

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

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Pickle Jar Management

I read an article the other day about Pickle Jar Time Management.

There are all kinds of ways to look at how we spend the 24 hours a day each of us are given -- and time management essays and gurus are plentiful. In fact there's a lot of money to be made by people who will share ways to find more time in a day in our busy world.

The pickle jar management idea asks people to look at their day as a pickle jar, which can be filled with all kinds of things -- rocks, pebbles, sand and water -- a little of each in our day.

If we are not careful, we can spend our time on pebbles, sand and water and never accomplish some of the big things we need to get done every day. At least that's what I picked up from the lesson.

Instead of scheduling each pebble or grain of sand, the person suggested that one focus on the stones that need to get done and let the smaller things work their way around the big things.

I began to think about what the stones needed to be in my life. I have a tendency to focus on the things I need to get done in my work and let the other things in my life fill in the cracks.

I am working on trying to look at three stones in my day -- but only letting one of them be a work stone.

If I am going to follow the promise of Jesus that if I will put the things of the kingdom first, then the other things of life will fall into place (be added to me).

I have a sheet that I ran out which has a pickle jar

Continued on page 15

TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

The Price of Forgetting

Priest Gordon Winkler opened the Communion message of September 3 speaking of the joys the day has brought to him. This is getting to be my favorite time of the year. I really appreciate the sunshine, the warm afternoons, the cool evenings, the changing of the seasons and the changing of the colors. It really gets to be a wonderful time for me, and it is a wonderful time for me to be here today to share in this communion experience with you.

I would like to begin this morning by sharing a scripture from Psalms 78:1-8. "Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old; Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done. For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children; That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children; That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God."

That scripture is going to be the foundation for this morning's message, and I would like to maybe emphasize parts of that last passage, verses 7 says that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God but keep His commandments. And verse 8 reminds of a generation that set not their heart aright and whose spirit was not steadfast with God.

This past summer I had the opportunity to go on vacation with my family. We took both Melissa and her husband Aaron and Heidi and her boy friend Stephen. We went outside Harrisonburg, Virginia, up in the mountains to a resort, and we had a wonderful time together. Linda planned the menus around everybody's favorite meals. We had an itinerary for every thing we were going to do. But one of the opportunities that presents itself from Harrisonburg is that it is only about two hours into Washington, D. C. So we had actually planned two trips into Washington, D.C.

The Holocaust - How Could It Be?

On the first trip, we took the time to go to the Holocaust museum, which is part of the Smithsonian Institute. I don't know how many of you have been to the Holocaust Museum. Anybody? What an incredibly moving experience to go through that!

It's four floors, as I recall. You get an introduction, get on the elevator and go up to the fourth floor. Starting there, you go around the fourth floor, down the stairs, around the third floor, the second, and so forth. I was amazed at how quiet it was going through that exhibit! People were very somber about it. They took in the history, and for some of them, I'm sure the ties to their families and to their personal lives were more than they were to those of us who went through as just tourists.

In those four floors there were pictures, there were letters that were sent home from people who had experienced those ordeals. There were weapons that had been saved and kept. There were doors that had inscribed and had etched in them David's star. There were pictures of children and adults that were skin and bones. There were replicas of the railroad cars that took people to the camps. There were piles and piles of shoes that were worn by people who lost their lives in the execution camps.

As I went through, I had several questions that came into my mind. The first thought was, "How could anyone think that this was all right? How could the experience of leading those people to their deaths in those concentration camps and in the work camps and through the medical experiments that were done on children and other adults - How could anybody think that was all right?" The second thought that came to my mind was, "How could this situation get to the point of mass murder and execution? How could it possibly get to that point?" So those thoughts are a part of what I want to talk about this morning.

Answering question number two first, which was, "How could it get to this point?", as we went through the museum it kind of builds on the history and the time line of what happened. It really started out as just an economic boycott against Jewish businessmen. They were doing so much better in terms of economy and wealth than the non-Jewish business community that it was getting people a little concerned. So it started out as just a boycott of Jewish businessmen. Then it developed further into vandalism, looting, stealing and eventually the burning of businesses and buildings.

From there it further escalated to religious persecution. It was not only against the Jews, but against the Jehovah Witnesses and other groups, including some Catholics. It got to the point that you had to prove your ancestry. They had forms like family trees, and you had to be able to fill out your family tree that showed what your religious background was to avoid persecution. Finally it came to be racial cleansing and Naziism. And at that point the world was at war!

Lest We Forget

To answer question number one, "How could anyone think this was all right?" What happened in Europe happened over a longer period of time than we think about. It started in the early 1930s and ended in war in the early 1940s. What had happened in generations before, continues to happen in our generation. That is, when our minds are not focused on God, and we are not keeping His commandments, our lives begin to unravel. I think that's what happened! Things got a little off center, but that was okay. They got a little further out of hand. It wasn't bad because we could still get back to where we had come from. And before long, we are on a course of destruction both individually, and in the case of Naziism,

globally.

On the bottom floor of the museum, there was a reflecting chamber. It was done in marble. It had benches where you could sit around and there was a flame and a torch that was lit. And people joined in there and remembered those things that touched their lives about the war and Naziism and concentration camps, their ancestors, and those sad times. When I was in there, I looked up and on the wall, behind that flame, there is inscribed Deuteronomy 4:9, and it says, "... lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen..." and I would like to share with you when I came home, that stuck with me. So I read back through Deuteronomy, back through the goodness of God's blessing - that God had not forgotten the Israelites. So I reread the words of Moses and the events of the Israelites as they traveled out of Egypt and out of bondage. I would like to share with you some of that history, particularly from chapters 4 and 8.

Chapter 4 begins with Moses saying, "Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord God of your fathers giveth you." Then reading in verse 3, "Your eyes have seen what the Lord did because of Baal-peor; for all the men that followed Baal-peor, the Lord thy God hath destroyed them from among you. But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive every one of you this day.

"Behold, I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day. Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons. Specially the day that thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb, when the Lord said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children."

That is a continuation of what was in the museum, but you can see where the Jews were coming from and what Moses was trying to tell them - that they must remember what they saw and must teach it to their children so they can always remember.

Continuing, then, in chapter 8:1-20, it reads, "All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the Lord sware unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wilt keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years."

"Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways,

and to fear him. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

“When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day; Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

“Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

“But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God; for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God.”

If you read the fourth chapter and the eighth chapter, you kind of get the gist of what was happening there. The goodness and the blessings of God were forgotten and the power of “mine” had gotten into the people. They thought that everything that had happened to them was because of themselves. And it is a concern for me that we are repeating this same scenario in our generation.

The Power of “Mine” Today

We have forgotten what blessings we have received and where they came from, and we are disobedient to the commandments, the laws and the statutes. And then we are going to wonder why, at the time of the destruction that it had to be. The exhortation of Moses was to be obedient and forget not the blessings and commandments of God. So what do we do not to forget?

One of the things we are encouraged to do is to pray. We pray over our meals. Different places in our scriptures talk about praying at noon time, before laying down to rest and going to sleep - to pray for the sick and the afflicted - to pray over our families, our flocks, and our fields. We share in testimonies. We had wonderful experiences this past month in hearing the testimonies Ron and Doug brought back from the things that are going on in Africa. We share in testimonies on Wednesday nights of each other and the goodness and the experiences we have had with the Lord - the things that bring us closer through the week. We attend Reunions. Some of us have had our Patriarchal blessings. (When was the last time you read your Patriarchal Blessing?) We read scriptures. We gather together socially going to the zoo - sometimes for campfires. We do this because of our bond that we have and our belief in God and His Son Jesus. This morning we shared in the Communion service, and as

the prayers were read, the statements were repeated that we will always remember Him and that we will have His Spirit to be with us. By not remembering Jesus and the blessings of God, we continue in the pattern of past generations, even back to Moses.

