

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Rob Rolfe • 619 S. State, Lamoni, IA 50140 • 515-784-6030

Law or Spirit?

You don't need much talent to be a critic. Critics can, and do tear down, but rarely does a critic build up. The continuing conversation Jesus had with the Pharisees was a conversation based on criticism. Why did not Jesus or his disciples follow the "law"? They "worked" on the sabbath, they didn't wash their hands, they associated with persons unclean. On occasion, Jesus even healed someone on the Sabbath.

I don't recall Jesus ever denying the fact that what the Pharisees claimed was the law, was the law. He didn't deny that He and His disciples "broke" the law. Was the "law" the "law" or not. If it was the law, Jesus, being a Rabbi, surely knew the law. Either it was the "law" and He knowingly broke the law, or it was not the law and He was free to do as he did. The underlying problem was, "what does the law mean". Was working on the Sabbath the law or was it a merely a rule.

The restoration saints are at the last crossroads. A call has been given to meet in a "general assembly". That call is to prepare ourselves, to humble ourselves and pray. We know the promise that is given, "if my people, who are called by name, shall humble themselves, and pray.." How can a people that are filled with such pride and stiff-neckedness be capable of humbling themselves? Instead of asking what is the first thing we should do to humble ourselves and pray, we argue over what it means to have a general assembly. We can't do it because we are not to work on the Sabbath, or some other interpretation of this or that rule. The call is, and will be, to hearken unto that "spirit which leadeth us to do good."

Does our Lord want to live with us, or not? Moses called the people to the mountain because the Lord

Continued on last page

TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

Your Job, 2004

Elder Michael Jordison, who was in charge of this Communion service, first gave us an opportunity to make special preparation for partaking of the emblems by reading from Alma 16:219-222 the whole purpose of the sacrifice made for us so mercy could temper justice. We had listened to a musical exposition of the question, 'Why Did He Have to Die?' We had responded in dedication of our lives to the service of our Lord and had partaken of the emblems of the sacrifice of our Lord in covenant with Him to accept His mercy. Amy Mitchell's sweet young voice had just reminded us that we are in an "Old, Old path made strangely sweet by the touch divine of the Master's feet" when Priest Rodney Bastow arose to speak.

Choosing Third Nephi 13:11-24 Brother Bastow read: "And it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings, he saith unto his disciples, Enter ye in at the strait gate; for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and few there be that find it, but wide is the gate, and broad the way which leads to death, and many there be that travel therein, until the night cometh, wherein no man can work.

"And it came to pass when Jesus had said these words, he spake unto his disciples, one by one, saying unto them, What is it that ye desire of me after that I am gone to the Father? And they all spake, save it were three, saying, We desire that after we have lived unto the age of man, that our ministry, wherein thou hast called us, may have an end, that we may speedily come unto thee, in thy kingdom. And he said unto them, Blessed are ye, because ye desire this thing of me; therefore after that ye are seventy and two years old, ye shall come unto me in my kingdom, and with me ye shall find rest.

"And when he had spoken unto them, he turned himself unto the three, and said unto them, What will ye that I should do unto you, when I am gone unto the Father? And they sorrowed in their hearts, for they durst not speak unto him the thing which they desired. And he said unto them, Behold, I know your thoughts, and ye have desired the thing which John, my beloved, who was with me in my ministry, before that I was lifted up by the Jews, desired of me; Therefore more blessed are ye, for ye shall never taste of death, but ye shall live to behold all the doings of the Father, unto the children of men, even until all things shall be fulfilled, according to the will of the Father, when I shall come in my glory, with the powers of

heaven; And ye shall never endure the pains of death; but when I shall come in my glory, ye shall be changed in the twinkling of an eye, from mortality to immortality; and then shall ye be blessed in the kingdom of my Father.

“And again, ye shall not have pain while ye shall dwell in the flesh, neither sorrow, save it be for the sins of the world; And all this will I do because of the thing which ye have desired of me, for ye have desired that ye might bring the souls of men unto me, while the world shall stand; and for this cause ye shall have fullness of joy; and ye shall sit down in the kingdom of my Father; Yea, your joy shall be full, even as the Father hath given me fullness of joy; and ye shall be even as I am, and I am even as the Father; and the Father and I are one; And the Holy Ghost beareth record of the Father and me; and the Father giveth the Holy Ghost unto the children of men, because of me.

“And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words, he touched every one of them with his finger, save it were the three who were to tarry, and then he departed.”

“A few weeks ago, I had a dream.” Rodney said. “It was a kind of a common dream that I had had before. I had come to church one Sunday morning. As I came in, I discovered that I was to be the speaker. When I got up to speak, I was unable to say anything. I didn’t know what to say, and it was a really terrible feeling. To me as a speaker, I believe it is important for me to fast and to pray and to study. I believe that if I do that, the Holy Spirit will provide me with the words to say.

