

MARCH 2007

TESTIMONIES AND SERMON NOTES

Be Doers Of The Word

After the emblems of the Lord's Supper were served, Seventy Ronald Smith read the parable of two sons who were asked by their father to go to work for him. (Matthew 21:26-30) "But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, saying, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I will serve; and went not. Whether of these twain did the will of their father?" Brother Smith left the question open for the congregation and a child responded, "The first!"

Ronald then came out in front of the pulpit showing a piece of paper on which the word, SIN was written in scarlet colored ink. The scarlet SIN touched a part of an area that was cut to make a flange. The paper had been folded but was now spread open for anyone to read. Aquilla Galusha volunteered to assist at Ron's request and held the paper with the SIN turned toward himself and the clean part showing the rest of us. Brother Smith explained that is the way we usually wish to keep our sins - to ourselves, showing a clean life to those about us. And so he announced that he wanted to talk to us about sin and repentance and the way God wishes to take care of our sins.

Our speaker asked Aquilla to hold onto the flange while he refolded the paper. Much to our surprise, and Aquilla's, the SIN side of the paper was now toward the audience and the blank side toward Aquilla. Aquilla had not turned loose of the flange at any time. As Aquilla resumed his seat and we all puzzled with him, Ron explained that is the way the Lord says it is going to be at the judgment day. We will know as we are known and all our sins will be revealed for every one to see.

But what God wants to do is to get rid of those sins entirely so both sides of the paper are clean. So He gives us this wonderful chance to repent and let Him take the sins entirely away. "Though your sins be as scarlet" (Isaiah 1:18). He will make them white as snow. God wants to wipe out all our sins and make us pure and clean before our Lord.

If we ask the ordinary person on the street to define sin, they would probably say, "Sin is what others do that offends us. Whether I think it is sin depends on whether I think it is good or bad. Good and bad are relative!" But sin is not relative to God.

Saturday morning I decided I was going to go over to see Rob at the hospital. You might think that was a good thing, but I never went! So you see, it was not a good thing at all. Like the men in the parable, it is not what we think we are going to do that makes us good or bad. It is what we do that matters.

I was hoping Kent Clisby would be here, but I expect he worked last night. Often I see Kent over at Gloria's house helping. When my brother-in-law, Doug comes, he is often over there helping Gloria. How often do I get over to help Gloria? Not very often. I have the same opportunity as they, and I have good intentions, but I don't follow through.

John 14:21-24 says it this way: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings; and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

Love and the Lord's Supper

This morning, we have taken the Lord's Supper. Jesus told us to do it. We have done well. By eating and drinking the emblems of the covenant, we have shown that we are willing to keep His commandments and remember Him always. That is good. But if it doesn't translate into keeping His commandments and remembering Him always, we are not showing that we really love Him.

I have to confess that I am a hypocrite. A hypocrite is one who says one thing and does another. There are days I say I am going to do something but end up doing something else. But my Dad taught me something about hypocrites. I will use these three books to represent God, the hypocrite and me. If I place God on this side and me on the other side of the pulpit and place the one representing the hypocrite between us, who is closer to God, me or the hypocrite? Here is the point: if you let a hypocrite stand between you and God, then the hypocrite is closer to God than you! So don't let mine or any one else's hypocrisy keep you away from God. It is important that we remember what God has done for us and what He will do for us if we repent and let Him.

In taking the Communion, we witness that we are willing to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ and remember Him always and keep His commandments. The promise is that if we do what we have pledged, we will always have His Spirit to be with us. Remember the times you have felt His Spirit with you?

Last Wednesday night I felt God's Spirit with us very strongly. We gathered together and were asked to remember the things God has done for us. It is very important that we take the time and effort to remember. As we grow older, we forget very soon what God has

done for us! And Wednesday night as we prayed for each other, I felt the Spirit strongly. Those of you who missed that service really missed a good experience. I would like to have that Spirit with me always. For that to happen, this is the place to come to remember, but we don't stop here. We have to keep loving and forgiving and sharing with each other.

I remember Ole Turnbull, Joni McDonald's father. (Many of you know Joni.) Ole attended one of our prayer services in Saskatoon and afterward said, "Wow! Many people would pay big money to be in a group that can openly share like that!" We are really privileged to have a church family where we can share in a way that our souls can grow towards God.

God's Revelation of Truth

Just before Di and I went to Taiwan, Robert Vaughn loaned me a book to read, *Black Holes and Time Warps, Einstein's Outrageous Legacy*. I had time to read the book during our long flights and over the course of our stay. I mention this because it gave me a new appreciation for the things that God has done. While reading the book, I began to understand what physicists are talking about when they say that time and space are warped by mass, that time is experienced differently in different parts of space, and so on. One of the big thrills for me was to see some connections between the view of the universe presented there and some of the revelations given to Joseph Smith.

