

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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### Through Different Eyes

A client of mine recently stopped by my office "to get his affairs in order". He had just had major surgery and now another serious tumor had been found. His life had been hard, because (like most of us) he had made some choices that caused pain and heartache.

When I saw him that day, I didn't think about the bad choices. I thought about what he was feeling and how those around him were feeling. Whenever I know someone is dying, that ultimate fact changes the way I look at them. My attitude changes and becomes more forgiving and tolerant to their faults. Even if I don't love the person, I still can feel compassion for their situation.

But aren't we all dying? I am dying. Someday! But if I knew that my wife, or one of my children or grandchildren, or a close friend were dying soon, I am sure that I would treat that person differently. I would be kinder, more forgiving, more understanding.

As a Christian, wouldn't we live a better life if we looked at every person as if they were dying? I have learned that the most important things in life, are the most easily delayed or forgotten. That visit, that phone call, that letter, merely staying in contact, are pushed aside by the unimportant things in life. Maybe we would not let these things be pushed aside if we remembered we are all dying.

Around the corner I have a friend,

*Continued on back page*

## TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

### Christ Died for Our Sins

On the first Sunday in June, Elder Gerald Bolingbroke brought us the message to help us prepare for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He began with two scriptures. Rom. 8:37-39: "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

And, I Cor. 15:57 says, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Brother Bolingbroke expressed how wonderful it was to be there with us where we had another opportunity to remember the sacrifice Christ made for all of us and partake in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He continued by expressing that as he reads the words of Paul in the Bible he is amazed at his devotion to the Master.

The apostle Paul was an excellent example of the true Christian minister. In writing to the saints at Corinth he said, "I delivered unto you first of all...how that Christ died for our sins." Please note that "first of all" is not there by accident. Paul was dealing with a matter of basic importance for his time and ours. In all ages, and among all men, sin saps life. There is no true life, except as we win the victory over sin.

We would not build a house by putting the windows in first. Builders of houses must first give attention to foundations. The Master himself was aware when he pointed out in the story of the wise man who built his house upon a rock. The rock on which we are built is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the sure foundation, for if we are built on this rock we can stand against sin.

Mortality is the time to prepare to meet God. Each person has to decide which way they will go; either a way of selfishness or the path to Christ and his ways.

Men and women will be held accountable for the way they have led their lives.

Every individual will be accountable to Christ for the choices they have made in life. They will be accountable for the deeds they have done in this life. The Bible plainly teaches, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead

were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judge every man according to their works” (Rev 20:12-13).

The Book of Mormon plainly teaches: “Believe in the Son of God.... And that he shall rise again from the dead, which shall bring to pass the resurrection, that all men shall stand before him, to be judged, at the last judgment day, according to their works” (Alma 16:196, 197).

And the Doctrine and Covenants plainly teaches: “Let no one deceive himself that he shall not account for his stewardship unto me;” (D&C 118: 4c).

This requires us to give an accounting of our entire lives for the judgment day. “Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment” (Matt 12:31). “And then shall the second angel sound his trump, and reveal the secret acts of men, and the thoughts and intents of their hearts” (D&C 85:35 a).

We do not like to think of ourselves as sinners. Many people do not think they are sinners. It is more prevalent in our time. Even those of us who take sin seriously have a graded list of sins and tend to think that sinners are murderers, and adulteresses and thieves. We have to be careful we don’t think this way. Paul said our day would be immersed in sin. People need to be shocked about sin rather than tolerant of it.

II Timothy 3:2-4 Paul says it this way, “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affections, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.” We must be careful that we do not fall into one of these categories.

The scriptures teach that we should be humble and full of love as Isaiah says in Isaiah 57:15, “For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Paul also says, “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

John tells us, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (I John 1:8) and James says, “God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble....Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up” (James 4:6:10). Modern revelation says, “No one can assist in this work, except he shall be humble and full of love.” (D. and C. 11:4b)

There are many definitions of sin. One of the simplest is the definition given by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the saints in Rome where he said, “Whatsoever is not faith is sin.” (Rom.3:23). Sin is rebellion. This is brought out very strongly in modern revelation: “The rebellious shall be pierced with much sorrow” (D. and C. 1:1) and later, “They who go forth, bearing these tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, to them is power given to seal, both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious” (D. and C.1:2). The hurtful thing about this rebellion is that it substitutes the human will for the will and purpose of God. “They have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; they seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man

walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God” (D. and C. 63:2).

The death of Christ does not stand alone as the means to our redemption. We must also consider who Christ was and the life that he lived. His death does not bring us an automatic guarantee of salvation. The whole nature of divinity is summed up in what happened at Calvary. While we were sinners and enemies, God took the initiative for our redemption. We only need to read the New Testament to see that the early saints experienced true redemption by the connection in their minds with what Christ had done for them.

A story to help us realize how important it is to follow Christ is “A Lamp To Thy Feet And A Light To Thy Path” by Ruth Lewis Holaman.

Etta Soule tried to convince her mother, Mrs. Webber, that it really was not safe for her to walk alone to a prayer meeting at night. It was quite a long walk in the daytime, but it would be very dark at night, and Etta feared she would be unable to find her way home. Mrs. Webber was nearly seventy-five years old and not very well.

But, Mrs. Webber was not easily persuaded. She explained to her daughter that she was quite sure she could find her way. She wanted so much to meet with her friends in a social service whenever she had the opportunity. So, she asked her daughter to not worry about her. She said she would manage very well, and she began her long walk to the meeting place.

Today our city streets are as light at midnight as they are at midday. But when Mrs. Webber was visiting her daughter in St. Joseph, Missouri, lights on the city side streets were far between. The branch where Mrs. Webber attended prayer service was held in a hall near Fourth and Felix streets. Mrs. Webber reached the hall safely and felt repaid for her long walk. The audience was small and after the interesting meeting, she inquired if anyone would be going her way. Everyone seemed to be going in the opposite direction. Some of them were concerned about her being alone, but she assured them she would be all right.

As she left the hall a heavy mist began falling, making it impossible to see the light in the windows of the thinly settled parts of the city. She walked on for several minutes, being unable to tell in which direction she was going, and stumbling at times. At this point she realized she was lost and that she should have listened to Etta. But she so needed to meet with the Saints that night. She stood still for a few seconds and realized she must have help in this difficult situation. She offered a prayer telling the Lord she was sorry she was so headstrong and that if He would come to her rescue, she would try to be wiser in the future.