“This morning, I think we have all expected to feel the presence of the Holy Spirit. I don’t believe that we could come to a service like this to truly repent and to truly be forgiven if we didn’t. A lot of us may have heavy burdens to bear. We may have loads that other people don’t even know about, and these things may interfere with us being able to communicate with our heavenly Father and to feel the presence of His Holy Spirit. But I hope as we have taken the emblems this morning, and as we have prepared, that we will not let our troubles and cares distract us as we commune here with God’s Holy Spirit. And I also believe that if we feel the presence of God’s Holy Spirit, we can realize that it is a gift from God and that we should praise Him for this blessing.

The Question That Prompted This Sermon

“During my Christmas break, which, by the way, has to have been the fastest two weeks of my life ever, the one thing that we did over the Christmas break was to go to the Richards household and have a holiday meal with Debbie’s family. They were all there except Joyce who was either in Texas or Oklahoma or someplace in between. Debbie is the youngest of her family, so that means all of them are older than we are. They are reaching that age when they are beginning to think about retirement, which is kind of funny because Debbie’s father is 88 years old and he still farms like he always has. He still gets up in the morning and does pretty much the things, you know, if I ever get to be 88, I would hope that I would still be able to do. He is still very active, but Debbie’s oldest brother, Don, has just reached that age where he can retire, and is thinking about what he wants to do. So a lot of the conversation that day was about retirement. I know that bores a lot of you younger people because you think, ‘That’s not going to happen to me.’ I thought that same thing, but now it is looking better and better all the time.

“Don’s married to Betty, and Betty is a rather unique individual in the least. Not being means by any means, because I love her to death, she is a real sweet heart and she is a very Christian person. But she is also the life so to speak, of the Richard’s get togethers.

She is the one who keeps the conversation going, she always has something to say and she is a lot of fun. One question that she asked me that say kind of stuck in my mind and kind of was the basis for my message here this morning. She asked me what job I would like to have if I could have any job I wanted. Believe it or not, I really didn’t know what to say.

“Think about it. If she had asked you that question, think about what you might say. If you could have any job that you wanted, would you want a job that would pay you a lot of money? Would that really be important to you to make a really lot of money? Would you want a job with a lot of power and prestige? Would that be important to you? Or would you want job that would bring you fame and glory? Would that be important? Or would you really want a job where you wouldn’t have to do anything? Maybe that would be important. Or would your response be like that of the Three Nephites? Would you choose to serve others and bring souls to Christ that your joy might be full?

“I think most of us here have already chosen to serve Jesus. We have made a commitment when we were baptized and have renewed that covenant here this morning as members of His Restored Church. Our job is, and always will be to help others find the happiness of knowing Jesus Christ as we have come to know Him. Today we have rededicated ourselves to doing that job.

“Many of you are familiar with Max Lucado. I think you have seen his pictures. You have read his books. Kathy Myers got us introduced to Max Lucado a few years ago. She gave us a book and we have added other books to this. This morning I would like to share with you one of his readings from his book, Let the Journey Begin. It’s called ‘Healthy Habits’:

“I like the story of a little boy who fell out of bed. When his Mom asked him what had happened, he answered, ‘I don’t know. I guess I stayed too close to where I got in.’ It’s easy to do with our faith. It’s tempting to stay where we got in and never move. Pick a time in the not-too-distant past, a year or two ago. Now ask yourself a few questions. How does your prayer life today compare with then? How about your giving? Have both the amount and the joy increased? What about your church loyalty? Can you tell that you’ve grown? And Bible study? Are you learning to learn?

Four Habits Worth Having

“There they are. Four habits worth having. Isn’t it good to know that some habits are good for you? Make them part of your day and grow. Don’t make the mistake of the little boy. Don’t stay too close to where you got in. It’s risky resting on the edge.”

“Each month when I come to this Communion service, I feel I’m that little boy. My spiritual life, I think too often is too close to when I got in. It’s hard for me to change so that I can grow spiritually. I need to do my job better. I need to pray more for others. I need to be more giving, more caring. I need to study more, and I need to spend more time in fellowship with others who have chosen to serve Jesus Christ.

“What about you? Are you on the edge? This week on the internet there was an article about dealing with difficult coworkers. It listed some types of nightmare coworkers with a description and advice on how to deal with them. These included the office gossip - you probably understand that one pretty well; the constant complainer; the nosey neighbor (I hadn’t thought about that one, but they describe people who always want to know other’s business, always want to know what you are doing and why, and things like that; the office thief - and that wasn’t quite what I thought. Their description was the person who steals your ideas and says they are

theirs. And there was listed, the all around unpleasant coworker - the one that is rude and arrogant and condescending.

"I scanned the article a little bit - didn't give it much of a thought. Of course, none of it applied to me; but I was trying to think a little bit of how it applied to people I was working with and who was who there; but at lunch that day I sat next to Tracey. Tracey's our Home Ec teacher, and she's also in charge of FCA. Tracey's a very, very good person, and I love her to death. But Tracey was upset that day. Someone had made a copy of this article and put into her mail box. It really hurt her to know that she had been perceived as a difficult coworker. I don't see Tracey that way, and I don't know why someone else did, but that's the way she had been perceived.

"I thought about this a lot this week. Does it matter what people think of us? Can we still do our job if people think of us adversely? And another thing I thought about, do we have the correct perception of how we are living our lives - how we are doing our job, and how other people perceive us?