So why is remembering, or not forgetting, so important? Here’s what I think. I think it is important because we need to be pure of mind so that God can be in us - so that we have His Spirit among us - so we are connected to Him so that we can hear His directions and His calling towards us - so that we can be in tune. The problem of not remembering is that then our minds become full of all kinds of other stuff. And then there are other substances, like drugs and alcohol that cloud our minds and don’t allow us to have the best part of our minds functioning. They impair us; and that separates us from our thoughts of God.

I think that’s where sin comes in. Sin is not a problem with our eyes or our hands, or our money. Sin is not the act of our hand when we are going through a WalMart and we just would like to have that object, but we don’t have the ability to pay for it so we lift it thinking, “They are not going to miss that one”. Sin is not the hand taking that off the shelf and putting it in your pocket, nor is sin in the eye when the eye looks upon and covets our neighbor’s property or our neighbor’s wife. Sin is not in the eye, and sin is not in money itself. Sin in the use of money for our wants only.

Jesus’ View of Sin

You see, the mind and our thoughts lead us to have the hand that steals, the eyes that lust, and the pursuit of money. Jesus addressed sin as being of our hearts and our minds. In the fifth chapter of Matthew there is one place in which He addressed this to His disciples, and also in Mark. I would like to begin by just sharing with you some of what is talked about in Mark 10:15-26. “And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good but one, that is God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery; Do not kill; Do not steal; Do not bear false witness; Defraud not; Honor thy father and mother. And the man answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

“Then Jesus beholding him,” And I think this is very interesting. It says, - “Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And the man was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions.

“And Jesus looked round about, and said unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of my Father! And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus spake again and said unto them, Children, how hard is it for them who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus, looking upon them said, With men that trust in riches, it is impossible; but not impossible with men who trust in God and leave all for my sake, for with such all these things are possible.” That was the key. It wasn’t the focus of the money. It was that the money had interfered with the thought of the rich ruler, as we refer to that parable, that he could not think on those things that would bring him closer to God, because those things about money were his first concern.

The fifth chapter of Matthew, verses 29-34, "Behold, it is written by them of old time," - and we just read about them of old - Moses- "that thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart, for it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell.

"Wherefore, if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. Or if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And now this I speak, a parable concerning your sins; wherefore, cast them from you, that ye may not be hewn down and cast into the fire."

Well, that sounds kind of harsh, doesn't it? If it is your eye that is giving you problems, pluck it out. If it's your hand with which you are stealing, cut it off! I don't know that Jesus really expected them to do that. I think He was just trying to heighten their awareness of the importance of the fact that the hand and the eye are in response to your mind and your heart, and that you need to be focused on Jesus. If we don't have Him constantly in our minds - if we don't remember Him always, those things creep into our minds and create the opportunity that we have in our life for sin. We are also not in a position to be in tune to His calling and His direction. We are not listening and are not going to be able to know what He would like us to do.

Forgetting We Do Not Hear His Call

In preparing for this morning, all week I had a hymn in mind, but I couldn't remember what the hymn was; so I tried to look it up, and I couldn't find it in the Hymnal. I found it in the Gray hymnal. The hymn is # 582 (or 579) "It may not be on the mountain's height", and it is entitled, "I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go." You know, this hymn used to be sung quite a lot at World Conferences when the appointees were given their assignments. It was kind of the ending of the service, and the beginning of the service was always "Redeemer of Israel". So for Mildred and Ron and some of you, this may have more significance that I am making of it this morning. But what I kept hearing in my mind as I was preparing was that, if we don't always remember Him - if we don't have Him in our hearts and in our minds, how can we be receptive to these words:

"It may not be on the mountain heights, or over the stormy sea.

It may not be at the battle front my Lord will have need of me.

But if, by the still small voice He calls to paths that I may not know,

I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in Thine, "I'll go where You want me to go!"

"Perhaps today there are loving words which Jesus would have me speak.

There may be now in the paths of sin, some wandered whom I should seek.

O Savior, if Thou wilt be my guide, though dark and rugged the way,

My voice shall echo the message sweet. "I'll say what You want me to say."

"There's surely somewhere a lowly place in earth's harvest

field so wide

Where I may labor through life's short day for Jesus the Crucified.

So trusting my all to Thy tender care, and knowing Thou lovest me,

I'll do Thy will with a heart sincere: I'll be what You want me to be.

"I'll go where You want me to go, dear Lord, over mountain or plane or sea.

I'll say what You want me to say, dear Lord: I'll be what You want me to be."

You can't do that if your mind is clouded with all the other stuff that we encounter in life's daily walk. We have to be diligent about trying to remember at all times, Jesus and the blessings of God in keeping His commandments and being obedient.

I began this morning with Psalm 78. I would like to conclude with another Psalm, Psalm 119:10-16. "With my whole heart have I sought thee; oh let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed art thou, O Lord; teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate upon thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word."

The Spirit Within Us

Brother Gerald Bolingbroke, who brought us the message for the September 10 service, began his sermon by expressing what a beautiful morning it was and how good it was to be with us. In a way, a new year has begun because the students in our community have begun a new year in school. He wished them the best and hopes that the year will bring them opportunities in which they can share the gospel with their friends.

He went on to read a scripture from the Doctrine and Covenants, Sec 10: 6.

"And now, verily, verily I say unto thee, Put thy trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good; yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously: and this is my Spirit."

Without Jesus, men, women and children walk in darkness. With Jesus as the light, we see and know God in his majesty, his perfection, his love, his mercy, his justice, his truth. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," said Jesus to Thomas. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," Paul wrote to the Colossians.

The brightness and glory of the Godhead came down to earth in the physical incarnation of Jesus so that sinful men and women could tolerate their presence. Jesus was the light in which God was revealed. Knowing him, we know the Father. In the light of Jesus, men and women come to know themselves as they are. If we compare ourselves with other men and women, even with the best men of history, we flatter ourselves that we are as good as the average and not too much worse than the best.

But when we compare ourselves with Jesus, when we look at ourselves in the light of his perfection, when we compare our fleeting mortality with his immortality, we are brought to see our own imperfections, our sinfulness, our weakness and complete dependence, and his salvation if we are to live.

In the light of Jesus and his perfect example, we catch a clear vision of what we may become. It is through the power of his

resurrection and redemption that we have life. In him we see the manner of men and women we may be, by his grace and with his help. In the light of Jesus, we find a sound basis for judging what is right and what is wrong. We also find what is good, what is best. In darkness, there is no difference between white and black. Everything is black.

For just a moment, let's take a look at the physical world when we are talking about light and dark. Have you ever gone into a cave where absolutely no light can penetrate, and the guide turns the lights off? No objects can be distinguished in the cave. Our eyes must have light in order to see objects. For that matter, our eyes must have light to see color. God's creation of the human eye is truly remarkable. The retinas in our eyes are composed of millions of tiny light sensitive cells called rods and cones. The cones in our retinas respond to colors. There are three types of cones: those that detect red light, those that detect green light, and those that detect blue light. The cone cells function only in bright light. That is why it is difficult to distinguish colors in dim light. The rods contain a pigment that reacts to small amounts of light. The rods distinguish among black, white, and shades of gray. They allow you to see in dim light, so they are important for night vision. As soon as the light gets too dim, the cones in our retinas, shut down or fail to work, and the rods take over.

In the spiritual sense, we cannot see the beauty or "color" of God's purpose without the light of Christ. We enter into dimness or perhaps total darkness when we shut out the light of Christ. The "cones" in Christ's light can no longer function, showing us the true peace and happiness his gospel can bring. Without the full light of Christ, the "rods" may be able to show us a few things in the dimness of our thoughts as we travel down life's path, but we are missing the fullness of His joy. And with no light at all, we find ourselves in complete darkness with only the adversary to take us down the wrong path.

Without Christ there is no complete guide to perfection. With Christ and in the light of Christ, we see more clearly to judge right and wrong. As Moroni puts it, "And now, my bretheren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye judge, which is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully. Search diligently in the light of Christ, that ye may know good from evil."

