

**FROM THE  
PASTOR'S DESK**

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**Led By Power**

We believe in the restoration of the gospel and the angel message through Joseph Smith, the Seer. We stand for the restoration of authority through the ministration of an angel. Our message is that an angel from heaven restored the gospel to earth. Men were delegated by God and given His authority. Some of these men fell and bowed to Baal, but faithful priesthood, while scattered, remained. If only one of these priesthood were a Joshua or a Caleb, it would be enough; but as there is more, there is more than enough.

For too long we have forgotten that we have the authority of God. It has been proposed that we cannot call or ordain high priests, evangelist-patriarchs, apostles, etc., as no one exists with the authority to make the call. What can that mean? Isn't it God that does the calling? Are we saying that God cannot call a man to a certain priesthood office, because procedurally, it would not be correct? When Alma reorganized the church, there were no "rules and resolutions," but the church grew from the baptisms of thousands. When Joseph Smith Jr. organized the church there were no "rules and resolutions." In fact, Joseph the Seer and other men were preaching the gospel and baptizing long before April 6, 1830.

By the command of God, any officer in the Melchisedek priesthood can ordain any and all other officers necessary to the carrying on of the whole work of the church. An elder is a member of the Melchisedek priesthood. Section 104:3b states that this priesthood "has power and authority over all the offices of the church, in all ages of the world.

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**TESTIMONIES AND  
SERMON NOTES**

**Obedience The Way  
To Prosperity**

Seventy George Knotts was in charge of the October sacrament service; and the Sacrament was served before the sermon was delivered by Elder Steven Smith. Also prior to the sermon, Brother Robert Rolfe sang a special number that appropriately provided the setting for both the partaking of the emblems and the sermon that followed:

Give Your Heart a Home

I hear your hollow laughter, the size of secret pain,  
Pretending and investing, just to hide your shame.  
Plastic smiles and faces. Blinking back the tears.  
Empty friends and places, all magnify your fears.

Chorus

If you're tired and lonely, weak and heavy laden,  
I can understand how it feels to be alone.  
I will take our burdens, if you'll let me love you.  
Wrap my arms around you. Give your heart a home.

Chorus

It hurts to watch you struggle and try so hard to win.  
But save your precious birthright from candy coated sin.  
Wasting precious moments, restless and confused,  
Building up defenses for fear that you'll be used.

Chorus

Take My yoke upon you and walk here by My side  
Let me heal your heartache, dry the tears you've cried.  
Never will I leave you, never turn away  
Keep you through the darkness. Lead you through the day.

If you're tired and lonely, weak and heavy laden,  
I can understand how it feels to be alone.  
I will take your burdens, if you'll let me love you.  
Wrap your arms around Me. Give your heart a home.  
Wrap My arms around you. Give your heart a home.

**Obedience the Way to Prosperity**

Elder Steven Smith read Matthew 13:47: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman seeking goodly pearls and

when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.” Then he asked, “What is it that we desire above all else to the point that we would give everything to have it?” He told three experiences he had with clients in his profession as a veterinarian.

There was Mrs. Little, a widow of some six years who worked for the city. She had saved her money. She and her husband had invested in some houses in the area and the area had gone down hill, so their investment was being chipped away. She had retirement with Kansas City. As she was preparing to retire, she realized that with the economy going as it had, with the aging properties she owned and her inability to keep them up, and with her few savings, she would not prosper in her retirement years; and it concerned her. She came up with a plan that she thought would help her prosper in her retirement years. She sold those six aging rental houses, took the money that was going to be in her retirement, pooled that with her savings and bought lottery tickets. And she lost! She retired with nothing. Her plan had failed! She moved to Florida with her sister to try to survive the best that could. She desired prosperity to the point that she would sell all and try her plan to get it.

As an aside Steven told of a project being prepared by Ron Smith and his Graceland students for homecoming to illustrate how small ones chances are of winning even the Iowa lottery. They have built a minute rice box that is nine feet high, six feet wide and twenty inches deep. If you fill that minute rice box with 1400 pounds of white rice with one grain of red rice in the mix, your chances of winning the Iowa lottery is the same as reaching in and grabbing that one red grain out of the entire, 9 feet X 6 feet X 20 inch box of rice -- one chance in about 120 million.)

A second client, a young man named Jim who, with his brother had lost his parents in a car accident when the boys were still teenagers, had a pit bull for a guard dog. The brothers were wise enough not to try the lottery but also depended upon their own plan for prosperity. One night they came home and found their front door had been broken in. Jim went in to investigate, and his brother went for the police. When he returned, Jim was dead. The intruder, who had killed Jim, had taken nothing, but had set many items out so they would be seen by the police and they would know what these young men had been doing. Jim and his brother had tried to find prosperity by stealing. The police never found who killed Jim, and Jim’s brother was convicted of burglary and jailed. Jim tried his own method. It seemed to work for awhile, but in the end, it wasn’t beneficial to him or to anyone.

“As you can tell, I’m talking about prosperity today, and I am talking about people who have tried their own methods to try to gain prosperity.

A third client, Melinda, a single fiftiesh type woman had had a very bad life. As a teenager she tried to earn money by exotic dancing. She maintained her body with multiple surgeries and a lot of silicone, and she did look much younger than she was. She had married once to a man who promised prosperity, but he was a member of the mob. She had a child. The child was killed when someone firebombed their house. One day when her husband was beating her, she picked up the scissors and killed him. Since that time she never married. She was sad. She wanted love. She wanted prosperity. Her method was to try to keep herself looking in her teens. She thought then she would be loved and would prosper.

“To some extent she was loved. She would come into the clinic about every six months with a new young man, or older man, depending on who she had attracted at that time. After about six

months I would hear that she was involved in another lawsuit. She gained a mortuary from one of her live-ins, which she lost because she did not know how to run it. She gained several vehicles, a boat, a motorcycle, a truck, a van, several really nice cars. She had gone to court in class action suit against silicone producers because she was diagnosed with systemic lupus erythematosus and she blamed it on the silicone. She was always grasping, looking for someone who could give her that sense of security, that sense of prosperity, a sense of love. I never saw that in her. Even though she was able to get relationships, they were fairly temporary. She had a hard time holding them. We find when we make our own rules to gain what we desire, it often doesn’t work. Neither Mrs. Little nor Jim nor Melinda became prosperous.

### **The Lord States The Principle**

“In Leviticus 25:18 -19 the Lord spoke to Moses on Mt. Sinai and stated the principle clearly. When the Lord spoke to Moses, he told Moses to tell the people. We have the recording of what Moses told the people, so this one came pretty much from the Lord’s mouth. And although He didn’t say ‘prosperity’, He put out a principle that was repeated over and over and over in the Old Testament. ‘Wherefore, ye shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them; and ye shall dwell in the land in safety. And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety.’ In other parts of Leviticus and even Deuteronomy, there are a number of areas where whole chapters are dedicated to the prosperity that will be yours if you do His statutes and keep His commandments.

“The Book of Mormon also talks about prosperity. It was one of the promises that Lehi received before he came to this land. He was told that if the people would keep the commandments of the Lord, they would prosper. It is so simple! And it makes sense. If the Lord was the manufacturer of a car, and he gave us a manufacturer’s manual, and that manual told us how to take care of the car, and we did what the manufacturer said, there is a very high probability that our car would run real nicely.

“But the Lord has made us, and He sent instruction on what we should do. Sometimes we think that when we follow those instructions it is just to make the Lord happy. But The Lord says it is there so we could prosper. The Lord gave to Lehi the promise that if his descendants would keep his commandments, they would prosper. Nephi was able to see that same vision and was able to talk with an angel who also told him that if the people would keep the commandments, they would prosper. By the time they got to Jarom, Jarom 1:21-22, ‘And thus being prepared to meet the Lamanites, they did not prosper against us. But the word of the Lord was verified which he spake unto our fathers saying, That inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments, ye shall prosper in the land.’ This principle, we are told by Jarom, was taught by the prophets, the priests and the teachers. Verses 24-26 say, ‘Wherefore, the prophets, and the priests, and the teachers, did labor diligently, exhorting with all long suffering, the people to diligence; teaching the Law of Moses, and the intent for which it was given; persuading them to look forward unto the Messiah, and believe in Him to come, as though he already was. And after this manner did they teach them.’ Just before that we found that principle was, ‘If you will keep the commandments, you will prosper.’ It was especially interesting that they taught their people to look forward to the Messiah as though He was already there - to act as though God was among them.

“We saw that when Alma was ministering, he actually told the

people, 'If you will keep the commandments, you will prosper'. When he blessed both Helaman and Shiblon, he took the time and made the effort to not only bless them and tell them that if they would keep the commandments they would prosper, but he took the time also to make sure it was written down that if they would keep the commandments they would prosper. Probably I would have said, 'I said it one time. I don't need to say it again', but not Alma. It was important enough that he made sure it was recorded.

"Moronihah taught it. After Helaman's death, Helaman 2:43-46 talks about this promise in a negative sense. 'And it came to pass in the sixty and first year of the reign of the judges, they succeeded in retaining even the half of all their possessions. Now this great loss of the Nephites, and the great slaughter which was among them, would not have happened had it not been for their wickedness and their abomination which was among them; yea, and it was among those also who professed to belong to the church of God; and it was because of the pride of their hearts, because of their exceeding riches, yea, it was because of their oppression to the poor, withholding their food from the hungry, withholding their clothing from the naked, and smiting their humble brethren upon the cheek, making a mock of that which was sacred, denying the spirit of prophecy and of revelation, murdering, plundering, lying, stealing, committing adultery, rising up in great contentions, and deserting away into the land of Nephi, among the Lamanites; "And because of this great wickedness, and their boasting in their own strength, they were left in their own strength; therefore they did not prosper, but were afflicted and smitten, and driven before the Lamanites, until they had lost possession of almost all their lands.' They had the opposite to that which they had been promised if they would keep the commandments. We see that Moronihah, then, came in and started preaching that if they would keep the commandments, they would prosper.