Do Others See Christ In You?

"Do you remember Kay? Kay was gone one day this week, and it was mentioned one day at lunch, because she usually eats with us, too. It was mentioned at lunch what a really good person Kay is, and that's true. Kay loves everybody - the other teachers, the students and even some of our more difficult parents. She's very caring. She is very giving. She wears an angel pin every day. If you ask her about it, she will tell you she has a guarding angel watching over her and helping her do her job. I need to be more like Kay. I need to do my job better so that others can see a Christ like quality in my life.

"I have a confession. I have known pretty much this week what it was that I wanted to say here this morning. And I remember one of Delbert's sermons in which he said, 'If you talk the talk, you have to walk the walk', and I was determined this week to practice what I was going to be talking about. Monday I went to school. You know, coming back from the vacation, I felt really good. I was fired up and enthused. I was really rolling. But as the day wore on, I wore down. In that hour the seventh graders came. Most of you can understand if you have ever taught seventh graders. And if you have never taught seventh graders, you can understand it because have been a seventh grader. But these kids were so excited when they came into the room that they were just bouncing off the walls. They were excited about being back, but they weren't really too excited about learning how to add mixed numbers. And it got so upsetting to me after awhile that my patience wore thin and I exploded! I didn't want that to happen. I didn't want to yell at the kids. I know there's a better way that I could have handled that. I am doing better because that used to be a problem to me, and it doesn't occur as frequently as it used to. And I learned from that incident. I know the kids still love me because they still come around and asked me questions after school. They were quiet the rest of the hour, and I could tell that it hadn't really affected them that much, but it bothered me. It's just something that the Lord has to help me with.

"You know, I finally found out where George gets that, 'The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel.' It's in Mark 1:13. Also I found in Mark these words:

"And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy one of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the unclean spirit

had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him."

"A lot of times I wish Jesus would come take the unclean spirits from my life. I wish He would help me to be more careful with what I say and with what I do. But I know that Jesus loves me, and I know that He will help me to do my job better. He continues to bless me in spite of my short comings.

"This week my family and I have been greatly blessed. Our son Brock has found some direction with what he wants to do. He's not sure that it's quite the job that he wants yet, but at least he is going in that direction. Jowett, after four tries, has passed his actuary tests and is heading the the right direction, and I hope will make a change in his life. Today is a new day. It's the start of a new week, the start of a new month, the start of a new year; and we know what our job is!

"I appreciated the call to worship. I had studied the verses on down from that a little bit, Alma 16:226-228, where we find these words:

"And now, my brethren, I would that after ye have received so many witnesses, seeing that the holy scriptures testify of these things, come forth and bring fruit unto repentance; Yea, I would that ye would come forth and harden not your hearts any longer; for behold, now is the time, and the day of your salvation; and therefore, if ye will repent and harden not your hearts, immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you. For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God: yea, behold, the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors."

"The time is now! Zion will soon be here. It's time to do our job! May we commit ourselves today to that cause."

Put Your Trust and Faith in God

Elder Gerald Bolingbroke was the speaker for Sunday morning, January 24. His sermon was enlightning as he spoke of the possibility of the existence of a Bible Code as discovered by Dr. Eliyahu Rips, an Israeli mathematician. He began his sermon by reading from the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 36:12 c-e and from the Inspired Version of the Bible, Daniel 12:4

About two years ago Brother Bolingbroke read the book "The Bible Code" by Michael Drosnin which explained how the code, or pattern of words was discovered or broken. The code foretells events that happened thousands of years after the Bible was written. And now recently Drosnin has written a second book on the Bible code with more convincing information.

For over 3000 years the code in the Bible has remained hidden. Isaac Newton believed there was a code in the Bible and searched for it but could not find it. Because of the complexity of the code, it had to wait for the computer to be invented. Through the aid of technology, the amount of time it takes for the code to be broken, and a message to be found, is greatly reduced.

Michael Drosnin is a reporter formerly of The Washington Post and The Wall Street Journal. He lives and works in New York City. When he saw planes fly into the twin towers, he went to his computer which had a Bible code installed in it and searched for

“twin towers” in the Hebrew translation of the Bible. He not only found those words, but later he found other words which related to the event.

Michael says he is not religious and does not believe in God. He is a Jew and the Bible Code is a puzzle to him. He has worked with the code, with leading scientists, and with religious Hebrew leaders. He confirmed the mathematical significance of every major encoding with Dr. Eliyahu Rips, the discoverer of the code and one of the world’s leading experts in group theory, the field of math that underlies quantum physics. Michael confirmed the code with a senior code breaker at the U.S. National Security Agency named Harold Gans.

In 1993, shortly after the first attack on the twin towers, when the bomb was planted in the basement of the towers, Mr. Drosnin found this message in the Bible code: “twin towers, the warning, the slaughter and terror, it will fall, collapse.” Collapse was encoded twice. He assumed that the prediction of the attack on the twin towers had been fulfilled. It never occurred to him that there would be another terrorist attack eight years later. However, after the attack in 2001, when he searched for the twin towers, he found these words: “twin towers, airplane, twin towers it knocked down twice, airplane.” Every detail about the attack is there including “Sin, crime of Bin Laden, the city and the tower, they saw smoke rising above the land like the smoke of a furnace.” The terrorist Mohammed Atta was also identified with these words: ‘Terrorist Atta, Egyptian man.’