In the beginning God trusted man and gave him his agency. If God had not given us agency we would have been locked into laws which would not make it possible to sin. But God loved and trusted men and women enough to make them free to choose. But men and women betray that trust; they choose evil and they fall. Still God's goodwill continues to follow after them. God promised us a period of probation on Earth. He promised us a Savior who would come to redeem us from death. He also promised to deliver us from sin of our own choosing if we would repent.

The highest expression of God's good will toward men and women that they might have peace, is the gift of his Only Begotten Son. Through him our guilt, the weight of our sin, our self-judgment, our fears and worries can be removed and remembered no more. Sometimes we may have committed a sin so great that we find it difficult to forgive ourselves.

Somehow we can forgive others who may have sinned in a similar way, but we have trouble forgiving ourselves. We may tend to wallow in our guilt, allowing shame and depression to pull us down and prevent us from moving forward. Perhaps we have repented, but we have not been able to shake the awful feeling of having sinned against God, hurting Him, our family, friends and

church members. God does not want us to wallow in our guilt. That's why His Only Begotten Son died on the cross. He took care of the sins we may commit as soon as we repent. He wants us to move forward into a life that is new and changed. He wants us to begin once again, step by step, to actively seek out others whom we can help. He wants us to repair the damage we have done by expressing our regret to those we have hurt and vowing never to return to the sin. It is a difficult thing to do, but God can heal a broken spirit if we but turn our whole selves over to him, allowing him to be our guide.

"Therefore being justified by faith, We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." By accepting his atonement and his grace completely and fully we will have peace. By surrendering our lives to the laws of his kingdom, we will find peace not only with God but also between men and women, between Jew and Gentile, between bond and free, between black and white, between businessman and laborer, between nation and nation. Peace on earth, goodwill to men, is up to you and me. Peace depends on men and women who have accepted Christ and have chosen to obey his laws.

Brother Bolingbroke shared a story with us about a Chinese girl who made some bad choices in life. But because of goodwill on the part of some saints in Taiwan, she was eventually able to feel the peace that only Christ can bring to a life in turmoil. The title of the story is *Shining Baby Girl* by Chen Yi Li in Keelung Taiwan.

She referred to herself as "a shining baby girl" from Keelung, a harbor city in the north of Taiwan. She was 29 years old and she referred to herself as a baby girl because she was baptized and born again about a year ago and also because she was the youngest in her family. She is now shining because she has light in her life where there was darkness before.

Most of the people in Taiwan believe in Buddha, and her family does, too. Her family thinks Jesus belongs to the rest of the world, not to the Eastern world, especially the Chinese. When Chen Yi Li was six years old, her kindergarten teacher taught her about the Bible and Jesus because her school was a Christian school. When she went home, she was so excited and could not wait to share the Bible story with her mom. But her mom said, "If you believe in Jesus, you will become a red monkey!"

As a child only six years old, she was so scared of becoming a monkey. So, she finally stopped believing in her teacher's teaching about Jesus even though she liked it very much. She never really knew any more about Jesus until two years ago. When she grew up, her parents, older sisters, and teachers taught her a lot of virtues and good manners. She was a good student and went to the university easily. She came from a very poor family, suffering a lot from the scorn of bad persons. But no matter how poor they were, they always loved each other. Chen Yi Li thought she could face any difficulty and solve all of the problems easily.

When she was 26 years old, she fell in love with a very bad boy whose name was Justin. He chased after her for six months, and finally became her boyfriend.

Unfortunately, he tricked her with sweet words and a false heart. He hurt her a lot, and her tears were just like a river because he never honored her. He just utilized her innocent and foolish love to get his way. He scorned her family and her because they were poor. He told her she was his burden because she could not help him to become rich and successful. He was selfish, greedy and full of himself as if he had been taught by the devil. If time could restart, she wished she had never met him.

She loved and cherished Justin very much, but unfortunately he was a wolf covered in sheep skin. He used abusive language toward her in the crowded streets in Taipei (the capital city of Taiwan), and he treated her like a dog, telling her she was worthless, trash, and no good. He had no respect at all. He treated her well only when he needed her. He told her she must follow him all the time and do everything he said because he was God. (He had read a bad book which said everybody can become God!) She believed him.

She felt much pain with a broken heart. Love was blind. He killed her love for him, and she suffered a lot from Justin for two years. Eventually, he threw her away, and this was the first time she felt her life was over. She was so upset and hurt. All she felt was hopelessness. She hated herself. It was as if she had the devil whispering in her ear saying, "Give up everything, you are not good." By this time she was 28.

Even though Chen Yi Li had a devil whispering in one ear, she also sometimes had an angel whispering in the other ear, telling her, "Go to church. They can help you there." She had seen a church sign near her home and felt drawn to it. Because she knew most missionaries have a good heart, she hoped she could find some answers from the people at that church. And she remembered her teacher when she was six years old. She thought it would be nice to be like her.

She was scared to press the doorbell because she was struggling between the devil and the angel. Finally she got enough courage to go to the church and press the bell. Unfortunately, that first time nobody was home. She almost wanted to give up and escape. But one day the healing angel told her to try again, so she did. That second time, the door opened!

She met the best missionary couple, Charlene and Sam Kemple, who were living and working at the Keelung Restoration branch. Charlene put her arms around her, and Chen Yi Li said to her, "Mommy, I need help. Can you help me?" Because she opened the door, opened her arms, and opened her heart to her, she asked Charlene if she could be with her. Chen Yi Li wanted to follow Charlene around because she wanted hope and light which she had, and she was so afraid to lose it. She welcomed her to her home and her life, saying, "You can come here any time." She was so full of love. Charlene and Sam helped her a lot at that hard time in life. They loved Chen Yi Li and comforted her. They encouraged her and gave her hope. They taught her the Bible, and she went to church. They taught her that she was cherished by God. They were her fighting, comforting, and healing angels. She called Charlene "Mummy" when she first saw her the first time because she was so kind and patient with her. Actually, she became Chen Yi Li's best friend. This was the first time she felt warm and happy in a long time.

At first the changes she made were just baby steps. She learned to depend on Jesus to help her. Her heart was locked, but Charlene helped her to open her heart. Every night, before she goes to sleep, she prays to God to say thanks for everything He gives her. She has a heart full of thanksgiving. No matter how much pain or joy she suffers, she always says, "Thank you, Jesus."

After a while, the changes in her life were noticeable. Chen Yi Li's mother was so thankful to Charlene and Sam that she invited them to come to her home for the Chinese New Year. That is a big honor in Taiwan, because it is usually only for the family. But her mother wanted to show them how grateful she was for what they did

for her. She wanted to be baptized before Charlene and Sam went back to America. Her Mother was not happy that she wanted to be a Christian, but she gave her consent because she saw how much her life had changed. She had become shining and happy again. She was baptized in October, 2004, because she wanted to follow Jesus, and she knew that was an important step to take. She chose to forgive Justin and all the bad persons who had ever hurt her before. She has made many friends because she has become stronger, more positive, and more confident with her smile.

Life is full of pain, challenges, and a variety of difficulties. She learned that even if you cannot change your environment, you can still change yourself. If your heart changes, your attitude will change; and if your attitude changes, your life will change. For a year after she was baptized, she was happy to believe in Jesus. She thought He was real because He would answer her prayers. But she had been a Buddhist for 27 years. Chen Yi Li didn't think that Buddha was really real, and she was a little worried about Jesus. Was he really real? She prayed and asked Him to show her.

Then she had a dream. In her dream she was taken to heavenly place. She saw many beautiful children happily playing and singing. They had flowers in their hair. She also saw a man with golden hair. The light coming from him was shining so brightly that she could not see his face. Then she heard a voice say to her, "Now you know Jesus is real." After that dream she knew. All doubt was taken from her. She will always know that Jesus is real. She knows that Jesus is with her and helps her. He has blessed her so much. Her life changed from dark to light, from death to life. Jesus did that for her!

