



Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

NEWSLETTER

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Blow the Trumpet in
ZION

sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly.

News & Notes

40 Days of Fasting

MARB is encouraged in the recent call to fast for 40 days, which began August 28 and ends October 6. Each participant is fasting as they choose throughout each day and reading the recommended scriptures; the congregation is fasting the supper meal on Wednesday nights. See page 2 for more details.

Need a Visit to your Home?

The Priesthood would like to meet in everyone's home this month. When was the last time you were visited? We encourage everyone to consider this holy directive. Let Ed Anderson or Rodney Bastow know when you'd like to be visited.

Priesthood Meeting

Sunday, September 18th at 5:00 PM at Norman Nelson's home.

Wedding Bells to Ring!!

Cody Clark, son of Bob & Jennifer Rowland and Kassy Williams, daughter of Matt & Anita Williams, will be joined in marriage September 30, 2011 in Kansas City. Congratulations everyone!

Fall Retreat

Sept 30 at 5:00PM thru noon on October 2 will be the Heartland District Fall Retreat. Forefront Restoration Branch is hosting the retreat this year, which will be held at Camp Nauvoo, in Nauvoo, Illinois. Contact Betty Vickery.

Contents

FEATURE:	PAGE:
Sermons	
Elder Gordon Winkler	3
H.P. H. Alan Smith	6
Priest Ed Anderson	12
H.P. Sherman Phipps	14
.....	
News & Notes	1
Words of Counsel	2
Calendar	10
Song in Tongues	11



During the 2011 Seventy Missionary Family Reunion, the following letter was presented by Chuck Perry to a quorum of High Priests. It was agreed that the letter contained wise counsel and an effort to organize a corporate fast to be enjoined by all factions of the 1830 Church of Jesus Christ was made. The fast, which started August 28, is divided into 10 days of Praise, 20 days of Repentance and 10 days of Consecration, ending on October 6.

In view of the many varying opinions about the direction of the church and priesthood authority, Mount Ayr Restoration branch is encouraged and hopeful that many Saints will put aside differences and join this fast, centering not on *who* has a right to call a fast, but centering instead on Him, *Whom has all Wisdom, Power & Glory*.

Words of Counsel

Letter from Kerry Lancaster - Dallas, Texas

Dear Brother Chuck,

In a burning and sober manner it has been heavily impressed upon me, more than I can bear, that it is time for the Saints to be on our knees in humble supplication to the Lord in repentance, seeking forgiveness and mercy. The conditions of the world today are rife with the signs we have studied and preached for generations—wars and rumors of wars, tumult in the nations, the Middle East in unrest and chaos, societies breaking down across the world, record droughts, record fires destroying the land, record floods as rivers burst their banks and levies, record tornadoes and hurricanes, record earthquakes and tsunamis, economic collapse and ruin, immoral and corrupt leaders in all the nations including ours, unemployment, huge institutions and businesses failing... the earth is groaning under the rampant sin and oppression covering her face.

And many are asking: "Where is the Lord?"

But the Lord responds: "Where are My Saints, where is My storehouse, where is My Zion?"

As a church, we have suffered for decades in the wilderness as scattered and lost sheep. We have taken refuge in our own self-perceived righteousness by shunning the apostasy of the leadership of the RLDS / Community of Christ and casting ourselves off from their errs and deceptions. We rebuked and rejected the sons of Joseph because they stumbled and spoke falsely.

Yet look at us. We are scattered. We are beaten down. We are trodden underfoot in the world. We are weak. We have no voice to warn the world and prepare for the Lord's return. And we have not asked ourselves what the Lord now asks us to examine and understand: if we are the righteous of the Church, then why did the Lord allow wicked servants to bring us to this captive state, in effectual bondage?

We have somewhat sought to forgive those who have done this to us (as individuals, but not corporately), but we have not examined ourselves to look to our own culpability.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me," declared the Lord. Yet we did raise up a god before Him... a god we thought was holy and good and worthy of being worshipped. Over the years, the RLDS had come to worship the Church, instead of the Lord. We worshipped its history, its structure, its holy places in Kirtland and Independence and Nauvoo, its quorums, its conferences, its councils, its stakes and districts and offices and missions. The Church became our god, and the Lord took it from us to turn us back to Him. And we have been asking the Lord to give us back the Church, and give us a Prophet again. Yet the Lord asks: "Will you accept and hear My true prophets, or will you stone them and rend them in the courtyard like the children of Israel did?"