The attack on the Pentagon was also encoded with the words “Pentagon, damaged, emergency” followed by “from Arabia.”

The Ariel Sharon (Prime Minister of Israel) and the George Bush election were confirmed with the words “End of Days, in the End of Days, Arafat, E. Barak, Sharon, Bush.” Michael showed the code to Dr. Rips. Dr. Rips was amazed. He checked the odds of all four leaders of Israel, the Palestinians, and the United States all appearing with the two Biblical expressions of the “End of Days” were at least 500, 000 to 1. Rips said the true odds might be 1 million to 1.

In October 1998 Michael Drosnin gave his Lawyer, Michael Kennedy, a prominent New York attorney, a sealed letter to be opened in 2002. The letter stated:

Michael:

“I’m convinced of two things: (1) The Bible Code is real; (2) The world won’t listen to its warnings until it’s almost too late.”

“The code challenges all conventional Western concepts of reality. So, although Newton believed that the future could be known and that a code in the Bible would reveal it, and a top NSA code-breaker has confirmed the Israeli discovery, it still isn’t fully accepted. Even the fact that the code has been correct in advance of the event about the Rabin assassination, the Gulf War, and other major world events, it has not convinced the skeptics.”

“Prime Minister Peres, and the chief of Mossad met with me, but most government leaders will not heed the warnings until more predictions come true. Therefore, I’ve put the most important in writing, so I can prove that these predictions were found in advance.

The warnings that are most clearly stated in the code are:

(a) The world will face global “economic collapse” starting with the Hebrew year 5762 (2002 in the modern calendar).

(b) This will lead to a period of unprecedented danger, as nations with nuclear weapons become unstable, and terrorists can buy or steal the power to destroy whole cities;

(c) The danger will peak in the Hebrew year 5766 (2006 in the

modern calendar), the year that is most clearly encoded with both “world war” and “atomic holocaust.”

After September 11, 2001, after Michael Drosnin had seen the attack on the World Trade Towers, after he found it perfectly encoded in the Bible, he retrieved his copy of the sealed letter. When he read it, it shook him.

On September 17, the eve of the Hebrew New Year 5762 (2002) the stock markets reopened for the first time since September 11. This date had been encoded with “economic crisis.” The Dow Jones fell by 684 points, beginning a week that saw the worst stock market crash since 1929, since the great depression.

World War In 2006 was encoded, as was atomic holocaust in 2006. Also encoded was “world war, terrorism, suicide bomber” and “war to the knife.”

Mr. Drosnin’s letter went on to say: “But the Bible code tells us all our possible futures, not one predetermined future. So we can change course, prevent the ultimate disaster. I believe the Bible code exists to help us prevent it. I believe that the code was discovered now, at this moment in human history, so that we would know just in time. That’s why I’ve left this time capsule with you sealed in 1998, to be opened in 2002, to prepare us for 2006.”

If the Bible Code is true, and if these events do occur as they have been predicted, we must trust in the Lord and stay true to his gospel, praying continually for his guidance and spirit to be with us.

Brother Bolingbroke continued his message by encouraging us. He asked us to remember the words of Nephi in the Book of Mormon as recorded in seventh chapter, starting with verse 32:

“For behold, saith the prophet, The time cometh speedily, that Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men: For the day soon cometh, that all the proud and they who do wickedly, shall be as stubble; and the day cometh that they must be burned. For the time soon cometh, that the fullness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon all the children of men: For he will not suffer that the wicked shall destroy the righteous. Wherefore, he will preserve the righteous by his power, even if it be so that the fullness of his wrath must come, and the righteous be preserved, even unto the destruction of their enemies by fire. Wherefore, the righteous need not fear; for thus saith the prophet, They shall be saved, even if it so be as by fire. Behold, my brethren, I say unto you, that these things must shortly come; yea, even blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke must come; And it must needs be upon the face of this earth; And it cometh unto men according to the flesh, if it so be that they will harden their hearts against the Holy One of Israel: For behold, the righteous shall not perish; For the time surely must come, that all they who fight against Zion, shall be cut off.”

In 1200 B.C. Moses went up to the top of Mount Sinai. He saw the God of Israel and there was under his feet a kind of paved work of Sapphire stone. Exodus 24: 1-10 tells us, “And he said unto Moses Come up unto the Lord, thou and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off. And Moses alone shall come near the Lord, but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgements; and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all of the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offering and sacrificed peace offering of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and

half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people; and they said, All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words. Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel; And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of sapphire stone, and as if it were the body of heaven in his clearness.