She came to America in November, 2005, to visit her lovely missionary family and to share her testimony with the saints. She now feels so happy to share her story with us. She prays that Jesus will always be with us to help us be strong and to overcome any difficulty, if you really trust Him. She is so happy to become a true witness of Jesus Christ like Charlene and Sam, to help other persons in need. Truly only Jesus' love can make the world turn around.

Brother Bolingbroke closed with a scripture from the Doctrine and Covenants Sec. 18:1d-2l. This scripture deals with our need to repent from not fully following God's commandments and giving ourselves to his purpose and cause. It is up to us to repent and bring about good will towards all people. Christ's love and gospel is needed throughout the world in order for the Kingdom to move forward.

"For, behold, I am endless, and the punishment which is given from my hand is endless punishment, for Endless is my name; wherefore--Eternal punishment is God's punishment. Endless punishment is God's punishment.

Wherefore, I command you to repent, and keep the commandments which you have received by the hand of my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., in my name; and it is by my almighty power that you have received them; therefore I command you to repent--repent, lest I smite you by the rod of my mouth, and by my wrath, and by my anger, and your sufferings be sore--how sore you know not! how exquisite you know not! yea, how hard to bear you know not! For, behold, I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer, if they would repent; but if they would not repent, they must suffer even as I; which suffering caused myself, even God, the greatest of all, to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit, and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink; nevertheless, glory be to the Father, and I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men; I

command you again to repent, lest I humble you by my almighty power, and that you confess your sins, lest you suffer these punishments of which I have spoken, of which in the smallest, yea, even in the least degree, you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit. And I command you that you preach naught but repentance, and show not these things unto the world until it is wisdom in me;"

By following the commandments of God and repenting, we will be a part of taking goodwill and peace to those in need of it around the world.

God's "Book of Remembrance": What Does It Say About you?

On September 17, 2006 High Priest Sherman Phipps read Malachi 3:13-18, commenting that he was using a portion of Malachi 3 that is not the one usually referenced from that Prophet. "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?"

"Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not."

After thanking the Galusha family for having given the ministry of music, Brother Phipps said: "I don't know where to start this morning. The first time I ever preached I was 14 years old and I don't think I was any more worried about it then than I am today."

I read this scripture that I read this morning because I think in some ways it reflects the time in which we live. It says, "Your words have been stout against me, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?"

"Ye have said, It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?" Then it goes on and talks about how we call the proud happy. Those that work wickedness are set up. And that's kind of the society we live in, I think. Those who truly believe in the teachings of the Lord - I mean - where will humility get you in this day and age? It's not a popular thing! We could go on and talk about that, but I don't want to spend a lot of time at it. You know what I am talking about. We live in a society where those that have got money are considered important. Those who have titles are considered important. You don't have to be a good person. You don't have to be honest - filled with integrity. You just have to have money and power! And those who do truly try to serve the Lord surely must feel often down trodden and beaten.

But then it says, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another." Now we have that privilege here in this country, and we have that opportunity and, I think privilege and blessing, here in

this congregation to come together often to speak with one another about the Lord and His goodness. And when we do that, according to this scripture, the Lord hears it. And I know from personal experience that the Lord is very, very conscious of each one of you. You may feel at times that you go unnoticed, and that your feelings don't seem to mean much to any one else, but they never go unnoticed with the Lord.

"And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." I don't know what that means to you, and this isn't my idea, particularly. I picked it up somewhere else, but I didn't used to know what that meant. A Book of Remembrance? What does that mean? What I have come to believe that means, and you may have a different idea, is that it has something to do with the Lord being very conscious of those times when we remember Him - of being very conscious of those people who remember Him and strive to do His will. And I wonder, you know, when I stand before Him to be judged, and He opens that Book of Remembrance, will my name be in there? And if so, how often? Have I taken time to remember Him? When things are not going well, then I am probably quick to do that. But how about the rest of the time? How about when things are going really good? Do I remember Him? When He does bless me, as He does in so many ways, do I take time to thank Him - to remember Him? Will my name be in that Book of Remembrance? Will He be pleased with what He finds there?

And it says of those who remember Him - I think that means in a day to day way - continuing to look unto Him and to rely upon Him not to be distracted by the ways of this world and what appears to make you "Something" in this world. Those who do remember Him, it says, "they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." I have thought about that. When He makes up His jewels, I am not sure how to express what I thought, but I realized as I would be standing up here this morning, and as I am, I am having the opportunity to look out upon His jewels! Maybe the people in this congregation don't have a lot of jewels. Maybe they do. I don't know, but if you have one, sometimes that makes it even more valuable than if you have a lot of them. But regardless, typically as people, we tend to try and protect those jewels. We keep them where they are secure. But we like to get them out and look at them once in awhile, too, I assume. Anyhow, we consider them to be precious. And that's what I see as I stand here today - those that the Lord considers precious! And His promise to you was, that He would spare you "as a man spareth His own son that serveth him." Is that worth pursuing? And He says, all we have to do is remember Him, and I am sure that means and includes, if we truly remember Him we will obey Him; and we won't be distracted by wanting to be lifted up in the ways the world lifts people up.

As I thought about family jewels, it struck me, too, that in our house anyhow, and I didn't talk to Cheryl about this, but if I were going to look at the family jewels - the things that are precious - I would probably just go out into the hallway because that's where all the kids and the grand kids' pictures are. And I wondered again, when I show up before the Lord, and I look down His hallway, will my picture be there? Will I be one of those He considered to be a part of His family? A part of His children?

I have to tell you a kind of an odd little story about that. I had a family that I represented in one of those little annuity things. The woman had six children, and, for me as an attorney, it was just a matter of waiting for each child to get to that age where they'd get

in trouble - because they always did and they always needed help. But I kind of liked this family. I liked the mother. She was one rough, rough person. The word around town was, "You don't mess with her or you will get hurt." And her husband just let her run the place. Whatever she said, that's the way it was. He was literally afraid of her! Spent most of his time in the garage.

But I liked her, and I think she got to where she liked me a little bit, too, although she wasn't very trusting of people usually. I had been to their house a number of times as we moved from one child to the next. I went down to the house one day. When you went into the living room. Then there was a big arch and you went into the dining room of this old, old house. They had been somewhere as a family and got one of those digital - generated pictures that looks like a banner - just black and white printed out on a long piece of paper. They had stuck it on that arch up above the archway. I risked a little humor with her, because you never knew how she would react. As I went in, I stood there for a minute and looked at that picture and said, "What's the deal?" She said, "What do you mean?" I said, "I'm not in the picture! Aren't a part of this family? She looked at me and started laughing and said, "Yeah, I guess we should have invited you."

That would be my concern, I guess. The way I live this life, will I show up and will I be a part of the picture that God acknowledges as His family; or will I not be in the picture? Well, if I am going to be in the picture - the family picture - if that is what I really want - there are some things I need to do - we need to do. And they're not difficult. And I am not going to try and define them for you today. All of you sitting here have as good an idea as I do of what they are. You know what you need to do, but sometimes it gets tough. Sometimes we get weary and we get discouraged and frustrated and we are like these words here where God said, "You have spoken against me in that you have said it's vain to serve God and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances." Does that ever happen to you? It happens to me. Maybe I shouldn't admit that! There are times in my life when I think, "You know what, I tried to do this right and I tried to do that right, but it doesn't seem like it means much. Everybody else is still living it up, having a good time, and I am still struggling. I don't think anybody else ever feels that way. Maybe I am the only one. Maybe I am the one He was talking to. But, if we are going to be in that family picture, we've got to buckle down and stay with it! We've got to do those things that we know need to be done in our life. We need to be willing to change the things that need to be changed. Again, I am not going to try to tell you what that is. I need to work on myself.