Suddenly there appeared at her feet a bright light. It was not like the common, ordinary lamplight more like the flashlights we have today. Mrs. Webber’s first reaction was, “A lamp to thy feet and a light to thy path,” and with joy she followed the light. To her surprise she noticed that on either side of the light it was very dark. The light did not extend outside of what could be called a “footpath.” Whenever there was an obstacle in the path, a raised place in the ground, or a ditch, the light would go very, very slowly. In difficult places to cross, the light would stop until she stepped over and would be safely walking on a smooth surface again.

In telling about her experience later, Mrs. Webber commented, “I had no idea which way I was going. I heard no voice; I saw no person, neither did I meet any one on my long walk home. I only realized and felt that I was in good hands. Not until I reached the

doorstep did I know where I was. As I opened the door, the light disappeared.”

Just as the children of Israel were led and protected by a cloud and a pillar of fire, so was Sister Webber guided to her home that dark night. The Psalmist said, “The angel of the Lord encamped around them that fear him and delivered them from wrong” Psalm 34:7. This story was written in April 15, 1950.

Brother Bolingbroke also told us an excellent story experienced by Vivian Sorensen explaining how he moved out in faith and helped to spread the gospel by confronting sin.

When Vivian was about fourteen, his mother asked him several times to read the Book of Mormon. He had tried to read the Bible and got bogged down in the Old Testament -- he said he probably began at the wrong place -- so he told his mother he tried to read the Bible, but he just couldn't appreciate it. She encouraged him by saying that she was sure he would find the Book of Mormon much easier to understand.

So to please her he took the Book of Mormon one day and began to read. He couldn't put the book down -- it had a spirit that captivated my whole soul, and it changed the whole course of his life! He began to search the Scriptures. He began to read every Church book he could get. He felt a surging in his soul, an hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and his soul was touched by the Holy Ghost.

Sometime after that his family moved to a different city in Australia. When he first attended that church, he was met by the pastor, who spoke to him under the influence of God's Spirit and told him about his future. He was amazed at the statements the pastor made because he (Vivian) was extremely shy and bashful.

He thought, “These things can never happen to me.” Satan was also tempting him by saying, “No, you can never do any good. You'll never be able to preach. You'll never be able to influence anyone. You'd better forget all about it.” It was only through the love and mercy of Jesus Christ that he could begin to serve Him.

Some of the best training he ever had was during the war. The pastor decided to hold street meetings to give the people of his city an opportunity to hear the gospel. The pastor invited the women as well as the men of the Church to come into the streets with him on Friday evening to witness of Jesus Christ. There were a lot of drunken soldiers in the city. They had a spokesman who said, “Let's smash up the ring.” The Saints had a Coleman lamp to light their music and the Bible. Vivian was standing near it, and one of the soldiers reached for the lamp to smash it on the pavement.

But the moment they saw his movement, everyone in the church group prayed within their hearts that the Lord would protect us. The soldier's hand froze in mid-air! It never reached the lantern -- it couldn't! It was utterly impossible for his hand to touch the lamp, so great was the power of God! Other men tried to come in a disturb their women and scatter them. But as they came near, they stopped, too -- just as though there were a great chain about the women. Every one of them felt that power and knew that the Lord was with them.

Those sisters of the Church had courage to stand out in a city and help the priesthood witness for Jesus Christ. But after that occasion many of them were quite upset, even though they had had this wonderful protection from God. Several of them said, “We cannot face it again.” But on the next Communion Sunday, for some reason best known to the Lord, He used Vivian to speak to them. If ever a man were put on the spot in prophecy, Vivian was then. Standing up in God's Spirit, he told these women that if they

went back and supported the ministry, the experience would never happen again.

Almost all the women accepted this message and went back to witness again. From that day on they preached. Although they did have trials, never again did they have such an experience as that. God blessed and led and directed them because they trusted Him.

God is all power, but yet He is concerned about each one of us. We understand God through Jesus Christ who was concerned so much for us that he died for us. Look at what God has prepared for us in Section 72:2 a-d of the Doctrine and Covenants.

First, He says He is merciful and gracious to those who fear Him. Next he tells us that great shall be their reward, and He reveals the mysteries of His Kingdom. Then He tells us He will make known to them the good pleasure of His will concerning all things in His kingdom. He tells us we will know the wonders of eternity and He will show us things to come. He tells us our wisdom will be great and our understanding shall reach to heaven. Last of all, he tells us by His Spirit he will enlighten them, and by His power He will make known the secrets of His will, even things which the eye has not seen or entered into the heart of man.

The Lord has told us to call on Him and He will be there, in Section 85:16 of the Doctrine and Covenants. Draw near to Him and He will draw near to us. Seek Him diligently, and we shall find him. Ask and we shall receive, knock and it shall be opened. He also told us if we ask things which are not right it shall be to our condemnation.

We have seen that sin is being rebellious against God. But if we repent and sin no more, we can depend on Jesus Christ to take the sin on himself. Let us be humble and full of love as we partake of the communion, and we shall have God's spirit to be with us.

## Someday Serving The Lord

Priest Rodney Bastow spoke about serving the Lord on the second Sunday in June. For his scripture he read a portion of Chapter 4 of Ephesians. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, In one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you...And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Til we, in the unity of the faith, all come to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...And be renewed in the mind of 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 I 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, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Kathy Myers than sang a lovely song with the affirmation that "Christ will be here some day".

### **Introductory Remarks**

As Rob has said, sometimes I struggle with knowing what to preach in my sermons. Considering that I preached a sermon not too long ago, it presents a problem for me. I can still remember what I preached before and know how far short I have fallen of my own message.

There is a story about a new minister being hired by a congregation. He looked like a good one, and the congregation was not disappointed. On the first Sunday he preached a great sermon and the congregation looked forward to the next Sunday with anticipation. To their surprise, he preached the same sermon again. They thought that preaching the same sermon two Sundays in a row was strange, but they didn't say anything. The next Sunday, he preached the same sermon again. Finally, one the board members had had enough. He went to the minister and said we don't pay for having the same sermon preached every week. The new minister responded, "when I see the congregation do something about my last sermon, I will move on to the next one"!

### **What is my ministry?**

In this case, I feel like I should take that advice (doing something about the last sermon) for myself. But when I pray and ask what I should talk about, don't I hope that the Holy Spirit will give utterance. But He expects that I (we) will do something about the message.

This morning I feel a little like Paul Harvey telling the rest of the story. Last month I told you I had applied for several positions as a high school principal. In all three occasions, the schools hired someone else. I had prayed for God's will to be done. Apparently his will was that someone else got the position. But it still hurt, nonetheless. Sometimes, when we pray, we want our will to be God's Will. We expect that it will happen just that way. But of course, it doesn't.

