



# Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch



# NEWSLETTER

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## News & Notes

### Valentine's Party

The evening of February 13<sup>th</sup> thirty-seven met at Ron and Di Smith's home for a Valentine's Party. Jan Jordison, our Fellowship Coordinator, involved her Sunday School Class in making decorations and individual Valentines for each person with special wording on the back of each one listing what they liked about that person. Each card was different. They also arrived early to decorate. After eating pizza and dessert, we watched the movie "Uncle Nino", which reinforced the importance of family.

### Priesthood Retreat

The Geneseo, Illinois Priesthood retreat has ben rescheduled for March 18-20. Register with Mark Deitrick at fieldsarewhite@hotmail.com.

### B.O.M. Men's Retreat

Men and boys ages 12 and older are invited to attend a non-denominational Book of Mormon Retreat at the Pleasanton Community of Christ church April 8-10. Details are still being worked out. See Michael Jordison or Mark Hensley for further information or sleeping arrangements.

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# Pastoral Considerations

by Sherman Phipps

My wife Cheryl and I have a chocolate Labrador who became a member of our household five or six years ago. Her owners were unable to obtain papers to verify her pure-breed status so they decided she was of no use to them as a “non” pure-bred. She was several years old when she became a member of our household and she already had a name, “Emma.”

I was the one who wanted Emma, and Cheryl reluctantly consented to our taking her in. However, Emma, from the very first day in our home, spent most of her time with Cheryl who is home during the day on a regular basis. Cheryl is usually the one who feeds her, lets her out and back in, talks to her and pets her during the day. In no time at all it was clear to me that Emma had become attached to Cheryl. Wherever Cheryl is, Emma is usually close at hand or more likely underfoot! Emma still comes and lays by my feet too if I am sitting and reading, but she prefers to be where she can still keep track of Cheryl’s whereabouts, even when she is with me. Cheryl has become Emma’s master.

One day recently Emma was laying in the living room where I was reading while Cheryl was in another room. Cheryl said Emma’s name and Emma, who appeared to be sleeping, became instantly alert. Her ears elevated and she immediately rose to her feet and started for the room where Cheryl was located.

It struck me that it would be a wonderful thing if I could learn to be so tuned in to and responsive to the One who I claim is my Master. However, I suspect that there are many occasions when I, and perhaps you, lay unmoving and asleep while my Master, Lord and Savior shouts my name and begs me to come and be fed or lay at His feet where I could be safe and secure. Oh that we would truly claim Jesus as our Master, love Him and be ever so sensitive and responsive to Him as Emma is to Cheryl.

Our Heavenly Father longs to claim us and provide for our every need and to provide a home for us. He has told us He would do so if we would just acknowledge Him and obey Him.

*D & C 59:5b; Ecclesiastes 12:13;  
see also D & C 56:1b, 2a; 58:6g, h and i*

## ARE YOU WHEAT FOR CHRIST?



Elder H. Alan Smith

*Mount Ayr, Iowa*

February 6, 2011

“Good Morning. I’d like to thank Sherm for the preparation he has made this morning, for Pat and Rob for their music, for each of you as you have come to the table of the Lord. My prayer is that there may be something that I can say to you this morning that will be a blessing to you as well.

“For some reason, the parable of the wheat and the tares has been running through my mind recently and so I did a little bit of research about it and looked at the scriptures that talk about that parable. I hope maybe there is something here this morning as I share this with you that may minister to you as well.

“I’d like to read from Matthew 13:22-29. This is the parable Jesus is teaching.

*‘Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man who sowed good seed in his field; But while he slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst*



*not thou sow good seed in thy field? whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. And the servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the wheat into my barn; and the tares are bound in bundles to be burned.'*

"Jesus told this parable right after he told the parable of the sower. Jesus said the sower went out in the field and cast his grain around. It fell in different places and had different results. There was some that fell on the wayside and the birds ate it. There was some that fell on stony places and it sprang up but was scorched by the sun and withered away. There was other that fell among the thorns and was choked out. Still other of the seed fell on good ground and grew a hundred fold, or sixty fold or thirty fold. Then Jesus went on to explain that the word that fell on the wayside was like the people who hear the word of the kingdom but don't understand it. The wicked one catches away that which was sown in their heart. The word that fell on the stony places was like people who heard the word, received it with joy, but didn't let it take root in themselves. When tribulation or persecution arose because of the word, they were offended. The seed which fell among the thorns was like those who had the care of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word out of their lives and they became unfruitful. The seed that fell on the good ground were those who hear and understand and endure and bring forth good fruit in their lives.

"This analogy may be something like a quote Valle and I read at the DaVinci exhibit in Des Moines yesterday. Leonardo DaVinci said there are three classes of people in the world: Those who see, those who see when they are shown, and those who don't see. So just like here, as the word is spread into people's lives, they respond in different ways.

"The field that we are talking about in the parable of the wheat and tares, however, is all good ground. What's sown there is going to grow. It is not at the wayside, it is not the stony places, it is good ground. Somehow some counterfeit seed is planted and it grows up with the same kind of strength of that of those who

follow the Lord. The only difference is in the fruit that is born.

"I'd like to start by looking at the parable story itself, then look at the meaning of the parable as shared by Jesus and as shared in the Doctrine and Covenants in revelation through Joseph Smith Jr."

### **Wheat Or Darnel**

"I did a little study about what Jesus must have been talking about when he talked about the tares. The tare is thought to be darnel, which is a rye grass that looks much like wheat in the early stages of growth. In fact there was a Roman law that prohibited sowing darnel among the wheat of an enemy. This was not something was unheard of, that someone would come in and sow bad seed over the land that you had sowed your good seed in. This story was something that the people of Jesus' time would have been familiar with.

"Darnel, which is also known as cockle, is an annual plant. The plant stem can grow up to three feet tall (about the same height as wheat), but it has purple grain. It grows plentifully in Syria and Israel, the same production zones as wheat. The similarity between these two plants is so extensive that in some regions cockle is referred to as *true wheat*. It bears a close resemblance to wheat until the ear appears. The ears on the real wheat are so heavy that they make the entire plant droop downward when the heads of the wheat are full. I darnel, on the other hand, the ears are light, so the plant continues to stand up straight. The wheat will also appear brown when ripe, whereas the darnel is black.

"If one tried to pull the darnel out of the wheat early, the root structure is not like a carrot where if you just pull one plant, you just get that one tap root and nothing else is harmed around it. Darnel has a root system that grows wide, so if you try to pull up the tare early, you would destroy other wheat that was around it. But if you wait until the harvest comes, until it is fully developed, you can pick out the tare which is standing tall and a different color from the wheat which is bent over a little bit.

"The darnel name expresses the weed's characteristic that if you eat the darnel's seed, it makes you feel like you have been poisoned with drunkenness and can even cause death. While the wheat's fruit brings us life, the counterfeit darnel disorients us and can lead to death. So

when Jesus was sharing this parable, it wasn't just a parable about wheat with a few weeds in it. The disciples would have understood how this parable could have deeper meaning.

"Now that we have a better understanding of what is being talked about in the physical story of the wheat and the tares, let's look at the lesson Jesus was trying to teach by it.

"Jesus was asked by the disciples what this parable meant. Jesus explained it to them in Matthew 13:

*'Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house. And his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man. (In other words, Jesus.) The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked. The enemy that sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world, or the destruction of the wicked. The reapers are the angels, or the messengers sent of heaven. As, therefore, the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world, or the destruction of the wicked.'*

*'For in that day, before the Son of Man shall come, he shall send forth his angels and messengers of heaven. And they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them out among the wicked; and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. For the world shall be burned with fire. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.'* (Matthew 13:35-45)

"The crops are people. People who are wheat are like the children of the kingdom. People who are tares are those who are children of the wicked who have let Satan take control of their lives. Through history, the Christian church has decided to do the separation of the wheat and the tares by themselves and not wait until the grain grows to show its real fruit. People have not waited for the angels to do the separation of the good from the evil. In the reformation period of time, the reformers took this to mean that they shouldn't be literally burning those that others felt were not wheat. If you remember the "heretics" or the "witches," or the different ones the church at that time destroyed as they tried



to root out the tares themselves. The reformers felt this parable spoke to them, that things should be handled in a different way, recognizing that the scriptures say the forces doing the final harvest and messengers of heaven and not each of us deciding who is a wheat and who is a tare.”

### What Kind of Fruit Are We Exhibiting?

“In terms of individuals and as we think of what tares might be like, there is this definition of tares in II Nephi 11:157. *‘For assuredly as the Lord liveth, they shall see that the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off; and they that make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of nought.’*”

“Do we scorn others in our field? Do we focus on other people’s iniquity. It says if we do, we will be cut off. Do we make a man an offender for a word? Do we just look for them to say something like some do with our politicians sometimes, when if you said one wrong word, we jump on it. Do we lay a snare for them, hoping that we will catch them at what they are doing wrong? Do we turn aside the just for some little difference or disagreement that we have? Jesus’ parable was telling us that we need to be careful as we grow in the fields of the world. We are not to be quick to judge the plants that are growing around us until we can see the fruit which they are bringing forth.

“Do you recognize that the wheat with the greatest fruit is the most humble? The heavier the fruit, the more bent the head of the plant. The more fruit you have, the more humble you end up being when it is time for the harvest. If we are stiff-necked and prideful instead of humble, when the harvest comes we will not be part of the good harvest. Everyone growing in this good ground will be harvested, it’s just what is done with us at that point that will be important for us.

