



Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

NEWSLETTER

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“Now they never had fought, yet they did not fear death: and they did think more upon the liberty of their fathers, than they did upon their lives; yea, they had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, that God would deliver them.

And they rehearsed unto me the words of their mothers, saying, ‘We do not doubt our mothers knew.’ ”

Alma 26:56,57

News & Notes

May Graduates

Several of the youth have reached major milestones in their lives and will be commemorating it this month. Erica Clisby graduated from Mercy College of Health Sciences and was pinned on Friday, April 29th. Amy Friend graduates from Graceland University May 15th with a degree in Elementary Education. Jazmyn Galusha graduates from Lamoni Schools May 22nd, and plans on attending Blue River CC in Blue Springs, Mo. Matthew Anderson graduates from Central-Decatur May 22nd, and plans on attending UCM in Warrensburg, Mo.

A reception will be held May 8th at 5:30PM at Jan Jordison’s home in Leon for Matthew. The congregation is asked to bring side dishes. Meat will be provided. A reception for Jazmyn will be held on May 21 from 4-7 PM at The Alley, on South Linden in Lamoni.

H. Alan Smith Ordination

Elder H. Alan Smith was sustained by both the Mount Ayr congregation and the 2011 JCRB General Conference to serve in the office of High Priest. His ordination is scheduled for May 15, 2011 in Mount Ayr.

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Pastor's Thoughts

by Sherman Phipps

The JCRB Conference was held last week. I took the opportunity to attend the services on the first Sunday and then on Friday evening and Saturday morning the last weekend. I have never been quite sure what my relationship to the JCRB is. The people there are precious to me as brothers and sisters in the gospel, and it would always be my intention to uphold and support those who profess Jesus Christ. However, I have been slow to profess "allegiance" to any one restoration-derived movement at the exclusion of others. I hope my "allegiance" is to Jesus Christ and His Father, who are one, and that I could be free to love His people wherever I find them and have opportunity to interact with them.

I recognize that there are questions regarding authority which sometimes raises issues as to who should be recognized as priesthood. My own reading of the scriptures leads me to the conclusion that true priesthood authority comes only from God, and that He is not limited to working with any one particular man-made institution. Oh, I know this raises all kinds of "red flags" for some individuals. I would refer them to D & C 1:6; 1 Nephi 3: 220-231; 3 Nephi 8:32-49; Mosiah 9:48-54; 11:96-103 & 128-132; 2 Nephi 13:7-32; Alma 16:130-138; 3 Nephi 5:32-42 and 10:31. Are we not told that the gospel is plain and simple? Do not the scriptures teach us to judge our fellowman by the fruits which they bear?

Now I will return to where I started and bear witness that each time I attended a service (or priesthood meeting) at the JCRB Conference the Spirit of the Lord rested upon me and brought humility to my heart and tears to my eyes. I acknowledge that if I had the opportunity to attend other groups and gatherings, I might well find the Spirit of the Lord working in power there also. I hope to have this opportunity.

My point is that I feel I have evidence that God is marshaling His army to accomplish His marvelous work and bare His arm to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. As this takes place I want to learn in my own life to obey His commandments, acknowledge Him wherever He chooses to work, and love His people – all of them, even as He does, and confess my own unworthiness.

Never forget that Jesus, Himself, prays for you and upholds you to our Heavenly Father. (D & C 45:1c)

REPENT, OBEY AND LIVE!



High Priest Sherm Phipps

Lamoni, Iowa

April 3, 2011

Ron Smith, who presided over our Communion Service, used the following as a Call to Worship. *O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name.*

His Spirit to be With Us

"Let me read from Luke 3:13, 14 as we begin this morning. Please just keep this scripture in the back of your mind for now. *Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, Abraham is our father; we have kept the commandments of God, and none can inherit the promises but the children of Abraham; for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also, the axe is laid unto the root of the trees; every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire.*



“Now let’s read the prayer of blessing over the bread which was given to the church in Doctrine & Covenants Section 17:22d. *‘O God, the eternal Father; we ask thee in the name of thy Son Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the eternal Father; that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.’* This prayer tells us that those who are willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, always remember Him and keep His commandments may always (underline mine) have His Spirit to be with them.

“How many times have we prayed, asking for His Spirit to be with us? I often pray asking for His Spirit to be with me/us. However, when I really consider the words of this prayer in Section 17: 22d, I have to ask myself if my prayers, asking for His Spirit, are simply an expression of lack of understanding on my part. It would seem as if I am trying to ignore or bypass my responsibility and ask for the Lord’s blessing without complying with His truth. This, of course, won’t work because He is a God of truth. He never changes and He never varies. The fact is that He has told us we will always have His Spirit with us if we 1) take the name of Jesus upon us; 2) always remember Him; and 3) obey His commandments.

“Instead of praying for His Spirit, it would seem that we should be praying for understanding as to what it means to take Jesus’ name upon us and the humility and strength to do so. We should pray to understand what it means to always remember Him that we might be delivered from evil and enabled to obey His commandments. It may be that three things are really just three different ways of saying the same thing (read 3 Nephi 8:32-43) In any event, if we are to have His Spirit to be with us, we must obey His commandments.

“I would suggest that the Lord has, ever since Adam and Eve ‘fell,’ been looking for a people who would truly be willing to humble themselves and come before Him with broken hearts, contrite spirits and obeying His commandments so that He could grant unto them His Spirit; not just here and there or occasionally in

very limited expressions. We have some examples in the scriptures where persons and communities have done this such as Enoch’s city, Zion; the people after Christ revealed Himself upon this continent following His resurrection; the brothers Lehi and Nephi; the three Nephites, etc. In each of these examples the outpouring of the Spirit which followed their obedience to His commandments was amazing and of great worth to the souls of many.

“On the other hand you have the Lord’s people led out of Egypt by Moses who were always complaining, never satisfied and quick to disobey. It seems that Doctrine & Covenants 58:6i could have been good advice to the people of Moses. *I command and a man obeys not, I revoke and they receive not the blessing; then they say in their hearts, This is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But woe unto such, for their reward lurketh beneath, and not from above.* But wait! These words were given to us! The simple truth is that if the work seems to go forward slowly and appears at times to be an unachievable dream it is because we do not obey God’s commandments. We seem to think that somehow we can ignore God’s commandments and still expect Him to work with us to accomplish His purposes. That will not happen. We will just continue to wander in the desert. However, I would suggest that we do not have 40 years left to wander and work on repenting.”