This past week I have putting up hay. If you recall, this past week was not a good week for "making hay". But, I was going to make hay and in a way, thought I could force the hay to be. I mowed the hay. It got rained on. I raked it up and everything looked good. The sun was shining. But in a few hours it was raining again. I persisted. I finally baled the hay, but it won't be worth much. In the same way, if we force our will, rather than accepting God's Will in our ministry, it probably will have the same result. "It won't be worth much".

I talked to my brother Herb about not being hired for any of these positions. His response discouraged me. He thought it was a good thing, not becoming principal. He thought being principal would affect my ministry. I thought about that. What is my ministry? What should I do to make my ministry better?

I have a friend at school named Larry. Larry and I can talk about the Christian faith; about serving the Lord. Larry was a preacher before he became a teacher, and understands the power of the Holy Spirit. He is looking forward to retiring from teaching and becoming a minister again, Some day. I told him that if he became a Restorationist, he could do both, teach and preach. He didn't seem to think he could do both.

Some days, I think I have the same attitude as Larry. Some day... I am going to serve the Lord full time. Some day...I am going to pray and fast more. Some day... I am going to spend more time with the Lord. Some day...I am going to get closer to God. But not today.

When I have to prepare for a sermon, it seems like every time that Satan throws things in my way. I have trouble studying and preparing. Some day... I am going to spend more time studying God's Word. I noticed that Larry knows his Bible pretty well. He has scriptural answers for why he thinks the way he does. Some day...I'll be able to do that. Some day... I'll make better use of my time, talents and possessions. Some day...

We were talking today about what we needed to change in our lives to bring about Zion. One thing that was mentioned, was spending more time together with good people. That we should "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called", as the good Apostle said. I have noticed that around me in my life are so many people in need; those that are ill and discouraged. Those that need someone to talk to. Someone to just be there for them. Some day... I am going to be kinder and more loving to my family. Some day...I am going to kinder to my neighbors, especially those that were not loving to me. Some day...I will know how to deal with anger and disappointment and to be more forgiving. Some day... "Even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you". What is keeping us all from doing all or any of these things today? I believe I can teach school and serve God. I believe we can raise cows or whatever job we have, and still teach others about God. Is your ministry waiting for Some day...?

There is a reading written by Paul Lawrence Dunbar. It also talks about what day we should do our ministry.

The Lord he had a job for me,  
But I had so much to do,  
I said, "You get somebody else,  
Or wait til I get through."  
I don't know the Lord came out,  
But He seemed to get along.  
But I felt kind of sneakin' like-  
Knowed I'd done God wrong.

One day I needed the Lord-  
Needed him right away;  
But He never answered me at all,  
I could hear him say,  
Down in my accusin heart;  
"Brother, I've got too much to do;  
You get somebody else,  
Or wait til I get through."

Now, when the Lord he have a job for me,  
I never tries to shirk;  
I drop whatever I have on hand,  
And does the good Lord's work.  
And my affairs can run along,  
Or wait til I get through;  
Nobody else can do the work  
That God marked out for you.

Some day Zion will be here. Which of all of these "Some Days" will be here first. But the Lord is asking us to serve him

today. Our speaker then closed with Ephesians 3:14-21.

"For this cause 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 fulness 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 Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end, Amen.

## Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother

Matthew 15:4-6 was Elder Steven L. Smith's choice of scripture for his Father's Day Sermon June 12, 2005. "For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother; and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death which Moses shall appoint. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to father or mother, By whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, it is a gift from me and honor not his father or mother, it is well. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." In this scripture, He was saying, "You are supposed to honor your father and mother".

By tradition the people were saying, "If I just give you a good gift, and I don't really honor you, that should be enough." But Jesus says, "No! You are supposed to honor your father and your mother. If you haven't guessed by now, today is Father's Day, and I would talk to you of fathers because it is important to honor your father and your mother; and that honor does not cease at the point where you become a father or mother. That honor needs to continue.

In the scriptures we have a number of words that have been translated to mean father. Probably in the Old Testament, the most the most common used word is Ab, which means the chief or rule maker. It's a Chaldean word, not Hebrew. It is talking about the head or rule maker in the family. We have also Ably Gibown which means the founder - the one who is the beginning of a family. It is often used in an ancestral sense but is also used as the beginning of a line of inheritance. We also have eesh, and interestingly enough, eesh is used in a lot of places in the scriptures, but it is not translated into a word because eesh simply means a male person, and in our terminology, when we say "father", we assume that is a male. We have bane, which means builder of the family name - one who creates a reputation for the family. We have dode who is the loved one or the lover. Those are the ones from the Chaldean and Hebrew. We find in terms of the Greek portions of the New Testament, we have pater, which is a male parent as opposed to mater. Many of you have sung of your Alma Mater, or the mother who has taught you. The Pater is the male parent and it is the most commonly used term. Even when Christ is referring to God as the Father, He often used Pater.

Also we find in the New Testament patrikos, which simply means a male ancestor. It can mean your father or your grandfather or actually an uncle as well on the father's side. Then we have patrios which is one who is the same family line with the same family name as you have. So we are talking of the person who classically

has been at the head of the family, has been the rule maker, is the founder, is the male who rules from a sense of strength and yet loves and is the one who passes on the name and creates a reputation for the name in the family.

Today we find that fathers as an institution are tending to be attacked. We find that because some individuals were without fathers, we have created institutions that make it so that many women will choose to try to take on the roll of father; but the government will help, and in helping covets the position of defender of the family, the provider for the family. It is not a good trade off, but it certainly is a part of the culture that we have developed.

So as I have thought about fathers, and the importance of fathers and what father has meant to me, I thought of my father. I thought of the things that he taught me and the things that I have learned. I would like to talk about that today. I won't tell you everything I learned from him, but I would like to tell you the important things.

When I was really young, I remember we had driven to a church. The building wasn't open yet, and Dad was going to preach that morning, He sat in the car and taught me to whistle. Whistling for me didn't come very easily. I had to purse my lips and blow but that didn't work very well. He then had to tell me that I had to take my tongue and form a u inside of my mouth, move it around a little bit so it changed the air flow inside of my mouth. I finally started to work with that, and eventually, I learned to whistle one note. It was kind of a neat accomplishment. And through watching my father, I learned to whistle.