“The Doctrine and Covenants takes this parable and broadens it in terms of churches instead of just individuals.

*‘Verily thus saith the Lord unto you, my servants, concerning the parable of the wheat and of the tares: Behold, verily I say that the field was the world, and the apostles were the sowers of the seed; and after they have fallen asleep, the great persecutor of the church, the apostate, the*

*whore, even Babylon, that maketh all nations to drink of her cup, in whose hearts the enemy, even Satan, sitteth to reign; behold, he soweth the tares, wherefore the tares choke the wheat and drive the church into the wilderness. But, behold, in the last days, even now, while the Lord is beginning to bring forth the word, and the blade is springing up and is yet tender; behold, verily I say unto you, The angels are crying unto the Lord day and night, who are ready and waiting to be sent forth to reap down the fields; but the Lord saith unto them, Pluck not up the tares while the blade is yet tender (for verily your faith is weak), lest you destroy the wheat also; therefore let the wheat and tares grow together until the harvest is fully ripe; then ye shall first gather out the wheat from among the tares, and after the gathering of the wheat, behold, and lo, the tares are bound in bundles, and the field remaineth to be burned. Therefore, thus saith the Lord unto you, with whom the priesthood hath continued through the lineage of your fathers, for ye are lawful heirs, according to the flesh, and have been hid from the world with Christ in God: therefore your life and the priesthood hath remained, and must needs remain, through you and your lineage, until the restoration of all things spoken by the mouths of all the holy prophets since the world began. Therefore, blessed are ye if ye continue in my goodness, a light unto the Gentiles, and through this priesthood, a savor unto my people Israel. The Lord hath said it. Amen. (D&C 84:1a-4)*

“Wheat with the greatest fruit is the most humble.”

“In my reading, the priesthood is an important function of his wheat. They have a responsibility to continue in God’s goodness, and if they will, they can help be a light to the Gentiles and a sweet blessing on Israel. But they need to continue in their function and not the function of being those who do the binding up of the tares.

“In section 85 it reinforces the thought that the tares are more than just individuals, but can be churches or movements.

*‘...That great church, the mother of abominations, that made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, that persecuteth the saints of God, that shed their blood: she who sitteth upon many waters, and upon the islands of the*

*sea; behold, she is the tares of the earth, she is bound in bundles, her bands are made strong, no man can loose them; therefore, she is ready to be burned.’ (D&C 85:26b-c)*

“This is also mentioned again in Doctrine and Covenants 98.

*‘I will show unto you wisdom in me concerning all the churches, inasmuch as they are willing to be guided in a right and proper way for their salvation, that the work of the gathering together of my Saints may continue, that I may build them up unto my name upon holy places; for the time of harvest is come, and my word must needs be fulfilled. Therefore, I must gather together my people according to the parable of the wheat and the tares, that the wheat may be secured in the garners to possess eternal life, and be crowned with celestial glory when I shall come in the kingdom of my Father; to reward every man according as his work shall be; while the tares shall be bound in bundles, and their bands made strong, that they may be burned with unquenchable fire.’ (D&C 98: 9a-c)*

“It’s not our job to be tearing up other churches or other groups on the Restoration level or a wider level. A lot of the wheat out there are willing to be guided in a right and proper way to salvation, the scriptures tell us, allowing their fruit to tell whether they will be harvested for the Lord or harvested and destroyed.

“II Nephi 12 talks about the churches as organizations and how we need to be careful.

*‘For it shall come to pass in that day, that the churches which are built up, and not unto the Lord, when the one shall say unto the other, Behold, I, I am the Lord’s; and the other shall say, I, I am the Lord’s. And thus shall every one say, that hath built up churches, and not unto the Lord; And they shall contend one with another; and their priests shall contend one with another; and they shall teach with their learning, and deny the Holy Ghost, which giveth utterance. And they deny the power of God, the Holy One of Israel; and they say unto the people, Hearken unto us, and hear ye our precept; For behold, there is no God today, for the Lord and the Redeemer hath done his work, and he hath given his power unto men. Behold, hearken ye unto my precept: if they shall say there is a miracle wrought, by the hand of the Lord, believe it not; for this day he is not a God of miracles; he hath done his work.*



*Yea, and there shall be many which shall say, Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die: and it shall be well with us. And there shall also be many which shall say, Eat, drink, and be merry; nevertheless, fear God, he will justify in committing a little sin: yea, lie a little, take the advantage of one because of his words, dig a pit for thy neighbor; there is no harm in this. And do all these things, for tomorrow we die; and if it so be that we are guilty, God will beat us with a few stripes, and at last we shall be saved in the kingdom of God. Yea, and there shall be many which shall teach after this manner, false, and vain, and foolish doctrines, and shall be puffed up in their hearts, and shall seek deep to hide their counsels from the Lord; and their works shall be in the dark; and the blood of the saints shall cry from the ground against them. (II Nephi 12:3-12)*

“We know in the last days that there will be many that will be working to lead us away from what God wants us to do. But the scriptures tell us that they will grow together, and we will know by the fruits that are shown what their true root is.

“So what is the lesson for us today from the parable of the wheat and the tares. I think the lesson of these parables for our life is that we need to focus on being good wheat and helping others to grow up as good wheat as well. We’re not to focus on other groups or other people to try to tear out the tares where we find them. We need to focus on the gospel of Christ and share the words of eternal life and make invitations not on what other groups do wrong, but what God wants us to do right. When we focus on Christ and what He wants us to do, we can bear good fruit and be his wheat, helping others to find the gospel that they can grow to be good wheat as well. We cannot suppose that we are the angels of the Lord, ready to do the selection between those who are wheat and those who are tares. We find this too much among us today.”

### **God is a God of Miracles**

“Our daughter Cara was worrying about the church and some other things going on yesterday when she went to her normal reading of the Book of Mormon. She began reading where it talks about the sealed portion of the plates. II Nephi 11:143 *‘Touch not the things which are sealed, for I will bring them forth in mine own due time for I will show unto the children of men that I am able to do mine*

*own work... then shalt thou seal up the book again and hide it up unto me, that I may preserve the words which thou hast not read until I shall see fit in Mine own time to reveal all things unto the children of men. For behold, I Am God and I Am a God of miracles and I will show unto the world that I am the same yesterday, today and forever; and I work not among the children of men, save it be according to their faith.’*

“And this was her testimony: ‘I know the reason I often get discouraged is because I’m looking to man to figure out the way out of the situation we are in, but I am reminded that God IS a God of miracles. That he is able to use even difficult situations to bring about good. That his understanding is far greater than my understanding (or anyone I know), and that often he works to show that He is able to accomplish his work. And what a blessing if I am able to be used by him in accomplishing that. And what a call to be listening to His voice and not discouraged by my own thoughts, or the voice of others or the world around me.

‘I think this morning God knew I needed to be reminded that God can do His own work. That He IS a God of miracles; that he knows what is happening (the sealed portion reveals all things from the foundation of the world until the end and will be read on the housetops by the power of Christ) and that my faith and therefore my works need to reflect my belief in him as a God of miracles.’

“If we’re going to be wheat, our focus needs to be on God and finding the place that he has for us to work, and not focusing on trying to catch someone else stumbling, unless we are trying to actually help them and lift them up.”

### **Called to Be Wheat for the Kingdom**

“I was at the press convention Thursday and Friday of this last week and heard a talk given by Aaron Thomas. He is the son of Aplington-Parkersburg high school’s football coach Ed Thomas, who was killed by one of his former football players not too long ago. Ed came from a family of alcoholics. His dad was an alcoholic and his grandfather was an alcoholic. They were mean fighters. If you grew up in his hometown and you said the name Thomas, the first thing that came to your mind was a drunk who was always fighting with people. But Ed decided that

he wanted to change the way people would think about the name Thomas. He determined that he was never going to drink, because if he didn’t, then he wouldn’t end up like his father and his grandfather. He wanted to be wheat. He said the greatest gift God has given us is the gift of choice. No matter what circumstances we come from, no matter who we’ve been, we have the choice to make change. We have the choice to be wheat or tare.

“Ed went to Aplington/Parkersburg and coached football for thirty-five or thirty-six years. He tried to make a difference in the lives of the students and athletes he came in contact with. He had a wonderful coaching career. Aplington/Parkersburg football was known around the state. Four of his players went on to be professional football players. He had the opportunity to go on and coach at a higher level. But he chose Aplington/Parkersburg to be his home, and he wanted to just stay there and coach football at that level.

“Remember they had the big tornado that came through Parkersburg and destroyed the school and a lot of the town, including the Thomas’ home? But Ed was one of the leaders of the community who said we are going to build back. There were 100 days before the first day of the football season and he said, ‘We’re going to play football on our football field.’ People from all over the country came and helped them clean up and get the football field rebuilt. The National Guard, some of the same ones who had been to help in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina, said what a difference it was in Parkersburg. In Louisiana, people were always coming up to them and saying, ‘We want you to do this for us,’ or ‘We need you to do that,’ and ‘Why don’t we have this yet?’ The Guard said in Parkersburg the people were saying, ‘We’re glad you’re here. We’re sure we can find you something to do, but if not, please get out of the way. We’ve got work to do here.’

“Ed and his boys were helping a neighbor finish their house up before Ed’s own was done. That was the way it was in the community. So, after this season was over, kids were working out in the weight room one day when a former football player was released from a mental health facility. The former player came and shot Ed seven times and killed him. Ed’s wife was the first medical responder on the scene. The sheriff had gone in first and told



her not to go in.