According to Einstein, matter and energy are just different manifestations of the same thing. We call it matter when we touch it with our fingers. We call it energy when we detect it with our eyes as light and our ears as sound. With more sophisticated detectors, we can experience this energy as radio waves or x-rays or gamma rays or even gravity waves. But in the end, it all boils down (so to speak) to various forms of energy. In the book, it was pointed out that it is the attraction of this energy to itself that constitutes the fundamental forces of our universe, and gravity in particular. Our revelations call the energy light. It is this same light which fills the immensity of space. It is light that is in all things and through all things. All things that are or were or are to come are made of it. And light cleaves to light.

Doctrine and Covenants 85:10-13 says in part: "... intelligence cleaveth unto intelligence; wisdom receiveth wisdom; truth embraceth truth; virtue loveth virtue; light cleaveth unto light; ... judgment goeth before the face of him who sitteth upon the throne, and governeth and executeth all things: he comprehendeth all things, and all things are before him, and all things are round about him; and he is above all things, and in all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things: and all things are by him, and of him; even God, for ever and ever. ... He hath given a law unto all things by which they move in their times, and their seasons; and their courses are fixed; even the courses of the heavens, and the earth; which comprehend the earth and all the planets; and they give light to each other in their times, and in their seasons, in their minutes, in their hours, in their days, in their weeks, in their months, in their years: all these are one year with God, but not with man. ".Unto what shall I liken these kingdoms, that ye may understand? Behold, all these are kingdoms, and any man who hath seen any or the least of these, hath seen God moving in his majesty and power. I say unto you, He hath seen him: nevertheless, he who came unto his own was not comprehended. The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not; nevertheless, the day shall come when you shall comprehend even God; being quickened in him, and by him. Then shall ye know that ye have seen me, that I am, and that

I am the true light that is in you, and that you are in me, otherwise ye could not abound."

So when God says He created us in His own image, he was not talking about just taking a piece of clay and molding a man. He actually entered in and put a part of Himself into each of us. Our intelligence is from Him, and He allows us to use it any way we choose. Sin enters in when we use the things God has given us but not in the way He intended.

Listen to the words of King Benjamin in Mosiah 1: 52-61. "I say unto you, my brethren, that if you should render all the thanks and praise which your whole souls have power to possess, to that God who has created you, and has kept and preserved you, and has caused that ye should rejoice, and has granted that ye should live in peace one with another; I say unto you, that if ye should serve him who has created you from the beginning, and art preserving you from day to day, by lending you breath, that ye may live and move, and do according to your own will, and even supporting you from one moment to another; I say, if ye should serve him with all your whole soul, yet ye would be unprofitable servants. And behold, all that he requires of you, is to keep his commandments; and he has promised you that if ye would keep his commandments, ye should prosper in the land; And he never doth vary from that which he hath said; therefore, if ye do keep his commandments, he doth bless you, and prosper you.

"And now, in the first place, he hath created you, and granted unto you your lives, for which ye are indebted unto him. And secondly: he doth require that ye should do as he hath commanded you, for which if ye do, he doth immediately bless you; and therefore, he hath paid you. And ye are still indebted unto him; and are, and will be, for ever and ever; therefore, of what have ye to boast? And now I ask, Can ye say aught of yourselves? I answer you, Nay. Ye can not say that ye are even as much as the dust of the earth: yet ye were created of the dust of the earth: but behold, it belongeth to him who created you."

God wants us to take the name of Christ and keep His commandments. He wants us to use the intelligence, the energy, the light he has given us in the way that he intended for it to be used. We must keep loving each other.

Is there something you are going to do different because you were here today? Is there some way you can lower your hypocrisy just a little bit? What kind of report will you make? Remember, at the judgment seat we are all going to report! I hope we will all allow Jesus Christ to take away all our sins!

God bless you as you continue in His Spirit.

Bring Your Gift to the Feast

Priest Ed Anderson chose 1 Corinthians 12:4-18 to share with us at the beginning of his sermon February 11, 2007. "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to

another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues; But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jew or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.

"If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?"

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."

Ron and Di Smith sang a medley of the hymns "All to Jesus I surrender" and "Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated, Lord to Thee," and Ed resumed his presentation.