The Lord would have us humble ourselves and prepare ourselves to hear Him before we can receive and accept what He has to say.

"Sanctify a fast before Me," says the Lord, "and turn from your pride, and humble yourselves. Yea, declare a fast, and forgive all who have wronged you, before seeking mercy and forgiveness from Me. Yea, seek to know and understand your own sins and transgressions which have led you to this state such that you can truly repent, and be forgiven. Uphold the sons of Joseph to Me in mighty prayer, that the covenant I swore in My righteousness to their father Joseph, and that was appointed unto and inherited therein by his son Joseph, and as was inherited in righteousness and truth also by his sons Frederick Madison, and Israel Alexander, and William Wallace, yea, and as was inherited therein also, because of My Covenant, with his son Wallace Bunnell, yea, uphold them to Me that the covenant I made with Joseph may be restored and fulfilled, even as I swore to him in My righteousness." "Yea, uphold the sons of Joseph in mighty prayer to Me, with much love and compassion and mercy and forgiveness, yea, even that same love and compassion and mercy and forgiveness that ye seek from Me, or I shall (*continued on back page*)



MY TWO CENTS' WORTH ABOUT PRAYER



Elder Gordon Winkler
Mt. Ayr, Iowa
August 7, 2011

Elder Steven Smith opened the morning worship with this scripture. *And it came to pass that Jesus commanded his disciples that they should bring forth some bread and wine unto him. And while they were gone for bread and wine, he commanded the multitude that they should sit themselves down upon the earth. And when the disciples had come with bread and wine, he took of the bread, and break and blessed it; and he gave unto the disciples, and commanded that they should eat. And when they had eaten, and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude. And when the multitude had eaten and were filled, he said unto the disciples, Behold, there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread, and bless it, and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name. And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread, and blessed it, and gave it unto you. And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body, which I have shewn unto you. And it shall be a testimony unto the Father, that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me, ye shall have my Spirit to be with you. And it came to pass that when he*

had said these words, he commanded his disciples that they should take of the wine of the cup, and drink of it, and that they should also give unto the multitude, that they might drink of it. And it came to pass that they did so, and did drink of it, and were filled; and they gave unto the multitude, and they did drink, and they were filled. And when the disciples had done this, Jesus said unto them, Blessed are ye for this thing which ye have done, for this is fulfilling my commandments, and this doth witness unto the Father that ye are willing to do that which I have commanded you. And this shall ye always do unto those who repent and are baptized in my name; and ye shall do it in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me, ye shall have my Spirit to be with you. And I give unto you a commandment that ye shall do these things. (3 Nephi 8:28-42)

As a scripture reading Elder Gordon Winkler read Luke 22:39-43. *And he came out, and went, as he was accustomed, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. 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.*

Good morning. It is a pleasure to share this morning with you in the renewing of our covenant and remembering our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. If I was to entitle my remarks this morning it would probably be something like this, 'My Two Cents Worth About Prayer.' The reason I say that is that on July 10th Brother Steve Cunningham spoke and I was really ministered to that day by his words and his offering. Since then I have thought about those words. Then last Sunday the 31st in family worship Alan and Valle Smith shared about prayer also. So this is my two cents worth added to Steve and Alan and Valle's.

Unanswered Prayer Is Hard to Understand

If you were here and remember, and if you weren't it will probably come out in the next newsletter so you will get a chance to read what Steve shared with us,

the phrase that caught my attention in Steve's message was when he said, 'It's hard to understand why one prayer is answered and another seems to go unanswered.' I'm trying to understand that. Maybe you are too. Steve indicated that for a lot of us we are caught up in what we consider the microwave society in that we are looking for answers right now. Steve shared his testimonies about prayer in his life. The one situation he shared surrounded the tragic death of his brother early in life. Steve said that he had to pray to have the anger and the doubt removed so that he could continue on with his life. Steve told of praying for his family's safety in travels that they have taken. He shared that there was a prayer on behalf of Christopher for his health when he was young and that he was healed.

Steve's message was encouraging to me and maybe to you also in that we need to pray continuously and unceasing and that we need to teach our children to pray. In part of his message he used the scripture from 2nd Nephi 14:11-12. *For if ye would hearken unto the spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray: for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray. But behold I say unto you, that ye must pray always, and not faint: that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.* I think the two important keys to that couple of verses is that we must listen to the Spirit that tells us that we **must** pray and that praying must be the **first** thing that we do in circumstances where we need strength or comfort or advice or wisdom. I thank Steve for putting me on that track.