“The Thomas family had a press conference that night. They were good friends with the Becker family, whose son had done the killing. His father had been one of Ed’s football players, and Ed knew them very well. Aaron, who was the spokesman for the family at the press conference, said, ‘When you are praying for our family, be sure to pray for the Becker family, too. They need your support.’

“The Becker family wasn’t sure what life was going to be like after their son had killed the favorite person of everybody in the town. But their mailbox filled up with cards of support from the community. The Thomas family invited them to join them at the family visitation. People asked Aaron, ‘How could you do that? How could your family respond that way?’ Aaron said, ‘My father’s life was built on faith, family and football. But faith was always first. If we hadn’t learned that lesson from him, and had acted in some other way, then all of his life would have been in vain.’

“Ed Thomas had won an Espy (ESPN) Arthur Ash award for someone who has done good. In a feature done as part of the awards show, over and over again, the family shared how their faith was so important to them and made such a difference in their life. Aaron said it again, ‘We couldn’t have responded the way we did if it wasn’t for our faith in Jesus Christ.’

“Their family stood up as wheat in a time of trouble. We are called to be wheat for the kingdom, focusing on living our lives so our fruit will show we are workmen that need not to be ashamed. We are here this morning to remember the call of Christ to us to bring forth good fruit, to stand for him in humility with so much fruit that our stems bow down. Then we will be gathered into the kingdom and not have to be one of the tares that has to be burned to cleanse the way for His coming.

“God can and will do his work. He asks us to live our lives in covenant with Him, and to listen so we can find the ways to help bring others to Him and share in the joy of knowing we have made a difference in their lives. He wants us to be wheat. We’re not to worry about the tares that are growing up around us unless there is some way we can use His spirit and His direction to help that tare make a choice to be a wheat as well.

“May God bless you and hopefully there has been something this morning that has given you a desire to be a wheat for Him.”



## DO YOU KNOW THE LOVE OF GOD?



High Priest Sherman Phipps  
Lamoni, Iowa  
February 13, 2011

Gordon Winkler, who presided, read 1 John 4:7-11 as a Call to Worship. ‘Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

‘He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.’

### The Love of God, Most Desirable

“I am going to read the scripture this morning from 1<sup>st</sup> Nephi 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter beginning about verse 41. Some of this I’ll read and some of it I’ll paraphrase.

Probably many of you are familiar with this. These are the words of Lehi and he’s speaking to his sons. ‘And it came to pass that while my father tarried in the wilderness he spake unto us, saying, Behold, I have dreamed a dream; or in other words, I have seen a vision. And behold, because of the thing which I have seen, I have reason to rejoice in the Lord because of [two of my sons], for I have reason to suppose that they, and also many of their seed, will be saved. But behold, [as to a couple of his other sons] I fear exceedingly because of you; for behold, methought I saw in my dream a dark and dreary wilderness.

‘And it came to pass that I saw a man, and he was dressed in a white robe; and he came and stood before me. And it came to pass that he spake unto me, and bade me follow him. And it came to pass that as I followed him, I beheld myself that I was in a dark and dreary [place]. And after I had traveled for the space of many hours in darkness I began to pray unto the Lord, that he would have mercy on me according to the multitude of his tender mercies. And it came to pass after I had prayed unto the Lord, I beheld a large and spacious field.

‘And it came to pass that I beheld a tree, whose fruit was desirable to make one happy. And it came to pass that I did go forth and partake of the fruit thereof; and I beheld that it was most sweet above all that I ever before tasted. Yea, and I beheld that the fruit thereof was white, to exceed all the whiteness that I had ever seen. And as I partook of the fruit thereof, it filled my soul with exceeding great joy; Wherefore I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; for I knew that it was desirable above all other fruit.’ (41-53)

“Some of you weren’t here this morning when Pat (Bolingbroke) shared for Family Worship. I wish everybody could have heard that. You have also heard Brother Gordon’s brief comments here this morning. I hope you did hear his words. They were, to me anyhow, significant. As I read this scripture, just the beginning where Lehi talks about his vision, something struck me there. I hope you will all go back and read this whole thing again (Lehi’s vision). I have read it a lot of times but when I read it again this weekend, I realized how much I had forgotten, how much more there was in there. The thing that struck me with regards to what I would like to share here today, I hope, was this last verse where he



said, *'I began to be desirous that my family should partake of it also; for I knew that it was desirable above all other fruit.'*

"As I stand here this morning I want to tell you that by the great mercy of God I have tasted that fruit, and I know that some of you have also. Lehi goes on and talks about the meaning of the vision and he identifies this fruit as being the love of God, and this love of God that he's talking about is, in fact, most desirable above all other things. When you feel it and experience it through the power of the Holy Ghost, the thing you most want to do then is to share it with those that you love.

"It's hard sometimes to speak when one of your kids is in the congregation. I thought of that because in raising my children, one of the things I most wanted to share with them was the love of God. Jenni may say, 'I didn't know that. He never acted like that.' You folks here today may have that same reaction. You may say, 'What? He doesn't act like that.' If I knew I was going to die today, then I would most want to share with you God's love. One of the reasons I felt like what Gordon said earlier was significant was that he said that when things get kind of complicated then he likes to find some way to simply them, and in doing that he went to the scriptures and talked about God's love.

"Well, that's kind of where I think we are at today. Things have gotten kind of complicated and that's very frustrating for a lot of people, but somehow today I want to assure you, if the Lord will allow me to, that we don't need to worry about that. All of the things that we look at and say, "oh my goodness! What's happened? What is happening?" That's not our battle. That's God's battle. All of the conditions in the world, the condition of the church, all of these things are in His hands. What we need to worry about is what is it that He has called each one of us individually to do and are we doing that?

"I want to read some more of Lehi's experience. Probably most of you know this but Lehi had this vision and then he shared it with his sons. His son Nephi in particular said he wanted to know what this vision meant and so he went to the Lord and asked the Lord to show him what the vision meant. Then he had quite an experience with it also. This now is addressing Nephi's part. *'And it came to pass after I, Nephi, having heard all the words of my father concerning the things*

*which he saw in a vision; And also the things which he spake by the power of the Holy Ghost; which power he received by faith on the Son of God; And the Son of God was the Messiah who should come; I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost,'* (1 Nephi 3:23-26)

"I hope that when we are done here today that you will be like Nephi, you will want to know the truth of these things. You'll want to know if I just made this up about the love of God and how it is, in fact, the most desirous thing or whether Lehi or Nephi made it up. I hope that you will go from here and say, 'I want to know the truth of this. I want to see the truth of this.' I want to see and hear and know

**"As I stand here this morning I want to tell you that by the great mercy of God I have tasted that fruit..."**

these things by the power of the Holy Ghost, *'which is the gift of God unto all who diligently seek Him as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men;'* [and of course that's going to happen again] *And the way is prepared [for all men] For he is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. And the way is prepared from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him; For he that diligently seeketh shall find; And the mysteries of God shall be unfolded unto them by the power of the Holy Ghost, as well in this time as in times of old; And as well in times of old as in times to come; Wherefore, the course of the Lord is one eternal round. Therefore remember, O man, for all thy doings thou shalt be brought into judgment.'* (27-33)

The scripture says, *'remember, O man, for all thy doings thou shalt be brought into judgment.'* It also talks about how God is the same in one generation as the next. With Him all things are one eternal round. So no matter what else is going on in the world or in the church or anywhere else, each one of you is called by God to a specific task and that's what your focus should be. That's what my focus should be and if we do our part, the scriptures are very clear that God will do His part and that nothing will go undone."

### Have You Tasted the Love of God?

"As I considered what I might share with you this morning, I wondered how many of us have, in fact, tasted the fruit of that tree that Lehi saw in his vision and Nephi also saw, the true pure love of God. I don't know how to express it so I am hoping that you have felt it, that you've tasted it, and if you haven't that you will. That you will take time to let the Lord share this with you. If you know the vision you know that the Lord wants all of His children to come unto Him and to taste of this fruit. You also know that once that happened then there began to be all these other things trying to distract individual away from the fruit. The world was calling to those who had already tasted of this fruit, making fun of them and trying to get them to turn away from the fruit and to come back out away from it. When they did that, and there were many who did, in fact most of them did, then they were lost in the darkness, this same darkness that Lehi talked about.

"I am standing here looking particularly at the young people and I am wondering if you have tasted the love of God? Have you felt His spirit in your heart? I am curious standing here today if we have felt His Spirit, if we know Him and know that He works with us and will work with us. (Sherman asked various young people sitting in the congregation this question.) I don't necessarily want to put you on the spot, but I do in a way. I want to put everybody in this room on the spot because He says He's the same yesterday, today and forever, and so if we haven't felt His love or tasted of it or we have tasted of it and then we've drifted away and need to find our way back, He's there and He's willing and ready to help us do that. He never changes and it's His desire to share this love with us.

"Every time I have to preach I am reminded of the scriptures that say, "preach nothing save it were repentance and faith on the Lord who redeemed His people." Do you know how many times we are told in the scriptures to preach repentance, faith, baptism and obedience? You know we were here last Sunday and we partook of the Communion and renewed our covenant with the Lord. Do we know what that meant? Did we really renew our covenant with the Lord? Did we really come before Him repentant and humble with a determination to obey His commandments? Why would that be



important? As I prepared for this morning, I particularly had the young people in mind so maybe the rest of you will just have to listen in. Why would it be important for us to learn humility and repentance? Why would it be important to obey His commandments?