Do Not Partake Unworthily

“This morning as you reach out your hand to partake of the body and the blood of Christ, shed for you, please do not do so unworthily. Please repent and determine to obey His commandments that you may, in fact, have His Spirit to be with you, not just for your own sakes, but for the sake of the souls of all those whom your lives touch.

“Remember, Jesus Himself stands before the Father and advocates for you, *‘lift up your hearts and be glad, for I am in your midst, and am your advocate with the Father; and it is his good will to give you the kingdom.’* (D&C 28:2b) but His prayers can only be effective for those who will ultimately obey God’s commandments. *‘Father, I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world, because of their faith,*

that they may be purified in me, that I may be in them as thou, Father, art in me, that we may be one, that I may be glorified in them.’ (3 Nephi 9:30.) Also read 3 Nephi 8:19-9:30.

“I started by reading Luke 3:13, 14. I read that because I sometimes fear – speaking for myself also – that our hearts have turned to stone. If that is so then I pray that we would humble ourselves here this morning, repent and ask God to raise up sons (and daughters) to Abraham from these stones – our hearts, and allow us yet the opportunity to be His people.

“I pray that we have not waited too long and that we might still be allowed to share in the harvest as His servants. *‘And now, my brethren, I would that after ye have received so many witnesses, seeing that the holy scriptures testify of these things, come forth and bring fruit unto repentance; Yea, I would that ye would come forth and harden not your hearts any longer; for behold, now is the time, and the day of your salvation; and therefore, if ye will repent and harden not your hearts, immediately shall the great plan of redemption be brought about unto you. For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God: yea, behold, the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors.*

‘And now as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore I beseech of you, that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; For after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity, behold, if we do not improve our time while in this life, then cometh the night of darkness, wherein there can be no labor performed. Ye can not say, when ye are brought to that awful crisis, that I will repent, that I will return to my God. Nay, ye can not say this; for that same spirit which doth possess your bodies at the time that ye go out of this life, that same spirit will have power to possess your body in that eternal world. For behold, if ye have procrastinated the day of your repentance, even until death, behold, ye have become subjected to the spirit of the devil, and he doth seal you his; Therefore the Spirit of the Lord hath withdrawn from you, and hath no place in you, and the devil hath all power over you; and this is the final state of the wicked. And this I know, because the Lord has said, he dwelleth not in unholy temples, but in the hearts of the righteous doth he dwell;



'Yea, and he has also said, that the righteous shall sit down in his kingdom, to go no more out; but their garments should be made white, through the blood of the Lamb. And now my beloved brethren, I desire that ye should remember these things, and that ye should work out your salvation with fear before God, and that ye should no more deny the coming of Christ; that ye contend no more against the Holy Ghost, but that ye receive it, and take upon you the name of Christ; that ye humble yourselves even to the dust, and worship God in whatsoever place ye may be in, in spirit and in truth;' (Alma 16:226-237)

"Brothers and sisters, truly the axe is this day laid unto the root of the trees. If we obey not His commandments, we cannot bring forth good fruit, in which case we shall be hewn down and cast into the fire. Jesus' sacrifice of His very body and blood for us will be of no effect. We will have to take back upon ourselves our own sins and be cut off from God's presence.

"On the other hand the way is prepared before us, even here this morning, that we might, through Christ, be one with our Heavenly Father. Please, repent, obey and live!"



"All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother. I remember my mother's prayers and they have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life."

- Abraham Lincoln

REPENTANCE IS "KEY"



Seventy Ron Smith
Lamoni, Iowa
April 10, 2011

But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you, whom ye have crucified; Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.

And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. (Acts 3:18-26)

"This morning I chose to read from Acts where Peter declares Christ. I find Peter interesting because he was a strong man, a fisherman, a man who was used to working hard with his hands. When Jesus called him, he went and left everything he had and followed Jesus. When Jesus was arrested and brought to trial, Peter denied Him and said he did not know anything about this guy, because he was afraid for his life. Of course, we all come to that point at some time when we have to make a choice between what God has called us to be and where we find ourselves. Peter was able to repent later. After all this had happened, Jesus talked to Peter and said, 'When you are converted, feed my sheep.' We all go through life in something of the way that Peter has. Sometimes we turn out okay and sometimes we do not, but I am hoping that today we will hear His words."

Unless We Repent, Our House Will Fall

"At this time of year, we come and remember Easter, the resurrection, the death of Jesus, and what He did for us that we might have eternal life. I really like the way Peter says it in verse 19. He says that all of the prophets have talked about Jesus' coming and what He was going to do and the suffering that He was going to go through. He says, 'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.' That is the good news. Of all the religious leaders in the world, it is only Jesus Christ who can do anything about the sins that you have already committed. Peter knew something about sins that he had already committed. He said that if you would repent, your sins could be blotted out. No other religion promises that. Other religions say that if you will study these precepts and act accordingly that your life will be better from here on. There may be something to that. Your life may be better from here on. But none of them say that they will do something about the sins that were in the past; that the sins in the past can be blotted out.

"So Peter ends up this section in verse 26: 'Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' So we see that we are blessed by our repentance, by turning away from our iniquities, and it's not just a matter that Jesus will forgive us of the sins but He wants to turn us away that we can have life and have it more abundantly.



“In my house, we have a little game called Jenga. (He set up the Jenga game and invited the children to come up if they wished.) I used to be fairly good at this. The idea is that you take a block and put it up on the top. (Ryder, Devon, Megan, and Samuel helped him by taking blocks from the lower layers of the stack and putting them on top.) What is going to happen if we keep doing this? The stack gets taller and taller until it falls. It will always fall. It does not matter how good you are. It does not matter how much skill you have. It does not matter how careful you are, eventually it is going to fall. Some people are pretty good about building that thing higher and can stay on top for a while, but it eventually falls.

“That is what Peter was saying about our lives. We can be big people. We can do wonderful things. We can be strong men and women. We can do a lot of things in this world, but unless we repent and do things differently, we are going to fall. Unless we have our sins blotted out, we all will fail eventually. We are carnal, sensual, and devilish by nature. We need to have a new nature. That is what the gospel of Jesus Christ is all about.