It's always tough for me to speak in front of people. I was so shy in High School that I absolutely refused to do the things they said I had to do. It's also not easy for me to come and talk to the choir, you might say. I know that some of you have a lot more experience, been a lot more places, and according to testimony, seem to have a lot more spiritual insight and spiritual wisdom than I, but it is my job to stand here today, and I choose to do that. It is not that I am refraining from doing it or anything like that. It's just sometimes you wonder if you have something unique to say. What I have to say this morning I thought was kind of unique until I was getting out of the car this morning and I heard some lady on the radio say almost the very same thing that I am going to say - at least the start of it.

Pot Luck Creates a Feast

As I start my sermon here, I want you to know I am not confused. I know this is not the first Sunday of the month, and I know we are not having a pot luck afterwards, but I am going to talk about a pot luck a little bit.

In a pot luck, everybody brings something - right? You bring the meat and you bring the potatoes and you bring the corn and some people bring brownies. Some people bring cookies. Me, I am not a cook, I would probably go to the store and buy some milk or something like that. You can liken the gifts that we bring to a pot luck - everybody brings their stuff to the dinner and we have a feast. If we look around us and look at our empty chairs - suppose there were enough people there filling those chairs that were also bringing something to the feast. How much more would our pot lucks be? We have enough food the way it is anyway, but consider when all the other people who are not here would be bringing something. I'm not talking necessarily about members of the church. I am talking about people who need to hear about Christ - who should be here - who need salvation - who need Christ in their lives to change them. I am not a cook, and some of this stuff I have just heard, so don't think I am talking out of experience. I have heard that when people cook, first of all there is the kind that measure everything out. Everything is exact! I mean, if there is one grain of sugar above the level line on a quarter cup, it gets flicked off! There is that exact kind of cooking.

Now there are some people who cook by sight. Well, that looks like a quarter cup - that looks like a teaspoon. Some people can get

by with that. Some people just know, you know. Some people are just experts at it, and they don't have to measure out perfectly. Then there are some people who have no clue how to cook, and that's where I fit in.

My wife did something. This was a long time ago just after we were first married and she has repented. Some girl that she did not like had a birthday. She took one of these tin pans, like a fruit cake pan, and she decorated it as a cake and gave it to the girl on her birthday. Imagine the surprise when the girl jams her knife into the tin. She was kind of upset that that happened to her.

Let's look at our lives as our propensities to baking. Deceit is obviously going to be uncovered very rapidly. It is not going to take very long for people to figure out that what is on our surface is not what is on the inside of us. That's the cake. Other people are prepared who have measured out perfectly and are very meticulous about their spiritual preparation. That also comes out on the outside of them. And those people who may guess at it - I am not sure that is haphazard. We all come out the same -right?. Maybe they have that gift that they can do it that way. As I read in the scripture, there are different gifts for different people, and everyone experiences those different gifts.

Good Gifts Require Preparation

My question is, what gift do we bring? In our preparation at home and our preparation here, what do we do? Things don't just happen. I can't play the piano. That is not one of my gifts. So if you play the piano, you have taken lessons and practiced at that gift - right? There has been some preparation.

Now, spiritual gifts also require some sort of preparation. Whether it is study, whether it is fasting, whether it is prayer. Maybe we are good conversationalists. Have we studied that? Have we read the books? History tells me that church leaders in the past, Joseph Smith, for example, got hold of all kinds of good books. We are supposed to read books and study good books in relation to our mission in the church - to better prepare ourselves for our ministry. It takes preparation.

I am working down in Savannah. It's not a real good place to work, but they are trying to get a computer system in there. Most of people are not qualified - have no clue. They get some of their employees from prison release. Some are volunteers. They are not really interested in participating, so we who are trying to make it a professional place try to do the right thing. Those who do not know what is going on are not helping. They are a detriment to the effort. We can liken that to our church life, all phases of our life. If we are here and our gifts that we have brought are not well thought out, not well prepared, how much, maybe, of a detriment am I, for instance, to the cause of Christ? Could we be further? We are supposed to be of one heart and one mind - correct? If my mind is not concentrated upon Christ and His mission, and if I am not prepared, where am I? Am I a detriment to the cause? Am I being a bad witness to those people with whom I live in the everyday world?

No matter what you do, somebody is going to be watching you. No matter where you go, either somebody you know is going to be there or somebody who knows somebody you know. If you go some place and you think, I can slip by here and I really don't have to witness. I can kind of slip by. You know, they gave me too much change at the store, but that's okay. Nobody noticed. I can slip by. But somebody is watching. There is always somebody who is watching you.