I went to a ball game Friday night where my grandson, Cody was playing. I don't know much about sports, really. I just go because the kids are there. So I won't try to tell you what was right and wrong. But I went to the ball game, and they were playing what they thought would be the toughest team they had to play this year. Our team came out in the first half, and their defense was good and they really went after them. Right close to the end of the first half, it was twenty two to zero, Lamoni; and they were really enthused. Then the second half they came out and, like I say, I don't know enough to really be talking about it, but I think their defense kind of dropped off. And the other team's defense was strong. The other team came back and beat them by three - no eleven points. They added another touchdown right at the end!

Of course, afterwards Cody was really frustrated, but yesterday I saw him and talked to him for a little while. Of course, he was wanting to talk about the game and his frustration, but he said

something that I think is important for us to learn. I don't know if he even understood or recognized what he was telling me, but he said, "Boy, Grandpa, that other team - it didn't seem to bother them that they were down by twenty two points at all. They just kept right on coming! The second half their defense was better than the first half." and he said, " You have got to admire somebody like that! They just stick with it and they keep right on going! And sure enough, they won!" And I thought, as Christians, or as professed Christians anyhow, we need to learn that! Never let our defense down. Don't let the adversary in there and don't let him discourage you because he has a lot of ways of doing it. But we need to recognize that God as the Creator is going to accomplish His work, and if we do our part, the reward is sure.

I'll throw this in, and I don't know why I throw this in today, but I have been kind of impressed lately going through some of the scriptures how often the statement is made in the scriptures - it's said different ways - but it is with reference to the fact that after much suffering comes the reward. So the promises are sure, no matter how discouraged we get or how beat down we feel, In fact, maybe sometimes when we are suffering, that's the time to remember these scriptures. And it is in there over and over and over that those who suffer but stay focused on the Lord, their reward is sure.

I don't know how this all fits together, maybe, and I apologize to the people from the older youth class who had to listen to me last hour. This idea of being allowed to be a part of those who make up His jewels -to be a part of His family - His sons and daughters - also got me to thinking about, "Who would I like to inherit from?" And don't take this wrong, but when my earthly father died, I didn't inherit anything earthly. I had an inheritance from him, and I wouldn't trade that off for any thing - I don't care what you offered. I wouldn't trade it. When my earthly mother died, she left the house, which we sold and divided - which to most people wouldn't be much of anything in this day and age. So, if we were talking about worldly things - material things - who would I like to inherit from? Maybe you can think about it on your own. I won't spend a lot of time on that, but I have thought of some people I know who it would be kind of fun to inherit from if you are just talking about earthly things. But in terms of spiritual matters, which I hope would be my focus, and is, I guess why I wouldn't trade what I inherited from my parents for anything material. I wouldn't want a different family. If we are talking about spiritual things, who would we want to inherit from? Well, who is there to inherit from? Who created everything? Who is in and through all things? Who gives us the breath of life? I know that different people might have a different answer to that, but I am convinced that there is only one true God. I am convinced that He is the Creator of all things. He gives life to all things, and that He is very, very personally interested in each one of us. It is beyond my comprehension how He can be the Creator of everything. You know a while back we read a scripture that talk about how He created this earth and the heavens and millions of others like these. It's just beyond my comprehension how He could have created all that. You look around and see how many people there are in this world and you think, "How could He possibly know what is going on with each one of them?" I can't explain it, but He is. And He's willing to be involved in everything that you invite Him to be involved in.

I will give you a couple of little examples. I always get concerned about this thinking, "I bet this is what I used in my last sermon", and it might be. I don't remember. I went to school in Iowa

City for a year and a half at one point in time. And, as usual, when Cheryl and I married, (For the first forty years of our marriage, we had nothing.) We were just wondering how we were going to pay the bills from one day to the next - let alone one month to the next, how we were going to buy groceries. And I had three jobs in addition to going to school full time. One of those jobs was at a fast foods restaurant. You know, we were always needing another dollar or another five dollars. We had two kids at the time, I think. They always needed something, and I never felt like I quite provided adequately.

The manager came in one evening - I worked nights there usually - and he said, "Sherman, would you be willing to take the night manager's job?" I said, "Well, what would that entail?" He kind of described it for me, and I said, "What does that mean pay wise?" He told me what raise I would get. My initial thought was, "Well, of course I'll take the job!" But I didn't feel right about it, so I said, "Let me talk to my wife and get back to you." He said, "Okay, but let me know because I need to do this within the next couple of days."

I went home and talked to Cheryl, and we prayed about it that evening. As I recall, we needed and wanted the money, but Cheryl said she didn't feel good about it either after we prayed. So I went back to work the next night and told the guy, "I'm sorry but I don't think I should do that. Better let somebody else do it." So he asked another guy who worked the night shift with me, and he immediately said, "Yes." Two or three nights later two guys came in. One of them walked up to the counter and said, "Who is the night manager?" This other guy said, "I am." and they shot him! Then they said, "Now, you know we are serious! This is a holdup." And it went from there. And that's the kind of God that I know. He knows what's going on with me. He knows what's coming. I don't, but He does, and if I even give Him a little opening to work with me, He will look after me; and He takes care of things that I could never take care of!

Thursday, this last week - this will sound like a silly little thing - but Thursday, this last week - Well back up. Wednesday last week I got a call from the court administrator who schedules for the judges and she said, "Sherman, I hate to do this to you, but I have got to send you to Newton tomorrow." And Newton, for those of you who don't know, is a little over a two hour drive for me and that's if I run a little over the speed limit. I don't like it when I have to go to Newton because I have to get up really early. I don't really have to be there until 9:30 but I like to be there at 8:30. So I got there about 8:20 and we went all day. The other thing I always say is, "I hope this is a short day. I hope the schedule is not too bad." It wasn't real bad, but we still went into the late afternoon. When I went out to start the car, when I turned the key, it turned over just fine but it just wouldn't fire. I don't think it has ever done it to me before. I stopped and hit the key again. It just ground but nothing fired. Now I am starting to think, "Oh. Oh. This is a bad deal!" I did it again. It went round and round and round but it just wouldn't fire. I let it run and run and run. It turned over fine, but just wouldn't fire. And I thought, "I am going to run the battery down!" So I turned it off again, and I was sitting there, and I thought, "What if this doesn't start? I'm in Newton of all places. I will have to call Cheryl. It will be a five hour drive for her to come and get me and take me home, plus, I can't just leave my car sit here. What do I do? They will come and tow it off, and I don't know where to have it towed to. I don't know who does what up there - who you can rely upon and who you can't." I was thinking, "Lord, I hate to bother You with this little

stuff, but this could turn into a big thing for me. And if You are willing to start the car for me, You know what it would mean to me." I reached down and hit the key, and it just started like it always does. I took off.

I was going back through Des Moines and I had planned on stopping in Des Moines in a couple of places trying to get some things we needed. So from Newton to Des Moines, I am thinking, "Should I stop and turn this car off, or should I keep going?" And then the thought hit me, "Sherman, the Lord fixed it. He doesn't do poor work! It will be fine!" So I stopped in Des Moines and went to the three different places I was going to go to, and it started every time. That doesn't mean it won't die - won't quit on me one of these days, but I trust when it does, the Lord will already have prepared a way for me to handle that when it comes up, too. I guess my point is, He really does know what is going on with us. He is really willing to be involved in our lives in big ways and little ways. He wants us to be His children. We are His sons and daughters. We have that calling. but He's not pushy about it. He will let us go out and do things on our own and suffer the consequences. But, if we are willing to claim Him as our Heavenly Father and as our God, He is certainly willing to claim us. He created us. He made us.

Where I started on this was, "From whom would we like to inherit?" I would like my inheritance to be from God the Creator, because the extent of what He has for us and wants to share with us is never ending. We will never have a need He can't meet. We'll never have a problem that He can't take care of. That doesn't mean we don't suffer along the way. It doesn't mean that we don't struggle, but ultimately He has prepared a way or us.

