is that really the way a Christian, a follower of Jesus - someone who was there would act? But they did. We have record of it. We know that it took place. So, anyhow, once this great and marvelous thing took place, some great and marvelous things again began to come upon the earth.

"One of those things was this man Saul. He was a Pharisee. He was out there persecuting Christians. He was putting them in jail. As far as we know, he may have killed a few. He at least had a hand in some of the deaths that took place. He persecuted them to the point that it was miserable to be known as a Christian. And Saul was minding his own business one day and was walking down the road, along with a bunch of his cronies. Up until this point, Saul thought he was a pretty important man because by his word, you could be in prison or beaten or at the very least shamed in your community. Saul was that powerful. He was known as a scholar, as one who was intelligent, as one who had the ear of the people in the right places; so Saul was pretty puffed up in himself. And now picture this. He's

tooling down the road one day - well, he's probably walking down the road. Tooling down the road is what we do today. Anyway, he's walking out there, minding his own business, thinking of what he is going to do next - 'How many Christians am I going to be able to persecute today?' And bam! What happened? An angel of the Lord says, 'Saul! Why persecutest thou Me?' Now, think about this for a minute. Think of your own life. Think of you as an individual, minding your own business when out of nowhere this voice comes down and slams you squarely in the face. And the voice is so loud - so powerful, yet so full of the Spirit that you can't deny what's taking place. His response was -- did you ever catch a kid doing something he shouldn't do? 'Who, me?' 'What?' You know what I'm saying. I can just see Saul doing the same thing.

Brother DeVera turned to the scriptures to read the account from Acts 9:1-4 "And Saul yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus, and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven; and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why thou persecutest thou me?"

Steve chuckled and said, "Think about this for a minute. He didn't believe it to begin with. Now, all of a sudden out of nowhere that voice comes - and the light, too. And you are going, 'Ah! Am I dreaming? Did I get pricked by one of those poison thorns and I'm hallucinating? Did I do something I shouldn't have? What is going on here? And it goes on to say that as that took place he says, 'Who art thou, Lord?' You know, 'Who is that? Who is this guy?' and the voice said, 'I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me do? And he Lord said unto him, Arise and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.'

"Well, this was dynamic. I venture to say there is nobody in this room that has had a voice came out and say, 'Stop it! Go do that, and we will be square! Now there are a few things you are going to have to do on the way, but we can square this up!' And Saul says, 'OK!' And He did!"

### **Idolators Then and Now**

"Well, Paul became one of the most powerful ministers of the Gospel that we read about because most of the Book of Acts was written by Paul or are the experiences of Paul. So why do you think - and this is a question - I'm thinking the other day, 'Why do we have the scriptures - the Bible? Most of those things are the words of Paul. Did God think we were going to go be idolators? That was what Paul was talking to those people about. 'You idolators! You worship false gods!' I'm thinking, 'Are we going to do that? Are we going to worship Zeus, Mars, Athena? Are we going to do that? We don't even know who those people are today! But you know we are. We do! I'll tell you what brought this about.

"I came home from work one day and we have a person living with us that said, 'There's a TV program I want to watch.' 'A TV program you want to watch? What is it?' Well, apparently, she had been watching this program, and my wife was watching it with her. (I don't watch TV. I watch the news and there is another program I watch once in awhile. It's a half hour program on once a week and it's about motorcycles and fast cars. You know, it's pretty cool. (Steve had ridden his motorcycle from Independence to preach to us.) This program was about American Idols. That's what Paul was talking about - worshipping idols! So I was sitting there, not

knowing anything about what took place in this American Idol thing. Apparently I was watching the second from the last program - and I'm trying to figure this whole thing out. There are two or three people there, and they are not really doing much. They sang for about twenty seconds and that was it, and people were voting on this thing, and I'm thinking, 'What's going on?' And people are flashing signs and it dawned on me, 'They are idols!' People were setting these people up as idols! God may not have thought we were going to go worship Zeus, go to the temple of Mars and all of those things. But what did happen, was that we set up idols that we worship. We don't go to the temple of Mars. We go to the arena or to the stadium, or to whatever the venue or form that they have these things in. Think about that. God in all His wisdom put that in the scriptures so we could take heed to the word - not that He was speaking to that people about those idols, but of the idols of today. And I got to thinking about this guy that used a cork bat - I don't know that much about baseball. Sammy Sosa. He cheated - apparently - allegedly! And the way he got caught was that he hit the ball, the bat broke and it was full of cork. Now, like I said, I don't know that much about baseball, but apparently that's a good thing for the hitter and a bad thing for the pitcher and the other team. And there's a law against it, right? Apparently, he hit the ball. The bat breaks. Inside cork. Now, this idol has become a fallen idol. They'll find another and Sammy Sosa will probably go right back up on top. I don't follow sports, but my guess is he's probably already hitting good enough that people will say, 'Well, we can forgive that one little indulgence! One time at bat. Bad bat. Good bat.