"When Christ came, He told the people that if they would keep the commandments, they would prosper. Fourth Nephi has some good things to say about that. Even the people of Zarahemla had the promise. Ether 4:22 says, "And thus the Lord did pour out his blessings upon this land, which was choice above all other lands, and he commanded that whoso should possess the land, should possess it unto the Lord, or they should be destroyed when they were ripened in iniquity; for upon such, saith the Lord, I will pour out the fulness of my wrath.' Again, if they would keep the commandments of the Lord, they would prosper, and if they wouldn't they would be destroyed here upon this land.

#### **The Promise Remains**

"Doctrine and Covenants, 94:5a-b & f-g: 'And now, behold, if Zion do these things, she shall prosper and spread herself and become very glorious, very great and very terrible; and the nations of the earth shall honor her, and shall say, Surely Zion is the city of our God; and surely Zion cannot be moved out of her place, for God is there, and the hand of the Lord is there, and he hath sworn by the power of his might to be her salvation, and her high tower.' It goes ahead to tell some of the things that will happen if Zion is not going to do that. "Nevertheless, Zion shall escape if she observe to do all things whatsoever I have commanded her, but if she observe not to do whatsoever I have commanded her, I will visit her according to all her works with sore affliction, with pestilence, with plague, with sword, with vengeance, with devouring fire; nevertheless, let it be read this once in their ears, that I the Lord have accepted of their offering; and if she sin no more, none of these things shall come upon her, and I will bless her with blessings, and multiply a

multiplicity of blessings upon her, and upon her generations, for ever and ever, ...' What a promise! If we keep the commandments, none of those terrible things will happen.

"Today we have covenanted to keep the commandments. Today, I would ask that you keep your promise and prosper!"

## **Born To Win - God's Plan For His People**

Elder Michael Jordison read Ephesian 6:10-18, a scripture he announced as "The well known and oft rehearsed scripture". "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand.

"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; ... ."

"Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" was sung by an ensemble of Smiths and Lovings and prompted an exclamation of 'Praise Jesus' from our speaker who asked for and received an "Amen" from the congregation.

Brother Jordison then commented that it seemed every time he was asked to preach, he had to work on the Saturday preceding the sermon. Because of that, there seemed never to be the time for preparation that he desired. However, he said, "I think this is the Lord telling me something. You know, when I signed up for this, it was for life; and my will is supposed to be put aside in the Lord's will, and I think He is telling me that in many respects. Anyway, a few weeks ago while listening to a sermon here at Mt. Ayr, I was given the seeds for this morning's talk, and I trust and pray that the Lord will bring out that which He has given to me through my words today.

"I had an opportunity a couple of days ago at the gas station. I was going in to pay and a fellow was reading a book at the cashier's counter. I asked, 'What are you reading?' 'Harry Potter', he said. 'Harry Potter,' I said. 'Is it any good?' 'Oh yeah, yeah!' he said. 'I see you are on the second book, so you must have read the first.' 'Oh, yeah', he said. 'A funny thing. You know, a lady came in the other day when I was reading this and looked at that book, and she said, 'Harry Potter! I would never read something like that! It has too much devilry in it! Then he said, 'She must have been a church lady, or something like that, but I said to the lady, 'You know, I read this stuff to get away from the really scary and the devilry stuff which is in reality. The fantasy is a kind of escape from the scary things in this world.' And she didn't have too much to say about that."

"But I thought about that," Michael said. "I have been reading the Lord of the Rings trilogy. Many if you are probably familiar



with that. I had never had any desire to read that until one day before the movies came out, I heard on the radio of an individual who wrote a book called Finding God in The Lord of the Rings. They went on, in this conversation, to say how much J. R. Tolkin was a friend of C.S. Lewis, the great Christian apologist. So I thought well, maybe there is something in this, and I started to read them. Having gone through the Chronicles of Narnia, I thought maybe it would be something like that. I had been in this kind of realm of fantasy lately; so when this gas station attendant told me this, it made me think a little bit; and what I feel like the Lord has been giving me, I have put into words in a parable form or a form of fantasy. I trust that you will understand what I am trying to get to in this little story I am going to read to you. I am not the best writer, but hopefully it will come through. There will be a test," he added facetiously.

#### A Fantasy on God's Plan

I'd like to tell you a story about a great General who was leading an army in the midst of war. Engaged for quite some time, the General just wasn't making any headway in defeating His enemy. They were at a standstill you might say, and had been really ever since the war began.

The enemy was terrible in his wrath causing a deep shadow of fear and death to cover the land. He took slaves when chance permitted, binding the weakest of mind and bending them to his will to do as he desired. The strong were slaughtered in a most hideous fashion; often destroyed beyond recognition. Though savage and brutal in a frontal attack, their greatest tactic was not fear, but was to ambush the General's army from behind.

Now it was difficult to determine which army a soldier belonged to just by looking at him. For although both the General and the enemy could tell who their own troops were, the troops themselves had a terrible time. They appeared very much the same in uniform, dialect and even weaponry. The only way they could distinguish an advancing unit was by the manner of their speech. The General's troops were bold yet courteous while the enemy's were brash and offensive. And yet this was the greatest obstacle for the General. For although his troops were superior in skill to the enemy's, they had one very noble, but revealing characteristic.

You see, the General's army was completely honest. When approached by enemy troops they were not afraid to state who they were. The enemy's troops however, would lie about who they were, posing at times as part of the General's army until at some opportune moment they would turn and begin to slay the General's troops from behind. Sometimes the enemy would lie about who they were long enough to learn what the General's orders were, then report back to their commander to set up an ambush where a great many could be captured or slaughtered without much risk to themselves.

Now sometimes, two enemy divisions would meet together, both lying about who they were. At such times, one would turn on their comrades before the other and begin to attack them. It didn't really bother them that they killed each other. There was often much strife and contention within single companies. They didn't mind so much who they fought, but just enjoyed the fact that they were fighting. Often in times when not engaged in battle for a long periods of time some would purposely create a raucous within their own groups to keep their thirst for blood and carnage satisfied. Although the enemy didn't see the harm in this behavior, (thinking that the more savage his troops were, the better the fighters they would be), it actually worked against him. For though the General suffered many casualties at the hand of His enemy, the armies were kept fairly even in number by the self-destructive behavior of the

other side.

The war had raged on for a long time in this way, with the General suffering much loss without much victory. So He decided that the only way to win the war and drive out the enemy was to break down his foe from the inside out. He would have to infiltrate their army and cause it to decay internally, which would cause the whole structure to collapse like the fall of a great building when it's support is removed.

The General held a conference with His two greatest Advisors. They would have to lay out a strategy that would cover every aspect of the war, leaving nothing out; considering all possible moves and counter-moves by both armies. Every possible scenario would have to be accounted for and counter measures taken to ensure in the end a decisive victory.

#### The Strategy

Rather than plan a heavy short offensive, He would use great patience in maneuvering his troops to the most strategic locations before the launching of the assault. An enormous task of logistics this would be. Care had to be made that each move of the enemy would not thwart His plan. Losses must be expected, yet capitalized on. The enemy might gain some ground, but that would have to be sacrificed so that greater battles might be won.

The General knew that He would lose many casualties in this engagement, but estimated the losses would be substantially less than if things continued on their present course. Because He cared about each one of His troops, mobile hospitals would be required to restore the health of the army in areas where great casualties might be expected. These would have to be placed with care so that the enemy might not be suspicious.

They would have to be manned by the most skilled nurses, doctors and surgeons in order to heal and restore the wounded.

Heavy artillery units would have to slip in unaware to be ready for when the assault began. These would be support for the ground troops, being able to defeat many enemy soldiers with each blow. Sometimes these units would often have to bring in their weapons one at a time to keep from drawing attention to their mission. Some would have to bring ammunition and deposit it where another could cart it off to the proper location. These drop-off points would have to be carefully concealed to avoid their being discovered and plundered.

Whole divisions would need to be broken apart and moved individually at times. Sometimes it would be necessary for officers to be separated from the enlisted men for lengthy times. Troops would have to be split up and divided only to reassemble at some future point in time to avoid drawing attention to their mission.

Some of the troops would need to continue fighting the way that they currently were in order to keep suspicion from entering into the mind of the enemy. The General knew that many of these would be lost, but in order for the plan to work, this would be necessary. These would have to be kept in the dark as to the greater plan underway in order that the covert operations could be accomplished.

Great detail was given to the plan. The General knew that there would be many losses in the battle where the enemy forces were strong, but He planned for reinforcements to come. Where the numbers of his troops would be small, He planned for His best forces to be located there. He knew that many of His officers and leaders would be lost in the fight so He searched out all His enlisted men who would be able to rise to the occasion and fill those

gaps if necessary. Great care would have to be taken to assure that the proper soldier was placed in the right location at the right time.

Knowing that His plan required that the battle be waged for many long years yet, the General would have to reserve many of the troops to be deployed later at strategic intervals. He could not afford to send all His troops in at once. That would work against His plan.

Because of the enormous detail, the plan took several months to draw up. But when the General and His two Advisors had finished they beheld that their plan was good. Very good. In fact, it was perfect, but there was one very important detail that had to be addressed in order for it to work. That detail was the honesty of the General's army. He knew that such a strategic battle as this required all confidentiality. There could be no leaks – no unintentional clues as to what was happening before hand. In order to keep all this from being leaked while troops were maneuvered into place, something would have to be done. Somehow, without their knowing it, the General's army would have to be moved into place so they wouldn't betray themselves nor the plan.

The General gave out His orders for each division, being careful not to reveal more than was absolutely necessary for each division to accomplish their task. More orders would be given later by reinforcements so that at any time the entire plan would be known only to the General and His Advisors. But still something was necessary to keep them silent for the initial movement.

It was decided that a hypnotist would be brought in to hypnotize each soldier. It was his duty to lock the orders that they had been given deep within their memory, to be recalled later only when their memory would be unlocked by a predetermined signal or event. This also was done with as much detail and care as could be taken to ensure that every soldier would be made aware of His mission at some point.