And I learned that whistling could be something that would be helpful. When I was doing a lot of jogging, I would be jogging along, and I remember that one day I wanted to see an angel. I prayed to the Lord that I would see this angel, would talk with the angel, and one night I walked home from church and as I was walking home, there was an older man that shouldn't have been out because of the ice and snow. He had a cane, and he was working his way along the ice and snow. I decided that must be my angel that I was supposed to talk to. I was about two blocks away, so I started running full tilt, as fast as I could to catch up with my angel and talk to him; because I had some things I wanted to ask. As I neared him, I was probably about two driveways away, he turned around and looked at me in terror and took off running in another direction. That wasn't my angel. And I learned that when I go out jogging, if I am approaching another person and I whistle a hymn or something like "Jesus Loves Me", it doesn't have to be very loud, I don't intimidate people. So I learned that whistling can be helpful in not intimidating others. I found that I could whistle at times when I was intimidated or scared; so I would whistle at times when I needed some comfort, and often the hymns were the things that I would whistle. And I found that whistling was something you could do when you didn't want to talk. You could do it at any time of the day, and I appreciated the fact that my father taught me to whistle. It makes it very easy not to intimidate people when you are jogging if you have enough air left to whistle at the same time.

My father taught me to follow the truth. Sometimes, he said, the truth would not be popular, but I should follow what I knew was the truth. But I should never assume that I knew all of the truth, because when I assumed, and he took the word assume, and divided it up and said, "When you assume, it makes an ass out of you and me." I learned how to spell that way, too.

My father taught me to treat others with respect. And he

especially taught me to treat women with respect. He told me a story when I was very, very young about the time when he was in the Navy. He was getting ready to go on furlough with a bunch of his friends, one of the guys started bragging that he had met a young lady in that port and he was going to go and have a sexual encounter with that young lady. Then he was going to leave. He was not being very respectful toward this young lady, and my father was saddened by the response of this young man. But there was another sailor who said to the first, "Do you have a sister?" He said, "Yes." And the second man said, "What would you do if somebody was bragging that they were going to do to your sister what you just said you would do to this girl?" The guy said, "I'd kill them!" The other man said, "Remember. She is someone's sister." And Dad asked me to always remember with ladies, I should be gentle and kind and that I should treat them as God asked me to treat them - not just because God asked me to treat them that way but because they have a father and a brother who will defend them as ferociously as I would defend my own sister.

He taught me to be careful with my words. He told the story of the guy who was driving along in Saskatchewan. Now in Saskatchewan because you have a lot of marshy areas, they have built roads up until they are about ten to twelve feet above the marshes. Then they have paved over the top, and in the winter time when everything is covered with snow, and cars are going across the snow, packing it onto the highways so that even the heavy plows can't get it off, snow packed ice develops. He told of a man who was driving along on the snow packed ice (This is a kind of a parable.) and drove off of the snow pack into the ditch. In Canada, it is very, very cold, and if you stay in the ditch for very long, you are going to die. He said sometimes dealing with people is like dealing with this man in the ditch. There are people who will come along and say to one in trouble, "Mister, you are really stupid. You are down in that ditch. Your car is up to its frame with snow. You have bottomed out. You can't get out of that ditch. You are going to freeze, and it's your fault, and you deserve it. Then they drive off. And there are those, and he asked me to be like those who, instead of telling the person of the misery they are already in, will go out and get a rope, go down into the ditch, tie the rope onto the man's car and onto the back of his own car, try to get as much traction as you can, spread some sand underneath the tires (Because you always carried sand in the back of your car in winter), and use that traction to pull the other person out of the ditch. And he said, "When you talk to people in trouble or sin, be the one who backs up your words with action. Don't be the one who condemns."

He also taught me to be very careful with my words. One summer I was traveling with him. Actually it was only about six weeks that I got to be with him. As you travel with a Seventy, he would go into the homes of the Saints. We depended on the Saints for our lodging and for our meals. So when we would make appointments to go to various people's houses, because many of them were so far out that they wanted to entertain my father and talk with him, we would go from one house to another. We would often eat with them, breakfast, lunch and supper.

One day when we were eating a meal, and for the fourth day, making it about twelve meals in a row, we had been fed steak for breakfast, lunch and supper. Now, I like a good steak, but this is a little bit fattening and somewhere in one of the conversations, somehow it was mentioned, I think we were getting into the Word of Wisdom, that fish might be a more appropriate protein source in the summer time. I learned that you don't say that unless you are

willing to eat an anchovy and sardine omelet in the morning and variations on that for every meal for the next four days that you are in town. And you really don't let them know that you like prunes. You have to be careful with the way you talk. You tell the truth, but you don't always tell the whole truth.

My Dad taught me math. I had a hard time with math through about the fifth grade. Then in the sixth grade, I had this teacher that was wonderful. He made math seem real, and I felt like I was behind. And I felt like I could never catch up. And my Dad came home. He had about three days at home, because he traveled a lot. He sat down with me for those three days and he showed me that I could do what I didn't have the confidence to do. He helped me conceptualize what was going on in math and between my math instructor and my father I learned to be very good at math so that by the time I wrote my SAT test going off to Graceland, I was in the 99.9 percentile of those who had written that test; and I really enjoyed math. As we went along, he shared with me his joy with math.

And he taught me there is an if - then sequence. If something happens, then something else happens - relationships. That carried over into church, the conceptualization of that, and he taught me about the kingdom and how the kingdom was based on an if-then proposition - on the fact that if we would do what God asks us to do, then He would give us blessings. And by doing those specific things that God asked, God had specific blessings in mind, that years and years of observation were recorded in the writings of the scriptures, and that sometimes if we were looking for specific blessings, there were things that were mentioned by several different writers. Then when you put them all together, that became the stimulus for getting some of that blessing. I appreciate his teaching in math and teaching me the blessings of the kingdom because they have followed me. Dad taught me to sing. He sang loudly. I was embarrassed by it when I was a kid, but he sang with compassion. He sang all sorts of songs. He taught me that if I was having problems memorizing things sometimes I could sing those things; so I was able to pick up very early a song on the sun. It went, (Brother Smith sang as he recalled the songs.) "The sun is a mass of incandescent gas, a giant nuclear furnace where hydrogen is turned to helium at the temperature of millions of degrees." Every question I have had about the sun since that time has been answered in that song.

He taught me simple songs like, "Jesus Loves me, This I know for the three books tell me so. Little ones to Him belong. We are weak but He is strong! Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me. The three books tell me so." And much of what I have needed, at times when I have needed reinforcement, and I am one who has needed a lot of reinforcement throughout my life, was memorized in that one little song.