“Let me jump to the end here for a minute. I won’t try to go through all of the reasons we need to be humble and obey because first of all I am not capable of doing that and you’ve probably heard a lot of it. The bottom line is what I read here earlier that is that all of us at the end of this physical life will stand before God to be judged. I am not wanting to get into this with the idea of saying, “You are going to have to pay for what you did.” Every one of us is going to have to stand before the Lord and be judged and what He wants for us is to taste and to receive His love that we were just talking about. He doesn’t want any one of us to be lost. He doesn’t want any one of us to have to go and be cast off into the darkness, separated from His love and His light, but it is up to us. We choose and that’s why it’s important for us to obey His commandments because it’s by obeying those commandments that we can come into His presence. If I have read the scriptures correctly, it is by obeying the commandments that we learn righteousness and have the opportunity to become righteous. It’s necessary for us to do that in order to come back into Christ’s presence with joy.

“What do we have to do as a people to really find burning within us a desire to obey His commandments and to have His Spirit to be with us? Do we believe that there really is a Spirit of God that works with us? I just read in here that there is and the scriptures tell us over and over about the Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit, but do we believe that? Are there things right now that we should be experiencing and be blessed with if we are obeying the commandments and trying to be repentant and be faithful and humble? Since we are talking about the tree of life which is the love of God (and since Valentine’s Day is coming up), we are told over and over in the scriptures that the way you can identify God’s people is that they are a people who love one another. One of the key

identifying marks of His people is that they love one another. Should there be something different about our lives? Is there something we can look to and expect and depend upon if we truly believe in Christ and claim Him, if we are baptized and repentant and remain faithful to the end? Should that really change what goes on in our lives?

“I don’t know why but one of the things I felt like I wanted to talk about this morning, and I mentioned this when Bob and I were talking yesterday that we have some very special promises made to us if we will do the things that God has asked us to do, such as repent, be baptized and be obedient. One of the things I was impressed with and I don’t know how this will strike you, but we have available to us if we truly are His people certain powers that we need in these last days.”

#### **The Devil Wants Us Distracted**

“Let me back up for a minute. Do we really believe there is a God? I am also wondering when I ask this question why do you believe that? What’s that based on? (Ron Smith and Norman Nelson shared their thoughts.) Especially for you young people this is what I want you to know. You can know Him. You can see Him the same as Norman has. You can see Him the same as the Brother of Jared if you really believe in Him. This is possible and this is something that you **need** in order to deal with the life that lies ahead of you.

“Pat (Bolingbroke) read part of a story in our worship this morning about a man’s spiritual experience where he experienced hell. One of the things that this man said was that the Lord told him twice that He would return very, very soon. There are things that are going to happen before He returns again and they are laid out in the scriptures. There’s going to be a lot of turmoil and the reason these things will happen is because Satan wants to distract everybody and turn us all to contend with one another. He doesn’t want anybody saved. This is where I started to go a little bit ago with this obeying the commandments. Why is it important? Because we will be judged and only God has something good to give us. He’s the only one who has this love within Him and

wants to share it with us. The adversary wants to destroy us. Now that’s the other side of the question. If we believe in God, is there really an adversary? I am going to tell you that I believe there is an adversary just the same as I believe there is a God because of my own experiences. I have felt this love of God. I have tasted it. I am not talking about when we go to meetings sometimes and we feel good about the meeting. I am talking about an experience where the Lord took me and let me taste of this fruit, this love of God. On the other hand, I have also had an experience where Satan overcame me with darkness and there was nothing that I could do about it. It was probably the most frightening thing that ever happened to me. The thing that dispersed the darkness was a very small kind act of love on the part of somebody else. So they are both real, God and Satan. Because time is becoming short the adversary is becoming bolder. He doesn’t want us to taste that love. He doesn’t want us to bask in the light of God. He wants us to be destroyed the same as he will be. He wants us to give up our belief in God, in Zion, in truth, etc.”

#### **God’s Power of Deliverance**

“We have available to us certain powers. I don’t know if that’s the right way to say it or not. The one that really rested on my mind as I tried to prepare for this morning was the availability to us of God’s angels and other servants who are upon the earth. I thought about the fact that the Three Nephites and John the Beloved and others are still here upon the earth. They still walk upon the earth and have power to reveal themselves to us. They are still available to bring ministry to His people. I don’t know if you believe that or not. I do. I believe it’s true. I think it’s important for the young people as well as all of us who are older to remember these things. We need to remember that when we’re out supposedly alone that we’re not alone. When we are struggling with whatever it is that we struggle with in life in order to do the right thing and to be God’s people, we don’t have to fight that battle alone. When the scriptures talk about the Three Nephites and the reason they were allowed to remain upon the earth

***“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” ~ 1 John 5:3-4***





is because of their great desire to bring the souls of men unto God. That's the kind of people you are talking about. They know this love of God and they love His children. They want to help you if you need help. They want to be available to you. You know why in the Book of Mormon it says they disappeared from the earth and were no longer available on a day to day basis? It was because of the people's lack of faith. The people quit believing. What I am saying to you today is that it's important for you to know these things. You need to read the scriptures. You need to know what is available to you. You need to know that there are men upon this earth today that have the power of God and work by the power of God. That's what the scriptures say if you read them. They have no greater desire than to share this power of God that they have with you and I. They want us to know that. If we have faith in God and believe in His word then these men, the Three Nephites, John the Beloved and others that we don't have in our records, want to come to us. They want to share with us the knowledge of God and His love for us. All of these beings that the Lord has told us are available to us now and forever are there if we need them but do we really believe that? If you were in a really bad situation, would you call upon God? Would you know that you could ask Him to send His angels and His servants even like the Three Nephites to assist you? It doesn't have to be like you are physically under attack, although it could be that, or it could just be that you are struggling with knowing what direction to go with your life, how to get back on track. The scripture says these beings work by the power of God and will until Jesus returns again in the flesh.

"What does that mean for us today to have servants of God available to us who work by the power of God? This is the same God that made heaven and earth and the seas and everything that is in them. He is all powerful. It's the same God that parted the Red Sea and divided the waters of the River Jordan. He raised the dead and healed the sick. I didn't remember until I was reading it again this weekend that these Three Nephites had kind of the same experience as Daniel, Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego did. They also were cast into a pit where there were wild animals and by the power of God they were perfectly safe. They didn't have any animosity with these animals like we

normally do. They were cast into a fiery burning furnace and it had no effect on them. They were buried in the earth. It says they couldn't bury them deep enough because the power of God lifted them up out of the earth. I don't know how many times they were buried. I thought about that and wondered what that experience would be like to see them digging a hole to put you in and knowing that's what they were going to do.

"My impression from reading was that it probably happened more than once and that each time the hole was dug deeper but it says they couldn't bury them deep enough to harm them because the power of God lifted them back up out of the earth. It's interesting to me that that's the same God who in other instances, because people were rebelling against them and disobeying Him, opened the earth and swallowed them up. He has complete control over the earth which we know. He created it and we should know He has control over it. In some instances He cast His people back up out of the earth so that they would not be harmed. In other instances He just opened the earth up and let the wicked ones fall into the earth and then closed the earth back on top of them.

"There are all kinds of stories in the scriptures about God's power. I am not going to try to go through all of them but you should read about Alma and Amulek and the brothers Lehi and Nephi. They were in prison and He delivered them. It is quite a story about how He did it. Another little thing that I ran onto in the scriptures as I was preparing that talks about God's power is the story where the Lamanites came in on the Nephites. There had been a period of peace and then the Lamanites unexpectedly came in on them and pretty much destroyed one city and took a lot of captives from that city and then left. So the Nephites, of course, wanted to get back the captives, who were probably family members and people they loved. What happened? Alma went to the Lord in prayer and said where are the Lamanites because they were not even expecting them to come. It wasn't like they had chased them back out of the countryside and knew where they went. He just went to the Lord and said where are they? Where are our loved ones so that we can go rescue them and get them back? The Lord told him where they were. When you need to know where something is whether it's a physical thing or whatever, do you ever go the Lord

and ask Him? He knows. He knows where every thing's at and He's willing to share that with you if you just ask.

"When I was thinking about the power of God and all the things He's done for us, I thought too about the Book of Mormon. Do you know what a marvelous thing this is that we have? We have it because God gave it to us and you know how He preserved it? I'm not going to tell you how He preserved it because it's beyond my comprehension and understanding, but He preserved the plates that this book was interpreted from through generations and generations and centuries. He kept it from people who wanted to get hold of it and destroy it. He did that for us so that we would have this word, we would have this testimony of Him.

"I guess I have been talking about these things this morning because somehow I want every one of you to know that God does know what's going on with us. He knows what we need and He stands willing to provide for us if we'll just submit ourselves to Him. There are some of you who have worried a lot about the church and surely the Lord loves you because of your concerns for His people, but you need to know that He's going to do His work. So if you have become discouraged and began to wonder, don't. God's going to do His work and He will stand and lift you up and allow you to do the work He's called you too if you just don't become discouraged. That's true for all of us.

"[Message to one particular sister:] 'You are not here this morning by accident. The Lord wants you to know He knows everything that's going on with you. He knows your struggles. If you will just obey His word He will rescue you. He loves you. Only He can convey to you how much He loves you, but you have to choose, you have to choose which way you are going to go. If you choose the way that you know you need to go, He will support you in ways that will amaze you.'

"Actually this could be said probably to everybody in this room. The Lord stands ready to uphold us in the fulfilling of His work if we will just humble ourselves, repent and obey His words."