The book of Enos in the Book of Mormon. Have you read that lately? Enos says, "Behold, it came to pass that I, Enos, knowing my father, that he was a just man; for he taught me in his language and also in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And blessed be the name of my God for it. And I will tell you of the wrestle which I had before God, before I received a remission of my sins:" and then he goes on to tell his experience. If you haven't read this lately, go home and read it. It is only two pages long. It's a one chapter thing. I really wanted to read this to you, but I won't now because of the time. He talks of how he went out to hunt and he prayed unto =he Lord and he Lord told him he was forgiven of his sins. Having that knowledge which wouldn't that be great to have the Lord tell you? How did He say it? "There came a voice to me saying, Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed." Wouldn't you like to hear those words? I would! I am a little ashamed of myself when I go ahead and read it because I think if I had that experience and I heard those words, "Your sins are forgiven you and you shall be blessed", I would probably have jumped right up and, I don't know went right on hunting. He was hunting. I might want to run back to town to tell somebody about my experience. Enos didn't do that. If you know the story, you know the once the Lord had told him that, then he became very concerned about the souls of his brothers and sisters, and he spent, I think if I read it right, he spent all night praying for his brothers and sisters that they might know God too and the plan of salvation that had been prepared before them. But at the very end of his brief story, the Lord spoke to him again - Let me back up again. He says, "I rejoice in the day when my mortal shall put on immortality and shall stand before him" - that being God - "then shall I see his face with pleasure and he will say to me, come to me ye blessed. there is a place prepared for you in the mansions of my father." Those words I would like to hear!

What I wanted to accomplish this morning was to encourage

you to continue on. Don't let your defenses down. Play the game out! and God will make us winners!

I want to red a little story that ws sent to us by Cheryl's sister: Seventeen -year-old Brian Moore had only a short time to write something for a class. The subject was, "What Heaven Was Like". "I wowed 'em," he later told his father, Bruce. "It's a killer. It's the best thing I ever wrote." It was also the last. Brian's parents had forgotten this essay until a cousin found it when they were cleaning out Brian's locker after he was killed. Brian died My 27, 1997. He was driving home,e from a friend's house when his car went off the road and struck a utility pole. He emerged from the wreck unharmed but stepped on a downed power line and was electrocuted.

Two months before that, he had handwritten this essay for class, and the essay was about encountering Jesus in a file room full of cards detailing every moment of his life. (Brian's parents are convinced that Brian had had this experience and been allowed to have a vision of life after death.) This is what he wrote: The Room In that place between wakefulness and dreams, I found myself in the room. There were no distinguishing features except for the one wall covered with small index card files. They were like the ones in libraries that list titles by author or subject in alphabetical order. But these files, which stretched from floor to ceiling and seemingly were endless in either direction, had very different headings. As I drew near the wall of files, the first to catch my attention was one that read, "Girls I have liked." I opened it and began flipping through the cards. I quickly shut it, shocked to realize that I recognized the names written on each one. And then without being told, I knew exactly where I was.

This lifeless room with its small files was a crude catalog system for my life. Here were written the actions of my every moment, big and small, in a detail my memory couldn't match. A sense of wonder and curiosity coupled with horror, stirred within me as I began randomly opening files and exploring their content. Some brought joy and sweet memories; others a sense of shame and regret so intense that I would look over my shoulder to see if anyone was watching.

A file named "Friends" was next to one marked "Friends I have Betrayed." The titles ranged from the mundane to the outright weird "Books I Have Read," "Lies I Have Told," "Comfort I Have Given" "Jokes I Have Laughed at" Some were almost hilarious in their exactness: "Things I've yelled at my brothers." Others I couldn't laugh at: "Things I Have Done in Anger", "Things I Have Muttered Under My Breath at My Parents". I never ceased to be surprised by the contents.

Often there were many more cards than I expected. Sometimes fewer that I hoped. I was overwhelmed by the sheer volume of the life I had lived. Could it be possible that I had the time in my life to fill each of these thousands or even millions of cards? But each card confirmed this truth. Each was written in my own handwriting, each signed with my signature. When I pulled out the file marked "TV Shows That I Have Watched", I realized the files grew to contain their contents. The cards were packed so tightly, and yet after two or three yards I hadn't found the end of the file. I shut it .. ashamed...not so much by the quality of the shows, but more by the vast wasted time I knew that the file represented.

When I came to the file marked "Lustful Thoughts", I felt a chill run through my body. I pulled the file out only an inch, not willing to test its size, and drew out a card. I shuddered at its detailed content. I felt sick to think that such a moment had been recorded. An almost animal rage broke on me. One thought dominated my

mind. No one must ever see these cards! No one must ever see this room! I have to destroy them!"

In insane frenzy I yanked the file out. It's size didn't matter now. I had to empty it and burn the cards. But as I took it at one end and began pounding it on the floor, I could not dislodge a single card. I became desperate and pulled out a card, only to find it as strong as steel when I tried to tear it.

Defeated and utterly helpless, I returned the file to its slot. Leaning my head against the wall, I let out a long self-pitying sigh. And then I saw it. The file was "People I Have Shred the Gospel With. " The handle was brighter than those around it, newer, almost unused. I pulled on its handle and a small box not more than three inches long fell into my hands. I could count the cards it contained on one hand.

And then the tears came. I began to weep. Sobs so deep that they hurt! They started in my stomach and shook through me. I fell to my knees and cried. I cried out of shame, for the overwhelming shame of it all. The rows of file shelves swirled in my tear-filled eyes. No one must ever, ever know of this room. I must lock it up and hide the key. But then as I pushed away the tears, I saw Him. No! Please not Him! Not here. Oh, anyone but Jesus. I watched helplessly as He began to open the files and read the cards. I couldn't bear to watch His response. And in the moments I could bring myself to look at His face, I saw a sorrow deeper than my own. He seemed to intuitively go to the worst boxes. Why did He have to read every one? Finally He turned and looked at me from across the room. He looked at me with pity in His eyes. But this was a pity that didn't anger me. I dropped my head, covered my face with my hands and began to cry again. He walked over and put His arm around me. He could have said so many things. But He didn't say a word. He just cried with me.

Then He got up and walked back to the wall of files. Starting at one end of the room, He took out a file and one by one, began to sign His name over mine on each card. "No!" I shouted, rushing to Him. All I could find to say was "No, no," as I pulled the card from Him. His name shouldn't be on these cards. But there it was, written in red so rich, so dark, so alive! The name of Jesus covered mine. It was written with His blood. He gently took the card back. He smiled a sad smile and began to sign the cards. I don't think I will ever understand how He did it so quickly, but the next instant it seemed, I heard Him close the last file and walk back to my side. He placed His hand on my shoulder and said, "It is finished." I stood up, and He led me out of the room. There was no lock on the door. There were still cards to be written."

I would like to have that kind of an experience, when the time comes, to know that this is my Heavenly Father, and He has paid the price. And I'd like to live in such a way that He wouldn't have to sign any more of those cards than necessary, although I may have decided that a little late! But He's still willing to have each one of us.

Life Filled With Lessons to Be Learned

Priest Rodney Bastow chose to read two passages from a modern version of the scriptures. The first one I would like to talk to you about is Job, 36:22-26, "God is exalted in His power. Who is a teacher like him? Who has prescribed his ways for him or said

to him, You have done wrong? Remember to extol his work which men have praised in song. All mankind has seen it. Men gaze on it from afar. How great is God, beyond our understanding. The number of his years is past finding out.”

Then I have another one. It is from Isaiah 48:17. “This is what the Lord says, your redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord your God who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go.”

This morning I am reminded of a song that our ball teams at West Nodaway uses to warm up. I don’t know the words - probably don’t care to know the words - but it starts out like this, “Are you ready for this?” I keep hearing that and I think, “Are we?” Are we ready to leave our problems, our concerns, the things that are bothering us this morning - are you ready to leave those things behind and get ourselves closer to that Holy Spirit? My prayer is that we are. My prayer is that we will be able to recognize that blessing, and if we can, we can feel that blessing here this morning. I would ask that we pray to our heavenly Father for that blessing.