He taught me little ditties that bring joy to children. So I still sing songs like, "I stuck my head in a little skunk's hole. And the little skunk said, "Upon my soul, take it out! Remove it!" Well, I didn't take it out and the little skunk said, "If you don't take it out you will wish you were dead. Take it out. Take it out! SSST." I removed it!" Singing has become a very important part of my life as a result of my Dad's joy in singing.

I remember Dad's hands. They were precise hands. He could work with his solder and repair circuitry on very small things. When I tried to do the same thing, I melted the board. One of my first memories of his helping out building things, or me getting to build things, was when I was in second grade. I was asked to build a bird house. I went home and he showed me how to find the instructions,



how to measure, how to cut, and he made me do it! Then he very precisely showed me how to put it together. When the nails went through into the house and would have hurt the bird, he made me pull the nail out and put it back in the right spot so the birds wouldn't be hurt. I took my bird house to school. Everybody in the class had to make a bird house, and I got a blue ribbon for the birdhouse that my father helped me make. We put our blue ribbon bird house with the blue ribbon on it out in the tree, and a wren came and lived in our bird house for about three years. And when we moved, we left it in the tree because I didn't want that wren to have to lose her home. I don't know what happened to that tree, but I remember the joy of my father showing me how to build a birdhouse.

And he showed me how to make arrows - how to take a dowel and how to fletch it with the feathers on the back and how to put the knock on and how to put the point on and make arrows that would fly with a trajectory, but if you looked at it from a different angle, the flight path was always straight and narrow, straight spelled straight, like the strait of Magellan - a small, thin route - a straight and narrow path. Then if I aimed correctly, I could make my arrow follow this straight and narrow path and it would hit the bull's eye. And I still remember his hands and the precision he could use as he was doing a number of physical manipulations. I didn't learn some of his skills. He was gone an awful lot, but I remembered some of those.

I remember that his hands were like steel and he was able to reach into a river where a group of high school kids were swimming, and he reached in and grabbed a girl that had gotten caught in some roots and was drowning. With one hand he was able to just lift her out of the water, and I was amazed. She was thankful, and she survived. The same steel hands were sometimes used in an ordinance he called the laying on of hands with the proper end in view - a little teaching experience which dusted your pants off. They were sometimes hard, and the lessons sometimes learned were hard.

And those same hands were holy. I saw him lay those hands on people's heads and ask the Lord for a special blessing for those individuals, and they were blessed! And I was amazed! I shouldn't have been, but I was. And I saw it happen over and over again.

I learned from my father the lessons of faith. He would get in front of a congregation and say, "In my hand I have a quarter, and the first person who will come up and ask me for it can have it. Do I have a taker?" (Steven held out his closed hand and asked the same question: Do I have a taker? Would anyone like to come forward and get a quarter? Do you believe that I have a quarter? All you have to do is come up and ask. Is there anyone who believes I have a quarter in my hand? Finally someone did get the quarter.) And Dad would tell me that God is like that - that He has blessings for us. He has told us exactly what those blessings are, and all we have to do is go and ask and have faith that what the Lord said is true, and we would be blessed with the exact blessing that He has promised.

He taught me to pray. He taught me to pray before speaking. When I was young, I would sometimes get really angry at my brothers or my sister or my friends, and he would tell me that I should pray, and in praying I should pray for those individuals who had made me angry. That's a hard lesson to learn that before I speak, I should pray. And yet, if you will take the time to pray for the individual who has raised your anger, you will find that your response is much different than if you respond in that anger.

Not only did he teach me to pray before speaking in anger, he taught me to pray before I spoke in God's name. I had an opportunity in a youth camp where there were a number of individuals

gathered to, take each of those individuals and pray for them in my own time in my own way. And as I prayed for them, especially those with whom I had some problem that kind of made me angry, the Lord brought to my mind their situation and some of their needs. By knowing some of their situations that I was not able to know on my own, I was able to be a blessing to those individuals. And as I prayed for them further, I found that I was actually able to respond to the Spirit of the Lord and speak for the Lord to those individuals. And they were able to receive that which I had spoken in His Spirit because I had first prayed. I will always be grateful for the fact that he taught me to pray before I speak.

My father taught me about getting even with those who are around me - sometimes those who are angry. He said that it is kind of like a triangle where God is at the top and then there is myself and you. And he says, if somebody hurts me, they pull themselves away from God. My opportunity is to either go farther away from God to get on the same level as they are, or I can reach out and "put my rope on the front of their car" and try to pull them back to the level where I am and in that way, we can get even.

My Dad had a sense of humor. He loved the pun, and he loved alliteration - saying things that start with the same letter. He taught me a lot of jokes. One of the things we often did was, you would see a sign that said "Stop Ahead" and he would reach over and grab my head saying, "All right, stop!" One of the jokes that he used was that a vitamin was what you did when someone came to your door. You invite 'em in!

My Dad taught me about the atonement. I didn't understand all of it at one time. And one day when I couldn't figure out why Jesus' dying for me had anything to do with anything else, he asked me to jump as far as I could jump. I took a running start, and I jumped as far as I could jump. And he says, "That's not far enough. I want you to jump a little farther." So I backed up a little more and started running faster and jumped as far as I could jump. And he says, "That's not far enough. I want you to jump a little farther." Finally I said, "What does this have to do with anything?" He said, "I want you to imagine going from one cliff to another. On one cliff is God and on the other cliff is you. And you have to get from one cliff to the other. The distance is so far that you can't do it on your own."

And he drew a picture and on the picture there were two cliffs and there was a kind of a sun who was God and on the other was a stick figure who was me. And he said, "What it took was the Son of God to lay down his life, and he drew a picture of a man laying down that went across this large ditch. And he said He had to lay down his life to create this bridge so I could come back and make it over to God. And he said, "If you take the word, atonement, and you divide it up, it goes at one ment. The atonement was simply an opportunity for us to become one with God. To come back with God because Christ laid down His life to create that bridge so we could do that. His analogy is probably unusual, but, you know, it was one that I remembered. It was one that made sense at the time, and one that I have evolved a little bit beyond as far as my understanding, and yet, always at the base of my understanding is that picture of two cliffs with Jesus laying down and God on one side and myself on the other side.

He taught me to sing. And he taught me that when all else fails, you can always whistle.

# Liberia and the Gospel

At the opening of the service of June 26, Seventy Ronald K. Smith read the great commission that our Lord gave His disciples after His resurrection from Matthew 28:17-19, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen." (Special music followed, provided by Diane Anderson. With a background of soft recorded music she gave her testimony of God's providence to her and her family which follows this report of Ronald's sermon in this issue of the Newsletter.)