# March 2011



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## Sunday Schedule

DATE	March 6th	March 13	March 20	March 27	April 3rd
<b>SPEAKING</b>	Gordon Winkler	Jim Barber	Norman Smith	Darren Cunningham	Sherman Phipps
<b>PRESIDING</b>	Steve Smith	Ron Smith	Steven Cunningham	Rob Rolfe	Ron Smith
<b>PIANIST</b>	Pat Bolingbroke	Jan Jordison	Pat Bolingbroke	Jan Jordison	Jan Jordison
<b>SPECIAL MUSIC</b>	Jim Barber	Cunningham Family	Yvonne Galusha	Sue Beck	Lynda Rolfe
<b>FAMILY DEVOTIONS</b>	Sherman Phipps	Michael Jordison	Jan Jordison	Bob Rowland	Rob Rolfe
<b>GREETERS</b>	Bob Rowland	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler
<b>CUSTODIANS</b>	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber	Rodney Bastow	Jordison family	Sherman Phipps
<b>SUNDAY EVENING</b>	Bob Rowland	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Rob Rolfe	Bob Rowland

## Wednesday Prayer Service Schedule

DATE	March 2nd	March 9th	March 16th	March 23rd	March 30th	April 6th
<b>LOCATION</b>	Gordon Winkler	Rob Rolfe	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler
<b>PRESIDING</b>	Rodney Bastow	Sherman Phipps	Gordon Winkler	Jim Barber	Ron Smith	Alan Smith



## Special Events & Activities

**Sunday March 6th:** Priesthood Meeting at 8:30AM - Potluck following Communion service

**Wednesday March 16th:** Day of Fasting & Prayer

**March 18-20:** Priesthood Retreat at Geneseo, Illinois. The theme is: A United Priesthood - A United Church. Classes include the theme, the art of preaching & grace vs. works. There is also open discussion on the Church of Christ Restored and the JCRB. Register with Mark Deitrick at [fieldsarewhite@hotmail.com](mailto:fieldsarewhite@hotmail.com). A free-will offering will be taken to cover expenses for the retreat.

**Birthday's this month:** Isabel Jordison, Kathy Myers, Barb Houston, Ruth Moreland, Tanner Rowland, Meagan Clisby, Cessaries Galusha, Tiffany Kinnaman, Cara Smith, Titus Linn, Diane Goecke

**Anniversary's this month:** Mike & Rachel Akers (Mar. 2nd); Steve & Elaina Smith (Mar 31st)



## ARE YOU WILLING TO BE A WAL-MART GREETER?



Elder Steve Cunningham

Boone, Iowa

February 20, 2011

As a Call to Worship Brother Ron Smith read John 15:8-11. *'Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.'*

Elder Cunningham began his remarks, "As a scripture reading I would like to use John 8:12. *'Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.'*

"Good morning. It's actually a beautiful day out. It's warm, we are not in Minnesota where they are having a blizzard, and believe it or not, above these clouds the sun is shining. It's amazing what happens when you fly through the clouds."

### Servanthood

"One thing I wanted to talk about today is what it means to be a servant.

This has been on my heart a lot. There are a lot of things that I have seen lately in the world dealing with young kids and seeing some of their attitudes. It really concerns me that it seems like we are getting away from being a servant, not only to God, but to each other.

"When I looked up servant, it said 'one who serves.' I use to like to write those down when you had to look up definitions for school. You would put that a servant is one who serves. Since serves is part of servant the teacher would write that it couldn't be that it had to be something else. The next thing I thought of was a government employee. Trust me if you are a government employee you are a servant. In the original writings of the Bible before the King James was translated, they actually used the word slave instead of servant. That was interesting. I went through some things on the internet, and I found a few things. I want to read actually word for word an article that had some good things to say about servanthood."

*"In our quest for the marks of mature spirituality and leadership ability, we must not bypass that quality which so completely characterized the life of Jesus Christ, the quality of unselfish servanthood. Jesus said, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45) The apostle Paul added to this focus when he wrote, "Each of you should be concerned not only about your own interests, but the interests of others as well" (Phil. 1:4). But then pointing to the Savior as our great example, he quickly added, "You should have the same attitude toward one another that Christ Jesus had." Paul then followed this exhortation with a strong reminder of the humiliation of Christ (Phil. 2:6) who, though being God of very God, emptied himself by taking the form of a slave. There is no question that if we as Christians are going to grow and mature into Christ-like character, we must experience progress in giving of ourselves in ministry to and for others. While we can and should find comfort and encouragement in Christ (Phil. 2:1), when properly grasped, that comfort should propel us into servants of the Savior and one another. Servant living stands opposed to the primary concerns we see today where the focus of our culture*

*and society is more on our own personal happiness and comfort.*

*The preoccupation with self today is readily seen in slogans like, "be all you can be" or "experience your potential" and in the titles and subtitles of books like The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life; and the list goes on and on. While many of these books may contain biblical truth or genuine help in dealing with certain problems people face as human beings, the message, whether explicit or implicit, suggests the prime goal we should be pursuing is our own comfort and the experience of some form of self-expression rather than growth in the character and quality of the life of the Savior. Simply put, our modern day society, and this includes a great number of Christians, is focused on making satisfaction its goal, indeed, its religion. There is much more concern for self-fulfillment than for pleasing God and truly serving Him and others as seen in the life of Jesus. Typical of today is the enormous number of how-to-books not just for the secular world, but for the Christian community. These are aimed at directing us to more successful relationships, becoming more of a person, realizing one's potential, experiencing more thrills each day, whipping ourselves into shape, improving our diet, managing our money, and on it goes. Again, while many of these things are important and have their place, it does take the focus off what is truly the heart of Christianity—knowing and loving God, and out of that resource and relationship, living as servants in the power of the Spirit according to the example of Christ.*

*But what exactly is servanthood? Servanthood is the state, condition, or quality of one who lives as a servant. Further, a servant is first of all one who is under submission to another. For Christians, this means submission to God first, and then submission to one another. Then, as one in submission, a servant is one who seeks to meet the real needs of others or of the person he is serving. To put it another way, servanthood is the condition or state of being a servant to others, of ministry to others rather than the service of self. It means willingly giving of oneself to minister for and to others and to do whatever it takes to accomplish what is best for another.*

*However, when serving others and their needs, if the underlying motive and goal is some form of self love, like the praise of others for the service rendered,*



then one's service is in reality hypocritical. This type of service is really aimed at serving selfish ends—usually in the futile pursuit of personal significance through something like praise, power, or status.

'Christ's plan and that which produces maximum blessing to the world and the church is servanthood. A servant is one who, even when in positions of leadership seeks to lead and influence others through lives given in ministry for the blessing of others and their needs. As the following passages will demonstrate, the Lord Jesus came as a servant with a commitment to serve. Just think, if He had come to be served, our redemption could and would never have taken place. Likewise, our failure to live as servants throws up a huge barrier to effective ministry as representatives of the Lord Jesus.'

"We must have a servant mentality. It seems like now days we think about what others can do for us. We think what's in it for us. In Matthew 4:10 it says, 'Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve...' In Romans 6:18 it says, 'Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.' Ephesians 6:6 says, 'Not with eye-service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;'

"So many times we want to serve ourselves. So many times this comes from Satan because we are of the flesh and what we want we want now. So many times I see it, and for me it's easier to see with younger children (when I say children I am talking about young men and women that have joined the military). I see their attitude when they come into our office, and it really scares me. George (Knotts) talked earlier about common sense. If people had common sense it would be easier to be a leader. It surprises me that people don't use common sense in life."

**Serving in the National Guard**

"We had a young man who came into the RSP Recruit Statement Program. That's where I actually work with the National Guard. Our job is to help prepare soldiers before they leave for Basic Training and AIT. Some of these people are as young as 17 years old and some are as old as 42 years. This young kid who came in went to two or three drills. Most kids ship out for their training sometime in

June because they are getting done with school for the year. After two or three drills this kid decided that the National Guard wasn't for him. He didn't want to be in the National Guard. One of my responsibilities is to resell the National Guard to find out why he joined the Guard. This young man joined because he planned on going on to college. When we tried to resell the National Guard to him we explained that if he stayed in the Guard he would have a \$20,000 bonus. When he finished Basic and AIT, he would get half of the \$20,000.00 and three years later he would get the other \$10,000.00.

"They also have what is called the GI Bill. You can go to school full time and get paid about \$350.00 per month and then you have the GI Bill kicker which is another \$350.00 so for every month that you go to school, you'll get \$700.00. That's in addition to your monthly drill pay which is about \$250.00. So you could make about \$1,000.00 per month going to school. It's amazing what the kids who enlist get. On top of that the State of Iowa has a program where if you live in the State of Iowa and go to a university within the State of Iowa, the Guard will pay up to 80% of your tuition. Then there is another federal program that pays the other 20%.

"So really there is no a reason for kids to make the comment, 'I can't afford college.'" We explained to this kid that he was going to lose all of these benefits if he got out of the Guard. He stepped back and said, "What do you mean I am going to lose it?" We explained that since he wanted out of the National Guard, he would lose the benefits. He was quite shocked because he wanted the benefits without being in the Guard. It really surprised me that he was serious. We talked with him for a while. Even when he

**Fun Fact:**

Distance from  
Mount Ayr, Iowa  
to Kabul, Afghanistan:

7,140 Mi. or 11,490 Km.