“So you ask yourself, ‘How can I be any different? I have to do what I have to do. I have to go to work. I have to make money. I have to support my family. I have to go to school. I have to do what my parents say. I have to do what everybody else says. How can I be any different than I am?’ That is where the gospel comes in. God does not say that we are necessarily going to be rich. He does not say that we are necessarily going to be perfect. He does not say that we are necessarily going to be famous, but He says, ‘I will bless you by turning each one of you away from your iniquities.’ If we can turn away from our iniquities, then we will be blessed. If we do not turn away from our iniquities, then we will fall.

“How can we turn away from our iniquities? I can try to list all of the bad things that you do, Samuel (a member of the congregation), but it would not do any good because I do not know anything bad

that you do. I only know the things that I do that are bad, and I certainly would not want to list those. I have done some bad things in my life and I have had to get on my knees and confess them to my Lord and my Savior. That is one of the things that we can do to start to turn away from our iniquities.

“How can we repent so that the blessings of Jesus can come to us? One of the things that we can do is learn to be good stewards. Stewardship is one of those areas that is foundational. Jesus said that where a man’s treasure is, there will his heart be also. He knew something about us. He understood this whole financial thing.



Jesus knows that to live, we absolutely must have some way of exchanging goods and getting food, and so on. So we need money and things in order to live. However, if we look at things as “ours”, and if we consider our job in life to be getting as much as we can, then our lives are like a game of Jenga. We can get on top for a while, but we are not on top for very long (thinking of ourselves as one of those blocks). As soon as we get on top, someone else is going to get on top of us and someone else is going to get on top of him, and eventually the whole stack is going to fall. We know it is going to fall. Money is going to fail. We know it is going to fail. So what are we going to do then? If we have not learned to see

everything as belonging to God, if we have not learned to share those things, if we have not learned to be good stewards of them, if we haven’t learned to be accountable, then when it falls, we will fall with it. Our whole world will fall.

“In 1929, there were people who jumped out of windows in New York City and committed suicide when the stock market fell. Why would they do that? It is because money was all they had. Their financial world was everything. Jesus said that if that is where your heart is, you will fall. I do not care if you are Bill Gates or if you are Donald Trump or Warren Buffet or whoever, if that is your world, it is going to fall. One of the things that we can do is to learn, even when we are Joshua’s age, to be good stewards over the money that we have, and to be accountable, and to see that as part of our stewardship.

“I have always been impressed by Sherman’s statement about his mother. She lost everything but she made the choice that when she had the chance to give everything, she did, and that has to be accounted to her for righteousness. We may be asked to do that as well.”

Repentance in the Promises

“How else can we repent? We can take hold of the promises. Ever since I was with my Dad and we discovered that the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenants were full of promises that have blessings attached to them that say if you do this then something is going to occur, it has been a real help to me in understanding how to bring about repentance. If you have a blessing that you really need then go to the scriptures and find the promise that goes with that blessing. Say, ‘Okay Lord, I am willing to put my faith in that.’

“Proverbs 3:5&6 says: *‘Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.’* To me that means you do not say to the Lord that you have to understand how forgiving my brother is going to help me before I will do it. Go ahead and forgive your brother, father, mother, sister, friend, or enemy. Go ahead and do it and lean not to your own understanding but acknowledge the Lord in doing that and He will direct your paths.

“That thing of forgiveness is so important. It is something that we can do



something about. Folks, I am not talking about being mean-spirited against someone. I am saying that if someone has hurt you and you are still feeling the pain, then something that you can do about it is to say, 'Lord, I am going to give this to you and you have got to take it because I can not take it. I am going to forgive that person no matter what and the judgment will be yours.' You give that up. That is something that we can do something about.

"How can we repent? There are some wonderful promises in section 86 of the D&C. I sometimes hesitate to bring it up, but I have heard people joking sometimes that we are the coffee drinking Mormons and that distinguishes us from other types of Mormons. That always puzzled me that people would take something that really has some wonderful promises attached to it and say that we are not following it so that makes us stand apart and joke about it.

"Now do not get me wrong. Section 86 was not given to us as a commandment. God will not send you to hell if you do not follow this, but He says that if you will follow the Word of Wisdom and walk in obedience to the commandments, that it will be health to your navel and marrow to your bones. That means healthy children and healthy lives. You will discover hidden treasures of knowledge and wisdom. You will run and not be weary and walk and not faint, and the Lord gives the promise that the destroying angel shall pass by you and not slay you. You remember what happened when the destroying angel came. Everybody's first born died. Those people who marked their doors with the blood of the lamb were spared. God says that the destroying angel will pass by you when the scourge comes. He can protect you if you have walked in obedience to the commandments and kept these things.

"The prophet Joseph Smith Jr., his brother Hyrum, and the prophets Joseph III, and Isreal A. all wrote about the Word of Wisdom. They all concur that the advice given in Section 86 concerning hot drinks and strong drinks refers to coffee and tea. There is also advice about tobacco and cigarettes and chewing tobacco and those kinds of things. There are some promises here that are really worthwhile – worth the prize – so go for it. Do not do those things to your body that would bring it into ruin. Do those things that would bring life. And Jesus says, 'I will bless you all.'"

Repentance in Reconciliation

"How else do we repent? We can repent by coming to one another. When there is an offense we come to that person in private and try and win our brother or sister to us. How often we go every place else first. This is outlined in Matthew 18. He says you first go to your brother or sister. The second step is, if they do not accept your attempts at reconciliation, that you bring with you one or two witnesses. Again the idea is to get them to reconcile with you. If that does not work, then you can go and tell it to the church. We can repent by doing those things and by keeping the law."

"We need to share with the world the way that Jesus has set out to allow people into the Kingdom of God."

Repentance in our Families

"We can repent by loving our spouse and our children. Sometimes we assume those people who are closest to us know that we love them, but we do not treat them with the kind of respect and love that would call them to be the wonderful persons that they could be. We can repent of that. We can do something different. We can treat our parents with respect. We can treat our children with respect. We can treat our spouse with respect and love. It is not too late, even though we may not have done it for a long time. One time at a campfire many years ago, I asked an elderly church official if he ever told his wife that he loved her. He replied, 'I have never told my wife that. She knows I love her. I do not have to say it.' Now his wife was sitting right there beside him, so I turned to her and asked, 'Would you like him to tell you that he loves you?' She said, 'Yes!' That was when I was young and foolish. Why not tell the ones you love today? Just say, 'I love you.' Start today. Tell them everyday, 'I love you, I want to be with you, and I will never leave you.' I give Ralph Bobbitt credit for that in my house. He said, 'Ron, you need to tell your wife everyday, I love you and I am never going to leave you.' I try everyday to tell her that I love her and I am never going to leave her, and that has brought blessings to us. You do not have to do it that way, but it is not a bad thing to try."