Brother Smith, who with his wife Di and Pat Bolingbroke had just returned from Liberia, then showed pictures of the Liberian mission. Ron had not expected a full house, and thought could get by with showing some slides off his computer screen. The congregation's new projector had refused to open for service earlier and efforts to display the pictures on the TV screen proved unavailing because of the lack of one little piece of electronic equipment needed. So, in preparation for the showing of pictures of the group's ministry, the congregation gathered in the front seats of the sanctuary and sang, "Fairest Lord Jesus" as they gathered. It was an unusual sight and a worshipful moment!

## The Liberian Mission

Elder Randy Vick, in charge of the peace keeping police force of the United Nations in that country, had asked a group of Saints to come to give ministry. Their principal assignment was to provide Vacation Church schools for children in a land devastated by war so intense that there were only young people and children left in the land, many without home or family. Unless one sees it, it is impossible to imagine what Ron describes as best portrayed in movies where there is nothing left of cities but rubble. There is a difference. In the movies there is no one around. In Liberia, there are people - lots of people, all young. The elderly are dead. Driven from their homes to escape the war, they went to the jungle where they killed and ate whatever they could capture or find, but only the young could survive. One of the mission's assignments was in an orphanage where sixty three children were housed, sixty one of whom the Elders took on their laps and blessed according to the instructions of our Lord and Savior. We saw the church, the orphanage, the school, a baptismal service, and much, much more. After the pictures, Brother Smith spoke, first thanking Diane for her testimony and, "For responding to the ministry of the Spirit."

In Liberia we had an amazing lack of technical ability. Electronics just failed, but the Spirit was there. So we got the power from the Spirit, not from the, batteries and everything else that we tried. If you look at the map of Africa, it has a big bulge, and comes down. Right out there on the bulge, on the Southwest side, kind of slanted, is the country of Liberia. It is about three quarters of the size of Iowa, and it has been devastated by fourteen years of civil war. There is no infrastructure there. There is no electricity. There is no water. There is no sewer. There is no anything. In the cities you have people. In Buchanan where we were, there are about twenty thousand people who are living from day to day, getting enough to eat and seeing what they can sell. But there are no bathrooms. There are no facilities of any kind.

(Ben Mitchell asked whether they play games.) They love playing games. We saw a soccer field and soccer games going on.

They played games at our Vacation Bible School and enjoyed it. It is a very young country because all of the old people died in the war. The amazing thing about Liberia, in the pictures you saw some young men. These young men, like everybody else, had to leave Liberia and to leave everything to survive. They went to either Ghana on the north or Ivory Coast, which is to the east. They left everything! They went with nothing because they had to flee from the devastation of the war.

The war took everything. When you walk through the streets, it's like you are in those science fiction movies where they have the big city where nobody is home, except there are lots of people around. There are just shells of buildings. Everything has been dismantled. Some of the pictures that you saw, which you probably didn't recognize, were of the port at Buchanan, and we also went to the port at Greenville. They have beautiful beaches - the kind you think of when you think of a tropical paradise. But at the ports, all you can see are the remains of huge cranes. Everything that can be chopped up and carted away has been sold for scrap. Liberia is a rich country. They have some of the richest iron ore mines in the world, but the rails of the railroads that connect the iron ore mines to the port are being pulled up one by one and sold for scrap. There is no manufacturing. The only big business is the rubber plantation, and they have gone through complete devastation and reconstruction since the war. They pay \$1.75 a day plus they build housing for their workers and give them a bag of rice every month. Those are the good jobs.

There are no gas pumps. Well, there are gas pumps. They just don't work. There are gas stations that have gallon jars of gas, which they sell for four U.S. dollars a gallon. Vehicles are very scarce. Mainly you just see the U.N. vehicles and the support people for the U.N. Mission that are there.

There are some generators. We did have lights for a while at some places. We tried to use the generators, but there are lots of incompatibilities between generators and the machines you are trying to run off of them. You get to appreciate the utilities that run here where you can just plug in and everything works! You plug in there and practically nothing works, and sometimes it ruins the equipment that you do have. We ran off of a car battery, but we had to have the car running right outside the little window in Gardour's Town, in the rain. We hooked up to the inverter and then to the machine, and we were able to get a little bit of light in our projector and had some opportunity to use it.

There was a riot one day, and the younger brother of our choir director in Buchanan was shot by the Bangladesh soldiers who are U.N. peace keepers. He was shot in the head. We prayed for him at prayer service, and he lived. Before we left Liberia, we got word that he was talking, and that was a really good sign that he was going to survive. On the day of the riot, Randy came to the Vacation Bible School and said, "You have five minutes to finish whatever you are doing and get into the car. I'm taking you back to the hotel." He took us by the back roads around the area in which the riot had occurred, but we were never feeling like we were in danger. We had had a blessing before we left, and the Lord had assured us that we would be safe. So we didn't, or I didn't, experience any real concern over the situation. The Lord protected us, and I am confident He will bring good out of even the prayers for the young man shot. When his brother prayed for him, he prayed that he would live, but also he said, "What I really want is that he will listen to the Lord now." So, hopefully, that is going to happen.

**Elder Randy Vick and Four Young Men**



Four young men were pushed together in the refugee camp in the Ivory Coast, and they started preaching the gospel as they understood it. These four young men left the refugee camp and came back to Liberia - again with nothing. When they came back, two of them applied for the police force in Liberia - applied for a place in the academy so they could get a job. Brother Randy Vick was in Liberia as a U.N. Commander of the civilian military in the southern half of Liberia. He had asked the Lord - he felt like he was directed to go to Liberia. It almost didn't happen. There were lots of things that got in the way, but he was given that opportunity.

When Randy was interviewing Mark Thompson for the police academy, he said they hadn't talked for twenty minutes until he found they were talking about the gospel. Randy shared with Mark the "Go Ye and Teach" slides. Mark got on fire and shared with Ben Cleon the same things and these two young men were the first two that were actually accepted to the police academy; but they gave up that opportunity for a paying job in order to preach the gospel as they now understand it. They went to one of the other fellows, Daniel Biah, who is now the Pastor in Buchanan, and got him to listen to Randy. Daniel has been to seminary, so when he preaches he can talk about the Greek and Hebrew words, the interpretations of them and those kinds of things. He's a very sharp young man. They were baptized in January.

Joshua was the fourth one. He heard that these guys were talking about the Book of Mormon. Joshua came from a Baptist family. His father was a Baptist Deacon and had started a church, so he was convinced that they had come into error and wrong doing. He came over to Buchanan from Monrovia to convert them back to the ways of the Lord; and he was also convinced by the power of the Holy Spirit. Joshua was baptized at the service in which we were privileged to be a part. There were eight members in the church before we to Liberia. Four more were baptized, and we had five baptisms of the Holy Spirit, while we were there.