"Another idol - sports idol, rock and roll, TV idols - all of those things. Think about this in your life. Was Paul speaking to you when he was talking to those people about the idols they were worshipping? I had a talk with this young girl in our house and my wife about this because I have a problem with it! How can you? I don't understand. I have a real problem with it, but they will say the same thing about my motorcycle program." Facetiously, Brother DeVera added, 'But it's not a living thing. It's not an idol.' Then he held up his hand, pointed and asked, 'What is it they say? If you point your finger, you have three fingers pointing back at you?'

### **The Point of Paul's Ministry**

"Let's talk a little bit more about Paul for a second. He did the same thing about stewardship. He did the same thing about prayer. If you read the writings of Paul, Paul took all of the issues of that day in their language - in their circumstances and they can be converted to today in our lives and our circumstances. There's nothing different. Here's the point of the message, folks. There is no change. There is no different message. There is no different Jesus. There is no different ways to conversion. There is no different way to repent of your sins. It is the same then as it is now, and as it's going to be tomorrow. When Paul wrote all of these things, they were for our benefit to take and assimilate into our lives today so that we could be better at what we do. Paul did that. Here's the message. We don't change the message. The message changes us. Let me say that one more time. We don't change the message. The message changes us. And if the message does not change us, then we must not be reading the message right.

"Here's what Paul did. Paul went on and did all of the things that God told him to do. He was baptized. He was ordained. He went and studied and he crammed and he read the word. He was taught from on high by the Spirit of God. And he went out and he shared that; he shared it every day of his life! Now you say, 'How can I do that every day of my life?'



“On our way up here, we stopped at a rest area right down the road. There was a family there, and I stepped right in front of them and started talking to them. I told them I was a minister, and I shared with them a little bit. And do you know what they said? ‘Hey, that’s cool! Thank you very much for saying it.’ And they even waved as they left and I felt like it was an old friend. Well, that’s how you do it. If you are that excited about the message that you have received, you need to share it with someone; and my bet is that there is going to be someone at this reunion this next week that you have been called to share it with.

“Now, I’m going to go back to those four Gospels and the things that Jesus taught. As we read those things about what Jesus taught, they said, ‘What is the greatest commandment?’ He said, ‘Well, there are only two of them.’ He boiled it right down to being real simple, didn’t He? ‘Love God with everything you’ve got. Love God like there’s no tomorrow! Love God with everything in your heart - your heart, soul, your mind - everything. Channel it that way. And the other one, love your neighbor like yourself.’ Everything was going great until He said that! Love your neighbor like yourself? Most people don’t like themselves. There’s proof of that on billboards. There’s proof of that on the radio, on television, on magazines - everything gives proof that we don’t like ourselves. If we liked ourselves they wouldn’t be able to sell billions of dollars of products to make us better than what we are superficially - to make us prettier, to make your hair different, to make it a different color, you know, dye your hair, whatever it is - wear different clothes - all of those things. If we did love ourselves we wouldn’t be engrossed by the ad industry that allows us to covet that different look. And we do covet. We covet so much that we don’t love ourselves. And if we don’t love ourselves, we can’t love our neighbor. And if we don’t love our neighbor we are not obeying the commandments of God because God said it! It’s one of His commandments - love God and love your neighbor as yourself. He boiled it down to something very simple. I’m not a real smart person, so God made it simple for guys like me.

“We have Jesus. We have his life. If we are going to emulate something, we can emulate what Paul did. He took all of those things and made them a part of his life. And when he had that conversion experience, that renewal of life - that renewal that made him something different than he was, he became a dynamic person for Jesus Christ. Dynamic!

#### **Alma’s Story - The Same Message**

“Alma did the same thing. Alma passed up - oh, I’ve got to read this from the Book of Mosiah. You all know this story in the Book of Mormon about Alma and his friends tooling down the road doing all of these bad things they are not supposed to be doing. An angel comes along and kind of goes ‘Boop! You are a bad boy. Why are you doing that?’ What happened to Alma was that it knocked him cold - knocked him out cold - comatose. Can’t move, and his father rejoices. ‘Praise the Lord! Thank You, God! You finally got his attention, and ours, too.’ Alma’s father called all of the priesthood together and said, ‘OK, now fast and pray because we want Alma to have an experience. We want him to be born again. We want him to have that conversion that is necessary for him to become that dynamic person he was called to be.’ Here’s what happened to him while he was in that state.