Repentance is a "Key" to the Kingdom

"The gospel says, 'Repent ye therefore and be converted.' We need a new heart and God says He will give us that new heart. We need new ways of treating each other. We need to share with the world the way that Jesus has set out to allow people into the Kingdom of God. It is amazing to me that Jesus gave the Keys of the Kingdom to Peter. He says in Matthew 16:20, 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.' Several times He tells His disciples, 'I am giving you the keys.' Even though he knew that they were all going to leave Him, He still gave them the keys.

"Doctrine and Covenants Section 65 is a really interesting section. It was one of my favorites because it is so short. *'Hearken, and lo, a voice as of one sent down from on high, who is mighty and powerful, whose going forth is unto the ends of the earth; yea, whose voice is unto men, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. The keys of the kingdom of God are committed unto man on the earth, and from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth, as the stone which is cut out of the mountain without hands shall roll forth, until it has filled the whole earth; yea, a voice crying, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, prepare ye the supper of the Lamb, make ready for the Bridegroom; pray unto the Lord; call upon his holy name; make known his wonderful works among the people, call upon the Lord, that his kingdom may go forth upon the earth; that the inhabitants thereof may receive it, and be prepared for the days to come, in the which the Son of man shall come down in heaven, clothed in the brightness of his glory, to meet the kingdom of God which is set up on the earth; wherefore, may the kingdom of God go forth, that the kingdom of heaven may come, that thou, O God, may be glorified in heaven, so on earth, that thy enemies may be subdued; for thine is the honor, power, and glory, for ever and ever. Amen.'*

"The Keys of the Kingdom of God. They allow you to enter the Kingdom of God. Entrance has been given to men on the earth, and we have been called to call people to repentance that the blessing of God may be upon them. We have been



called to baptize them for the remission of sins that they can turn away from their iniquities and be blessed with a new heart and soul. Then we will not be part of the Jenga game that is destined to fall but will be part of the Kingdom of God so that when He comes, we will know Him because we will be like Him.

“May God bless you. I pray that His Spirit will be with you this week to bring to your mind the things that you can do to repent and to turn away from your iniquities, so that God can bless you, and you can become the kind of person that God has called us to be.”



CHOOSE TO NOURISH HIS WORD WITHIN YOU



Priest Ed Anderson
Lamoni, Iowa
April 17, 2011

And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfill and to do the work of the covenants of the Father which He hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of Him. (Moroni 7:32)

Lost and Saved

“We are all familiar with the creation story in Genesis: How God created everything spiritually first and then physically, placing Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden to tend to His creation; and how God planted in the garden of Eden the tree of life and also the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God told them that he had given unto them every tree of the garden to eat except (by way of commandment) that they should not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He then added a very important concept as he instructed them. He said *‘nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, for it is given unto thee, but remember I forbid it.’* In other words, He gave unto man his agency to choose for himself - He gave unto man the *choice* to follow God or to follow his own will and pleasure.

“Adam and Eve’s choice was to set aside the command of God and partake of the forbidden fruit. Satan tempted Eve first by getting her to drop her guard: she gave consideration to his temptation. Satan said to her, *‘Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden.’* She replied, *‘We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden but this tree or the tree of the knowledge of good and evil we cannot eat.’* Here we find satan lulling Eve by telling her a half truth, seducing her by saying, *‘Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye shall eat thereof then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods knowing good and evil.’*

“The truth part was that Adam and Eve would not suffer an immediate physical death as a result of eating the forbidden fruit and also they would become as gods knowing good and evil. The part that satan left out in seducing Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit was the immediate spiritual death they would suffer. They were kicked out of the garden of Eden and thus denied the presence of God. Another part satan left out was that they would grow old and die physically. All this satan did to destroy the great plan of God and to deceive and blind men and lead them captive down to hell. It would appear that he was successful. Man is miserable, having to eek out his living from the earth, no longer walking in God’s presence. The only thing that they had to look forward to was growing old and dying. Because of their rebellion they were lost, eternally separated from God their creator.

“But alas, all was not lost. Adam must have felt a longing for the presence of God which was lost to him when he was driven from the garden. He and his wife began to call upon the Lord’s name. The Lord, true to form, spoke to them, giving them a commandment that they should worship the Lord their God. Also God commanded them that they should offer the firstlings of their flocks as an offering to the Lord. Adam was obedient and did as he was commanded. It is interesting that after many days an angel appeared unto Adam asking him why he was offering sacrifices unto the Lord. Adam being truthful answered ‘I don’t know.’ The angel gave them the key: *‘...This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth; Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest, in the name of the Son. And thou shalt repent, and call upon God, in the name of the Son forevermore. And in that day, the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying, I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever; that, as thou hast fallen, thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will.’* (Genesis 4:7-9)

“Now Adam and Eve believed and started telling their sons and daughters. At this point Satan came among them saying, *‘believe it not’* and men began to be carnal sensual and devilish. God called upon men and *‘...commanded them that they should repent; And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved..’*” (Genesis 5:1-2)

Saved from the Second Death

“At this point, I wish to explain the term saved. The fall from the presence of God brought physical and spiritual death to all men. When Christ was crucified and resurrected, He conquered death for all men that *all* men might be resurrected. Because of Jesus’ being raised from the dead, all men are brought to stand before the judgement bar of God where the book of life will be opened and all will be judged according to their works, those things which they have done and those things which they haven’t done. Now as all men have sinned, they will have to stand before the alter of God with a perfect remembrance of all their sins. They must shrink from God’s presence and suffer the second death. The second death is being separated from God’s presence forever.



Those who stand before the judgement bar having a faith in Christ Jesus will receive forgiveness of their sins. Their sins will be carried by Jesus who died for them. They will stand before the judgement bar having their guilt and remembrance of their follies washed away in the blood of the Lamb.

“God has not left us alone. He has given us a hope that progresses to faith,

“Personal salvation is the result of what you choose to do, not what someone else chooses for you.”

and then to knowledge. He has declared this simple plan to all peoples, nations, kindreds and tongues by His mouth, by Jesus, by angels, and by His Holy Spirit. He has incorporated into every soul the knowledge that they may know good from evil.