Michael Drosnin says according to legend it was on that "Sapphire stone" that God wrote the original words of the Bible. Although the stone was as hard as a diamond, it could be rolled up like a scroll. And although it was the deepest deep blue, it was also transparent. In fact the Bible said it was the "very Heaven for clearness." Mr. Drosnin saw in Hebrew that Sapphire in reverse spells Rips and Sapphire Stone in reverse is "Rips prophesied." Also in the Bible code Michael found "Sapphire Tablet, Rips, Russian, He will compute, Prophecy, and, Decoder Rips prophesied code."

Michael showed Rips the code he found about him. Rips was humbled. Michael then asked Rips if he thought we'd ever be able to see the Bible code whole. Rips responded, "We don't have the key." Michael searched for "code key". He found "Code Key Obelisks." Obelisks was not what he expected. He had seen obelisks in Egypt. They are four or six-sided stones with writing on them found in Egypt. He searched again and found "Lord of the Code, Sapphire, Rips, Object of heaven, Obelisk."

Mr. Drosnin was flying back to Israel before Thanksgiving in 1998, looking at the startling encoding of "Bible Code" crossed by "obelisk" when he found also "In the Valley of Siddim." This Valley of Siddim did not appear on any modern map. He found in Genesis 14:3 "All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea." Michael continued to search for information about the valley of Siddim and found the location in the code. He found "the exact place Lisan, north from Lisan, tongue of sea, from edge of the Jordan on the border," and "encoder Lisan, tongue of the Dead sea, to the north." He searched more about the code key and found that there was a metal box in the same location that contained information to lead to the full decoding of the Bible code. He thought he could search for it with a magnetometer. So far he has not been able to go to the site because the Jordan authorities have forbidden him to go there.

Also, Michael went to Yassir Arafat with the code and Arafat believes in it. Arafat has been predicted by the code to be assassinated. Michael tried to get Ariel Sharon to look at the code, but he could not get a meeting with him.

Brother Bolingbroke continued his sermon by relating an uplifting story to the congregation as given by Oscar Case in his "Story From My Book of Acts."

When Oscar was 17 years old, he went with his brothers to the Western Iowa Reunion of the Church, which was held that year, 1889, at Garner's Grove. Every sermon he heard he was moved by the Spirit of God and said to his brother Hubert he was going to be baptized as soon as he got home. His brother said he was going to be baptized too, so on October 17, 1889 they were both baptized in the river Jordan, a small stream in Western Iowa. A wonderful testimony was given to Oscar on that day. Sunday afternoon he went out in the woods to pray, and while he was engaged in prayer a voice spoke to him telling him this church which he had united

with was His, and if he would prepare he'd be permitted to do a good work.

Oscar was soon called to the office of an Elder. In 1883 his father said to him, "When are you going to take up the ministry?" Oscar remarked, "God knows my name and address, and if He wants me, He will tell me."

He was teaching school. Another of the Western Reunions was coming on, and he decided to go. It was held at Logan, Iowa, 25 miles from their home. He told his mother that he was going. She wanted to know what he was going to do about his school. He told her that he would go down Friday night and come back Sunday night. So when he was ready to start from the school house he decided to pray about what his father asked him, as his father told him at the time that he had received a testimony that when Oscar was a baby he would preach the gospel. So when he was ready to start from school house, he decided to pray about his father's testimony.

So he went up to the desk where he had been teaching all day, and told the Lord all about it. He told the Lord that if He wanted him to preach the gospel he would like to have Him reveal it to him by moving someone whom he did not know, and in the gift of tongues and interpretation He would tell Oscar it was the answer to this prayer.

He arrived at the reunion ground around midnight. A police met him and helped him care for his horse and find his tent. There were about 425 tents on the ground. The next morning Oscar told Hubert that he was going to the prayer service. They went together. Entering the big tent, there were about 1500 people in that meeting., they went down to the center. The meeting had progressed about 15 or 20 minutes. An old gray haired man, A. H Rudd, arose directing them to the next row of seats. He spoke in an unknown tongue, and in the message he laid his hands on Oscar's head. At one time. in the interpretation he said to Oscar, "You are called to the ministry and this is in answer to your prayer you offered at the school house last evening and you will go to the East, West, North and South and will be instrumental in baptizing hundreds into the church."

He also laid his hands on his brother Hubert calling him to the ministry and telling him of his work and mission in which he would baptize many souls. This message filled their souls and has been fulfilled to the most minute detail. They were active in their ministry for 67 years. They have never turned back.

Brother Bolingbroke shared another story from Small Miracles II by Chrissie Jenkins.

Chrissie thought their marriage was idyllic. She thought her husband was a respectable, upright, law-abiding citizen. She thought they had an open, honest relationship in which they knew everything there was to know about each other. But when she discovered a cache of drugs hidden in his briefcase one day, she realized that everything she had known about her husband and about their marriage was a total sham.

Fifteen years of pretense came crashing down around her as she examined the small plastic bags of cocaine powder stashed in the pouch compartment. How had the truth eluded her all this time? How could she have been so naive? How could she have lived with a hard-core addict and not even known.

It wasn't the shock of discovering that he was an addict that pulled her away from him irrevocably. She could have lived with the knowledge that her husband had a serious problem. She was a loyal person and she would have given him her support. Together, they could have attempted to surmount the crisis. But the realiza-

tion that all these years he had lied to her, perpetrated constant deceptions, engaged in endless subterfuge in order to maintain his habit and hide it from her. That realization she simply could not countenance. For her, honesty between partners was the paramount thing; without it there could be no relationship.