I probably have shared this one story with you about a girl named Rosemary. When I first went down to Warrensburg, I met

her in the book line. At Central Missouri they rented the books to you, so you went and stood in line to pick them up. I invited her to Liahona, at the time, I'm not sure what they call the Restoration group now. She saw the people at Liahona and says of one of the girls, "I noticed her in the class, and I knew there was something different about her. I knew there was something different about her, and now I know why." There were two or three members of the Liahona that she had seen in class that she knew something about. She knew there was something different about them in the class before she ever knew that it was because of Christ in their lives. Once she saw them at worship with Christ, then she knew what the difference was.

With these gifts, I also have to say there are no slackers in Zion. One of the things when Satan came to God, he said, "I'm going to save all of these people!" If he had come and that was his chore, it could take away our agency, but did you ever think that some of us might really enjoy that? If he is going to do it for everybody, then what do I have to do myself? What do I have to do? I don't have to do anything!

Satan would take away our agency. Not that he took a hammer and was going to force you to be members of the church. He just says, "I am going to do this, and everybody is going to do it, and everybody is going to be saved!" That might not be exactly what I want to say, but you kind of get the idea that we need to participate in our salvation.

What Example Am I Setting?

I have heard it expressed by several people. In the Book of Mormon in particular it talks about Alma and the Sons of Mosiah, how they hurt the progress of the church by the examples that they set. I am wondering if I am going to sit back and if I am going to be passive about my God and my Christ, what kind of example am I setting? Further back than that, if I am going to say, "A little of this and a little of that won't hurt", my example is even worse. And how in the world can I ever attract anybody to Christ and to the church if I am not living up to what I tell them. "Oh, the church is great. Christ is great. He's our only way to salvation." How in the world am I going to convince that person of that if I cheat somebody or backbite them or tell lies about them or whatever else I can figure in my own heart that is what should be done? I really can't. I can't attract anybody to church. I can't even tell them about it and have them not smile behind my face and say, "We know".

I have another scripture to read to you. This is from Mosiah 13:49-55. King Mosiah had been telling his people of the burdens of being a king on whom they placed responsibility for their own failures. "And he told them that these things ought not to be; but that the burden should come upon all the people, that every man might bear his part. And he also unfolded unto them all the disadvantages they labored under, by having an unrighteous king to rule over them; Yea, all his iniquities and abominations, and all the wars, and contentions, and bloodshed, and the stealing, and the plundering, and the committing of whoredoms, and all manner of iniquities, which can not be enumerated, Telling them that these things ought not to be; that they were expressly repugnant to the commandments of God.

"And now it came to pass, after King Mosiah had sent these things forth among the people, they were convinced of the truth of his words. Therefore they relinquished their desires for a king, and became exceedingly anxious that every man should have an equal chance throughout all the land; Yea, and every man expressed a willingness to answer for his own sins."

This was in discussion when none of Mosiah's sons would take upon him the kingship. Mosiah is telling them, "Look, we can appoint you a king, but suppose you get a bad egg. Suppose we appoint a bad egg in the king's slot. How much trouble - how much iniquity that one person might cause! The people were eventually convinced that, "Yes, we really don't want that kind of problem on us". And they made a commitment that they would accept the burden that every man might bear his own part. And they also made another commitment which said, "Every man expressed a willingness to answer for his own sins".

When we come to this point today, it seems to be especially in the youth, the attitude is, "You made me do that!" Or, "The situation demanded that I had to do that. Something outside of me is the cause of my sins - the cause of my problems. If I can't get along at school, it's them. It's always something else or somebody else that causes my problems."

We here must accept the burden and do our part. We have got to fill these seats. We have got to bring our gifts to the feast. We have got to bear our own sins, and say, "Lord, forgive me. I am sorry. I shouldn't have been doing this." We have to recognize - we have to be truthful with ourselves.

If there is any one thing that I can see in today's young people in particular, it is that today's young people are not truthful with themselves. They make statements of their beliefs that they know are not true, but they will say that it is true anyway. Let's not be that way. Let's be truthful with ourselves. We really don't have too many excuses for what we do. We can't blame somebody else. Let's bear our own sins, and let's repent of those sins and give them to Christ, and having repented, do them no more.

The sum of the feast is greater than all the parts. If Ron and Di and Mildred plus me plus Gerry, plus Pat - that's six, really equals probably ten. It's a mathematical problem which we are bearing here. It is kind of along the lines of a perpetual motion machine. Everybody knows that doesn't exist. Right? But I can guarantee you that when we put all of our gifts together, the sum of our parts is going to be greater than each individual. The whole is greater than sum of the parts. Hopefully we understand that when we come together,

I remember going to a camp at Nauvoo when I was fairly young. When we lit one match, the light was not very bright. When you put two matches together it is brighter, isn't it? Then you start a fire and you have a few leaves and put on a piece of wood, and it is brighter. And the more you add, the brighter it gets. And that's the sum of our parts. The Kingdom is what we are looking for. Let's do everything possible. Let's prepare ourselves. Let's look at ourselves and repent of those things that stand between us and Christ. Let us be diligent in preparation.