“Moroni 7:10-16 says that everything which inviteth to do good and persuadeth to believe in Christ is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ. It also says whatsoever persuadeth men to do evil and believe not in Christ and deny him and not serve God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil.”

Good Seed Needs Nourishment

“Now Christ has sowed the word. Some of the effort has fallen by the wayside and the word was quickly plucked up out of the heart of those who heard. Some heard the word and quickly received it and the word sprouted readily, which is the natural thing for seeds to do. After the seeds sprouted there was little soil to sustain the growing seed. The environment of these that heard quickly led them astray and they gave the word no attention. The sprouted word quickly withered away. Some of the word found place in the hearts of those engulfed in the world. Although the word grew into a plant, the cares of the world choked the new plant causing it to be of no effect. Some of the recipients of the word placed it in their hearts and it grew and the hearts of those individuals were changed to a greater or lessor extent. They were capable of being instruments in God’s hand bringing ministry of a greater or lesser quality to those who stood in need of succor.

“Alma 16:151-172 gives a little different version to this parable. The Zoramite priesthood had forbade the people who were poor to worship in the temple. These were the people who helped

build the worship house. Alma, in preaching to them, explained how this change of heart that brought salvation worked. He prodded them to awake and arouse their faculties even to experiment upon his words. Even if the best that they could do was to have a desire to believe, that was a place to start. This desiring to believe would allow them to give place in their hearts for a portion of his words. This was likened to planting a seed in their hearts. If it was a good seed it would begin to swell in their heart. This worked if they did not cast it out by their unbelief, causing them to resist the Spirit of the Lord. When you feel the swelling motion in your breast you recognize that it is a good seed enlightening understanding and enlarging the soul. As the tree growth or the word of God grows in your hearts ye will say, ‘Lets nourish it with great care that it may get root that it might bear fruit unto us.’ **But if you neglect the tree and take no thought for its nourishment it will not get any root.** When the heat of the day comes it will be scorched and you will pluck it up and cast it out. This isn’t because the fruit would not be desirable, but it is because your ground is barren and you would not nourish the tree. Therefore, you cannot have the fruit thereof.

“II Nephi 11:97-105 gives God’s position on salvation. It is free and is there for everyone. He commandeth none that they shall not partake of salvation. Does Christ say depart from me??? Nay but he saith, ‘Come unto me all ye ends of the earth, buy milk and honey without money and without price.’ (vs. 99) ‘Hath he commanded any that they should not partake of his salvation? Behold I say unto you, Nay...’ (vss. 102-103)

“From the garden of Eden, God has given us the ability to choose our own destiny. Because of the transgression of Adam and Eve, mankind has need of repentance to re-enter God’s presence. God has prepared the way. He has given His only begotten Son that those who have faith on him might be forgiven of their sins and be saved. Has he denied us entrance into his kingdom? Nay. None has he commanded that they should not partake of salvation.

“There is a fallacy today that someone else is responsible for our actions. Is this God’s decree? Nay. It is the decree of God that all men should stand before His judgement seat and answer for their own sins. In this world there are some who say

that religion has no place, that there is no place for the religious mumbo jumbo in scientific discovery. They are unbelievers. They say there is no evidence that God exists. I say that there is ample evidence that He lives. Are we to let the opinions of others cheat us out of salvation? Personal salvation is the result of what you choose to do, not what someone else chooses for you. I would exhort you to choose ye to serve the Lord. With the agency which God has given to every man, choose the path to everlasting Salvation. It is a simple choice. On one hand you choose to disbelieve or on the other you choose to believe. Yes or no, it’s your choice.”



Conference News!

Ordinations

At various Business Sessions the General Conference voted to sustain the calls of men to the offices of High Priest and Seventy. Ordained at this Conference were:

- Seventy Gary Metzger
- Seventy Hugh Caldwell

- High Priest Brad Gault
- High Priest Tony Durant
- High Priest Ron Vermeland
- High Priest Robert Giertz
- High Priest Criag Moore
- High Priest Chuck Perry
- High Priest Gary Kuntz
- High Priest Bill Herod
- High Priest Rudy Leutzinger

Sustained, though not yet ordained as High Priests, were Elder Alan Smith (Mount Ayr Restoration Branch), Elders Kerry Lancaster and Larry McHargue (Dallas Restoration Branch).



Inspired Message
April 18, 2011
2011 JCRB General Conference
Inspired Message given through Seventy Gary Wilson

Saints, throughout this day I have had the Spirit of God very very close to me. I know it was because I love to preach. But I also know it was because of the great experience that I had yesterday while I was at the auditorium—or across the way (*referring to the Conference Center*), during the communion service. I don't think I was ever as blessed in my life as I was during that service. Beginning with a beautiful duet by the Bates boys – they brought such powerful ministry. And listening to those beautiful violins play, I walked into the courts of glory. And I heard my Father saying:

“Tell my children that I love them. Tell my children that what they are doing is the will of my Son. Tell my children, Do not despair, for the work of the latter days that I entrusted in my servant Joseph is the same work that you my people are called to promulgate in your time. I know that my adversary has desires to destroy my Holy church. But be assured that it is in vain. For I have forces that are ready to come forth from my presence to be with you, my people, and cause great miracles to take place – much more than you have ever seen. Be of good cheer and follow me. Follow the words of my Son, for they are words of truth and words of soberness. Find joy in your days of service for the day will come when many of you shall see the salvation of my Son take place. I will not be mocked by man. What I have said in ages past I continue to say today. I am the same that spoke and all things were, and are, and will be. Do not despair for my word is sure and it will not come back to me void. And you are the people of my choice. Move forward and be not afraid to stand in those places that for many of you are uncomfortable, but to stand in the truth and under the mantle of my Son. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto you my people.”

Confirmation by Presiding Elder, Richard Hoff

“As one being in charge, I'd like to bear witness of and confirm the voice of the Lord through our Brother, Gary. He has brought to us a message of Jesus Christ today. May His peace truly rest upon you and may you be encouraged today. May hope have been inspired in your hearts.”

WHICH DROP OF BLOOD WAS YOURS?