The family worship that was presented by Valle and Alan began with a scripture from 2nd Nephi 13:29-30 which is just across the page from where Steve left off. That's probably not coincidental. It says, *Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.* Valle then shared a testimony of their experience in searching for housing both in Ottumwa and later in Mount Ayr. She



talked about how prayer was an important part of their search process. She described the bumps along the road in finding a house that would meet the criteria that she and Alan had created in a list. In both instances suitable housing was found in those communities. Valle made the statement that God is not a vending machine. You don't always put a prayer in and get an answer out. Valle concluded by saying that God is always with us. If we trust in Him He will lead us in His time in His paths and in His plan. I was reminded of a scripture from the second section of the Doctrine and Covenants:1a-c. *The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God, cannot be frustrated, neither can they come to naught, for God doth not walk in crooked paths; neither doth he turn to the right hand nor to the left; neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; therefore his paths are straight and his course is one eternal round.* I believe, from the testimony that Valle shared, that she believes that to be true that God's paths are straight and He has a plan for all of us including the Smith family even in finding housing in both communities.

That kind of set the thoughts rolling in my mind for today. So now here's my two cents worth. I believe in prayer. I have come to accept that prayer is beyond asking and receiving. Prayer is fundamental to our relationship with God. If you think of it as such it's kind of a barometer of our faith. Prayer keeps us connected with each other. It helps us to know where compassion, strength and love are needed. I believe that prayer is one of the most powerful tools we have and that prayer can change the circumstances of our lives. But, I also know that there are going to be times when prayer will not change what's going to happen. Here's a quick story for you.

The pastor noticed a young boy kneeling off to the side of a room after church and praying very fervently. As the pastor came within earshot of the boy, he was surprised to hear the boy saying, "Tokyo, Tokyo, Tokyo." After the boy finished his praying the pastor approached him and said, "Son, I was very pleased to see you praying so devoutly but I couldn't help but overhear you saying something that sounded like Tokyo, Tokyo, Tokyo. What was that all about?" The boy replied, "Well I just finished taking my geography test in school Friday and I've been praying as hard as I can that God would make

Tokyo the capital of France." How many of you think that the boy's prayer will change the capitol of France to Tokyo? God can do whatever He wants to and if Tokyo is in His plans to become the capital of France then I am sure it will but otherwise Tokyo will likely still be the capital of Japan.

My Experiences With Prayer

Like Steve Cunningham I've been thinking why does one prayer get answered and another not. I have had some situations in my life that have created those questions too. I have two brothers and two sisters in my family. My youngest sister Karen as I think I've shared with you before died at a very young age from breast cancer. I offered lots of prayers on her behalf asking that God would heal her, that He would allow her to continue to be a mother and a wife. That prayer wasn't answered in the way that I had wanted it to be answered. Karen died at a young age.

"What happens when God doesn't answer my prayer the way I want it or think it should be answered?"

A couple of things happened more recently. Alan and I had the opportunity to share with Beverly and Lloyd Gray from Tingley. Unbeknownst to us the Grays had moved to Tingley. They had been active as members of The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, but as the church began to go through its difficulties and struggles they kind of drifted away. Lloyd was struggling with his health and had made contact with Alan and asked if we could come and administer to him which we did. In fact I think we administered to him three times. The first time that we administered to him there was a very good Spirit and also the second time. In Alan's prayer there was made mention that Lloyd would fulfill that which he was called to do which was not really understood by any of us at the time. Later I had an opportunity to visit with Lloyd as he was seeking medical care at the hospital. He shared with me that he had been called to the priesthood earlier but because of the disarray of the church at that time he never accepted that call and didn't have that further priesthood calling that was there for him. We got a last call to go and administer to Lloyd. This time we were asked to administer to him by his wife Beverly because Lloyd was on his

deathbed. The prayer was that he would go quickly and easily and that prayer was answered. I don't understand why the prayers that were prayed that he would recover and be able to fulfill that ministry and calling that he had were not answered but I believe that now he is able to fulfill that ministry on the other side of the veil for those that are still needing the opportunity to find Jesus Christ.