**A Mount Ayr "Hello" to:  
Cody C., Ammon S.,  
Stephen B., Rick L.,**

Our prayers are with you!



decided to get out we had him sign a counseling statement accepting knowledge that he understood that he was going to lose his bonus. Many kids today have the "we want it now" attitude.

"When we were getting ready to move out, and we've had this conversation with Christopher [our son], we were told that there are things our parents had because they have been around longer. With our son we explained that it's not because we have great wealth, but that we've been around longer. We've been to more garage sales than he has and to more stores than he has. Kids now days want it now. They want to work at McDonalds for \$7 to \$10 per hour but whenever they have something going on, they want to be released so they can go to their after school parties. They don't have a servant mentality.

"I see it each and every day not only with young people, but with older individuals. We have a mentality of entitlements within this nation. We think we are entitled to various things. I hear this so many times. People forget what others have worked for. I don't get into political things but the other day they were talking about Governor Branstad's retirement he was getting from the first time he was governor and now he's being paid for being governor again. There are people who go every month and get the same check that Steve Cunningham gets but they don't work for it. People feel entitled to certain things. Terry Branstad worked earlier as [Iowa] governor and gets a pension for that which is no different than me. I worked 22 years in the Iowa National Guard for which I draw a pension every month but I worked for this. I didn't feel that I was entitled to it without working. We see so many people with this entitlement mentality. They think they are entitled without any of the work.

"When I first started working full time in the military, I worked with M-day (Man-day) soldiers. My M-day soldiers are there once a month but I was there 30 days a month. All of a sudden you start getting puffed up thinking that you are more important than they are; that I was more important than an M-day person because I was a full-time soldier. It didn't matter if I was an E4 or an E5 ....E67."

**No Different than a Wal-Mart Greeter**



“One thing Colonel Perry pounded into us was that we were no different than a Wal-Mart greeter. It doesn’t matter what you do in life, you are no different than a Wal-Mart greeter. It took me a while to actually stop and think about what he said. He wasn’t putting down a Wal-Mart greeter. He was saying that a Wal-Mart greeter’s job is to greet you as you come into the store and provide you with what you need. That has stayed with me for a long time. Here a while back I was having a problem with a security guard because he was a security guard. He felt like he had more power. He had his badge and gun so he thought he was more powerful. I explained to him what I thought he was missing was that even though he was there to do a job, he was no different than a Wal-Mart greeter. He took offense to what I was saying. I explained to him that I wasn’t putting him down all I was saying was that he was there to serve. It doesn’t matter if you are a colonel, a general or a brand new E1, you are there to serve. It doesn’t matter if you are working for Golden Corral, your thought should be ‘What can I do to improve my job so that the owner makes more money? In turn, hopefully the owner will pay me more money.’

“So many times we don’t think that we are servants. We’re there to put our time in and to draw a paycheck. We need to actually step back and look at what we are there for. I know that in the military we forget that we are here to serve. Within the world I see that they are forgetting what it means to serve.

“I look back, way back to when my brother Darren was born. Mom was in the hospital and we had three boys at home. The church brought food over to the house. I remember when Darren fell off the roof and broke his head open. Church people came over and brought us food. You don’t see that very often any more. I was watching a show the other day that took place in the 40’s or 50’s. New people had moved in and the neighbors brought them something to welcome them to the neighborhood. I have neighbors that live across the street that I don’t know. They have lived there for a long time. We forget what it means to be a servant. In turn we forget what it means to serve God and Jesus Christ. If we lose being a servant in our everyday life, how are we going to serve Jesus Christ?

“When you listen and talk to other people, you find yourself looking at where you are in your walk with Christ. Here I am, I have been in the church since I was baptized when I was 8 years old. I was ordained to a Priest in 1990, and I am an Elder in the church now.”

**Is Our Faith Weak From Prosperity?**

“I’ve found myself looking at a man from Sudan who is not a church member, his thoughts and his desire to serve God. He is in the National Guard. There were some things that he needed help with and I had the opportunity to help him. It was impressed on me more than once that I needed to sit down and talk to this man. The last time he was in my office I told him that when he had time, I would like to

**“If we lose being a servant in our everyday life, how are we going to serve Jesus Christ?”**

talk to him about what he believed about Christ because he had made a few comments. He came back in later and we talked. We talked about his wife because here recently she had started taking some medicine that the doctor gave her. The doctor told her that she needed to come in every three months to get checked.

“Three months later she went in to get checked. She wasn’t feeling very good which they told the doctor. The doctor they normally went to was gone and there was a new doctor who said it sounded like she just had the flu. She was nauseated and light headed and didn’t feel good. She told the doctor that she was taking this medicine. Now there is a little bit of a language barrier there but she did let them know that she was taking this medicine. The doctor sent her home. Two or three months went by and she was getting worse and worse. She went back to the doctor who told her again that she just had the flu. Everyone had the flu. They finally decided to go to a different doctor. The doctor found out that this medicine she was taking was destroying her liver to the point that they sent her directly to Iowa City. For nine days she was in a coma and was then blessed to have a liver transplant.

“As I was visiting with this man from Sudan he talked about how he prayed for his wife. How he would hold his wife up to God and ask God for a healing. He told me that he knew she would be healed.

Once in a while that concerns me because I pray but I question myself. I always want to throw in if it is Your will. I think that’s our way to get out of it if the person isn’t healed. He also told me about a time when he was at school. He was willing to share all of this. He wasn’t bragging. He is a very, very humble individual. He told me about one of his classmates whose Mom was very sick. He said that he told his classmate not to worry about it that they would sit down and pray. Now, how many of us are willing to go up to someone you know who has a problem and ask them if they want to pray. I visited with Ron and talked to him about an individual at work that I was having problems with. He said to visit with this person and ask him if he wanted to pray about it. This man from Sudan without having to ask anyone said he would like to sit down and pray for his friend’s Mom. He did and his Mom was healed. He told him not to worry that his Mom would be healed.

“This man from Sudan would like to find a way to get into the hospitals to visit people. I had talked to him about times we had been to the hospital and had administered to people. He wants to go into hospitals to pray for people. He goes to an Episcopal Church there in Des Moines. He wanted to know how he could get into the hospitals to pray for people. He explained to me that he doesn’t go to church regularly but he carries his Bible and reads it daily. He has a true desire to serve God. I look at this individual who speaks Arabic and English. You have to pay attention to him to understand him.

“I sit back and look at my life and how I’ve been raised and the things that I know and how his desire is so great to serve God. We actually started talking about the United States. I asked him what the difference was between the United States and Sudan. The very first thing that he said was that the people in the United States were very loving and very kind and gentle. He said that they were very giving. He explained different times during this flood and that flood that money came to them and how people were willing to give, but he said we aren’t willing to protect what we have. He explained how the people in the United States are weak. He has concerns about this weakness. He wondered what would happen if we lost our phones. If we didn’t have cell phones, what would we do? That sounds silly but what happens if we didn’t have running



water and sewer or electricity or gas? We would have to walk. Can you imagine walking to the store? We live a block and a half away from Hy-Vee, and it doesn't matter what the weather is, we jump in the car to go to the store. We don't walk to the store.

"The other thing that he said was that people expect too many handouts from the government. He said in the Bible doesn't it say if you don't work you don't eat? Too many people in the United States want to take. He told us how good we were but he also said we are weak. He wondered what would happen if something happened to the United States. We would fall much harder than the people of the Sudan because they don't have anything. You look at what they wear. They wear the same thing day after day after day. A lot of them don't have shoes.

"What he wants to do now that he is in the United States is go to college and learn everything about agriculture so that he can go back and teach the people how to farm. He said that if he had just a little bit of money he could teach these people what to do. They will be rich. Not by our standards but they will be rich. He is married and has three kids. He is very loving, kind hearted and humble. He never bragged. In fact there are things he didn't tell me. I finally told him that we needed to talk after work. He said that he would find the time when we could sit down and talk more.

"I was talking to Major Houston who is our OIC officer in charge. He asked me if I realized that this man was part of the 'Lost Boys of Sudan?'" He came over here in 1984 or 85 and never once did he bring that up. Never once did he complain about where he lived or the hardships that he went through. He did talk about one time walking somewhere and coming up on an area where there was blood on the road. When you found blood on the road you had to go back and hide so that you wouldn't be found. I guess I didn't know what he was talking about until I read a little bit about the "Lost Boys of Sudan" and the things that they went through."

### **What Are We Willing to Give?**

"What are we willing to give? Are we truly wanting to be servants of Jesus Christ? Do we have that burning desire and that passion to serve Him or do we just try to fit God and Jesus Christ in our lives?"

"There's a lot that goes on in our family. I am not complaining. I am so glad that we are blessed for what we have. Sue works full time and I work full time. It's about 12 hours a day by the time I drive back and forth to Camp Dodge. We have a business (taxidermy) and it is going well. Unfortunately we are not good enough to be full time but too good to be part time. We didn't pick up as many deer as we did last year but we picked up bear, a couple of coyotes, and a lot of birds. We have about 20 to 25 birds in the freezer that we have to do so we have a lot of taxidermy work. We are trying to juggle doing our part-time work and not taking away from our full-time work. I want to make sure that the job that I do at the National Guard is a good job, and I want to make sure that we are doing a good job with what we have at home. We are both members of the Iowa Taxidermy Association. That's where we were last Sunday. They had a meeting and showed us how to stuff a buffalo. So if you ever shoot a buffalo we know how to stuff it.