Elder Alan Smith
Mount Ayr, Iowa

April 24, 2011

Good Morning. For a scripture reading this morning I would like to read from II Nephi 6:45-48. *And he cometh into the world that he may save all men, if they*

will hearken unto his voice; For behold, he suffereth the pains of all men: yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women and children, who belong to the family of Adam. And he suffereth this, that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day. And he commandeth all men that they must repent, and be baptized in his name, having perfect faith in the Holy One of Israel, or they can not be saved in the kingdom of God.

It is good to be with you on this Easter Sunday morning, I hope that as we share together this morning, you will realize that you were involved in this story of death and resurrection, that the story that we know of Jesus' dying for us and then coming back is more than just symbols of the cross and the empty tomb or crucifixion and resurrection. There are two things I would like you to go away with this morning. I hope you can feel in your heart, “Christ died for me and Christ rose again for me.”

Christ died for us, you and me. Sometimes it is easier for us to think of Christ dying for everyone than it is to think that he died for me.

Let's remember the story of how he died. He went to the garden and prayed.

There he made the final decision to suffer for each one of us.

In Luke it is recorded this way: *And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed, Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and he sweat as at were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.* (Luke 22:41-44)

And when he came back to the disciples who he had asked to pray with him in this special moment, they were asleep.

In just a short time, Jesus went to the cross to face a horrible death. The word excruciating was coined to explain what death on the cross was like. That word didn't exist until people were crucified. Crucifixion is slowly strangling to death. It's not the other parts of going to the cross that actually kills a person. The reason that they put nails through your hands and feet is so it will be harder for you to lift yourself to get a breath as you hang on the cross. It will be more painful. Sometimes they would come along and break your legs to hurry the process. They did that so



that it would be more painful for you to pull yourself up against the tearing of the nails in your hands and feet so that you could get a breath. Sometimes they stuck a spear in your side as they did with Jesus because as you bled you would lose strength. As you lost strength, it would be harder for you to get your breath and you would strangle faster.

It is not any wonder that the phrases that Jesus said from the cross were not long sermons. You can imagine what it must have been like to gather the strength to say anything. You gasp for air through your mouth and your mouth becomes dry and makes it even harder to say things like, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do," or "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," or "It is finished."

But as bad as it was to die of crucifixion as Jesus did, the two thieves on each side of him were going through some of those same pains. There have been painful deaths of people all down through the centuries. But the scriptures tell us that Jesus' death was different. He was doing more than just dying on the cross, much more.

As Alma tells us in chapter 5:20-23 *And he shall go forth, suffering pains, and afflictions, and temptations of every kind; And this that the word might be fulfilled which saith, He will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people; and he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people: And he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities. Now the Spirit knoweth all things; nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh, that he might take upon him the sins of his people, that he might blot out their transgressions, according to the power of his deliverance; and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me.*

Jesus took upon himself the pains of dying the way he did so that no one of us could say, "But you don't understand, Jesus. You don't understand the pain I'm feeling. You don't understand how bad I'm hurting." Because He hurt to the ultimate degree of hurting so He would know in the flesh what that was like and have mercy on us.

The worse pain I have ever felt is a kidney stone and that is pretty powerful.

But I don't have any way of knowing what the is worst pain unless I feel it myself. I can say different ones have pain, and I've had pain, so I kind of understand what your pain is like. But Jesus tells us that He has felt every pain. He knows what it is like. There is no pain that we could experience the Jesus cannot say, "I know what that feels like."

We have the testimony that I read as the scripture reading. 2 Nephi 6:45-48 *And he cometh into the world that he may save all men, if they will hearken unto his voice; For behold, he suffereth the pains of all men: yea, the pains of every living creature, both men, women and children, who belong to the family of Adam. (That's pretty much everybody, as far as I can figure out.) And he suffereth this, that the resurrection might pass upon all men, that all might stand before him at the great and judgment day.*

Jesus wasn't just suffering the pain of the cross, he was suffering for the sins of each one of us. He was suffering and he would have suffered and he would have gone to the cross even if you were the only person in the world. He would have died even if you were the only person there was to die for. He died for your sins. He died for you when you have been rebellious in your life and done things you knew weren't right. He died for you when you yielded to the temptation of Satan in your life and loved darkness more than light. He died for you when you said something unkind to someone else or when you were selfish with what God gave you. He died for you when you did something that you thought know one else would know about so maybe it would be okay just this once.

Which drop of bloody sweat was yours? Was there one strand of that whipping cord that went across His back especially for you? Was there one hammer in the nail of His hand, or one pain from the spear in His side, or did your sin take that last breath away as He said, "It is finished"? We sing the song "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?" Some of us may have seen that in vision, but none of us were there in person. But our sin was there.

The scriptures tell us that all have fallen short of the glory of God and that Christ died for each one of us. He suffered for our past sins, sins of today and our future sins, for every man, woman and child who will come upon the face of the earth. How do we feel when we finally

come to understand what sin has done in our lives? What does it make us feel like when we finally understand that if there had been only one person in the world, Jesus would have suffered and died for us. What would it be like if Jesus hadn't come to do that for us? What would it be like if Jesus had decided he couldn't go through with the garden and the cross?

Listen to the testimony of Alma: *And the angel spake more things unto me, which were heard by my brethren, but I did not hear them; for when I heard the words, If thou wilt not be destroyed of thyself, seek no more to destroy the church of God, I was struck with such great fear and amazement, lest perhaps I should be destroyed, that I fell to the earth, and I did hear no more; But I was racked with eternal torment, for my soul was harrowed up to the greatest degree, and racked with all my sins. (Alma 17:9-10)*

Do you understand the word picture there? What does it mean to be racked with your sins? Have you ever seen the old movies with somebody on the rack when they are stretching you and breaking every bone in your body and every ligament and pulling all of those things out. Maybe we know the harrow better. I remember my grandfather used to have an old harrow that they pulled over the field to break up the clods of dirt. It had teeth. I can imagine what it would be like to be run over by the harrow.