Afterglow

The congregation sang, "God Be With You 'Til we meet again" and Robert Rolfe, in his benedictory prayer, asked for the presence of our Heavenly Father, as we had just sung, in every life so that when we are tempted to do those things that we know are not right that we will allow Him to be with us. And when we are called upon to do things that we know that we should be doing but are reluctant that, "Your spirit would be with us and your presence also. We ask for your rich blessing on us and the power of your spirit to go with us this week. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen."

Words of Life and Death

Just prior to receiving the vocal ministry of Kathy Myers singing, “Just A Closer Walk With Thee”, High Priest Robert Rolfe introduced his message by giving the setting of his scripture.

Jesus had been accused of doing many mighty miracles by the power of Satan. Like many people today, they could not admit that all of the good things he was doing were of God, or they would defeat their own position of being “theologically and politically correct”. After being charged with obtaining his power from the adversary, Jesus spoke only in parables while in public. The Scripture Reading this morning is part of His reply to accusation.

“Either make the tree good and his fruit good; or else make the corrupt, and his fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by the fruit. And Jesus said, O ye generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of the heart bringeth forth evil things. And again I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

(Matthew 12:28-32)

When we listen to someone who speaks very well, we usually give more credence to what they are saying. Unfortunately, speaking well, does not mean necessarily mean the person is truthful or sincere. Samuel went to Jesse’s house to anoint a king over Israel. He looked at Eliab. Surely, this man is the one. He is the oldest son, he is good looking, tall and strong. But God said to Samuel, “look not on his countenance or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.” (1 Sam. 16:7) We look at the outside, God looks at the heart.

I hope everyone has come this morning to worship. We worship with our mouths; we pray, sing, we recite. But worship is really an act of the heart. Worship is an attitude. Worship is a choice we make. We choose to worship God.

The Lord tells us in Matthew 15:7-9 that we can worship with our lips, but not our hearts. We can move our lips and sing a Hymn, but our hearts are not involved in any way. We can pray with our lips, recite with our lips, but our hearts are not involved. If this is our circumstance, we need to repent.

We need to always remember that God looks at our hearts. When we worship (and at other times) we need to permit God to work in our hearts! I wonder, what is coming from our hearts today? The Word of God says, “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7) What we think, in our hearts, is what will eventually come out of our mouths.

The Scripture lesson this morning said we each bring treasure out of our hearts WHAT kind of treasure are we getting from our hearts? It is really very simple. Jesus says, you can’t get good fruit from an evil tree. Jesus says, out of the goodness of the heart, comes good things. If your heart is evil, good things simply won’t come out of it. My mother would say you “can’t get a silk purse from a sow’s ear”.

Our words produce something everything we speak. What is produced? Do you believe that something is produced every time you speak? It doesn’t matter whether you control your tongue or not, something is produced from your words; every word you

speak.

I had an Uncle George who had a drinking problem. He also had a bad speech impediment. You might think that being under the influence of alcohol and having a speech impediment would cause big problems. But, Uncle George could recite tongue twisters without stuttering. Let’s try one this morning.

Betty Botter bought some butter
But she said the butter’s bitter,
If I put it in my batter
It will make my batter bitter,
But a bit of better butter
Will make my batter better,
So she bought some better butter
Better than the bitter butter
And she put it in her batter
And her batter was not bitter,
So ‘twas better Betty Botter
Bought a bit of better butter.

If you can control your tongue, you will be able to say this tongue-twister without missing a word. Wouldn’t it be great if we could control our tongues in all of our speech. But most of us cannot! The principle is: we produce something every time we speak; good things or evil things. The Word of God says, “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. (James 3:2) James says we can not only can control our bodies, (if we can control our tongue), but we become a perfect man. James, under the influence of the Holy Spirit says we need to control our tongue. But, it is what is in our heart that guards our tongue. If something is in our heart, it will soon come out of our mouth. Every word produces something. Every word is a seed, and each seed produces after its own kind. When we speak words of unhappiness, complaints, strife, hate, etc. we somehow don’t expect these words to produce anything, BUT they do-They bring forth their own fruit. Can we expect anything else?