(Ronald was interrupted by was a question about animals from a young person, and other questions followed before he could continue.) Actually it was amazing. We saw virtually no animals. We asked where all the animals were. We hardly saw birds even. Didn't see any sea gulls. I don't know what happened to the sea gulls. I thought there were sea gulls wherever you had the ocean. They said most of the animals got eaten. There just weren't any animals except for some hunting dogs. We did see lots of chickens, so we had chicken and rice or fish and rice, or sometimes potatoes. We had lots of delicious cassava greens and some things like that.

(Another question was asked - why had the animals been eaten.) Because the people went into the jungle to escape the war and had to eat whatever they could eat! The old people and the very young died. So it is a very young country. Now there are lots of children, but there aren't any old people. We saw maybe one or two that were older than thirty or forty. It is hard to tell how old they are. (Question about existence of farmers.) Yes, there are lots of farmers - people who grew cassava. Cassava is a root plant that we use only for tapioca, as in puddings. About two thirds of the world gets at least half of their Calories from cassava. It grows anywhere and everywhere. You just put the stick in the ground and it grows. They use the leaves and the roots from it for eating.

(Question about fishing.) They go out in the dugout canoes, which I am not sure you noticed in the pictures. They go out every day, bring back a little bucket of fish and people will be waiting to buy it from them. (Ronald resumed the testimony of the four young men.)

These four young men took on a school and an orphanage. There are pictures of the school that show that it is basically nothing; but they have 165 students in it from the ages of about 5 to 15 or maybe 18. There are fifteen of them that know the letters of the alphabet and the numbers! The rest are called "pre-grade". The ones who know the alphabet and their numbers are in grade one. They had a little program for us. They went through the alphabet and recited scriptures. They started with A - "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23." They went through to Zebulon. I couldn't understand all of the words because, even though they are speaking English, it is hard for us to understand their accent and it is hard for them to understand our accent; but we had the power of the Spirit working with us in the services and the translations went really, really easily. We would speak and they would speak and we would get into a rhythm and it seemed like they knew where we were going and could follow back and forth, That's when you know the Spirit of God is working.

The orphanage has sixty three children, and as I said, all but the two who were not present that day were blessed. We had a Vacation Bible school at both places. They told us there were going to be sixty people in the first school. The first day there were 158. The next day we had more and the last day we had 220 children show up for the school. We were stretched to the limit. Di had some good stories with flannel graph that she showed. Pat Bolingbroke took the children and did recreation with them. You know, you have 158 kids and you have three rooms in which to put them, and then you had the rest of them who had to be on the outside. It was raining, so they had to be on the porch. They had to be right there screaming and yelling. Everything was going on at the same time. The kids learned, "My God is so big, so strong and so mighty, there's nothing that He cannot do!" When we would drive around town, we would see the kids out there. When they would see us, they would start singing that song. They loved, "I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart," and some of the other songs that we were able to sing with them.

These four young men put their vision and their mission statement on a big sheet and had it lettered. They sent the sheet back because some of the words were misspelled, but we got to see it. They put down what their mission is, and it is no less than changing Liberia within five years! They have 2010 written right there! They are going to change Liberia. They believe that the gospel is what is going to save Liberia and make the change of heart. Their vision is to reach all the indigenous population by going into the country sides and establishing churches. They even have bigger plans. They are planning on saving Ivory Coast and Ghana, too, because they are the neighboring places where they have many contacts. They want to change the hearts and minds of people and bring them to the gospel. Mark said to us, "You probably don't know what it is like to live by the grace of God! I know what it's like! I have a wife and I have a child. We have no job, but we have clothes on our back and we have food to eat. When we have clothes on our back and when we have food to eat, it's because of the grace of God!" That was pretty amazing! We have so much and sometimes just get so busy that we can't quite see our way to share the gospel. For these young men, it is their goal always with them to share the gospel and to save their country.

I'm reminded of the times in the Book of Mormon when Alma was talking about how wicked the people were, and he said the only thing that would save them was the preaching of the word. So Alma left his job and went and preached the word to establish the church

because he felt like that was the thing that would change the hearts and the minds of the people.

It's hard for us to see, because it is our own culture, the hold that Satan has on the hearts and minds of people. But it is easy to see if you go to a different culture. In Liberia there is the Zoe society. They are the witch doctors. They are the people who dress up in devil's costumes. They dress up as the devil. They make no bones about it. They are serving the devil. They ransack villages, take all the women that they want and ravage them. It is institutionalized. Charles Taylor made a Grand Zoe for the whole country as a political appointment. There are Zoes over each of the counties, and it has a hold on the minds of the people. And this scripture says that the gates of hell shall not prevail against Christ's church. The church has the power to go into any place where that kind of hold is over the people and come out, and the gates of hell will not prevail. Jesus said that would happen with this church; and He says, "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:20.) Jesus gave His disciples explicitly power to bind on earth and to loose on earth. That means that He gave to His disciples the power to baptize, to give the gift of the Holy Ghost, and to baptize for the remission of sins that the sins can be taken away. He gave them that specific power.

### **The Church that Jesus Built**

I would like to share this little illustration, (Brother Smith set three small dishes on the pulpit.) because I think it is significant and it may help in our understandings. In the scriptures we read that Jesus built His church. In Matthew the sixteenth chapter, let me read a couple of scriptures to you. I know that I am probably preaching to the choir here - people who are well aware; but even if you are well aware, it doesn't hurt to go over it again. This happened at Caesarea Philippi and Jesus asked Peter and the other disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" Some of them said, "Some say that You are Elias or John the Baptist or someone like that - a great prophet." But Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said, "Blessed art thou, because flesh and blood have not revealed this unto thee, but My Father who is in heaven." And He said, "I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" (Matthew 16:14-19.)

And Jesus did build His church. If you go to the eighteenth chapter you find the law of reconciliation expounded by Jesus. (Matthew 18:16- He tells people, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; and if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." He tells them to go to people and make things right, and if they won't make it right, then bring two witnesses to show that you have actually tried, and if that doesn't work, then come to the church.

### **Where Is the Church That Jesus Built?**

Well, where was the church? Jesus built the church. It was there. It was there in His time. He was giving His disciples specific instructions concerning the church. And He said that all power was

given and they could bind on earth, and it would be bound in heaven. And He gave His great commission, which I read to you at the beginning, "Go ye therefore teaching all nations, baptizing in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world". So Jesus made His church and He gave them power to the remission of sins and to give the Holy Ghost.