Yea, I did remember all my sins and iniquities, for which I was tormented with the pains of hell; Yea, I saw that I had rebelled against my God, and that I had not kept his holy commandments; yea, and I had murdered many of his children, or rather led them away unto destruction; Yea, and in fine, so great had been my iniquities, that the very thoughts of coming into the presence of my God, did rack my soul with inexpressible horror. O, thought I, that I could be banished and become extinct both soul and body, that I might not be brought to stand in the presence of my God, to be judged of my deeds. And now, for three days and for three nights was I racked, even with the pains of a damned soul. (Alma 17:11-14)

Alma didn't feel anything that Jesus didn't know. Do you understand that? But without that gift of Him coming and dying for us, all of those pains that Alma spoke of would be ours. In fact Paul writing in Hebrews even says there are things we can do today in our lives that can crucify Christ



anew. In Hebrews 6:3 -6 he says: *And we will go on unto perfection if God permit. For he hath made it impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to be renewed again unto repentance; seeing they crucify unto themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*

If this was the end of the Easter Story, we might not have as much to celebrate at Easter each year. Remembering the pain and agony of the crucifixion without the rest of the story would not be something to celebrate, except to realize that Jesus suffered so we wouldn't have to if we come to him in repentance of our sins. But the story does not end with the crucifixion.

Jesus rose from the dead as well to bring us joy and the hope of eternal life, making this story all the richer. The scriptures say again, *...for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* (Hebrews 12:2)

Jesus died for us for joy -- the joy He knew was coming. He endured the cross and that joy in overcoming finding joy in eternal life can be ours.

Listen to the testimony of King Benjamin as an angel shared it with him. *And he said unto me, Awake, and hear the words which I shall tell thee: for behold, I am come to declare unto thee glad tidings of great joy. For the Lord hath heard thy prayers, and hath judged of thy righteousness, and hath sent me to declare unto thee that thou mayest rejoice; and that thou mayest declare unto thy people, that they may also be filled with joy. For behold, the time cometh, and is not far distant, that with power, the Lord Omnipotent who reigneth, who was, and is from all eternity to all eternity, shall come down from heaven, among the children of men, and shall dwell in a tabernacle of clay, And shall go forth amongst men, working mighty miracles, such as healing the sick, raising the dead, causing the lame to walk, the blind to receive their sight, and the deaf to hear, and curing all manner of diseases; And he shall cast out devils, or the evil spirits which dwell in the hearts of the children of men. And lo, he shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than*

man can suffer, except it be unto death; For behold, blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people. And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things, from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary. And lo, he cometh unto his own, that salvation might come unto the children of men, even through faith, on his name; And even after all this, they shall consider him a man, and say that he hath a devil, and shall scourge him, and shall crucify him. And he shall rise the third day from the dead; and behold, he standeth to judge the world. And behold, all these things are done, that a righteous judgement might come upon the children of men. For behold, and also his blood atoneth for the sins of those who have fallen by the transgression of Adam, who have died, not knowing the will of God concerning them, or who have ignorantly sinned. But wo, wo unto him who knoweth that he rebelleth against God; for salvation cometh to none such, except it be through repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ. And the Lord God hath sent his holy prophets among all the children of men to declare these things to every kindred, nation, and tongue, that thereby whosoever should believe that Christ should come, the same might receive remission of their sins, and rejoice with exceedingly great joy, even as though he had already come among them. (Mosiah 1:95-109)

Remember, that was a prophecy from the Book of Mormon given before Christ came.

What a difference the fact that Christ rose again, breaking the bands of death and making eternal life possible is for us. What a difference that we can repent and what a difference it is that we even have the promise that we can share in the resurrection story because we shall see Him and know ourselves that He is.

Here's the difference it made in Alma: **17:15-23** *And it came to pass that as I was thus racked with torment, while I was harrowed up by the memory of my many sins, behold, I remembered also to have heard my father prophesy unto the people, concerning the coming of one Jesus Christ, a Son of God, to atone for the sins of the world. Now as my mind caught hold upon this thought, I cried within my*

heart, O Jesus, thou Son of God, have mercy on me, who art in the gall of bitterness, and art encircled about by the everlasting chains of death. And now behold, when I thought this, I could remember my pains nor more; yea, I was harrowed by the memory of my sins no more. And O, what joy, and what marvelous light I did behold; yea, my soul was filled with joy as exceeding as was my pain; yea, I say unto you, my son, that there could be nothing so exquisite and so bitter as were my pains. Yea, and again I say unto you, my son, that on the other hand, there can be nothing so exquisite and sweet as was my joy; Yea, methought I saw even as our father Lehi saw, God sitting upon his throne, surrounded with numberless concourses of angels, in the attitude of singing and praising their God; yea, and my soul did long to be there. But behold, my limbs did receive their strength again, and I stood upon my feet, and did manifest unto the people that I had been born of God; Yea, and from that time, even until now, I have labored without ceasing, that I might bring souls unto repentance; that I might bring them to taste of the exceeding joy of which I did taste; that they might also be born of God, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. Yea, and now behold, O my son, the Lord doth give me exceeding great joy in the fruit of my labors; for because of the word which he has imparted unto me, behold, many have been born of God, and have tasted as I have tasted, and have seen eye to eye, as I have seen.

Jesus came that this might be our experience when we come to Him.

Even before His death, Jesus was teaching about the resurrection to Martha before he raised Lazarus. He said, *"I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die."* (John 11:25)

Jesus silenced the doubting Thomases that indeed he had risen from the dead and broken the bonds of death for all time. Thomas said, *"Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe."* (John 20:25)

What are your doubts about the risen Lord? What do you have to see to accept the fact that He died for your sins, that He calls you to repent and to live with



Him in eternal joy?

The scriptures talk about Jesus visiting Thomas. John 20:26 . . . *then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger; and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.*

Imagine the joy of Thomas as Jesus brought this revelation to him. Imagine our joy as He brings this revelation to us.

What was the joy that Jesus found in dying for us? This is what He said when he visited the people in Book of Mormon times: 3 Nephi 13:7-8 *And now behold, my joy is great, even unto fullness, because of you, and also this generation; yea, and even the Father rejoiceth, and also all the holy angels, because of you and this generation; for none of them are lost. Behold, I would that ye should understand; for I mean them who are now alive, of this generation; and none of them are lost; and in them I have fullness of joy.*

Would we like Christ to have fullness of joy this morning? Could He come and say to this group, "None of you are lost. You have made my joy full." That's the message of Easter, when we will respond and make His sacrifice of effect in our lives.

Paul shared this in Romans 6:2-9, 22-23 *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead to sin is freed from sin. 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. But now*

being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I want to affirm again this morning, Christ died for you personally. He rose for you personally. He calls for you to repent and be baptized and be a new person. Jesus' call to His disciples was: *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments. Break not my commandments for to save your lives; for whosoever will save his life in this world, shall lose it in the world to come. And whosoever will lose his life in this world, for my sake, shall find it in the world to come.* (Matthew 16:25-28)

We are called to follow Jesus by making our lives those that can find joy, and bring joy for our Heavenly Father.