“Now they fasted and they prayed. Now he’s out cold for the space of two days and two nights. You know you could come up and poke him and nothing happened. He would just lay there! ‘Alma!’ Two days, two nights! Here’s what happened. He says, ‘I have

repented of my sins.’ Step one. ‘And have been redeemed of the Lord.’ The result of repentance. ‘And I am born of the Spirit and the Lord said unto me, Marvel not that all mankind, yea, men, and women, all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, must be born again; Yea, born of God, changed from their carnal and fallen state, to a state of righteousness, being redeemed of God, becoming his sons and daughters; and thus they become new creatures; and unless they do this, they can in no wise inherit the kingdom of God.’ The Lord knew what they were supposed to do. An angel came along, knocked him out cold. Through the prayer and the fasting of the Priesthood and the Saints, this guy had this experience and goes on to be one of the greatest ministers that God called in the Book of Mormon times.

“So I go back to the beginning of this thing and pose the question to you: This week, if you go to Reunion, and if you don’t, I’ve got another question for you - wherever you go, are you going to be one of those persons that is going to cause another person’s life to change so dramatically that you won’t even know them? And if you are not at that point in your life with your Lord, the steps are simple. Put it down and say, ‘I have repented of my sins.’ And then what happens? ‘I was redeemed.’

“Do we talk about redemption in the Restoration? Just Curious. It’s real simple. Like I said. There’s no new message here. We don’t change the message. The message changes us. Repent. I’m going to say it again in case you didn’t hear it because one of the things that we as Elders in the church of Jesus Christ in the last days were called to do is to call all men to repentance. And I will say this as a minister - as an Elder in the Church of Jesus Christ, Restored in the last days, repent of your sins. Cleanse yourself of all of those things worldly in your life so that your heart and your soul are clean as the driven snow - that you are pure before your God and you will be redeemed by that shed blood of Jesus that was shed for you; because by no other power on earth or in heaven can you be redeemed but by that shed blood by Jesus Christ - by the One and the Only that came on this earth for that specific purpose. Your part, repent. His part, forgive. You move forward from there and you can be the change in someone’s life. You are responsible for bringing people to Jesus. And by the power of the Holy Spirit that will accompany you when you share that word, they will change. Things will change. They will happen, and testimonies will take place.

“So don’t try to change the message. Don’t try to find a new formula, because there isn’t one. Be changed by the message, and take the message to others that they might change.”

## **June Music Service**

Seventy Ronald K. Smith was in charge of the quarterly music service June 29. Our opening hymn of praise questioned, “O Lord of Heaven and earth and sea, How shall we show our love to Thee, Who gavest all?”

Priest Jim Barber offered the prayer of invocation.

After the monetary offering was received, Robert Rolfe introduced his musical offering by saying it declared that life is great but asks the questions, ‘Who am I? Why am I here? Where are the cookies?’ He then sang of Job’s predicament and gave the first prophecy we have recorded in Scripture of the resurrection. (The children were listening, because one youngster kept asking his mother where the cookies were.)

Tiffany Kinnaman and Robin Vickery asked Ron to accompany them on the guitar while they sang “Father, I adore You, and

I lay my life down before you. How I love You!" The affirmation was repeated for Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Jan Jordison accompanied Alan, Valle and Cara Smith as they sang, "Like shepherd He leads us. Like a father He feeds us. He is the Great I AM."

Rodney Bastow read Psalm 70: 4. "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee; and let such as love thy salvation say continually, Let God be magnified."

Yvonne, Jazmyn and Gabel Galusha and Robin Vickery accompanied on the guitar by Aquila Galusha sang, "Sing Allelujah to The Lord".

Kathy Akers' piano offering was, "The Power of His Love".

Steven Smith sang again his ballad of the handicapped Indian maiden whose Father assured her that one day she would "Soar like an eagle, run with rabbits that never tire".

Ron accompanied Elizabeth Eckart as she sang, "King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Glory, Hallelujah!"

Brandi Anderson read Psalm 104:33-34. "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord."

Jan Jordison accompanied Michael, Julie, Samuel, Isabel and Joshua Jordison as they sang, "This Is My Father's World".

Heide Winkler read Psalm 9:1-2. "I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee; I will sing praise to thy name, O thou Most high."