#### The Plan Begins to Unfold

So it came time for the plan to be initiated. The hypnotized soldiers were sent out to assimilate into the enemy's ranks, joining them until it was time for each to be brought out of the clouded state they were in. They were completely unaware of what their future responsibilities would include, let alone that they even had other orders. Under hypnosis they were given temporary orders to join with the enemy and therefore were easily accepted into His army bit by bit.

When at last it came time for the first assault every thing and everyone was in their proper place. The signals were given for them to recall their previous orders and the troops began the assault. Though the plan progressed according to the General's plan, to the casual observer the whole thing was a mess.

There seemed to be problems from the beginning. During the assimilation many of the General's troops were convinced to fall into the lifestyles of the enemy's troops. When the signal came they were unwilling to follow their orders and continued to fight with the enemy. Others were led away and were out of place when the signal was given so that they never heard it. These too remained and fought along side the foe.

There were some who during the time of assimilation were convinced to make bad choices, which because of them, they were wounded and sometimes killed, therefore being unable to complete their tasks when awakened by the signal. Often they were out of place and the wounded ones could only assist the fight in limited ways.

There were still others who were awakened by the signal who

refused to follow their orders. Some of these saw the apparent confusion by their leaders and fellow soldiers and thought that they could come up with a better plan. Of these, many of the enlisted men, with little or no experience and knowledge tried to lead the troops often getting them into worse trouble. Still some of the officers refused to lead and instead took to following the orders of the delusional enlisted men.

Some of the skilled medical staff when they saw what they perceived as a need for more combat troops, refused their orders to work in the hospitals and gave up their stethoscopes for guns. And conversely many of the soldiers turned over their weapons and sought to administer aid in the hospitals where they were severely unskilled. These ended up causing even more damage to the wounded. Yet still they thought that they were doing right.

Others in the supply and courier divisions thought many of their duties were menial and not really very helpful to the battle. These left their posts of resupply and information joining other divisions, thinking that greater responsibility should be theirs. This left many troops without much needed provisions and intelligence reports. Great was the turmoil that seemed rampant in the General's army.

But amid all this confusion, the General's plan was accomplished just as He had predicted. There were always setbacks, but somehow each one was turned into a greater victory. In spite of the many that deserted and refused to follow orders there were also many who when awakened to the great battle at hand followed their orders with utmost care. These soldiers were not daunted by the appearance of the battle. They focused on their responsibilities ensuring that they accomplished their orders with great exactness according to the General's wishes. Their enthusiasm for the work was most apparent in everything that they did.

In fact, because of their devotion and steadiness, they often were successful in inspiring many of the deserters to rejoin their own ranks. And many soldiers who came up with their own battle plans began to see how things worked smoothly for these most faithful ones, taking back their proper duties and ranks. And when they began to follow their orders with the exactness expected of them, they began to see victory where before they saw only confusion and loss. Many were promoted in rank and relocated to where they were needed more.

The war went on like this for quite some time, while all the time new troops were added to the battle, unaware of what their orders would be until they were given a unique signal to bring them out of ignorance. Losses were taken but victory gained as time went on. Eventually the plan found its fruition. Then enemy army collapsed under the skillfully laid out plan by the General. And the enemy and all his soldiers were captured and subdued.

The General had finally won decisively by complete preparation and great patience. His long hand extended over every defeat and victory beholding the perfectness of His plan. And when the battle was ended, the General found that every one of His soldiers who had followed his orders with exactness was still alive. To these were given great honors and medals.

And great joy was given to the General and His Advisors.

"A little bit of fantasy, but you can see how the fantasy touches upon reality. It is easy to see how and why those people that read those fantasy books can be captured by them and filled by them. For there is a spiritual battle taking place - fantasy some might call it, but it's very real none the less.

### The Lord's Signal Is His Word

"I read to you from Ephesians that we fight, not against flesh and blood but against principalities, and I think that we need to remember that each one of us are soldiers in a great and terrible battle. When we were born into this world, our minds were clouded by the sin of the fall, and we are unable to see the battle plan as the Lord sees it. And so the Lord is sending His signal to each one of us, 'Awake! Come out of your sleepiness! I've got plans for you! Put on the breastplate of righteousness, and the helmet of salvation, and the shoes of the gospel of preparation of peace. Take upon you the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.' Well, if you recall, that signal was the word of the Lord. Jesus said, 'My sheep hear and know My voice.' When we heard and knew His voice, something happened within us. There was a change wrought. We began to exercise faith in a new way, and we went to the waters of baptism, and we came up clean, a new creature; and we received the baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost, and we were sealed the Lord's.

"Stepping back a minute, we all can behold the great confusion of the world. We all can behold the confusion in the churches - in our church. And we look at it and say, 'Boy! What a mess!', don't we? But the Lord gave Job some counsel. He admonished Job, when Job was kind of discouraged by the way things were going, and this is what the Lord told Job, and I believe this counsel goes for us as well. Taken from the thirty eighth chapter of Job - I am going to read only a portion of it.

"Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?" Does that sound like us? 'Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it?"

"God put Job in his place. Job thought he knew what should be going on much like I think most of us today think, 'Well, these people over here need to be doing this and these people over here need to be doing that. Where were we when Jesus laid the foundation of this world and the great plan of salvation? Were we there? No! I don't believe we were.

"You know this morning, I woken to a radio sermon. Our alarm clock comes up with a radio station, and the radio preacher was talking about different denominations, about the Methodists and the Lutherans, the Catholics, and the Congregationals and the Presbyterians. He never mentioned the Mormons or the Church of Jesus Christ. I thought about what he was talking about, and I think it fits pretty well with my story that I read to you this morning. How do we know who is on the side of the Lord? How do we know who is following His orders with exactness? How do we know who is not out doing their own thing thinking that they are fighting for the right side? How do we know that? Can we really move as one army when we have divergent theologies? No, we cant, I don' think. We can't

really move with smoothness that the Lord desires for us when we are scattered around with different thoughts and ideas about who God is and what His gospel is.

"Anyway, this radio preacher talked about baptism and he mentioned in particular about baptism and how we conduct our worship services. He said, 'You know when we get to heaven the last day, it's not really going to matter how we were baptized or if we were baptized or how we conducted our worship services. What is going to really matter is, did we confess Jesus!

### Our Sins Must Be Remitted

"When I heard that I said, 'Right on! Amen! That's right.' But I thought about that a little more, and I don't think that's quite the case. Even the devils confess that Jesus is Lord! What's important is that when we get to the last day, we are free from sin. The scriptures teach that no unclean thing can dwell in the presence of God. Just by confessing that Jesus is Lord isn't enough. Our sins have to be remitted. We have to be made completely clean and whole. You see, Adam and Eve, even in the Garden, they still knew who God was. They still knew He was Lord, but they had fallen. They had fallen because of their sin, and just because they confessed the Lord didn't bring them back into His presence. That was the reason why the angels were sent to declare repentance and baptism for the remission of sins.

"We have a unique distinctive in the Church of Jesus Christ, and I am not here to rail on any other denomination or congregation. We have a unique distinctive of baptism. I used to think that baptism for the remission of sins came in the water but that's not the case. 2 Nephi 13:24 says, 'For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water; and then cometh the remission of your sins by fire, and by the Holy Ghost' You see we have a unique distinctive in this church, and that is the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. Remember that faith wasn't enough. The people on Solomon's porch, the Jews came, and Peter preached to them faith. He preached Jesus Christ, and they said, 'What do we do?' And Peter said, 'Repent.' To be sure he quoted it correctly, Michael turned to Acts 2:36: 'Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly; that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' And we already know that the Lord calls only His sheep.

"You see, we can't fully engage in this spiritual battle until we have received the remission of our sins by fire, and we have received the Holy Ghost. Again, the Holy Ghost cannot dwell in unclean temples. When we have sin in our lives, we are separated from the plan. We are separated from the orders, and we are unable to know and to discern where and how we should move, how we should act, how we should speak. Many of our churches have fallen into this ritual type pattern where you do this and this and this on Sunday, and that is not what the scriptures teach. The scriptures teach that the meetings are to be conducted by the Holy Ghost, whether to sing or to preach or to exhort or to pray. And that's what we need to be getting to as a people.

### Rank In The Army Only Dictates Your Duty

"Every person that stands up here and speaks needs to be prepared at every moment. You know we talk about, we need time to prepare,



we need time for this or that. Our whole life is preparation, and whether you are standing here or standing out there, it doesn't matter. Rank in the army only dictates your duty. It does not indicate any position of status. It only tells you what you should do. The General is not greater than the Private. The Colonel is not any greater than the Captain. And the High Priest is not any greater than the Deacon. And the Elder is not any greater than the Mother or the Daughter.

"The time we were brought into this world, we were given specific instructions on how we can complete this great battle, and that's what the Lord wants to lock within us. He wants us to understand and realize why He has placed us here now in this place and others in other places. He wants us to understand that so we can move - we can be obedient to His commands so the whole plan can be accomplished and not one soul be lost.

"I love the story in the book of Alma. Most of you know this about the sons of Helaman, the two thousand sons, and 60 more were added a little bit later. But for those of you that don't know the story, the Anti-Nephi-Lehi people had made a covenant that they would not take up arms anymore against their brothers. They had settled down in the land of Jershon, and the Lamanites came to battle. The people really wanted to fight, but they had already taken that oath. They were about to do it and Helaman said, 'No! No! No! Don't do it!' So they said, take our sons. They didn't make this covenant, so off the sons went to fight in the battle.

Antipus and Helaman devised a stratagem to draw the army of the Lamanites away from their stronghold. Helaman's young sons pretended to be bringing supplies, and when the Lamanite armies came out after them they fled before them and, according to plan, Antipus and his army came charging after the them. Pretty soon, the sons of Helaman figured out that, 'Hey, they are not following us anymore. What happened?' They finally decided maybe they had turned back and were fighting with Antipus' army. So they made a choice right then to go back and to fight.