Paul says that Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. (Romans 10:16) In that sense then, whatever you hear, whatever you are listening to, is producing faith in you, good or bad. If you hear that Wendy’s makes the best burgers and fries, over and over, you not only want the burger and fries, but you believe they are the best. Why? What you believe has its foundation in what you heard. What you continue to hear is most likely what you will believe. Mass media thrives on this principle. Repeat the message over and over.

Faith comes by hearing not only God’s Word, but hearing your own words. This is why it is important to protect and guard your hearing. When you protect your hearing you are protecting your heart. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh”

Whatever you put in your heart, will eventually come out of your mouth. If you put good things in your heart, the promise of God’s word is that it will also produce fruit after its kind.

“So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)

The same is true of us. What a man sows, that he will also reap. Brothers and sisters, let us keep a good flow of God’s word coming from our mouths, and into our ears. Can we say with the Psalmist, “surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life”.

Can we keep saying this and not believe it? Surely not! If we say it (and believe it), we can expect to harvest a blessing of the good things God has promised. God's Word always works. It never fails!

Are you happy this morning with the course of your life? If not, how do we do change that course? When I was a young man, I learned that if you tied a rope around the neck of a cow or a horse, they could easily (and they did) drag me behind them. However, if you put a knot in the rope in the right spot by their nose, I could easily turn the 1600 pound animal and make it do what I wanted. Another uncle I had used a small piece of wood to turn his ships; ships that were driven by V-8 engines. The brother of our Lord tells us why!

"Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouth, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, withersoever the governor listeth." (James 3:3)

The words coming out of our mouth are like the bit in a horses mouth, or the rudder of a great ship. Our lives go wherever our words take them. Let me ask you this morning, how much horsepower does your tongue have? Don't we still measure the power of our cars by the power of a horse? For myself, my tongue must have a lot of "horsepower", as it surely has the power to take control of the course of my life.

The tongue also has the power of life and death. They that love it shall eat the fruit thereof. (Proverbs 18:21) Jesus said we can curse with it or bless with it. (But not both at the same time.) He used the simile of a fountain. Can you get good water and pure water out of the same fountain?

"Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words will never hurt you", goes the nursery rhyme. Mere words are not sufficient to provoke violence. (According to the civil law). But, we all know, through experience, that "mere words" can hurt us. How many of you have been hurt by words? Words are powerful and should not be spoken mindlessly. Our words are like steering wheels, taking our lives wherever we steer with the tongue. I asked you this morning, in what direction is your life going? As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he! In what direction do you want to go?

God's Word bears fruit. Our words also bear fruit. About 180 years ago Joseph Smith chose a new life when he believed and acted upon what James said in 1:5, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God ... but let him ask in faith.." What does this mean? to ask in faith!

FIRST, you must ask in line with God's Word and His kingdom principles.

SECOND, you must believe God is able to do what you ask. "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering; for he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." (James 1:6)

THIRD, you must believe that God will do what you ask, as you are keeping his Will and acting according to his Word.

But, are these three principles enough? I think so! Jesus told all of us a very powerful truth: "For verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and I shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith fulfilled. Therefore I say unto you, Whatsoever things ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive, and ye shall have whatsoever ye ask." Mark 11:25-26 Do you believe this scripture this morning? Have you spoken powerful words like this? Words like this contain the power of life and death.

For the next 30 days, I challenge you to try the power of changing your life by changing your Words. Use the tongue only in blessing God and each other, in creating good fruit, in revealing God to yourselves and others, in planting good seed, in short, creating God's kingdom here on earth. Test God's Word to see if your words also have the power of life and death. I pray that we will all choose to speak---life!

God Has a Plan For You

Micah 6:6-8 was Elder Norman Nelson's choice of scripture with which to introduce his sermon February 25, 2007. "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

"He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Psalm 8:1-9 opened the actual discourse. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

"Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor.

"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet; All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. "O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!"

In the beginning, God created, and He created for His pleasure. But He did it through the works of His Son. Christ was always with God, and they created the heavens and the earth. Then they created all that is on the earth and in the earth and through the earth. Then they created man to be in their likeness and to recognize them as their Father and their God. They created you and me to bring pleasure to them, to worship them, and to become the kind of people, he kind of souls that could live and enjoy being with them. Then they looked down into the future and realized that and knew - well before they started they knew this - man would not always seek to be what they wanted him to be.