So, there she was, a newly-divorced, forty-year-old with five children on her hands, and no marketable skills. All her life, she had devoted herself to home and hearth, eschewing the lure of the workplace in order to be a constant presence in her children's lives. When she had left her job to have her first baby, no office boasted a computer system. Now, they all did. How was she going to support her family. "Displaced homemaker" was the term they used for her and tens of thousands of women like her.

She sat in agency after agency, scribbling applications for training courses and emergency relief. She was assured that help would soon be on its way. But in the meantime there were bills to pay and five young and hungry mouths to feed. How was she going to get by?

She baby-sat a little; she tried telemarketing at night. But until she was accepted into a training program and acquired real skill, every month would prove a tremendous challenge.

One day, she couldn't take it anymore. The strain and burden were too great to bear. The next month's rent was due the following day and she was \$240 short. The refrigerator and cupboards were bare. She didn't know what she could serve her children for supper that night. Each month she had somehow managed to pay the rent and feed the kids. But now, she seemed to be at the end of her rope. Everything was unraveling, including her. She began to weep. She felt utterly alone and helpless. To whom could she turn?

"Pray!" a voice inside her urged. "Pray" another voice scoffed. Why not? she shrugged. It certainly couldn't hurt. Out of the depths of her being, she prayed. She prayed. She prayed as she had never prayed before.

"Dear God," she prayed, "please help me pay this month's rent and feed my children tonight." She told God that she was not asking for luxuries or extravagances. She was begging God to allow her to survive.

Just then, there was a knock at the door; and her aunt and uncle burst into the room, bearing bags of groceries. She stared at them in shock. She was taken by surprise not merely because her aunt and uncle lived in a different part of town, but because for years they had been somewhat estranged from their family and had kept in touch only sporadically. She had not spoken to either of them in months. Yet here they were, only seconds after she had completed her prayers—flesh and blood answers to her supplications. So frightened was she by their sudden and unexpected arrival, she could only stammer her surprise and gratitude.

After they left, she pondered with awe and fear the mysteries of their suspicious visit. She had not spoken to anyone who was in contact with them, and she had been too proud to tell her friends and relatives the extent of her troubles. No one had known that her cupboards were empty.

When she had attempted to ask her aunt and uncle what had brought them to her home, they had answered, "Oh, we were just in the neighborhood and thought you could use some extra stuff." An unsatisfactory answer, indeed. She was overwhelmed with relief knowing that her children would eat heartily that night.

But what would she do about the rent? As she began to unpack the groceries, she noticed an envelope discretely tucked into one of the bags. It had her name on it. She tore it open and found inside

twelve crisp \$20 bills, \$240. Two hundred and forty dollars is a strange amount to give as a gift. But it was precisely the amount she needed for the rent.

Let us all put our trust in God. We do not know what the future holds, but if we trust God we will be all right.

Made In the Image of God

Elder Norman Nelson read Genesis 1:27-29 "And I, God, said unto mine Only Begotten, which was with me from the beginning, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and it was so. And I God said, Let them have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And I, God, created man in mine own image, in the image of mine Only Begotten created I him; male and female created I them."

"The kind of thing that we need to consider is that every one of you is created in the image of God. I remember a testimony of a little old lady who was going through a park. During the last several nights, many people had been molested in that park. As she started through, there was an ugly looking guy who came up to her and said, 'Do you know who I am?' She said 'No, but I know you are created in the image of God.' And that wicked man took her through the park safely.

"There's another story of a monastery that was falling to pieces. It was not doing a good job at all, and the people there were getting fewer and fewer. They went and asked a wise old man what had happened. He said, 'I don't know, but there is a story that when you do things, you had better be aware that you may be taking care of an angel unaware; and I believe that one of you in that group is such a person. The people began to wonder, 'Which one is it?' And they began to treat each other as if they were that angel of whom they had been unaware. The monastery became a great and wonderful worship center. It flourished and became a wonderful place for the community.

You Are Valuable to the Lord

"We need to recognize just how valuable each of us is to the Lord. You are created in the image of God, and you have the potential to be such an individual. But it's up to you to choose whether you will be able to fulfill the mission He has given you to be in His image, and in His likeness and to be His son or daughter; or will you be something else? As I have said many times before, in the beginning, Christ was with God, and through the power of Jesus Christ we were all created. We were created as souls - living souls - with the potential to become what God had created us to be - to be His companions and His friends - One with Him and with Jesus Christ.

"Then remember Lucifer, who was a worthy soul, came before God and said, 'I want to go and save mankind. I will do it, so you give me the honor and the glory. But they won't have any choice. They will all have to be what I want them to be.' And Jesus said, 'I will go, and I will save as many as will.' With Jesus Christ, you have to have your agency - your ability to choose.