"So they did, and Antipus' army was about to be overcome; but they were able to come in and drive the Lamanites away and to slay them. After the whole battle is done, Helaman went around and counted all his troops, and to his great joy, there wasn't a single one of them that had been killed. Yet he says that there was not a one of them that had not received many wounds. Now, the sons of Helaman said that the reason for this was that their mothers had taught them that if they would not doubt, that God would preserve them.

"But there's another element to that story. It says in there that the Sons of Helaman did everything with exactness that their commander, Helaman, told them to do. They did not vary. They followed his orders with complete and utmost care. And because of that, they were victorious. Today, think about that. We are in the midst of this great battle and all the Lord requires of us is that we keep His commandments, and that we focus on where we are and what He has called us to do. That may be to go out here and start a new branch. That may be to go over here and build up the kingdom in some far away land. That may be to share with your neighbor. That may be to sweep the floor. Every job has a purpose, and we've really got to be faithful in everything that we do in following the commandments of God. We don't know, out there there may be a general that needs to be awakened to the battle, or a private or a nurse, or a doctor. Maybe there is someone in this congregation who needs awakening. Everyone is important. We all are important.

**By the Gift of the Holy Ghost, We See His Plan**

And, yes, there are setbacks. Sometimes we get hurt. But because we have been given that gift of the Holy Ghost - and if you haven't been given that gift, you need to pray for it - because we have been given that gift, we have the foresight - we have the ability to rise up above all that chaos that's in people that surround us and to see what is really happening. We can see how the Lord's plan is not frustrated, but is moving just as He has designed. He is working so hard - he has carefully laid out His plan so that not one of His faithful followers should be lost.

"There is more that could be said, but let me suffice it to say that if we will be faithful in doing what we can for God, as Rob alluded to this morning in his class, we have got to be diligent in the trivial things of our lives - the things we think - the things which we say, it doesn't matter if we are in a three piece suit or blue jeans or whatever. It doesn't matter if we are tall or short, fat or skinny. Remember the Lord has placed each one of us with a special purpose in mind, and He gave us that purpose before we were born. And He is just waiting for us to unlock those plans and those orders.

"Ron said I have to share a testimony, so I will tell you one that happened this morning. In my prayer and meditation this morning, the Lord gave me an insight about prayer that I had never considered before. Did you know? You know in the scriptures where it talks about the sons of Mosiah and it says that they had given themselves over to much fasting and prayer, therefore they had the spirit of prophecy and of revelation. Well, prayer is a revelation from God. There are many ways we can pray, and a lot of those are valid ways of communication with God; but when we pray in the Spirit, the Lord is able to commune with us and give us revelation. When we pray in the Spirit, we are sincere. He showed me that this morning, how He can talk with us. When we give ourselves over to much prayer and fasting, we receive the spirit of prophecy and of revelation. So that's my testimony.

"Now, I want to leave you this morning with the words of Paul which he wrote to his brother in the Lord, Timothy (2 Timothy 4:6-7). 'For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; ... .' May each one of us be able to say that at the last day!"

Seventy Ronald Smith, who was in charge of the service announced, "One of the things that Mike just shared at the end just stood out that God will not lose any one of those whom He has chosen, and I've been reminded of His great love for each one - all of His soldiers. So let's sing "O Love that Wilt Not Let Me Go". Ron then pronounced the benediction on the service with a special petition that the Loving family be assured of God's great love and of their need to find their rest in Him, a special thanks for Michael's willingness to listen to the Spirit and to be touched by God's love, a plea that we all be determined to be soldiers under God's command, and a request that God hold each of us in His hand.

## **Bear Each Others Burdens**

Priest Rodney Bastow read Galatians 6:1-10 as the setting for his sermon October 26: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself

to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden. Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

At Brother Bastow’s request, Alan Smith sang the hymn, “Bear Each Other’s Burdens, Share each others suff’ring, And love as the Savior has shown.” Brother Bastow commented on his hopes for the morning saying,

“As I have prepared for today, I have thought quite a bit about Mike’s message last week. Sometimes I wonder about my calling, and I wonder what it is God really wants me to do. That kind of struck a nerve with me last week, and now this morning in the class when Alan mentioned the part of Isaiah where it talks about soaring on the wings of eagles, I like the soaring part. That really appeals to me, but it seems like so often I’m in the part where I am just running along or just walking, and that bothers me. I feel like I don’t understand why I can’t always be soaring. And I studied Doug’s sermon from last month and wondered to myself, ‘Am I just a hypocrite?’ It’s more important to me, like what we talked about this morning in our worship service, that my life speaks to you, that the way I am living is the way that God wants me to live, and that I’m doing the things that He wants me to do. I pray this morning that we might ask a blessing of Him that we might be touched by God’s Holy Spirit so that when we leave here we might be soaring. And if that should happen to us, I would ask that we would praise His name and give Him all the glory.

#### **Why Do We Get Angry At Other People’s Mistakes?**

“I don’t know how many of you are baseball fans. Maybe some of you watched the playoff games this week.” Declaring he rarely watched games on television, Rodney continued, “However, I did take interest in the plight of the Cubs. As many of you know, they have been ‘cursed’ here for 57-58 years I guess now and don’t seem to be able to find a way to get to the World Series; and it really looked like this year might be their year. They were rolling along in the playoffs and were up three games to one. They came to the game Thursday night with hopes pretty high. There was a young man who attended that game by the name of Steve Bartman. I don’t know much about Steve’s story other than that he went to the game, apparently alone. He had this great seat right along left field.

“Folks, I’ve been there to a few Cardinals games, and I tell you, I usually have to watch the game - I always think, ‘Why didn’t I bring binoculars?’ I’m usually that far away. To be able to sit down there right along that left field line - that guy had to feel pretty good about that! He was very fortunate, and he was a die-hard Cubs fan. The Cubs were winning. It looked like this was going to be it! Finally the ‘curse’ was going to be over, and they were going to win. It got into about the eighth inning. The Cubs were up, I think three runs. I think there was one out; and here comes a foul ball - right to him! He reaches out to catch the ball. He misses it, but he deflects it off of his hands. All of a sudden, this left fielder for the Cubs starts yelling at him. And the people behind him start yelling and throwing things at him. He had knocked the ball away from the left

fielder and had cost the chance they had of making an out.

“People really started getting on his case! Things got worse. The Marlins rallied. That guy got a hit and the next guy got a hit. There was an error, and the Marlins came back and won the game. The fans got so upset - so angry at this Steve Bartman that they had to get an escort to get him out of the stadium. Security had to take him out of there or he would have been seriously injured. The fans were that angry. And he was not able to go to work the next day because he was being pursued by the media and because of threats that were presented against him. I think he possibly even had to change his phone number - all because of a mistake that he made. He didn’t mean to do that! He didn’t really want to do that, but these people got really upset with him because of what he had done.

“I thought about this. I thought, ‘Why did people get so angry about something that really doesn’t mean all that much, does it?’ I mean, really who cares? If you were really a diehard Cub (Rodney unintentionally said ‘Cardinal’), I can see why you would really care; but, you know, I can’t even tell you who played in the World Series. I can tell you last year, but not much back beyond that. Does it really matter?

“But you know that people really do get angry at other people. And people are very quick to point out people’s mistakes. I know that’s true. I have seen it happen, but I don’t know why that is. I don’t why they get so angry. I wonder why people don’t put themselves more in that other person’s shoes - why they don’t think about what that person is going through. You know that scripture that I read this morning says that when a brother makes a mistake - when he has a fault - we should point it out to him, but we should point it out to him in meekness. That doesn’t mean that we can’t correct somebody when they do it, but we shouldn’t get angry with them, and we shouldn’t threaten them when it happens.

#### **There Is A Way To Handle Errors**

“Hopefully, none of us is like that. Hopefully, none of us would ever get so angry over something that wasn’t important. We forgive others when they make mistakes, whether intentional or not intentional. We think about other people’s feelings, and we show them love. We bear each others burdens. We need to do as the scriptures say in Ephesians 4:22-32:

And now I speak unto you concerning the former conversation, by exhortation, that ye put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the mind of the Spirit; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Can ye be angry and not sin? Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands for the things which are good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

“That’s what we are supposed to do. I can kind of identify with Steve Bartman. I had a similar incident a few weeks ago. At West Nodaway, I am the announcer for their home football games -



Junior High, Senior Varsity, Varsity. I get paid a little bit to do it, but I really do it because I enjoy doing it. It kind of makes me feel part of what the kids are doing, and I get an inside view of the game. Usually in the fall, it's not a bad place to be. It's kind of fun for me.

"A couple of weeks ago we were playing the Craig Hornets. Craig is just a very tiny school. They only had ten-eleven boys playing, so most people knew it was going to be a pretty one sided game. When I got ready to announce, I got kind of nervous. I usually get nervous right at the beginning and then once I get started, I'm OK. It's just getting through that first part - getting the starting lineup - that kind of bothers me. As I went to announce the Craig team, I mispronounced Hornets. I can't even tell you what I said, but I didn't say Hornets. I know that, and I'm scared to think what I might have said. As soon as I make that mistake, the guy that runs the scoreboard, sitting right next to me, starts rolling! He is just laughing so hard, it causes me to lose my composure. Here I am trying to introduce their members and I'm laughing at the same time. I know that's not a good situation, but you are already started, so how do you stop? What do you do? You have to keep going! So I swallow hard and try to do it. I felt like I was fairly successful, but I knew I was going to catch it by the listeners. That's the first week that we have had the speakers fixed in the stadium, so I knew they were going to hear me, and I knew people were going to just really let me have it for making that mistake. (I keep telling the kids that I made a mistake once and from that they think I think I'm perfect. That's not what I mean at all, but -!) I knew this guy that was sitting next to me was going to harass me about it, so I was kind of flustered. As the night went on, I called our coach Robert and his name's Bob. Our star running back I called Jordan, and his name is Jared. It was just one of those nights when I kept tripping over my tongue. The game was a blow out and rather boring, and our coach didn't call off the dogs. The score was something like 69 to 6. It was just a kind of a blow evening.