Remember the worth of souls is great in the sight of God; for, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him.

3d And he hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him on conditions of repentance. And how great is his joy in the soul that repenteth. Wherefore you are called to cry repentance unto this people. And if it so be that you should labor all your days, in crying repentance unto this people, and bring save it be one soul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father! And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the kingdom of my Father, how great will be your joy, if you should bring many souls unto me! (Doctrine and Covenants 16:3c-4a)

My prayer this morning, is that we will respond in the spirit of the Lord and find the true joy of Easter, in our lives and in sharing the new life Christ makes available for each of us, with those around us, that we may share in the joy that Christ went to the cross for each of us in the first place.

* * * * *

Sherman's Phipps then wrapped up the morning with these comments as the presider for the service: One of the things that has always struck me about the Easter story ... is the fact that Jesus' own disciples, even His own apostles, apparently listened to Him and heard him say, "I'm going to be crucified, I'm going to lay in the tomb for three days and I'll be resurrected." But it never really registered, because once he was crucified, they seemed to treat Him as though He were gone. Then when there were witnesses who came back and said, "We've been to the tomb and He is not there," at least in the records we have there is nothing I find where they said, "Great. It has been fulfilled." They were all doubtful. The reason I bring that up this morning is because if we truly believe, and I hope you do, I think you do, that Christ died for our sins and has been resurrected, then surely the rest of His words are true also, and we should anticipate his return again also, and be prepared. We need to be preparing so that we can be a part of that joy that Brother Alan was talking about. As he spoke, I was struck with the fact that we have an opportunity. Christ always puts before us choices. Light and dark. . Now as Alan was speaking it struck me, we have a choice, an opportunity to either be a part of Christ's excruciating experience or His exquisite experience. I hope you will choose to be a part of the exquisite.



We have a choice, an opportunity to either be a part of Christ's excruciating experience or His exquisite experience.



May 2011

Sunday Schedule

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				

DATE	May 1st	May 8th	May 15th	May 22nd	May 29th	June 5th
SPEAKING	Steven Cunningham	Michael Jordison	Ordination Service	George Knotts	Sharing Service	Rodney Bastow
PRESIDING	Sherman Phipps	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Steven Cunningham	Steve Smith	Michael Jordison
PIANIST	Pat Bolingbroke	Jan Jordison	volunteer needed	volunteer needed	Pat Bolingbroke	Jan Jordison
SPECIAL MUSIC	Rob Rolfe	Sue Beck	Devon Cunningham	Ron & Di Smith	Sharing Service	Beth Knotts
FAMILY DEVOTIONS	Alan Smith	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber	Sue Beck
GREETERS	Sue Beck	Patty Bolingbroke	Steven Cunningham	Michael Jordison	George Knotts	Sherman Phipps
CUSTODIANS	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber	Rodney Bastow	Jordison Family
SUNDAY EVENING	Norman Nelson	Jan Jordison	Rob Rolfe	Bob Rowland	Ron Smith	Steve Smith

Wednesday Prayer Service Schedule

DATE	May 4th	May 11th	May 18th	May 25th	June 1st
LOCATION	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler	Norman Nelson	Rob Rolfe
PRESIDING	Rodney Bastow	Gordon Winkler	Ron Smith	Rob Rolfe	Alan Smith

Special Events & Activities

Sunday May 1: Priesthood Meeting at 8:30AM. Potluck following Communion service.

Sunday, May 8th: Mother's Day.

Graduation Celebration for all MARB Seniors - 5:30PM at Jan Jordison's home. Meat will be provided (grilled hamburgers). Everyone is asked to bring something to add to the meal - call or email Jan to let her know what you are bringing so she can make sure there is a variety.

May 15th: Ordination service of Alan Smith to the office of High Priest. Potluck to follow the service.

Graceland University Graduation Ceremony.

Wednesday May 18: Day of Fasting & Prayer

May 21st: Jazmyn Galusha's Graduation reception at The Alley in Lamoni from 4-7PM

May 22nd: Lamoni (2PM) & Central-Decatur (1:30PM) High School Graduation Ceremonies

May 30th: Memorial Day

Birthday's this month: Bob Rowland (2), Cody Clark (24), Zachary Akers (24), Taylor Clisby (31)

Anniversary's this month: Ron & Di Smith (28th), Jim & Linda Barber (30th)



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

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



CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST - MT AYR RESTORATION BRANCH

MAY 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)

And it Came to Pass...



April showers bring May flowers... or so the saying goes. And what do May flowers bring? Why smiles of course.

However, the other thing that April showers bring is M-U-D. That's why Spring is my least favorite season. Oeey goeey mud seems to get everywhere. You just can't escape it in this part of the country and I've often wondered if there's any way that Spring can come without bringing with it this unpleasant and unwelcome companion. The problem is, that Spring without rain means a Spring without flowers. It also leads to summers with poor crops and autumns with even poorer harvests.

No, to take away this nasty little consequence of the Season means to take away the things that make the rest of the year so grand.

God gave us the seasons for a reason.

Wise King Solomon told us that for every thing there is a season, a time to sow, a time to reap, a time to live and a time to die.

Our lifetimes as a whole are a season in which to live out our probationary period. We also seem to go through different seasons throughout this lifetime. The point is, that though we may have some rough and not so pleasant periods in our lives, where the rains bring the mud and muck, the important thing to remember is that they are there for a reason.

Whatever it is that we're going through we must remember to have hope. For one day the unpleasantness of the thunderstorms will turn into the beauty of the summer, and what joy we will have as we look upon the blossoms that God brings from that "rainy season".

OFFICERS

PASTOR/PRESIDING ELDER:

High Priest Sherman Phipps
Elder Alan Smith (Counselor)
Elder Gordon Winkler (Counselor)

BISHOP'S AGENT

Elder Gordon Winkler
Cheryl Phipps (Stewardship Coord.)

HOME MINISTRY

Priest Rodney Bastow
Priest Ed Anderson

SECRETARY/RECORDER

Julia Jordison

FELLOWSHIP COORDINATOR

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Linda Barber

YOUTH LEADER

Steven Smith

SERVICE PROJECTS

Kent Clisby

HISTORIAN

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