Christ to Redeem and Pattern

So they made a plan that Christ would come and redeem and be a pattern for all mankind to follow to be able to come back into His presence because God cannot stand the least degree of sin; and you and I are just not capable of bring that good, are we? So Christ and God made the plan that HE would come and redeem all mankind and make it possible for them to come into the presence of God by Christ coming, living the perfect life and showing us how to live. Then satan came and said, "That's not a good plan. I'll come and save everybody. They won't have a chance. They will just have to serve You and be what we want them to be. Since I am going to do it, I want the glory!

And Christ said, "No! Man has to have a choice!" "You have

to make decisions. I can't have robots. That wouldn't be My plan at all. I want souls who choose to come and follow Me and be My children."

From that time forth, satan began to tell lies. He tells us those things we are supposed to do aren't really important. What we feel in our emotions - in our physical being is all there is. There is no God. There is no satan. There is just you and what you feel like doing! If you don't worship God, so what? But God created you to be His and to be able to return to Him the kind of being that will enjoy His presence.

So, if I choose to do the things that satisfy my physical being only and don't choose to worship God, to give Him the praise that belongs to Him - to give to Him the worship - to give to Him the kind of being that we need to be, then we become God's enemy and worship satan in our individual selves and we have all the chaos that we have in our world today.

Now, God made a plan, and He said, "In that plan you choose to worship Me. You choose to recognize your finite self. You choose to repent of those things that separate you from me - to ask forgiveness and to recognize Jesus Christ as the one who is able to save you from yourself, from satan, from the being that being you tend to be if you don't choose to worship Me, God." And he said, "If you come and ask forgiveness, be baptized in My name, and choose to worship Me continually so I can teach you what you need to know. If you choose to do your things your way only, and don't come to Me for the knowledge, for the worship, for the kind of things you need to know to be My child, you just can't do it that way!" You have to try. You have to have the choice. You have to make the choice to worship God daily. And when you make mistakes, and you will, recognize Jesus Christ as your Savior. Ask His forgiveness and ask Him to help you come back to where you belong.

This is not a pattern that is developed in our church today. This is the pattern that Adam was taught in the very beginning. After Adam and Eve made their mistake, then Cain was the first one that we have a record of - (Cain was not the first son of Adam and Eve. They had many children before Cain and Able), but Cain chose to make a sacrifice according to satan's request. Able made a sacrifice according to God's request. So satan put it into the heart of Cain to want the things that Able had. So he killed him and took them. Isn't that something that still exists in our world? People are still destroying each other for things they don't need but they want just to have power over other people. And the only power they can recognize and come into the presence of God is the power of Jesus Christ to save us from our sins.

We have the story of Enoch whom God called, and he preached and prophesied and brought a bunch of people together and they had a condition which they called Zion because there were no rich and no poor among them. They loved each other. They all worshiped God together. And when they had reached a condition where all of those people were worshipping God and doing the kind of thing that God wanted them to do to become the people He wanted them to be, He took them to Himself. And we think that those people are still in the presence of God. Our goal, our aim is to become people like them who love each other enough to love God enough to worship daily, to help each other in any way we can, not just to have things, although that's a temptation, isn't it? Let's just give everybody what they need and we will have Zion. Not so! That's part of it, but the part of that is merely, since we love each other enough, we will see to it that everybody has what they need. But it's because we love

each other and God and worship Him daily together. This is why Zion comes. We still hope for that condition to exist among us. You know, we have sometimes thought that ought to be here now. But this happens in God's own time. He is the one who causes it to happen, and it is up to us to recognize His presence - recognize the things He is trying to do and to worship Him daily if we are to cause this to happen. But it is in God's time, in His way and not just in ours. When we think that we are going to do it ourselves - we were reading from Jeremiah this morning, weren't we? Jeremiah 17:5-9 tells us what happens when we try to do it alone in contrast to what God wishes for us. "Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm; and the man whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited.

"Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"

Our Search For a City

Remember the statement of Abraham. He constantly sought for a city whose maker was God. That's why he was chosen and why his people were chosen to bring about this condition. We become brothers and sister with them if we choose to worship God only, always - not once in awhile, but always. "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

Come and invite your friends!

**Concert by
Center Place Restoration School
Choirs**

Directed by Dr. Nathan Smith

**Cheville Chapel
Graceland University
Lamoni, Iowa
Sunday, March 18
3 p.m.**

**The choirs will also be singing at the church
service at the Church of Jesus Christ,
Mount Ayr Restoration Branch
Sunday, March 18
Pot Luck Dinner Following the Service**

News and Notes

Fasting Weekend Postponed

The fasting weekend scheduled for February 16-18 was postponed because of deaths in families of the congregation.

Jan Jordison's mother, Sister Avis White, died February 13, just 20 days after her one hundredth birthday. Her funeral was held at Carson-Speaks Funeral Home near the Auditorium in Independence, Missouri Saturday, February 17.