"In March we have the draft for softball. They have asked me to be a coach. I told them that I could help out but that I couldn't help out the way I did before. I just have too much going on. When you are a coach you are practicing three times a week. You have games on Saturday. You also have just as much time at home trying to figure out your batting order. That sounds so simple but you are trying to look at the talents of the girls to find out where you want to put them.

"Then you have your family. I try to make sure that I am there for Christopher when he wants to go out looking for a vehicle. There's so much but the last thing we have is our church. How do we fit Jesus Christ into our life? In the first place we have him in the wrong spot. We are trying to fit Jesus Christ into our lives (I say this all the time but for some reason I am not smart enough to put Him in front). If we put Jesus Christ in the front, I think we'd be amazed how things start falling in line.

"There is a lot of confusion within our family to know how to juggle this stuff but it says in the scriptures that God is not the author of confusion; Satan is. Again where do we have Jesus Christ? I want to be a servant but also I have to juggle all these things. How do I do it? You have to give something up but what am I going to give up? We have the directions to salvation.

We have them right here in the scriptures but how many times do we pick up the scriptures and read them. I know I go through the scriptures and see things highlighted, but how many times do I really sit down, read them, study them and actually take in what they have to say. We have to utilize what we have.

"A year ago last August we bought a van and an extended warranty. Usually I don't buy an extended warranty, but this time we bought a 36,000 mile warranty. Immediately the transmission started slipping. Everyone that looked at it agreed that the transmission was slipping, but I just didn't have time to take it in. Several months ago we went down to pick up Christopher at the airport. We drove all the way down to the airport into the short-term parking. As I pulled out the ticket, I suddenly felt like I was up against a clod of snow. At least that's what I thought it was. As we parked, I thought the van sure didn't feel right. We found out that the transmission was out. I pulled the extended warranty out thinking that it would take care of everything. I drive between five to seven hundred miles a week. Talk about a blessing, my warranty had 600 miles left on it. The plan had been that during Christmas break when Sue had time off, we would take it down to have it fixed. It was a blessing to find out in time that my warranty only had 600 miles left on it. I was able to get it in to have the transmission replaced and have the warranty cover the cost of a new transmission. New transmissions aren't cheap. I could have taken it in ahead of time but didn't and I almost lost out. I almost had to pay the bill myself which would have been almost \$3,000.00. I had the warranty. I saw what was happening but yet I took my time to get it fixed. I was blessed to still have 600 miles left on the warranty so that I could get the new transmission.

"How much time are we going to waste? Are we going to utilize what we have? Are we going to sit back and say, 'I should have done that?'" When I was a platoon sergeant with the military my job was to make sure that if we ever went to combat we were trained as best as we could be. I wanted to be able to look at that mother and that father or that wife or husband or the children and say, 'I am sorry for what happened, but he was as trained as he could be.'



“What’s going to happen when we are sitting up in heaven and somebody knocks on the door and it’s my neighbor saying, ‘Why didn’t you tell me?’ Being a servant means a lot. It means opening your mouth and sharing. I know Christopher was concerned about getting up and saying the opening prayer this morning. It was his first time up front. It does get easier the more you are up front. The more you share with your friends and your neighbors, the easier it gets. The more you open your mouth and put your hand out the easier it gets. Shake a hand and share about Jesus, the Christ.

“I want to read out of the Doctrine and Covenants, Section 11:2a-5b. *‘Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap, let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God; yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God; therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive, if you will knock it shall be opened unto you. Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, Keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion. Behold, I speak unto you, and also to all those who have desires to bring forth and establish this work; and no one can assist in this work, except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things whatsoever shall be intrusted to his care. Behold, I am the light and the life of the world, that speak these words; therefore, give heed with your might, and then you are called. Amen.’*

“I pray that we would actually focus on being a servant. When we serve, we don’t want to serve only here at church. I pray that you won’t hide that light that you will let it shine, that you will go out and learn what it means to be a servant. I pray that you will be willing to be a Wal-Mart greeter.”



## SHEPHERDING

101



High Priest Robert Rolfe  
Lamoni, Iowa  
February 27, 2011

After hearing sister Diane Anderson bring a lovely ministry with her flute, High Priest Rob Rolfe read the following scriptures: *‘Behold, I say unto you, that the good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ. And if ye will not hearken unto the voice of the good shepherd, to the name by which ye are called, behold, ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd. And now if ye are not the sheep of the good shepherd, of what fold are ye?’* (Alma 3:62-64)

*‘For thus saith the Lord God; Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among the sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all the places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.’* (Ezekiel 34:11-12)

Sister Diane then sang “I come to the Garden”, unaccompanied, creating a worshipful setting for the morning message.

### Shepherds Sometimes Lose Their Way

“We worship a risen Lord. All of the other world religious leaders are in their graves. We proclaim our Lord’s victory

over death. That, is the “good news” of the Christian message. But, after Jesus’ death, things were not going well for the church. Their leaders had run off. Some denied they even knew Him. The members were in hiding. If it weren’t for a few of the faithful women, the outlook could have been worse. What do some men do when facing difficulty with their ministry? They go back to the life they lived before being a disciple. It was no different then. Jesus’ closest disciples decided to go fishing. In John 21 it says: *‘And they fished all night and caught nothing.’* I’ve done that! As they looked to the beach, they saw a man standing there. He called out, *‘do you have any fish?’* They called back, *NO!* He called back again and said *‘cast your nets on the right side of the ship and you’ll catch fish.’* They did as the man instructed and the net was so full of fish, they couldn’t pull it in. John immediately said, *‘it is the Lord’.* How did he and Peter know that?... Because it had happened before. On that occasion, Jesus was in the boat and they had fished all night and caught nothing. At that time, See (Luke 5:6) Peter said, *‘depart from me, because I am a sinful man.’* Whenever we come face to face with the savior, we become acutely aware of our sin. We are no different than Peter or the other disciples!

“This was Jesus’ third appearance after His resurrection. What do you think might have been going through Peter’s mind when he jumped overboard and swam to shore. The memory of his 3 denials of his Master was likely still fresh and painful in his mind. (See Matt 26:29-31) His words were, *‘even if the entire world is offended by you, I won’t be offended.’* *Jesus answered, ‘before morning you will deny me three times.’* And it happened just like Jesus said.

“This memory was likely the main thing on Peter’s mind. Will Jesus have anything to do with me? Will he still want me to be one of his apostles? Jesus also went through his questions 3 times. You are familiar with the account. There is something in this account that is not stated. It is understood, though. If Peter is being called upon to feed the sheep and the lambs, then **Peter is a shepherd.** He was responsible for the sheep. If one was lost, Peter was responsible. The same is true today. We are the shepherds of our flocks. And, just like in John & Peter’s time, we’re having our problems with our latter day saints.”

**A Shepherd is a Leader**

“The shepherd model of leadership is what God chose for us to follow. If you look, you will find hundreds of examples of God using the lesson of shepherds and sheep to teach us. God used the shepherding model to explain how God cares for us. This is the example of how our priesthood should serve. You don’t drive sheep. You have to lead them. Isaiah 40:11 gives us the image we should follow: *‘He shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them gently in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are young.’*”

“Why does God refer to us as sheep? After all, sheep are the stupidest creatures on earth. Or so it is said. But is it true. Sheep can remember numerous faces of other sheep. Sheep can remember their shepherd. They remember if they have been treated badly. They remember if they have been treated well. They remember their shepherd’s voice. And they can be athletic. Those who are in the sheep business have contests with their sheep. Races, steeple chases, etc. What do you think the record is for a sheep running a 220 yard course that is not a straight run. (17 seconds) That would be world record time for a human.”

**Shepherds Keep Their Eyes Open**

“I’m going to make some observations about what is happening in the world today, and then talk about what our duty as shepherds is in that regard. Most of you have probably noticed what is happening in the Middle East. Those events should make you uneasy. We now have serious turmoil in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Yemen and Jordan. Do you think the rioting in so many countries at the same time is a coincidence? After World War II, America replaced Europe as the dominant force in the Middle East. Over time, we have tried to support both Israel and the Arabs. As Dr. Phil would say, “how is that working for us? With gas prices rising and likely to continue to rise and stay high, our politicians are wondering, “how can I get reelected with high gas prices?”

“Shepherds need to be watching the horizon for trouble. The lives and well-being of your sheep depend on how prepared you are! If you cared for sheep, you would be looking for predators, for bad weather, for greener pastures, for good water. Shepherds need to be well aware of

world politics. For example, if you lived in Jeremiah’s day, the fact that you didn’t have anything to do with world politics wouldn’t change a thing when Nebuchadnezzar, as an agent of God’s plans, destroyed Judah. And your attitude about politics won’t change anything today when God acts to bring about his purposes in these latter days. You can find direction on what you should do in such a circumstance. The scriptures are full of promises about what is going to happen. AND There are 3 times as many scriptures dealing with the general subject of Christ’s second coming as there are scriptures about his first coming.

“Most of you have probably noticed what has been happening in this country as well. To make a point, I would like to remind you of the events surrounding Bernie Madoff. He instituted the grandest Ponzi scheme yet. (Grand in an evil way) He promised to pay very high returns on the investor’s dollars, and did so. The way he did it however, was to pay the old investors with the money coming in with from the new investors. He even stole 3 million of sister’s money. It is easy to see the end result of such a scheme. Eventually you cannot bring in enough new investors to pay the interest on the old investors money and the whole scheme collapses. The result--losses in the billions for his followers.