I feel like I have already been blessed here this morning. I got here for the worship service, and fortunately we waited for the Jordison family to get here, because if we had not, we would not have seen that pretty little face that was up her smiling and dancing to the music. It really touched me to see her up here this morning. She and Josh both mean a lot to me, and it means a lot to me to be able to see them here. We might be better off just staring at them for the hour. I’m not sure.

The other thing that I feel like I have been blessed by this morning - last Sunday I came here, and I was thinking that I would borrow a book from the library. I was going to use that book to help me prepare for today. For some reason, I didn’t get around to looking for it, checking with it. I wasn’t sure that it was in the library. That book was, Humor in the Scriptures. So I felt really blessed by our class to have Alan read from that book.

Our speaker added a bit of levity because of his standing between two good singers during the hymns that preceded his speaking. Referring to the reading from the book on humor he quipped, “Also I think it has been a blessing, I am not real sure because I am not sure I was real comfortable with that. That would say that when I became an administrator I should want to surround myself with good people. Well, I feel like we have got two pretty good ones here this morning, but singing here between them, I don’t know! You have to sing fairly loud to keep up with Alan, but you don’t want to sing too loud so that you drown out Michael. It is a little bit of a challenge.”

A New Experience in Teaching

But what I want to say to you this morning - most of you know I teach school. I am a math teacher. That’s not what I taught when I taught at Chaffee. I taught science over there because that was what my degree was in, but at West Nodaway, I teach Math. I teach mainly algebra one, algebra two and geometry. Now if you were from here, you would probably say algebra one, geometry and algebra two, but our system is not that way. (Maybe Mt. Ayr is that way, too, because they have gone to Saxon.) I don’t teach any of the advanced math classes. Anything above algebra 1, algebra 2 and geometry, I would consider an advanced math class. The reason I don’t do that is because I don’t have the ability to do that, and fortunately someone has recognized that and have kept me from doing it.

This fall, though, I have had a new experience. Just think! Thirty two years in education. How can you have a new experience

after all that time? But I have. They put me in a class room. It’s algebra 3 . I told you, I don’t know much about algebra three, but I’m in this class room with these students that are taking algebra 3. They are actually being taught by a teacher from Jefferson which is about thirty miles away. They watch a TV that he actually comes through. There are two - well, actually four screens. There is one on him. There is one on his class room and there is one on the board that he writes on. And this is how they are supposed to be learning algebra 3.

When I first found out that I was doing that this fall, I thought, “Hey! Good deal! No lesson plans, you know. Just go in there, sit around - you know turn the TVs on , FAX things back and forth to him. How much better could it be?” It hasn’t turned out quite that way for some reason.

Algebra 3 - I don’t know how many of you have taken it or how many of you are familiar with it - is a subject that needs a lot of one on one. It’s hard to get that one on one over a telephone line! You know, it’s really difficult to get that and fortunately most of this is review from algebra 2, so I have been able to help the students with it, and they have been coming to me with a lot of questions. In fact, there are eight of these kids - and they have been very dependent on me to help them get their problems solved and get their work done. I didn’t expect this. I really didn’t, but it kind of makes you feel good, you know? When you can have the answers and they can ask you questions and you are able to help. Of course, a lot of this is geometry that we are doing right now. We are doing constructions which they had no clue about whatever. I usually avoid that because I can do it, but it is not just something I am real comfortable with. But they come to me with their questions and I help them with their work. I help them work through this and it’s just a really good feeling, and hopefully, they are learning the material while we are doing it. Some of them are very dependent on me. I mean, they come to me with almost every problem. They come before school. They know how to do it, but yet they want the assurity that they are doing it right - that what they are doing is the right thing to be doing. So they come to me a lot for help. They ask me questions. They have me look over what they are doing.

Some of the students are very good about reading the book and finding the way to do the problems from following the examples in the book. That’s how they are learning. Then there are some of them who work together with another class mate. What one doesn’t know, the other one does, and they have been learning that way. There is one student, however, I have been rather concerned about because she has missed several days. She hasn’t made up a lot of the work. She is just kind of lost, and I am really worried that she might become completely lost, have to drop the course and will not be able to finish this.

Sometimes my students get frustrated. Sometimes they get, I guess you could say, a little angry. Sometimes they don’t understand why I don’t just give them the answers. You know. Just tell me is this right or wrong! I don’t understand why we have to do this. I don’t understand why we have to learn this. I don’t understand why it has to be done that way. And sometimes I get a little frustrated when I keep explaining the same thing over and over again, and it’s the same thing, and I can’t understand why they don’t see it because it seems so simple to me. But you keep explaining the same thing over and over again. I keep trying and I try to keep encouraging them to keep trying and to keep working hard so they can do well. I know there is going to come a point when this study is going to leave me, and I am going to have to either learn along

with the students or get more TV sets or something. I don't know, but we will come to that point when we get there.

Jesus As A Teacher

A couple of weeks ago I was shopping up here with Debbie at Pamida and looking through the books that were discounted. I found this book. It's called Footprints for Men. Most of you know the "Footprints" reading, I am sure. It's one of my favorites. I really like that reading. I really think it was inspired. It says a lot about me. It says a lot about my life. I have a couple of these devotional books that are based on this reading. This one I thought might be something different because it is for men. I am not exactly sure it was because everything I have seen so far I can't see the difference, why it wouldn't have been for women, too.

In one part of this book, it talks about God being with us. God is with us as our teacher and mentor. And it refers to that line in the reading where it says, "You would walk and talk with me all the way." Do you remember that line in the reading? This made me think about this and made me think about Jesus as a great teacher, as is said in the scriptures that I read to you this morning. There are some other scriptures in here that refer to Him as a teacher, too.

Jesus knows all of the answers! He is not going to come to a part where He doesn't know the answers. He's going to know the answers clear through our course - clear through our life and forever. He has given us His words. He has given us a text book - right here - a text book that we can refer to - a text book that we can learn from to know how to live our lives. That's how we can learn. It is from reading His words, by talking to Him; by praying to Him; by asking for His guidance and His direction. And when we have problems, He wants us to come to Him because He can help us to find the answers. He is very patient with us. He helps us even when we keep making the same mistakes over and over again. He encourages us to keep trying.

Pertinent Readings

I found a couple of readings that kind of also deal with this. I want to share them with you. I don't usually like to use too many readings. I have used so many it seems like I am always afraid that I am going to reuse the same ones or use one that you have already heard and that may be overdone. But these I think are both pretty good. I'll let you decide what you think.

This first one is called "Rules for Being Human". (I don't agree with all of these quite, but some of them really kind of hit home pretty hard.)

Rule number 1. You will receive a body. You may like it or hate it, but it will be yours the entire period of time around.

Rule number two - You will learn lessons. You are enrolled in a full time informal school called life. Each day in this school, you will have the opportunity to learn lessons. You may like the lessons, or like my students, you may think them irrelevant and stupid.

Rule Number three - (This one I really like.) There are no mistakes, only lessons. Growth is a process of trial and error and experimentation. The failed experiments are as much a part of the process as the experience that ultimately works.

resented to you in various forms until you have learned it. When you have learned it, you can then go on to the next lesson.

Number 5. Learning lessons does not end. There is no part of life that does not contain its lessons. If you are alive, there are lessons to be learned.

(And this one I really like) - Number 6. There is no better than here. When your "there" has become a "here", you will simply obtain another "there" that will again look better than "here".

(And this one I think is really true) - Number 7. Others are simply mirrors of you. You cannot love or hate something about another person unless it reflects something you love or hate about yourself.

Number 8. What you make of your life is up to you. You have all the tools and resources you need. What you make of them is up to you. The choice is yours.

Number 9. (And this one I would disagree with a little bit. I would probably just add to this.) Your answers lie inside you. The answers to life's questions lie inside you. All you have to do is look, listen and trust. (I would probably put with that, "and pray".)

The tenth rule: You will forget all of this.