"The game got over, and here comes the band, and I'm thinking, 'Oh! Shoot! The band has to play all season and I don't know what to say.' So I'm sitting up there worrying. The band gets done, and I'm getting ready to leave. I see this woman coming across the field, and I think, 'She's on a mission! She's really after something, but I didn't think it was me. I figured she was going after our coach for running up the score; but she comes up to me and says, 'Are you the announcer?' I say, 'Yeah.' She says, 'I really didn't appreciate you laughing at our players!' And I'm like shocked. I say, 'Mam, I wasn't laughing at your players! I had mispronounced your name and I was embarrassed.' She says, 'We're a small school and I really don't appreciate you doing that.' The guy on the score board says, 'He made a mistake. I got tickled and he got tickled, and it wasn't anything like that!' There wasn't anything we could say. She was angry, and she was not going to forgive me, no matter what I said and no matter how much I apologized. I wrote a letter to the school superintendent apologizing to them because I never intended my laughing to be taken that way. I really didn't! And that bothers me. That woman is never going to forgive me!

"But the scriptures say, if we have ought against someone, we are to go reconcile with them, and I don't know how to do that. I don't know how to get her to forgive me. It's important - It's very important that we forgive others, but it's also important that we accept - that we do forgive! I know a lot of people can forgive but they can't forget. It's important! It's important if we are going to do God's will that we find a way, no matter how they have offended us - how they have hurt us. We have to get over our anger. We have

to reconcile ourselves with them. Bearing each others burdens sometimes means you have to forgive and you have to forget.

### **Remembering Concern For Others**

"Sometimes I get so wrapped up in my own cares, in my own concerns, that I'm not aware or I forget about the burdens that others might be carrying. This week, I worried a lot about what I would say here today. I kept telling myself, 'I'll just study and I will just prepare. God will provide.' So, I was doing that, but I forgot that there might be others who had need and would also need an interest in my prayer. Thursday morning was one of those mornings. Debbie had an early morning meeting with one of those parents who think things should be their way, that the teacher is at their disposal, and that the teacher doesn't have a life except to serve them and their child. So Debbie was really concerned about this meeting and what she would go through. It didn't dawn on me until she left that I had forgotten to pray about it with her. So after she left, I got down on my knees and asked God to forgive me that I might be more aware of those around me and what they are going through. And I asked that He might bless Debbie that the meeting might go well and that she would be able to deal with this parent. Debbie didn't say much about the meeting later. I don't know if my prayer helped or not. It made me feel better, but I should have done that before. I feel ashamed that I didn't have Debbie's need on my mind.

"But I did use that experience when I had another situation that came up, thankfully that same day. During my free period, I happened to look in and I saw Kay Nicholas. She didn't have any students, so I went in to have a talk with her just to see how things were going. She had been a little sick that morning, so we talked about that and how she was doing.

"Kay has one son, a seventh grader, and this is a new experience for her. Those of you that have had seventh grade sons can probably identify with her a little bit. Kay is very over protective. She just worships the boy to no end. Today she was saying, 'Oh, I don't know what I am going to do with him! I don't know what I am going to do! He's just so awful!' I say, 'Oh! He's been drinking again!' She says, 'No! He doesn't do anything like that!' 'Oh! He's been using drugs then!' 'No! He doesn't do stuff like that!' I say, 'Well, Kay. What's wrong?' 'It's his mouth. He doesn't treat me with respect!' I say, 'Well, he sounds like a seventh grade boy to me.' She didn't quite understand me, and she told me a little bit about her situation, what had gone on, how they had had a talk and she had told him how much she loved him and he had told her how much he loved her, and that made her feel better.

"As I was getting ready to leave, Kay said, 'I want you to include Janet in your prayers. Janet is the wife of Wayne Kruth who is one of our janitors. She has had some health problems and she was having surgery on her neck. I said, 'OK, Kay', and I went back, took her hand, and right there in the room, I said a prayer. I prayed for Kay and for Janet and Wayne. I have decided when someone wants me to include someone in my prayers, I had better do it right then or I might forget. I am going to try to make sure I take care of that opportunity when it presents itself. I did feel good about doing it after it happened. Maybe that made up a little bit for the times that I have forgotten. I hope God will help me to be more aware of those who need my prayers. God will lift the burdens of others if we ask Him to and if we keep ourselves close to Him.

"We had another neat thing happen Friday. We have a Senior Boy by the name of Matt Morrow. Matt was a football player and this was his first year to have a chance to get to play much. First game of the season, he wounded his knee. That was really kind of

sad. Matt hasn't had a lot of joy or a lot of attention. He had to have knee surgery this week and he got back to school Friday. He was sitting in class and a girl bumped him. It really hurt! He was in tears it hurt so bad. Some of his classmates knew how much he was hurting and they knew of the burdens that he had had. They put up this great big banner right over his locker that says, 'We love you, Matt! We hope you get to feeling better. Take care, Matt! And just on and on. They left candy and such like that, and I thought that was just a sweet thing to do. I thought that was really nice how they thought of their brother and how they were helping to bear his burden.

"This week my Mom had not been feeling well. We can't tell anymore with Mom really what's wrong because she is not very expressive. Kind of like our prayer has been for Delbert has been my prayer for Mom. I feel so sorry for her - for the way her life is right now, because it's not what she would have wanted. I am just praying that God will do what's best for her. They called me this week and said they thought there was something wrong. They weren't sure what, so Jowett took her out and had some tests done. They didn't find much, so when we got into town Friday night, we stopped in and talked to her. Actually, we talked. She just kind of sat there. When it came time to leave, I put my arm around her. She had said that she had not felt very good, but when I put my arm around her, she said, 'That's the best thing that has happened to me in a long time!' George, I don't think you know how much good your hugs can do! There may be others who need your hugs - need our hugs, or maybe just need a kind word or a smile or love and a bit of attention. I know it meant something for Mom.

I want to leave you with these words from Ephesians 3:14-21: 'For this caused I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.'

## Book of Mormon Day, October 26

Christ in the Book of Mormon was the focus of services of the Mount Ayr congregation October 26. The focus of the early worship, conducted by Robert and Lynda Rolfe, was on the coming forth of this sacred scripture. We sang the beloved hymn, "Book of Mormon, Hid for ages in Cumorah's lonely hill, Written by those ancient sages Whom Jehovah taught His will. Glad we hail it. Fullness of the gospel still". Elder W. H. Kelley's account of his interview with David Whitmer when David was an old man, as recorded in Vol. 4 of the Church History, pages 369-371, was read. In it, David reaffirmed his testimony, found in almost if not every edition of the book ever published, that indeed he did see the plates as shown to him and the other witnesses by an angel as they testified they did; and the book is truly what it claims to be, a sacred record

of God's dealings with His people on the American continent. The Book of Mormon Foundation of Independence, Missouri brought the rest of the services for the day. After the opening worship, children from kindergarten through sixth grade retired to a classroom where Barbara Capps taught them. The rest of the youth joined the adults in the sanctuary to learn from a multimedia presentation by Chris Capps of the topic, "Finding Christ in the Book of Mormon".

During the morning, the purpose and work of the Foundation was explained by Linda Guin, formerly the office manager of the Foundation. The Intern program that gives opportunity for youth from ages 18 to 24 to participate with the Foundation in service and study related to the Book of Mormon for a summer was explained by Kathy Gilmore. Kathy had served as an intern and, with her husband Dave, had directed the intern program during the past summer. A short video illustrated the range of their activities.

Special testimonies were shared at various times by three adults, Kathy and Dave Keller, Barbara Capps and by two youths, Kristen and Nicole Capps. Kathy spoke of opportunities that have been provided her to learn and serve since she began to ask the Lord to help her grow. Dave spoke of the necessity of having our own testimony and the growth that comes if we "give the Lord half a chance. It's so easy to seek for those things that bring us immediate joy and so hard for us to ask for those things that bring us eternal joy," he said. "It's so easy to be a sinner and sometimes so difficult to be a servant of Christ. If we focus on each day, planning for the future but focusing on one day at a time, taking every opportunity to serve the Lord, there is opportunity out there for us. God made us different so we could take care of every task that has to be done. The Lord is going to get His work done one way or the other, but is most pleased when each of us takes his/her place as His servant." Kristen told how, although she was not old enough to qualify for the trip of her congregation's youth group to Mexico, she had opportunity to go with the group to see some of the areas of which the Book of Mormon speaks. Before they went, their youth leaders challenged them to read the Book of Mormon. She told how she put it off until she was sure she could not get it read before the trip. But she asked the Lord to help her, and was able to read the book in less than a week. That, she said, was a real accomplishment for her.

"God made it really clear, and I was able to understand and really enjoy it," she testified. She also told of the group's stay in Teoihuacan. When their translator, Nathan Sherer, was talking with one of the hotel workers, the man became interested in the Book of Mormon, and invited the whole group to his house for dinner. They talked about the book through the evening and left the man with a Spanish copy. She expressed her hope that he would read the scriptures and be led by them.

Nicole, Kristen's younger sister, said, "God has blessed me this year more than I had ever expected. I have been able to go out to Oregon for a youth camp with my family and also to Maine with my best friend's family. But I want to share a testimony that happened this spring." She told how had felt she not had an opportunity to witness to anyone because she had no friends outside the church since she was home schooled, and all their home schooling groups were also in the church. Then they were invited to another home schooling group for a day. "I thought, Wow! This is really good. Maybe I will get a chance to witness to them! I met some friends and kind of brought it up sometimes. Some asked a few questions but there was never any really big interest." So Nicole started praying about it.

In January of this year the Capp family was invited to cook for a Book of Mormon Foundation retreat for older youth. The children were able to go with them and attend some of the classes. At the end of the retreat Books of Mormons were given to everybody, and the youth were told to share the book with somebody else if they already had one. From January to May, Nicole prayed about the one to whom she should give her Book of Mormon, "hoping God would open a few windows for me." Finally she sent out E-Mails asking whether anyone of her friends did not have a Book of Mormon and would be interested in having one. One friend wrote back saying, "Think it would be really cool to read it, because I have a lot of questions about it." In June she got the book to him and in August she learned that he had read a little and was asking questions about things he did not understand. Nicole was able to answer a few of his questions, with the help of her father, and she asked for prayers for her friend, "because he has the desire, and I just want all the windows to be open to let me and my sister be able to witness to him more."