"We also find that, 'Adam called upon the name of the Lord, and Eve also, his wife; and they heard the voice of the Lord, from the way towards the Garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out of his presence. And he gave

unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God; and should offer the firstlings of their flocks for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord. And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam saying, Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him, I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake saying, This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth; Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest, in the name of the Son. And thou shalt repent, and call upon God, in the name of the Son for evermore.

“And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying, I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever; that as thou hast fallen, thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will. And in that day Adam blessed God, and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth: saying, blessed be the name of God, for, because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again, in the flesh I shall see God.

“And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying, Were it not for our transgression, we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient. And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God; and they made all of these things known unto their sons and daughters. And Satan came among them saying, I also am a son of God, and he commanded them saying, Believe it not. And they believed it not; and they loved Satan more than God. And men began from that time forth to be carnal, sensual and devilish. (Genesis 4:4-13.)

An Active Choice Is Required

“We have a choice. We have two opposing choices available for us. You need to remember that you have a choice, but it must be an active choice. If you wait, Satan has his say.” “If you wait, Satan has his say,” our speaker repeated. “If you get up in the morning, ask God to be your director, your helper and guidance for the day. If you don’t, you have already lost it. Do you go with our friends to their parties and their alcoholic binges and their all kinds of things? Or do you ask your friends to come with you to pray and study and learn? You have your choice. If you go with them, you are not leading them your way. You are going their way. You know, it’s very simple. ‘I’m not doing anything bad. I’m just going a little way’. You know, ‘I’m not going to go out and drink with those guys. I’m just going to go out and see that they don’t get hurt.’ Or. ‘I’m not going to do all those other evil things. I’m just going to go along! And that little tiny cord that was started around you now becomes stronger; and the first thing you know, you are drinking and eating with them; and you now have a strong chain around you and you are doing all kinds of abominable things that you wouldn’t do to start with just because you didn’t start out to do the thing that God wanted you to do but went along to just be with the crowd.

“You know, there is a situation in our history that is an example. What did Adolph start out to do? He was going to make the Third Reich the power of the world, and make everybody do the things that were right. Of course they were going to kill all of the Jews and Negroes, or at least make them servants. The end would be a wonderful world power. Everyone would have plenty to eat, to drink and to wear. But it wasn’t God’s way, and it had to fail because it was not allowing the agency of man - your agency. He was making you be the kind of individual that followed the leader, who was

Satan. The end does not justify the means!” “Again, The end does not justify the means!” he repeated forcefully. “Just because something is supposed to be doing something good for somebody, doesn’t mean it’s good for you. You have to start to listen to God first thing in the morning and make your day God’s day or you will be listening to another voice and gradually be drawn away into those things which are not good, are not of value and not worthwhile.

“You know, we have all kinds of stories that come to us to help us know. As we just said, the first thing that Satan did was to say, ‘You know that this fruit really won’t hurt you. It’s good for you. It will make you wise.’ And so Adam and Eve were drawn away. In all of our life, this is the kind of thing that we face. ‘This isn’t really very bad, you know. Just go along a little way. You can come out any time you want yo. You don’t have to do all the things that the other people do.’ But unless you become the example for good, all of the other people will still be led away, and you will finally go with them rather than to go on your own way toward the Kingdom of God. You must be a leader and become the kind of people that God wants you to be.

“In section 17:4 of the Doctrine and Covenants we read, ‘By these things we know that there is a God in heaven who is infinite and eternal from, everlasting to everlasting the same unchangeable God, the framer of heaven and earth and all things which are in them. and that he created man male and female; after his own image and in his own likeness created he them, and gave unto them commandments that they should love and serve him the only living and true god, and that he should be the only being whom they should worship. But by the transgression of these holy laws, man became sensual and devilish, and became fallen man.’

We Need Each Other’s Help

“Since we are in this situation, knowing that each one of us has the ability - has been created in the image of God, we need to recognize that situation and call on each other and support each other in trying to become the kind of person that we were really created to be. In Section 64:6c,&8a-b ‘all things must come to pass in their time; wherefore, be not weary in well- doing, for ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great. Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days; ... for, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her, and she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven. And the day shall come, when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.’

“The need is to be a people that will be obedient to the Lord and be able to show others what God really wants from us. Some have said we need an ecumenism; that we need to be like all the other churches. But then, who’s going to be the example to lead toward God? Everybody knows we are good people. We don’t hurt each other unless we are led to do so, but we can do all kinds of abominable things and say we are Christians. We can lie if it’s convenient. We can steal if we need to. We can commit adultery. What’s the harm in this? These are things that the world does. They need an example of a people who don’t do those things; but not just don’t do those things but have the glory of God in mind, seeking every day to glorify God and to lead the people toward Him. We cannot remain in our state of merely being ‘good people’ and not being the example that God wants us to be if we are to accomplish

the task that is ours.

The Wonder! The Beauty! Try to Imagine It!

"I'm still trying to remind you of the wonder and the beauty - I wish I had words! But to just even see God or to spend a few seconds in His presence is so much more wonderful than anything else you have ever imagined. It's worth anything you can do to be there. And to live in such a way that you can really enjoy His presence, and to be with Him through all eternity is unimaginable! We need to be clean that bear the vessels of the Lord. We need to start out our day worshiping Him and asking for His presence throughout the day. Then be the kind of people that can really enjoy Him.