This next reading I have got is entitled, "I have Learned", and I like it a lot, too. There are some variations I would probably put to it. It goes like this: "I have learned that you can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk, age six." (Now that wasn't true for me, folks. We never had broccoli at all. I was liver, and I learned that you can't make it go away just by string at it.)

"I have learned that I like my teacher because she cries when we sing "Silent Night". That was age 7. "I have learned that when I wave at people in the country, they stop what they are doing and wave back". That was age 9." "I have learned that just when I get my room the way I like it, Mom (or in my case, wife) makes me clean it up." That was age 12. (Actually, Mom never did that, but it did happen later in life to me.) "I have learned that if you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering someone else up." That was age 13. "I have learned that although it is hard to admit it, I am secretly glad my parents are strict with me." That was age 15. (I am not sure what age I was when I appreciated that one.) "I have learned that silent company is often more healing than words of advice." That's age 24. "I have learned that brushing my child's hair is one of life's great pleasures." That was age 25. "I have learned that wherever I go, the world's worst drivers have followed me there." That's age 29. "I have learned that if someone says something unkind about me, I must live my life so that no one will believe it." That's age 39. "I have learned that there are people who love you dearly but just don't know how to show it." That's age 41. "I have learned you can make someone's day by simply sending them a little card." That's age 44. "I have learned that the greater a person's sense of guilt, the greater is the need to cast blame on others." Age 45.

(I haven't learned this one yet, but I hope to before too much longer.) "I have learned that children and grandparents are natural allies." Age 46. "I have learned that singing "Amazing Grace" can lift my spirits for hours." Age 49. I have learned that motel mattresses are better on the side away from the phone." Age 50. "I have learned that you can tell a lot about a man by the way he handles three things - a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas Tree lights." Age 52. "I have learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you miss them terribly after they die." Age 53, (And that was true). "I have learned that making a living is not the same as making a life." That's age 58. "I have learned that if you want to do something positive for your children, try to improve your marriage." That's age 61. (It seems like to me that should have come a lot sooner!)

"I have learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance." That's age 62. (That should have been a lot sooner.) "I have learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back." Age 64. "I have learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you, but if

News & Notes

Fall Retreat - Rich Ministry

Eighteen members and friends of the Mt. Ayr Congregation were among the approximately one hundred participants in the Fall Retreat at Geneseo, Illinois, September 22-24. Participants came from Iowa, Illinois, Michigan and Missouri. Special guest ministers were Marlin Guinn and Dale Godfrey of the Book of Mormon Foundation, Independence, Missouri, who assisted in the celebration of the anniversary of the date on which Joseph Smith received the plates from which the Book of Mormon was translated, at the hands of the angel, Moroni. A baptism of water and the Spirit were observed for a father and daughter who came from Michigan especially for those ordinances. Lynda Rolfe and Di Smith taught children's classes. Ron Smith directed the Missionary testimony service in which Elder Sam Agwanda of Kenya participated, and the prayer service which brought unmeasured ministry to all. Robert Rolfe was in charge of the Sunday morning preaching and confirmation services and served with distinction. And Ron and Di Smith directed the campfire of Saturday evening.

Club Remembers Anniversary

Sept. 21, Graceland's Book of Mormon Club remembered the anniversary of Joseph Smith receiving the plates of the Book of Mormon with an activity in Zimmerman Hall featuring Francis Akland and his prize winning hymn about the event and a power point lecture by Seventy Neil Simmons. Ronald Smith is faculty sponsor of the club and Katie Ellis is president. Katie, Lauren Smith, Andrew Dunning, Andrew Neal and Zachary Wilson presented Mr. Akland's song. An anniversary cake was served.

Kenyan Minister Visits

Elder Sam Agwanda, visited the congregation on his way to the September gathering of the Priesthood at Kirtland Temple. He participated in the prayer service and was the guest teacher for the women's class on the way to Kirtland and participated in the Missionary Testimony session and the healing service of the Fall Retreat at Geneseo on the way back. He was hosted by Norman and Cathy Nelson on both visits.

Pastor Addresses Retreat

Elder Alan Smith was one of the instructors at a retreat sponsored by the Conference of Branches held at Colbern Road Restoration church near Independence, Missouri September 22.

Calendar to Be Set

October-December schedules will be set at the Planning Session to be held after the Zionics Dinner Sunday, October. All branch members are urged to assist.

Elder's Conference Scheduled

October 27-28 have been set for the Fall Elder's Conference at Waldo Restoration Branch in Independence, Missouri.

you focus on our family, the needs of others, your work, meeting new people, and doing the very best you can, happiness will find you." Age 65. "I have learned that whenever I decide something with kindness, I usually make the right decision." Age 66. "I have learned that everyone can use a prayer." Age 72. (I don't know why that one was so late, and the same way with this one.) "I have learned that it pays to believe in miracles, and to tell the truth, I have seen several." Age 73. "I have learned that even when I have pain, I don't have to be one." Age 82. (You liked that one, didn't you?) "I have learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone. People love that human touch - holding hands, a warm hug or just a pat on the back." (George taught me that one, but he didn't wait until I was 85.) And finally, "I have learned that I still have a lot to learn." Age 92.

A Personal Reflection on Footprints

I know that a lot of you have been concerned about me and about my family, and I appreciate that. I am concerned also, and I still have questions about the things that have happened in my life and in the lives of those that I love, including many of you. I don't know the answers, but God does, and He will help me understand if I stay in the class and don't get lost.

When I read the "Footprints" reading, I always got the impression that it was going in a straight line. Is that the impression you got when you read it? I think if I had written that, the path would have gone in some circles, in some kind of dipty do. You know what I mean? Because there are so many times in my life when I haven't just followed a path - when I have gotten lost and have gone in circles. But when I have come back, Jesus has been there for me. He has blessed me many times. I believe that Jesus is always with me, but I am not sure that I always follow the right path. I also think that during times of trouble, when He tries to carry me, too often I try to resist. I need to be a better student. There are some scriptures that I found, and we have these. If you have this, (Rodney held up a small pamphlet) which I think is back in the back, isn't it? This tells you how you can better prepare yourself. And it gives these scriptures: Second Timothy 2:15. "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Proverbs 4:7, "Wisdom is the principal thing. Get wisdom and with all thy getting, get understanding." Doctrine and Covenants 85:36, "Seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom. Seek learning even by study and also by faith." And finally, James 1:56, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him, but let him ask in faith,"

I need to follow those scriptures. I know I need to study more. I know I need to spend more time in fasting and prayer. I know I need to take more time for walks and take longer walks with Jesus every day. I found this thing that I like. It says, "When you are through changing, you are through!" I have a book mark that also kind of says something to me. It's, I think, kind of important, and I will close with this. It goes like this:

"God, teach me to be patient. Teach me to go slow.

Teach me how to wait on You when my way I do not know.

Teach me forbearance when things do not go right,

So I remain unruffled when others grow up tight.

Teach me how to quiet my racing, rising heart,

So I may hear the answer You are trying to impart.

Teach me to let go, Dear Lord, and pray undisturbed

Until my heart is filled with inner peace and I learn to know Your will."

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Continued from front page

at the top and place for me to write three stones for the day: my stone for the kingdom, my stone for my family and my stone for work (at work or around the house depending on the day).

Some days the stones are of much different size. My stone for the kingdom may be much bigger than other stones on Sunday for example.

But if I'm going to be looking for the kingdom each day, I need to be purposefully thinking about what my next task will be to try to develop the relationships of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost that will make it real to me and those around me.

If I'm going to be part of a family, I need to take time to have at least one activity a day where I am focusing on them.

My work stones will probably be the easiest to come up with -- there are always things to do there. But that's why I purposely listed my work stones last. I want to make sure that I can try to keep my priorities straight.

I'm don't know if this method will be of any help to you as you look at your stewardship of time. If you would like a pickle jar management sheet, just let me know and I'll run you one.

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