And there are three kinds of Christian churches in the world today. Basically all of the churches can be put into one of these three categories. You have those who believe that in the scripture in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, Jesus was giving Peter power and authority as the leader of the church; and Peter ordained his successor and his successor ordained his successor, and so on; and those became the Catholic churches. And there are many Catholic churches - the Roman Catholic church, the Greek Orthodox church, the Russian Orthodox church, there are the Nestorians, the Coptics, the Legio Marias, and there are a number of different Catholic churches. The thing that sets them apart from other Christian churches is their belief that authority comes from heaven and that it is passed from one person to another by ordination, by the laying on of hands.

In the fifteen hundreds, the printing press was invented and the Bible began to be translated and printed in languages that people could actually read. Before that only some people could read them, for they were in Latin and most of the people didn't speak Latin. Nobody spoke Latin as a living language. It was just learned from the priests and by the priests. As people like Martin Luther began to read the scriptures, they said, "This isn't the church that Jesus built! They have changed the ordinances. They are selling the Priesthood for money. They are selling indulgences. They are allowing people to pay to have their sins remitted by the church." So Martin Luther tacked up his ninety five thesis on the wall of the church in Germany and invited anybody to debate him on these ninety five things. Those who followed him then became known as the Lutheran church; and there were others - John Calvin and others who protested the things that were in the Catholic church. They said, "If the Pope, or the church, ever had authority to do those things, he no longer does. That authority was broken because they changed the church." Of course, the Pope said, "Martin Luther, you are going to hell."

So there was a little problem. These who protested had to decide where their authority came from. It didn't come from the Catholic church, because if the Catholic church had authority, they were goners. But they believed the Bible. So they declared that the Bible was their authority. If you are looking for a church or for what is true, the thing to do is to look in the Bible. Look in the scriptures. Find out. "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life", Jesus said. "Search the scriptures, for they are true and faithful, and the prophecies and promises which are in them shall all be fulfilled," says the Doctrine and Covenants. "Feast on the words of Christ, and the words of Christ will tell you all things what you should do", says the Book of Mormon.

If the authority to remit sins was given to the early church, where is it today? If the Protestants are right, it is nowhere, and you can join any church. Anyone's baptism is as good as anyone else's. But if the Restorationists are right, then you need to find from the Holy Ghost where that Priesthood authority is; and you need to come and be baptized.

In conclusion, I would like to share with you just four scrip-

tures. These are all the accounts of the great commission which Jesus gave to His people. Matthew 28:17-19 - "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, unto the end of the world. Amen."

The great commission is repeated in Mark. Everybody who wrote it down wrote it down a little bit differently, but if you put these together, I think you will see the picture. Mark 16:14-15 - Jesus, after He was risen, "said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Very straight words. There is more I could say about it, but I am way beyond my time. Let us look at it from Luke. This is Luke 24:44- 46. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Matthew and Mark said baptism. These say repentance and remission of sins. They are telling different aspects of that instruction.

We go over to John the twentieth chapter and we find that same experience. John 20:21-23. "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost; Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." He was talking about the power and authority that was restored to the earth, and this power is still on the earth. This is the thing that is going to save Liberia and Africa and the United States and the world because God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son that whoso believeth on Him...", and I believe that means the words that He said - not just that He is - "Whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." And folks, we are living in a day when the power of God is at work in the world to bring people to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and we need to share the truth and let them know what Jesus said. May God bless you!

## From the Pastor's Desk

*Continued from page 1*

In this great city that has no end;  
Yet days go by, and weeks rush on,  
And before I know it a year is gone.  
And I never see my old friend's face,  
For life is a swift and terrible race.  
He knows I like him just as well  
As in the days when I rang the bell  
And he rang mine. We were younger then,  
And now we are busy, tired men;  
Tired with playing a foolish game,  
Tired with trying to make a name.  
"Tommorrow", I say, "I will call on Jim,  
Just to show I am thinking of him".  
But tomorrow come--and tomorrow goes,  
And the distance between us grows and grows  
Around the corner--yet miles away...  
"Here's a telegram, sir..."  
Jim died today.  
And that's what we get and deserve in the end:  
Around the corner, a vanished friend.

(Charles Hanson Towne, in Poems that Touch the Heart  
adapted from June 2005 "Pulpit Helps")



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

## **News and Notes**

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### **Successful Missionary Family Reunion**

Some 575 people registered for the Missionary Family Reunion held at Graceland June 19-25. Many more participated on a part time basis. Congregational members were highly involved in making it a spiritual and educational success. The \$80,000 budget was also exceeded by some \$5,000. Alan and Valle Smith were the directors and Cheryl Phipps the registrar. At the closing session, they projected plans for the next reunion to be held in 2006. Jan Jordison was the music director. The list of those involved in teaching and volunteering in so many ways would include a large portion of the congregation. Thanks to all for assisting our Lord and Savior in providing a wonderful experience for so many people!

### **Liberian Mission Completed**

Seventy Ronald Smith reported on the Liberian mission in which he, his wife Di and Pat Bolingbroke participated with Jeannette Thomas and Neil Simmons. Please read his sermon for details.

### **Winkler-Ballantyne Wedding**

Melissa Winkler and Aaron Ballantyne were married June 11 at the Buckner Church of Jesus Christ, Buckner Restoration Branch. Nathan Smith officiated at the wedding and the entire Alan Smith family was involved as coordinators, hosts and servers.

### **Shower for Baby Cornish**

Jan and Barbra Jordison hosted a shower at the Jordison home in Leon June 18 for the anticipated arrival of Baby Cornish, whose parents are Erin and Peter Cornish presently of Bryan, Texas. The Cornish family is in the process of moving to Illinois where Peter will be employed in his post-doctoral work at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana.

### **Members Featured in SAFE Coalition**

Fran Parker and George Knotts are pictured in the June 30 Lamoni Chronicle as members of the SAFE Coalition named first in the nation. The Lamoni organization is the recipient of the Harold E. Hughes Exceptional Services Award, presented in recognition of the Lamoni coalition's substantial contribution and support in resolving rural alcohol/drug issues.

### **Student on Dean's List**

Brandy Anderson earned a place on the spring 2005 semester Dean's List at Central Missouri State University at Warrensburg. Her place is in the 3.5 to 3.9 grade point list.

Heidi Winkler earned a place on the spring 2005 semester Dean's List at William Jewell College.

Congratulations to both girls!