In Section 76 we have this testimony of Joseph and Sidney: "We, Joseph Smith, Jr., and Sidney Rigdon, being in the Spirit on the sixteenth of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty-two, by the power of the Spirit our eyes were opened, and our understandings were enlightened, so as to see and understand the things of God;

"And, now, after the many testimonies which have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him, that he lives; for we saw him, even on the right hand of God; ..."

"I don't know how many of you heard Brother Levegood talk about his experience in which he was in the Waldo church. He was told that he needed to go toward the back of the church. He went a few rows back and the Lord said, 'No. That's not far enough.' So he moved back a little farther and finally got almost to the last row of the building. Then as the service was proceeding, he saw a light. I wish I could explain what he saw, but he looked up and there was the most magnificent, largest, most beautiful throne he had ever seen. The reason he had to go back was because there was no other way he could see the beauty of God's throne. Yes! It's real! And we need to know how important it is that we recognize these things, spend our lives and all our efforts in being the kind of people that can be there with Him.

"As I told you before, God created you as a spirit in the beginning in His likeness, but He could not make you the kind of person you needed to be. You need to choose that. You need to study, and to pray and to daily walk in such a way that He can teach you. Can you imagine a being that can create the whole universe - all the stars, all the planets, everything, all the people, and have them under His control and us having the potential to be a part of Him - to be a part with Him? How are you going to learn that? He has to teach you or you can't know. How can you learn if you don't ask? How can you learn if you don't study? How can you learn if you don't plan your day to be with Him - to be the person He wants you to be?"

"This is the day He has given you. This is the day the Lord has made. Rejoice and be glad in it!"

We had sung prayer hymns at the beginning of the service. Diane Anderson and Michael Jordison had sung of our need for the Lord's mercy. Now Brother Gordon Winkler, in charge of the service, said, "Thank you, Norman, for those continued words of guidance and direction. I hope that we can be vigilant in our efforts to walk daily with the Lord." Our prayer to that end was twofold: sung by the congregation in the words of the hymn, "Be with me Lord wher-e'er I go. Teach me what thou wouldst have me do." and voiced for us by Seventy Ronald Smith.

News & Notes

Weather Cancels Service

Communion Service for January was postponed until the second Sunday of the month because of the storm that made travel hazardous.

Fasting Weekend Observed

The Mt. Ayr Restoration congregation observed its quarterly fasting weekend January 16-18. As is customary, the congregation gathered for prayers at the time they would normally have been eating Friday evening, each mealtime on Saturday and Sunday morning. They broke their fast Sunday noon. Prayers were again concerned with the needs of those who know not God and included the need each of us has to know Him better. Those able to attend the gatherings were richly blessed.

Plans Begun for Fall Retreat

Plans for the fall retreat to be held September 17-19 at Farwesta, near Stewartville, Missouri, were begun at the South Iowa gathering at Decatur Saturday, January 17. "Thankful Living" was chosen as the theme. Plans are for a schedule more relaxed than previously and an increase in Patriarchal ministry. The next gathering will be in Ottumwa, February 14.

Seventy Sponsored Missionary Family Reunion Anticipated

Preparations are underway for the Missionary Family Reunion at Graceland June 20-26. Plans for the Reunion were on the agenda of the Restoration Seventy as they gathered at Jericho Hills near Lucas, Iowa, January 9-11. Alan Smith is again Director and Valle is Registrar. It is expected that this will be an especially large reunion because the facility at Excelsior Springs previously used by several congregations is being refurbished this season and so is not available for Restoration reunions. Registration forms will soon be available on line at centerplace.org.

Author Presents Work to Libraries

Mildred Smith is presenting her recently published "Delmo, Threshold of Freedom" to libraries at Lamoni, Graceland University, the Missouri Historical Society at Columbia, Missouri, the Delmo Housing Corporation in St. Louis and Lilbourn, Missouri, and the required two copies have gone to the Library of Congress. The work is a combination of personal stories and documented history of the ten communities built for the poorest of the poor agricultural workers of Southeast Missouri in response to the Sharecropper's Demonstration, often called Strike, of 1939. Alan Smith, Paragon Publications, Inc., is the publisher.

Youth Achieves Double Acclaim

Aquila Galusha won first place in a recent Pee Wee Wrestling Tournament at Mt. Ayr and a number one rating in piano performance in the Piano Auditions at Graceland University. He was among those receiving honorable mention for his work.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST
Mount Ayr Restoration Branch
607 E. Madison St.
Mount Ayr, IA 50854

From the Pastor's Desk

Continued from front page

wanted to dwell with them. The people were unwilling. They had their own ideas about what God was doing.

Are we thinking about this call to assemble from our point of view or that of our Lord? Are we going to come with preconceived notions of what will happen, or are we willing to allow the Lord to do what He will do? Will

we raise our legal objections or will we hearken unto the voice of the Spirit? Are we willing to wait for the Lord to speak, or have we already decided what our response will be?

How do we judge? The answer is given in Moroni 7:14-15 .