Jan Jordison then accompanied Danny Kinnaman as he sang "People Need The Lord," and finally accompanied Michael and Barbra as they sang, "Be This My Vision".

Diane Anderson offered "How Great Thou Art as a flute solo then sang with her daughter Brandi, "Father, when in love to Thee, Low we bow the adoring knee. When repentant to the skies, scarcely do we lift our eyes. ... As we humbly now draw nigh, Hear, forgive us when we cry."

Cessaries Galusha played Beethoven's "Tempest Sonata, Opus 31 in D Minor".

Worshipfully we sang, "Blest Be The Tie That Binds" and were dismissed with Elder Norman Nelson's benedictory prayer.

## News & Notes

### Memorial Service For Jerry Slayton

A memorial service was held at Graceland's Shaw Center Sunday afternoon, June 29, for William John (Jerry) Slayton.

Rob Rolfe was in charge, Ronald Smith was the speaker and Jan Jordison the organist. Ron and Di Smith provided the special vocal music singing Doug and Judi Smith's arrangement of "My God, How Wonderful Thou Art" and Cessaries Galusha provided the piano meditation playing Beethoven's "Tempest Sonata, Opus 31 in D Minor". Jerry and Gloria's son John offered the opening prayer. Jerry passed away at home June 15 after many years of extended life filled with blessings to which he continually bore valiant testimony.

### Seventy Missionary Family Reunion Successful

Some six hundred and fifty people registered for the Seventy sponsored family Reunion held at Graceland University June 22 through 28.

The theme of the week was "For The Love of Jesus". Alan Smith was the director, Valle Smith the registrar. The rest of the Mount Ayr congregation assisted in many ways to make the week a week never to be forgotten by those who received its ministry.

Fran Parker was in charge of the nursery. Cara Smith directed the recreation. Diane Anderson was in charge of the nurses' station. Gerald Bolingbroke took care of the money - over \$72,000 of it. Di Smith recruited and assisted teachers for more than 250 children. Ron Smith was in charge of the general prayer services, preached one sermon and taught classes. Mildred Smith taught. Jan Jordison played for some services. Danny Kinnaman served on the corps of Deacons. Doug Smith directed the campfires. Di's brother Doug drove one of the carts that escorted needy persons over the campus. Erin's husband Peter Cornish operated the Power Point that provided words for the singing that made it unnecessary for the Deacons to transport hymn books from place to place for services.

Others made their presence known by giving loving service to the campers from Kenya, Nigeria, Mexico, Canada and from far flung areas of the United States who were our guests.

Incidentally, there were several from Mexico who wished to come but were denied visas; and Elder Arturo Gomez was turned back at the border because he did not have with him four months worth of cancelled utility bills to prove he was not a terrorist. Had he been rich enough to fly, the bills would not have been required.

Alan Smith wrote up one of the testimonies from the reunion for his column in the Mount Ayr Record-News and it is included on the next page. We shared testimonies from the reunion Wednesday night and many people were richly blessed. If you didn't get to attend, ask any who did and they can share more with you.

### To Be an Ambassador

Jared Beck has been selected as one of Iowa's Ambassadors of Music. The group will be touring Europe next year.

### Team Competition

Aquila Galusha's team won third place in the Mount Ayr Little League Baseball tournament. Tyler Morris' team was one of the contestants.

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# We're calling the story 'Trey's miracle'

Miracles can happen -- and one did at the family church camp for which Valle and I were directors at Graceland University in Lamoni last week.

One of the families that was part of the week brought their 13-year-old son, Trey, who has battled a seizure disorder since his first set of them when he was three years old. Pat and Kim and Trey's sister Ariel were having a good week. Trey usually has as many as 20 seizures a week and until Thursday afternoon he had only had four.

One of Trey's few pleasures is swimming -- something that he gets to do weekly at the school he attends. Trey is autistic after battling the seizures for 10 years, but recently has been able to show affection on a number of occasions which has been uncharacteristic up to this point.

Thursday afternoon Trey was in the Graceland University pool, swimming under the watchful eye of his father Pat.

Meanwhile, Jennifer -- a divorced mother of three -- was sitting on a dock at a Missouri lake feeling pretty low. Some of the decisions she had made recently she knew had been hurtful to her and her family. She was wondering to herself if she would ever be able to feel happiness again and she was asking God if there was any hope for her. About that time Tuesday night her stepmother called her and invited her to bring her kids to camp.

Jennifer is a trauma nurse in an Independence, MO hospital who had a few days off, so she and the family came. It felt right once she got there for activities Wednesday. Her youngest ran into his best friend in the world. Her middle daughter found the camp pastor from the camp she had just attended and was thrilled. Her oldest boy ran into a girl he had met at camp a couple of years ago. Jennifer ran into an old professor she hadn't seen in years.