Barb Capps, Kristen and Nicole's, mother followed them, opening her testimony by reading Moroni 7:21, "For behold, God knowing all things. Being from everlasting to everlasting, behold he sent angels to minister unto the children of men, ... ." "The testimony I would like to share with you concerns that scripture. It happened when I was younger, but it has had such an impact on my life that I would like to share it with you."

When Barb was seventeen, a senior in high school, two weeks before school ended, she and her Mom were hit by a semi. The car spun around, and when it came to a stop there was a very typical erie quite. "I looked down and my left leg was broken," she said. "I remember very vividly saying, 'My left leg is broken!' I was just stating a fact. It was broken, and my Mom's arm was excruciatingly painful to her." Although seat belts were not mandatory at the time, Barb expressed thanksgiving that her mother was wearing hers. "A few moments after the accident, a young man came up to me. He had on dark colored pants and a white shirt. He had medium dark hair. I don't remember him speaking anything specifically to me, but I remember that there was a calmness, and I did not feel afraid." Much later a neighbor who had come upon the scene asked Barb's Dad, who that young man was that was talking to Barbara, and her dad Dad asked Barb. Although she could remember the pain that both she and her mother experienced, and also remembered that she was not afraid, she could not remember that part of the accident and so could only say, "I don't know."

It wasn't until the family had gathered to the Independence area, were living in Lexington and had three children that Barb began to ask who that young man was. "I began hearing testimonies about the Three Nephites, and people having experiences with angels, and I began to make it a matter of prayer because I thought, 'There was a purpose in that and I don't know what it was'. So I began to ask the Lord who that might have been. For a long time I prayed, and I didn't get an answer. Then one night I was awakened about three o'clock in the morning and a voice told me that it was my brother Kevin." Kevin had died from an accident when Barb was nine months old, just a week before his third birthday. "He was the one that was there at the time of the accident and comforted me, and I thank the Lord for that."

When Barb and Chris' son Seth was about nine months old, he was in his walker and tried to follow his sisters to the basement where they liked to play. Barb was in the front of the house, and when she realized the door was open, ran to try to make sure Seth

did not fall down the thirteen steps to the basement floor. She was too late. "I saw him falling, and about the fourth or fifth step from the bottom, it was like he was just lifted out of the walker and laid down on the floor! I was so thankful because that morning I had been prompted to make a special prayer for each of our children. I felt that the Lord had truly blessed him and felt that that was part of the reason I had brought them before the Lord that day."

Several years later Barb volunteered to watch Doug and Judi Smiths children as they played with hers and Judi took a Mom's couple of hours out. The Smith's youngest son, Bryan, was in the walker at that time. "I saw Bryan getting really close to their stairs and I said, 'Seth, will you please go over and shut the door? We don't want him to fall down like you did!' At that instant, the Lord just spoke to me and said that it was my brother Kevin who had protected Seth. I am thankful to know that my brother, even though he was very young, I know where he is, and I know he has a work for the Lord. I am thankful that the Lord gave me that experience."

Jesus Christ - Son of God - Book of Mormon's Central Theme Elder Chris Capps began his presentation declaring that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and we are going to discover in the pages of the Book of Mormon the testimony that is there from those who have gone before. You know, if we think about it for just a minute, Jesus lived His whole life in a very small area of the world, gave His ministry all in the Middle East area. But what if this man also visited this continent? What if He came and brought His testimony here - His ministry and His work to the people who were brought to this land? What would that mean to them? What evidence would that bring to us today of the divinity of Jesus Christ? And so we are going to share much about that. We are going to remove all doubt that Jesus was much more than just a teacher - much more than just a prophet. He was, indeed, the Son of God, and Jesus Christ is indeed the central theme of the Book of Mormon!

"The Book of Mormon is an inspired record of scripture that points clearly and directly to the identity of Jesus Christ. We will see here in a little while that there are many ways that Christ is identified in the scriptures. We will explore the overwhelming evidences that are found inside the pages of the Book of Mormon that support this truth. Reading from the fly leaf of the Book of Mormon - "And also to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ, the Eternal God, manifesting himself unto all nations.' The Book of Mormon itself testifies that one of its primary purposes is to convince both Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ.

"The Bible also testifies of this Book of Mormon. We find in Ezekiel 37:19, 'Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord, behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephriam and the tribes of Israel, his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand.' We are going to explore how the Book of Mormon speaks of Jesus Christ, and how it parallels the Bible; how the Book of Mormon is the stick of Joseph and together with the stick of Judah, they are to the convincing of the Jew and Gentile.

"The Bible speaks of the added witness that has and will come from the tribes of Israel to proclaim that Jesus is the Christ. The Book of Mormon is one of those sticks (scrolls), the stick of Joseph that fulfills this prophecy. "Wherefore the fruit of thy loins shall write and the fruit of the loins of Judah shall write, and they shall grow together to the confounding of false doctrine and laying down of contentions." The pattern of God's proclamation concerning His Son, Jesus Christ weaves harmoniously through the scriptures, through the Bible and through the Book of Mormon. These two



testify together as one stick with spiritual authority to the identity, life and purpose of Jesus Christ. They both testify that Jesus was with the Father from the beginning.”

Brother Capps then showed how the Bible and the Book of Mormon testify the same things with scriptural references for each truth. He presented them as parallels in the two works. They both foretell Christ’s coming, of the signs of his birth, of his ministry on earth, of the things He came to teach us. Of the latter, Chris declared that the testimony of Abinadi has always been the testimony that has made the Book of Mormon really come alive for him. “Before that became real to me, the fact that one person could make a difference really never entered my mind. I always felt like, here I am this guy just doing what I do, and it’s pretty pitiful sometimes - perhaps not everything that I could be doing. Then I see the difference that one man made - his testimony and the witness in accepting the call that God had given to him to bring this message, and the fact that he was willing to go and do that. The ministry of Christ fulfills all law so brings even more than we can imagine that Abinadi did.”

“Both the stick of Joseph (the Book of Mormon) and the stick of Judah (the Bible) testify of the crucifixion and the resurrection and of His purpose - the atonement that we may have a way to return to the Father. Many times Christ has asked us, and asks us today, to come and follow Him. He provided the example for us in every thing. As Jesus beckons us to come and follow Him, His ministry - the example that He gave us, was the perfect example of the way to walk with God. He taught us how to be humble. He taught us how to live our lives in love, and that is His testimony, love and charity, caring for one another - being a servant to one another. He commands us to walk after His example and to endure to the end. This is not an all inclusive list of the parallels of these two books of scriptures concerning the testimony of Jesus Christ, but they will provide a basis for us to work from today.

“In the beginning! Jesus Christ as our redeemer was not a last minute idea. He was not plan B. He wasn’t plan C. He was plan A! Jesus was with God from the beginning.” References from both Scriptures repeat over and over again that Christ was with the Father in the beginning. “The prophets foretold of His coming. We read the account of Christ’s coming in both scriptures and we know that there were those who had listened to the prophets and knew the signs of His coming. The only way they could have known the signs were the words of the prophets. The Lord says that He will do nothing except He first reveals it unto his servants, the prophets, who then reveal it unto His people. The coming of Jesus Christ was not a surprise to those who listened. The same will be true of His coming in glory.”

“As I read the Book of Mormon, I recognize that they were people just like you and me that lived hundreds of years ago and lived with the same testimony that we have been given. They knew that Christ would come. What’s even greater, many accepted that testimony, acknowledged that before Christ came and responded to His ministry even before He came to earth. Jesus came to earth to fulfill the will of His Father and to prove that God’s expectations were possible. It’s possible for us to live that perfect life that God asks us to live. Jesus showed us the way. He proved the point by living that way.

#### **People in America Knew of Christ’s Birth and Ministry**

“The familiar Christmas story in Luke has long been one of our favorite scriptural accounts of the coming of a Savior who is Christ the Lord. You know the angels brought this message to the shepherds. Those who were in this land maybe didn’t receive the

message as the angelic trump, but they knew the signs that had been given by Samuel the Lamanite many years before. In third Nephi, it says, ‘They knew it was the day that the Lord should be born.’ The Book of Mormon people knew of this great event and they shared equally in testifying of the Christ who had come to the earth.

“Christ’s ministry - the love and compassion for His creation is clearly portrayed in His ministry. Jesus came to bear witness of the Father through His servanthood. He also came to set all things in order and to build His church so that the gates of hell could not prevail against it. He healed their sick, both in Judea and in the Americas. Third Nephi parallel the accounts of the four gospels in recounting his ministry. He loved the people. He cared about them. He had compassion on them. He evidenced the same commitment to show us how to be servants. His teaching ministry declared in the New Testament is verified in Third Nephi: ‘There cannot be written in this book even a hundredth part of the things which Jesus did indeed truly teach unto the people.’ The Book of Mormon and the Bible together proclaim the earthly teaching ministry of Christ.

“The crucifixion and the resurrection are events of extreme importance in Christ’s mission. Any scriptures that are inspired of God will place a great emphasis on this aspect of His life. The Bible describes the events graphically. Second Nephi foretells, ‘And after the Messiah shall come there shall be signs given unto my people of His birth and also of his death and his resurrection’. What a beautiful message of consistency between these two sticks - how they talk about the crucifixion and the resurrection. So many times this people has been accused of worshipping a different Jesus Christ. The Jesus that is testified of in the Book of Mormon and the Jesus testified of in the Bible is one Christ. The scriptures bear witness to that.

“Jesus Christ came to take away the sins of the world that all who believe on Him and all who follow Him and endure to the end could have eternal life. God’s scripture will always point to the redemptive mission of His Only Begotten Son. Romans 5:11 says, ‘We also joy in God through our Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Second Nephi records, ‘We talk of Christ, we rejoice in Christ, we preach of Christ, we prophesy of Christ, and we write according to our prophecies that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.’ The atonement. Almost the same words given in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon.