Paul Loving, Valle Smith's father, died Saturday, February 17 after a long illness with cancer and strokes. His funeral was held at the Stone Church in Independence, Mo. on Saturday, February 24.

Ricky Leonard's mother, Rose Mary Leonard, died February 19 of heart disease. Before her death she had a vision of Jesus welcoming her. Her funeral was Wednesday, February 21, at the Methodist Church in Clearfield.

The fasting weekend will be held March 23-25.

Moonlight Club Entertains

Through the efforts of Michael Jordison, Cheryl Phipps and their associates, the Moonlight Club was established in the home of Ron and Di Smith for the congregation to enjoy. The club was a feature of the progressive dinner planned as a celebration of Valentines Day.

Our evening began at the home of Pat and Gerry Bolingbroke where we enjoyed hors d'oeuvres. From there we crossed the road to Ron and Di Smith's home where we ate our main course and watched while people bearing the names of well known performers of an earlier day sang and joked and otherwise entertained us from a stage equipped with professional lighting and sound. Leaving "the Club", we gathered at the home of Cathy and Norman Nelson for dessert.

Forty Days of Preparation Outlined

The Spiritual Preparation Committee has prepared another suggested list of scriptures for daily reading during the forty days that precede the Spring Conferences of the Restoration Elders and the Restoration Branches the first week in April. The readings are to be accompanied by fasting and daily prayer for the Lord's presence in those Conferences that we may be united as one as our Savior has told us we must become to be His people. The theme of the preparation is "One Fold, One Shepherd", related to John 10:1-18.

The Spiritual Preparation Committee was formed at the request of the Restoration Patriarchs and consists of High Priests of whom our own Robert Rolfe is one. High Priest Paul Gage prepared this list. Copies of the list may be obtained at the church, at www.conferenceofbranches.org, or will be sent on request to any one interested in participating. Call 641-784-7659.

St. Patrick's Day Family Night

Friday, March 17

5:30 p.m.

Ron and Di Smith Home in Lamoni

Movie and Light Dinner

See the News and Notes for details

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

News and Notes

Branch business meeting

A short business meeting of the Mount Ayr branch will be held Sunday, March 11, following the preaching service to elect delegates to the Conference of Restoration Branches and look over proposed legislation.

Spring Gathering Attended

Robert Rolfe, the Galusha family and Mildred Smith attended the Spring Gathering at Colburn road Restoration branch on February 23-24. The Friday evening sermon, preached by Bishop Carl Cedarstrom, was a powerful spiritual plea for the Restoration branches to become "one" as the Lord requires if satan is to be overcome and the Lord's purpose in His church fulfilled. Brother Cedarstrom's analogy of Admiral Lord Nelson of the English navy's charge to his officers as they faced Napoleon Bonaparte's navy to remember "Yonder is the enemy!" will not soon be forgotten by those who heard.

The Succession Committee's report was reviewed and discussed. The 19-page document is available at the above web site or from one of us. Pending resolutions were reviewed and suggestions were heard by the officers to consolidate similar ones and eliminate those already cared for in previous legislation.

The Spring Conference of branches is to be held the first week of April in conjunction with the Elders Conference. Both conferences will convene at the Center Place Restoration School/ Waldo Branch building opening with a Sacrament Service at 10 a.m. April 1. The Conference of Elders ends at noon April 4 and the

Conference of Branches begins after lunch that day. There will be an Easter service with the Waldo Congregation on April 8.

Details of the conference and materials that may be helpful to those who participate may be found at www.conferenceofbranches.org. Delegates from the Mount Ayr congregation will be chosen at a business session to be announced.

CPRS Choir to Minister

March 17-18 the congregation will host some 30 members of the Center Place Restoration School's Concert choir and their director, Dr. Nathan Smith.

On Saturday evening the choir will attend the concert of "Three Men and a Tenor" at Graceland University. They will be housed at homes of the Mount Ayr congregation in Lamoni and will minister in the morning services at Mount Ayr on Sunday. The congregation will share a pot luck dinner with them after the services.

The choir will then proceed to Graceland University where they will give a concert at the Cheville Chapel at 3 p.m.

St. Patrick's Day Movie Night Planned

A St. Patrick's Day movie night will be held Saturday, March 17, at 5:30 p.m. for a light supper and watching the moving "Facing the Giants."

Those who come are asked to bring an appetizer or dessert. Sloppy Joe sandwiches will be provided. Since it is St. Patrick's Day, please try to bring an appetizer or desserts that are green or partially green.