“Why do I remind you of Madoff’s scheme? It is simply because our social security system and our pension systems in many states, are based on the same kind of Ponzi scheme. There are no trust funds or there are insufficient funds to keep the system solvent. We would say the system is not actuarially sound. The current payments to the early “investors” are going to be made with the future contributions of the newest “investors”. Unfortunately the number of investors receiving funds keeps increasing and the number of investors paying keeps decreasing.

“In Social Security, Medicare, Parts A, B, etc., the estimated shortfall is currently 118.8 trillion dollars. There is no money to pay that deficit. I don’t think even China will loan us that kind of money! Even if they did, we couldn’t afford the payments. Our leaders simply do not want to face the problem, because they know we will vote them out, if they do what is needed. What needs to be done are higher taxes and less benefits.”

**1,000,000,000,000**

“How much is a trillion. You can visualize 1 trillion in many different ways. If you spent a million dollars per day from the birth of Christ to today, it would total approximately 734 Billion. What is the likelihood that our whole economy will collapse? If it doesn’t collapse, what do these facts portend for the elderly, the poor etc., in terms of their standard of living. You might say, well we can fix it. And so we can. The scriptures indicate it will not be fixed.

“Sec 45:13a reads: *‘And it shall come to pass, among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor, must needs flee unto Zion for safety.’* What must happen for this kind of condition to occur in our nation?--Only a breakdown of the government or the economy or both. IT HAS HAPPENED BEFORE! In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter of 3<sup>rd</sup> Nephi, we find that circumstance. The government was destroyed. The people divided up in families, friends and tribes.

“Many years ago, my wife, Lynda had a dream in which she saw the interstate highways and there was grass growing in the expansion joints. What events must occur to permit grass to grow in the expansion joints of the interstate?”

“If the times ahead of us are going to wipe out our wealth and our nation, what preparation should we make? What do we, as ministers, being shepherds, tell our flocks, when they have lost all of their material goods, have no food, and there is no government to bail them out. A shepherd is called to bring ministry particularly when everything bad is happening. Should we band together, or separate ourselves? Should we share our food, or keep it all to ourselves? What about all the other things we need to live? Do we take up our swords? Do we permit ourselves to be robbed or killed?”

“Third Nephi 9:101 reads: (This is Jesus talking) *‘Yea, wo be unto the Gentiles, except they repent, for it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Father, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots, and I will cut off the cities of thy land and throw down all thy strongholds.’* DC 83:23 predicts that Albany, New York and Boston will end in ‘desolation and utter abolishment’. If we would read “horses” as “horsepower”, and “chariots” as “cars & trucks”, what is Jesus telling us here? By the way, He was nearly quoting





the same prophesy as it is found in the 5<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Micah. (Have the Gentiles repented?) (Are they likely to repent?)

“Do we really trust God to take care of us? Is he able to provide food when there is no food? Let me bring some scriptures to your remembrance. In Mark 8, we find the following exchange between Jesus and his disciples: (Mk 8:14-16) *“Now the multitude had forgotten to take bread; neither had they (the disciples), in the ship with them, more than one loaf. And he charged them saying, Take heed, and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and the leaven of Herod.”* And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *He hath said this, because we have no bread.*” Do you remember our Lord’s response? *“Why don’t you understand? Can’t you see? Can’t you hear? Don’t you remember? When I broke the 5 loaves among 5000, how many baskets full of fragments did we have left? They said 12! And when I broke 7 loaves among the 4000, how many baskets full of fragments did we have left? They said 7! He said, how is it you do not understand? Would Jesus do that kind of miracle for us today if we were starving? Is there a certain measure of faith required for us to “qualify” for the blessing?*

“I believe it was Joseph Luff that was stranded in a cabin in the winter. It literally had snowed so much he couldn’t open the door. He had very little food. So, he got down on his knees and started to pray most fervently. He prayed on and on. A voice finally spoke to him and said, *“that’s enough Joseph”*. He opened his eyes and he saw enough food had just appeared to last him for 3 days. By the end of the three days, he was rescued from the cabin. Do we have that kind of faith? In 3 Nephi 8, Jesus gave all the people bread and wine, but there was no bread and wine before they were passed out. Can we say to our sheep, trust in God, if we don’t believe it ourselves? There simply are no “magic words” that will accomplish such a mighty miracle. This kind of power comes from spiritual resources built over time through a life of service.

“What should we tell the sheep to do to prepare for these days? We can’t control the events coming in the world, but we can control our response and our preparation. What is this shepherd’s message this morning?

•**Minimize your debts.** In March 2010, there was 2.45 trillion dollars of

consumer debt. This doesn’t include mortgages on land. Proverbs 22:7 says *“the rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.”*

•**Control your desires.** Jesus said, you can’t serve both God and mammon. You can’t serve 2 Gods.

•**Remember, the more we have, the more we want;** the more we want the more we spend; the more we spend, the more we worry; the more we worry, the more we lose, the more we lose, the more we leave behind. God gives us the power to accumulate wealth, but only if we desire to do the right things with the wealth.

•**Almost everything around us is temporary.** Treasure what is eternal, and seek to protect the eternal. Jesus said, your treasure is where your heart is. Put your treasure in heaven, where you don’t have to worry about rust, moths, thieves or corruption. What is permanent? Your soul, for one thing!

•**Build a life based on faith.** Daniel had a vision and saw such terrible things coming that he fainted and was sick for a few days. He was not prepared for the things that he saw. What did he do next? He got up and went back to work doing the King’s business. (Daniel 8:27 KJV) We need to keep working and living, but most of all--keep trusting in God even when bad things happen to us.

Are we to be like Job, and ask, “where is now my hope” (Job 17:15) When your sheep come to you without hope, what do you tell them? You are their shepherd. They are looking to you for help and guidance. *‘Romans 8:24 For we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?’*

“Finally, I would tell you to consider the fig tree. (Mark 11:4-24) Jesus was hungry and went to a fig tree. There were no figs. Jesus cursed the tree and it withered in 1 day. On the way back, Peter mentioned the tree, and how it had withered in 1 day. We may not know why the tree had no figs; or why Jesus cursed the tree; or many other things about this lesson. What we do know is that when things happen that we don’t understand and cause us distress, what our Shepherd’s counsel is to us: **“Have faith in God.”**



## PEDAL

Anonymous

*Shared by Lori Cunningham.*

At first I saw God as my observer, my judge, keeping track of the things I did wrong, so as to know whether I merited heaven or hell when I die.

He was out there, sort of like the president. I recognized His picture when I saw it, but I really didn’t know him.

But later on when I met Christ, it seemed as though life were rather like a bike ride, but it was a tandem bike, and I noticed that Christ was in the back helping me pedal.

I don’t know just when it was that He suggested that we chance places, but life has not been the same since.

When I had control, I knew the way. It was rather boring but predictable ...It was the shortest distance between two points, But when He took the lead, He know delightful long cuts, up mountains, and through rocky places at breakneck speeds, and it was all I could do to hang on!

Even though it looked like madness, He said, “Pedal.”

I worried and was anxious and asked, “Where are You taking me?” He laughed and didn’t answer, and I started to learn to trust, I forgot my boring life and entered into the adventure. And when I’d say, “I’m scared,” He’d lean back and touch my hand. He took me to people with gifts that I needed, gifts of healing, acceptance, and joy. They gave me gifts to take on my journey, my Lord’s and mine. And were off again. He said, “Give the gifts away, they’re extra baggage, too much weight.”

So I did, to the people we met, and I found that in giving, I received, and still our burden was light. I did not trust Him at first, to be in control of my life. I thought he would wreck it; but He knows bike secrets, knows how to make it bend to take sharp corners, knows how to jump to clear high rocks, knows how to fly to shorten scary passages.

And I’m learning to shut up and pedal in the strangest places, and I’m beginning to enjoy the view and the cool breeze on my face with my delightful constant companion, Jesus Christ.



**Church of Jesus Christ  
Mount Ayr Restoration Branch**

c/o Cheryl Phipps  
15581 270th St  
Lamoni, IA 50140

**Serving on Many Fronts:**



Clockwise top left: Seventy Ron Smith; Sgt. Rick Leonard; Josh Jordison & Jacob Cunningham; Michael Jordison; Di Smith & Amy Friend



**CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST - MT AYR RESTORATION BRANCH**

**MARCH 2011**

*And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come; and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. (Revelation 14:6-7)*

**Thoughts**

Have you ever been humiliated; I mean really humiliated? I remember on a few occasions of having my pants unzipped while I was in front of a crowd of people. But that was more embarrassing, than humiliating. One definition of the word, 'humiliate' is to "Make (someone) feel ashamed and foolish by injuring their dignity and self-respect, esp. publicly." -Dictionary.com

Have you ever had your dignity injured?

Would you consider it humiliating to have everything that you've done in your life played out on a big screen for everyone to see; all of your sins, all of your mistakes? Talk about wounded pride. What would your friends - your family - your congregation say if they saw the real you, with nothing filtered?

But the thing is, God sees the real you every day. Do you think about that?

What is more important - what your pastor thinks or what God thinks about you? Too many of us are working hard to make sure that we put a good front out for others to see, all the while ignoring, or perhaps forgetting, that God is watching behind the scenes. All the luck of the Irish won't be enough for us to escape the wrong things we've done in this life.

We have a choice. We can choose to be humiliated when we stand before God our Father at the last day, or we can humble ourselves now and give our sins to Jesus. There should be no hiding of who we are or what we've done, only contrition and humility. When the church operates in humility, there will only be room for the love of Christ to abound. And when the love of Christ abounds, Zion is.



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