#### **Jesus Christ Is Our Standard**

Both scriptures show Jesus our standard by which we live. He came to take away the sins of the world. He showed us that we can overcome temptations, that we can live with one another the way that He desires us to live in the City of God. He showed us how to be servants one to another. His scriptures give counsel and guidance which reflect the true standard, and the true standard is Jesus Christ. In John 14 He says, “I am the way the truth and the life.” Moroni 10 says, “Yea, come unto Christ and be perfected in Him”. It is recorded in both records that He established His church among the people, ordained and gave authority.

Evidence that the Book of Mormon writers focused on Jesus Christ is found in the number of references to His name in their individual accounts. Projected on the screen were the number of times reference is made to Jesus by name in each of the books of the Book of Mormon and the frequency of those reference. “The first time that I saw this, I was flabbergasted,” Chris declared. “It is incredible!” Our attention was called to the 1013 references to Christ in the book of Alma, the one who referred to Jesus the most

times, and Moroni referred to Him most frequently. “The Book of Mormon refers to Jesus Christ on an average of once every 2.2 verses. Isn’t that amazing? The New Testament averages every 2.1 verses. This is no coincidence. They are one stick in the hands of the Lord.”

Projected on the screen were 101 different names that are given to Christ in the Book of Mormon with one reference to each of those names. Chris continued: “These names point to God the Father and the relationship between Him and His creation. One of my favorite names is the one that shows up in the middle, Mediator. When I think of a Mediator, I think of a really good older brother or sister who, when you are going to your father for your punishment, steps in and tries to give you a hand. But, you know, this Mediator went a lot of steps farther than a big brother or a big sister would for you. He gave up every drop of His blood so that He might be the mediator of the new covenant for us. He is, indeed, the true and living God, our true Messiah, the true shepherd.”

A list of many of the significant events in the life of Christ as recorded in the Book of Mormon with the number of appearances by subject was projected for us. “It’s exciting to see that the Atonement, there in red, is the subject that we see receives the most attention.” Brother Capps said. “What marvelous testimony of the authenticity of this sacred book. First John, 4:2 supports this beautifully with the admonition that we know that we have the Spirit of God when we confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. ‘Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God, every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God.’ The Book of Mormon testifies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh and He is our atonement.”

#### **Many Names of Jesus Describe His Ministry**

A few of the descriptive names of Jesus were noted: Alpha and Omega: the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, used figuratively to teach the timelessness and eternal nature of our Lord. Counselor: helps us see Jesus Christ as both as a brother who gives us help and direction and a righteous judge to declare repentance unto us when we drift from the path. The Holy One of Israel: Jesus Christ is both the embodiment of holiness and the God of Israel who came into the world through the lineage of that chosen people. The Lamb of God: John the Baptist announced it, ‘Behold the lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.’ The Book of Mormon explains it. He takes away sins of the world as a lamb. He was crucified for us. Salvation comes because of the shedding of His blood. Jesus was that spotless lamb - the only pure sacrifice that could be offered for our sins.

Rock: Jesus is the rock. This gives a connotation of strength - stability - a foundation upon which, if we stand, we cannot fall. The true vine: His word reflects our ultimate source of life. We cannot be nourished apart from Him. By way of illustration, our speaker asked, “What happens if a watermelon gets pinched off from the vine?” He then told of his severing poison ivy vines from their roots before cutting down a tree. The next day all the leaves were curled up and dead, and the vine had started to turn brown. “We are not poison ivy, and He is definitely not, but it was a good representation of what happens to us if we are not attached to the true vine. We will wilt and we will die!

A few years ago Roy Weldon, a well known Book of Mormon scholar wrote, “The Book of Mormon has a date with destiny. It has potentials that no other book has or even remotely approaches as it

moves into the future.’ He felt that it will be recognized by the world and declared, “The grand finale of the Restoration movement is now beckoning us on. What a day to be alive!”

Brother Capps affirmed, “It is a great day to be alive. We live in a day that the prophets wished to see because they knew what was going to happen.” He characterized the Book of Mormon as an added witness, a true and inspired witness that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.” His personal testimony is that as he was growing up, the scripture was so much a part of his life that he thought that everyone had a Book of Mormon. Then he realized that almost none of his friends knew anything about it, and the ones that thought they did only knew something bad they had been told about it. Since he really didn’t have a personal testimony about the Book, it was difficult for him to share with his friends.

Realizing that he was not sufficiently informed about the testimony of the book, his mother determined that they would read it together. She waited up for him to come home from football or other activities to which he was committed, and each night they read until they finished the book. “And as we read the words of Abinadi and as I saw the Holy Spirit working through Alma to restore His church, and I saw the people respond to the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the book became alive to me. Yet it really didn’t set like it should. It wasn’t until several years later that I was challenged at a camp to read the Book of Mormon - to make it a part of my life - to have a personal testimony whether it was true, that I took the promise that is given in Moroni 10:3-5, ‘If ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent having faith in Christ,’ all things shall be made known unto you. As I studied with real intent, it was like the Book of Mormon was put up on a screen for me. I was able to visually see the events unfold as I read the account. It became knowledge to me, a part of me that I cannot deny. The testimony that Jesus is the Christ and that He’s the same Jesus Christ that taught in the Bible, the Son of the living God, became so real to me!

“If you haven’t given the Book of Mormon a chance, please do. You won’t find anything in there contrary to the scriptures contained in the Bible. Read the promise in Moroni 10, and ‘If you shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, He shall make it known. The Lord will enter into the humble heart of a sincere seeker and bear witness by the power and authority of the Holy Ghost. May we all be found seeking through fasting, prayer and study.

#### **The Service Progresses into the Eleven O’clock Hour**

Kathy (Anderson) Gilmore followed Brother Capp’s and other testimonies previously reported with a beautiful song honoring our, “Wonderful, Merciful Savior, Precious Redeemer and Friend”! At that point, Marlin Guin, who was in charge of the service said, “Beautiful! Beautiful! Turn the roast down. We are going to go over just a little bit!” Since a Zionics dinner was awaiting us at the church, having the service go a little past twelve was not a serious problem.

“What did Jesus say in the Book of Mormon? What did the prophets in the Book of Mormon say about the gospel of Christ? That’s what brother David (Gilmore) is going to share with us for a few minutes.” Marlin also changed the order of service a little. Instead of the congregation singing the last hymn as indicated in the bulletin, we would be blessed with Sue Beck’s ministry of music just before the benediction.

The Gospel Of Jesus Christ in the Book of Mormon was presented by David as Brother Capps had done, by use of both visual projection and word of mouth. We read the scriptures on the huge screen before us as he commented on their relevance to the

gospel as Jesus taught it in both Judea and the Americas.

#### Why The Book of Mormon?

“We have determined that the Jesus Christ we read of in the Bible is the same Jesus Christ that we read of in the Book of Mormon; therefore, it should stand reason that the gospel should be the same whether it be found in the Book of Mormon or in the Bible. But the question is, Why the Book of Mormon? In relation to the gospel of Jesus Christ, what does the Book of Mormon provide us that the Bible does not? The answer: It contains the fullness of the gospel written so that it is plain and precious. Nephi speaks of changes that have been made in the writings of the early apostles saying, ‘For behold, they have taken away from the gospel of the lamb many parts which are plain and most precious, ... and all this they have done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord; that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. ... Behold, saith the Lamb, I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious.’ (1 Nephi 3:170-184). Nephi is saying that the gospel as written in the Book of Mormon is written in a very plain and precious manner because it hasn’t gone through the many ages of men - the many different translations - the many editions. So, one of the jewels of the Book of Mormon is that the gospel is written in a way that we might understand it better. ‘And in them shall be written my gospel, saith the lamb, and my rock and my salvation.’ (1 Nephi 3:186).

“The gospel of Jesus Christ does lead us unto salvation, and today we want to talk about this plain and simple truth. From the book of Jacob 3:4-5, ‘For this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory, many hundred years before his coming, and not only we, ourselves, had a hope of his glory, but also all the holy prophets which were before us. Behold, they believed in Christ, and worshiped the Father in his name, and also, we worship the Father in his name.’ “And that is true even for us today”, David declared. “The gospel has spanned many ages. It has always been the same, just as the purpose of Jesus Christ has always been the same from the foundation of the world.

“Jesus Christ came into this world for a very specific purpose. ‘And he cometh into the world that he may save all men, if they will hearken unto his voice (2 Nephi 6:45).’ Jesus Christ came, and paid the price for us. There was nothing that we did - nothing that we can do - to ever deserve what was done for us. It was a gift. What we have been called to do is to respond to that gift. That’s the opportunity that we have been given, that we might receive that gift - greater than any other gift that might be given to us, that of eternal life - a gift that can’t be taken away. Just as Brother Chris mentioned, it’s a job that we must do on our own. Nobody can do it for us, and that in itself is a gift, because nobody can take it away from us, either. It requires our response and ours alone.

#### To Inherit Eternal Life

“The answer to what we must do to inherit eternal life is given all throughout the Book of Mormon, but there are several specific areas where it is very clear - Second Nephi, chapters 13 and 14, the Third Book of Nephi 5 and also Third Nephi 12 - the words of Christ as he was here on this continent. This presentation today deals mostly with Second Nephi chapter 13, beginning with the third verse. There are two ‘bookend’ scriptures in this text, and this is the beginning one. This is where Nephi tells us, ‘Wherefore the things which I have written sufficeth me save it be for a few words which I must speak concerning the doctrine of Christ. Wherefore I shall

speak unto you plainly according to the plainness of my prophecy.’ Nephi wrote plainly because he understood himself to be a plain person, and he didn’t try to speak over anybody’s head. I can appreciate that.

“Continuing in the next verse: ‘For my soul delighteth in plainness for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men.’ To make it more understandable, Nephi uses an illustration. He says, ‘For this cause have they been shown unto me that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter.’ He is alluding to the gospel of Christ and he is describing it as a gate that men go through during their lifetime here upon this earth.” (A picture of a gate appeared on the screen and David explained that he was going to fill in the picture with scriptures from the Book of Mormon.)