Jennifer attended a class Wednesday afternoon where the teacher challenged people to ask God to use them to do His work. Jennifer took the challenge. She prayed that God would let her use her hands to do something good. If He would, she would know He knew she was "on the planet", as she put it.

Thursday afternoon Jennifer took advantage of the camp rest period for a nap. Her children woke her up after the swimming period for their age group had started. She wanted to go back to sleep, but was urged to take them to the pool.

So Jennifer was in the pool Thursday afternoon, playing in the water with a girl friend who was there. She turned around to flip water on her friend and saw someone on the bottom of the pool. For a moment she thought it was a youngster diving for quarters. Then she recognized it was more than that.

Pat saw what was happening from the side of the pool and jumped in to help his son. Trey had had a seizure while in the pool and was now at the bottom.

Pat got his son to the side of the pool, and Jennifer, the trauma nurse, began working on Trey immediately. After trying to clear his airway, she got his parents involved. His father Pat was doing the chest compressions, his mother Kim was doing the breathing for him, and Jennifer was checking for vital signs.

It wasn't good. The air wasn't getting to Trey's lungs like it should. If Jennifer would have had to list his condition, she would have listed grave -- the worst there is. He was not breathing, there was no pulse. He was blue. At least his parents were helping so they knew they were

## THOUGHTS & other things

BY ALAN SMITH

doing everything that could be done, she thought.

Then Jennifer looked up. Standing not too far away was a man -- a Latino -- with dark hair, who had on blue shorts and a blue plaid shirt. Jennifer's attention was drawn to the intensity of the man's concern for Trey and she knew he was praying. She was certain he was a minister from the spirit she felt as she looked at him. Kim, Trey's mother, noticed the man too.

Jennifer recognized that unless something happened, Trey would not make it. "The man was praying so I thought to pray too," she said. "I said the shortest prayer I have ever said. It was 'God, help.'"

Immediately the thought came to her mind to reach as deep down Trey's throat as she could. This is not something one does with a person who could have a seizure as the person can clamp down with their teeth involuntarily on anything in the way.

Jennifer obeyed the thought anyway. She had tried to clear his airway several times as they repeated the procedure for CPR. This time she reached way down, however, triggering Trey's gagging reflex. He gagged and up came the food that was lodged in his throat and blocking his breathing. In an instant he was getting air again.

Trey was stabilized and taken by ambulance to Decatur County Hospital in Leon. Valle took Trey's mom to the hospital while his dad changed clothes and went along later. The doctor at Leon said that without the help of the trauma nurse, Trey would not have survived. My brother Doug and I and another family from their home church congregation went on to Blank Children's Hospital in Des Moines. Many prayers later Trey was fine. In fact, his parents and he were able to attend the final service of the week back in Lamoni Saturday morning. And many people had a testimony of God's love -- like the boy about Trey's age who had been in the pool and sat intently praying. "When I stopped, they said Trey was breathing," he was happy to tell other people.

But back to the man who was standing beside the pool, intently praying, and whose presence gave Jennifer the idea to pray and to have her earlier prayer answered -- to literally be able to use her hands to do something good and have an assurance that God knew she was there.

"I've got to talk to that man," Jennifer said after things had settled down Thursday afternoon. We checked with the Latinos attending the camp. None of them had been at the pool. Friday morning when she shared her story with the rest of the camp, she asked for that person to raise his hand if he was there so she would be able to find him and talk with him. No one responded. No one but campers were at the pool at the time. The person in the blue shorts and blue plaid shirt still hasn't been found.

Some people will say that some massive series of coincidences put Jennifer in the pool just feet from Trey when he needed help. That someone wearing blue just happened to wander into the pool area and pray at the right time. That Jennifer thought of the life saving measure herself, despite its unconventionality.

I'm just not one of them.

**CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST  
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## **News & Notes**

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### **Returned from Africa**

Ronald and Douglas Smith returned from Kenya June 15 bringing Eric and Pamela Odida and their sons, Dean and Pressler, with them. The Odida family attended the Reunion where Eric taught a class on Missionary Outreach. They will be visiting and ministering in the Independence area until their scheduled return to Nairobi July 15.

Norman and Cathy Nelson hosted the Odida family while they were in Lamoni awaiting the Reunion. They spent the week touring places of interest to the church including Farwest, Nauvoo, Liberty Hall and others.



## **News & Notes**

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