“If you are going to have a gate, you must have a gate keeper. Second Nephi 6:81 tells us who that is. ‘Behold, the way is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel: and he employeth no servant there’. Jesus Christ waits for you. He is the only person who has authority to let people through the gate. He is the one with whom we make a covenant. In third Nephi 5:21 it says, ‘And the Lord said unto him, I give unto you power that ye shall baptize this people when I am again ascended into heaven.’ So Christ specifically gave authority - established His Priesthood - that they might act in his stead upon this earth.

Referring again to 2 Nephi 13:28, David read, ‘For ye have not come this far, save it be by the word of Christ with an unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merit of him who is mighty to save; ...’, The gospel of Christ requires that man has faith in God, so our gate has faith.

Once we have an understanding of God, we also have an understanding of the things we do which are against his will. It is necessary that man repent of that. “For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and ... (2 Nephi 13:24).” Repentance is more than just asking forgiveness. Repentance requires us to change our ways that we might act in a more appropriate manner. So we have faith and repentance - both very important parts of the gospel of Christ.

Then come the covenant you make with Jesus Christ. “For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water (2 Nephi 13: 24) ... .” So baptism, along with faith and repentance, is necessary. From Mosiah, 9:41, “Now I say unto you, If this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him that you will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you.” Next comes the baptism by the Spirit. That’s found in Second Nephi 13:24, continuing in the same verse above, ‘and then cometh remission of your sins by fire and the Holy Ghost.’

“So our gate is completed by the baptism of the Spirit, but does the doctrine of Christ end here? If we make our response to the gift that Christ gave to us, and pass through the gate, is all done? Do we get to sit down, watch TV, enjoy our hobbies and not worry about anything else? That’s where the Book of Mormon paints a very good picture for us because it describes what comes next in our lives. Remember, though, that none of this we are teaching here is any different than what you find in the Bible. Continuing in 2 Nephi, 13:25, ‘And then are ye in the straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life. Yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son.’ So now,



we have passed through the gate, we have made our covenant, and we are walking along the straight and narrow path. We are walking because we must always be moving forward in our lives. We cannot be standing still. Even though this is a straight and narrow path, when you visualize it, always remember that it is a double wide. There is always enough room for Christ right by your side. You'll never be walking alone.

"And now, my beloved brethren, after you have gotten into this straight and narrow path, I would ask if all is done. Behold, I say unto you, Nay!" So what must be done, if all is not done. Verse 29 - 'We must press forward,' forward because temptations will come. There will be stumbling blocks. Being a Christian is not an easy life, but no matter what comes, the commandment has been given to press forward. But do we press forward alone? Do we have to overcome trials and temptations on our own? Nay! Because we 'press forward with a steadfastness in Christ'. We understand that he is all powerful. He has the strength to support us. It is not our strength. It's His! we go 'with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope ... '

"It does not say that to be a Christian you must have a perfect understanding of God and all of His ways or that you must have memorized all of the scriptures. No! It just says that we must have a perfect brightness of hope. To me it means that you strengthen your faith. You have an understanding of things that are to come. When things look their darkest, you know where to turn; because if you don't have that perfect brightness of hope, you cannot be steadfast in Christ. There will be something that will overcome you. We must rely wholly upon the merits of Christ and have a perfect brightness of hope of things which are to come, which, for us today in these Latter Days is for the return of Zion upon this earth. What a glorious hope we have in that - one that nobody can ever take away from us as long as we keep it in our hearts. And finally in this verse, We must have a love of God and of all men. This is not about us. This is about humanity. This is God's work. It's not ours. We've been blessed enough to be involved in it.

"And as you press forward, you must 'feast upon the words of Christ', for that is where you will find strength. As you read your scriptures, as you study the doctrine, you will be strengthened, and you will know how to stand before the fiery darts of the world. As you feast upon the words of Christ you will know where your hope lies.

"And finally, we are called to endure to the end. Verse 30 - 'Wherefore, if you press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.' There is the promise. Ye shall have eternal life - the ultimate gift to which we are all seeking - the gift which has been paid for at the cross - one that we did not earn - one we do not deserve, but Christ did it for us anyway. And that is why the gospel of Christ has been given to us, to lead us to eternal life. It's the only way - the only plan by which eternal life can be found. Verse 31, 'And now, behold my beloved brethren, this is the way, and there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the Kingdom of God.'

David then showed the final illustration - "We have our gate with Christ our gatekeeper, he having given authority unto men that they might lead others unto him by establishing a covenant. That covenant comes as men have faith upon him and repent of their sins, recognizing him as the sovereign God. And they do so through the baptism of water and the baptism of the Spirit. They pass through that gate and then are on the road toward eternal life. It is a straight

and narrow path and we have been called to press forward, being steadfast in Christ, having a hope of things greater than what we have upon this earth. We must love God and all men, and feast upon the words of Christ which have been given unto us, and we must endure to the end. And now, our other 'bookend' scripture, verse 32: 'And now behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen!'

"This is the testimony that the Book of Mormon gives of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. This is the same doctrine that you will find in the Bible. We are blessed to have this Book of Mormon as an added witness that we might have a further understanding of what we are called to do. Christ comes to each one of our doors. He has drawn us to himself. He's knocking at our door, and it's up to us how we will respond.

### **The Service Is Ended**

Bother Guin closed the spoken part of the service by declaring, "I testify to you, as we have heard today and as we look forward to the future as a people, the greatest days of the Restoration are yet before us! What a day to be alive!"

Sue Beck's clear, sweet voice rang out as she sang four stanzas of "Admonition" that are rarely heard but were uniquely appropriate for this service. High Priest Marlin Guin's benedictory prayer follows:

"Our Father and our God. We come to this your house this morning to praise your Holy Name, and to thank you for our Savior, Jesus Christ, for the gift of love that is expressed through Him by you. So we come as a congregation to give you thanks. We appreciate the opportunity to worship you, to come together in freedom, to express ourself in presence, in testimony, in word in preaching and teaching, in music. Lord, we give you thanks to be able to do that.

And now, as we close this service and continue our fellowship, we do pray for these, thy children. We pray for the work. We pray for the promises to be fulfilled that You have so beautifully expressed to those of faith in the time in which we live. We pray for the discernment to see You at work in the world, and to find the perfect brightness of hope and the ability to share our testimony of this great work in power and authority. We look forward to the time ahead, not in fear but in faith, and we give You thanks for the opportunity to participate in it. May You bless it and endow it, Oh God, as we give You thanks for it.

Bless our families. Enrich each home. Lift us up, O God, for thy service. We pray it in the name of Jesus. Amen!"

## From the Pastor's Desk

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*Continued from page 1*

.. " This is what it means to hold the keys of the kingdom.

Section 19:3b reads: "Wherefore, it behooveth me that he (Joseph Smith, Jr.) should be ordained by you, Oliver Cowdery, mine apostle; this being an ordinance unto you, that you are an elder under his hand, he being the first unto you, that you are might be an elder unto this church of Christ, bearing my name . . ." In the law we would say this is *prima facie* evidence that as an elder, he could legitimately ordain an apostle, by virtue of the commandment. Remember that an apostle is an elder. Their office and work may differ, but the priesthood is the same. Those who propose otherwise have forgotten that the elders are servants, not rulers. They bind themselves with their own law, to justify their disobedience. Our modern day Sadducees have forgotten the true meaning of the law and are "straining at gnats while swallowing camels." Are the priesthood of Christ servants, or managers? Is the law our servant or our master?

Some might object that "a stream cannot rise higher than the fountain." This may be true if the fountain is in a man. It is certainly not true if the fountain is the will and commandments of God. But, some may press the question, can a lesser ordain a greater? My answer is, "was Jesus greater than John?" John baptized Him. Was Samuel the superior of Saul? By the command of God, Samuel anointed Saul to be king.

The Saints will be assembling themselves to consider what to do. Zion will be. Will you be Zion? Remember "the redemption of Zion must needs come by power; therefore I will raise up unto my people a man, who shall lead them like as Moses led the children of Israel. . ." Get ready to follow this man! (Adapted from Joseph Smith III, "Foundations of Reorganization," Vol. 5, Church History, pp. 345, et. seq.)

## News and Notes

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### Fasting Weekend Set

The congregational fast for the souls of those who know not God is to begin the evening of October 31 and continue until Sunday noon, November 2. We will gather for prayer at the home of Norman and Cathy Nelson at 6:00 P.M. Friday, at 8:00 A.M., 12:00 noon, and 6:00 P.M. Saturday.

### Hayride Sunday evening

A hayride at the Barber farm in Missouri is planned for Sunday, Nov. 2, at 4 p.m. Details and directions will be available at church Sunday morning.

### Connection to Christian Killed in Nepal

At the beginning of the October Sacrament service, Seventy Ronald Smith announced that the Nepalese whom the Maoists beheaded in front of his wife and children because he would not deny his Christ was Gyanendra Khadka. He had been investigating the gospel but had not yet been baptized. Prayers were asked for the Khadka family. Seventy George Knotts, who was in charge of the service, contrasted the ease with which we worship our Lord and the danger with which the Nepalese and Christians throughout the world worship Him. George suggested that maybe we might have a new symbol for our church. Maybe we could have a cross made out of a pillow! He immediately declared that idea "a little off" but graphic.

### Melchisedek Priesthood Gathering at Kirtland

Several of our Priesthood will be traveling to Kirtland, Ohio the second weekend of November to attend the Melchisedek gathering in the Temple. Remember them in your prayers.

### Annual Christmas Tea at Liberty Hall

All are invited to attend the annual Christmas tea usually held at the former home of Joseph Smith III the afternoon of the first Sunday of December. Watch for further information regarding time and date.

### Call For Prayers

Sister Helen Bastow is no longer able to attend services. Valle's brother, Kim Loving and Larry Oiler are each suffering from invasive cancer. We have at least two families in eminent danger. Harold Akers is in search of employment. Keep in touch with the needs of these loved ones and remember the needs of our nation and of those in troubled areas of the world.