Another area of prayer has been for my niece Kayla. Kayla's husband came home one day and told her that he was in love with another woman and wanted a divorce. That news affected Kayla physically. She was hospitalized and had some significant health concerns. She was able to get through that and get home but that precipitated the onset of an eating disorder that she has been fighting with since that time. She's gone through the divorce. We prayed for her during that time that she might be able to financially continue to support the two children that she has. That hasn't happened. She's going to have to sell the house in order to be able to meet her financial obligations so the plan is to move back in with Linda's brother, her mother and father Keith and Kathy, with the kids. Right now Kayla is in Denver at an eating disorder program trying to get that situation back under control. I don't know why all those prayers haven't been answered in the manner in which we have prayed for them to be answered.

Maybe you have a prayer experience that's like mine that makes you relate to these questions that I have. What happens when God doesn't answer my prayer the way I want it or think it should be answered? What do I do when God says no? What good does it do for me to pray if I am pretty sure those prayers may not change my circumstances? In Luke 22 the scripture that I read earlier we find that Jesus is praying for God to take a cup from Him. What does this mean? What is this cup and what was God's answer? In the book of Isaiah 51:17 we find this. *Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.* There is a similar reading from the book of Jeremiah 25:15, 16. *For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it. And they shall drink, and be moved, and*



be mad, because of the sword that I will send among them. Now Jesus being familiar with the Old Testament Prophet probably recognized that the cup He was asking God to take and spare Him from was the cup of God's wrath; the cup that was meant for you and me. God's answer to Jesus in that prayer was, no I won't remove that cup.

The reason Jesus came to earth, the reason He took on the form of a man, the reason He preached and taught and healed the crowds for three years was to come to this very point in His earthly existence. Jesus came to die for us. He came to be our substitute. He came to pay the price for our sins. Jesus came to drink the cup of God's wrath so that we would not have to taste it ourselves. That's why He was born, that's why He came and that's why He died on the cross. Now just hours before the deed was about to be done, Jesus prays, 'Father if you are willing take this cup from me.'

The gospel of Matthew also records this event that took place in the garden and Matthew goes into more detail. In fact Matthew's telling of the story wasn't that Jesus prayed just once but that Jesus prayed three times. He prayed, . . . *O my Father if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink of it, thy will be done.* (Matthew 26:39) That's the way Matthew records it. Did Jesus think that His prayer was going to change His destiny? Did Jesus believe that there was some other way to get the job done? I don't think so. So why pray the prayer? If Jesus knew that the Father was going to deny His request, if Jesus knew that God was going to tell Him no, if Jesus knew His prayer wasn't going to change His destiny on the cross, why pray the prayer? He prayed that prayer because prayer isn't always about changing our circumstances and fixing our problems. Sometimes prayer is about laying hold of God, about reaching out to God, reaching out to His strength, reaching out for His comfort, reaching for His will in our lives.

Too often some people see prayer as a magic incantation. If they say the right words in the right way at the right time, abbra cadabbra presto change everything is going to become better. My experience is that it hasn't always gotten better, at least not in the way that I had prayed it to be. So why pray? If I can't always get what I want when I pray, if I can't always avoid danger or pain or sorrow or death, why

pray? Well the easiest answer is that sometimes prayer indeed does change our circumstances. I've seen times when prayer has brought healing. I've seen times when prayer has brought people back from the brink of death and I've seen times when prayer has defied the belief that nothing will change. But I've also seen and I've experienced times when prayer has a different kind of purpose, a purpose that stands strong in the face of circumstances that may not change. This purpose of prayer is best summed up by this two line poem that I found.

*Sometimes God stills the storms
of the sea.
At other times He stills the
storms within me.*

That night in the garden Jesus felt a need for that kind of calmness. It was that type of prayer. It was that prayer that gave Jesus His strength. It was that prayer that gave Jesus His courage. It was that prayer that gave Jesus His power to face the pain, the humiliation and the horror of being on the cross. That's the kind of prayer that we need to learn how to pray. It's a type of prayer that can give us the ability to face the hardest tests of life. There were two elements in that prayer, two that can help our prayers that will give us strength and courage that we need to face the difficult times of life. The first element in Jesus prayer was His honesty. When Jesus prayed in the garden he was brutally honest. There was no religious platitudes, no sugar coating. He knew what was about to occur. Jesus prayed, 'Father, if you are willing take this cup from me'. He knew what was about to happen. He knew what had to be done but He still prayed three separate times essentially saying the same thing, I don't know if I can really do this. God did not take the cup from Jesus but in verse 43 as we read God sent an angel from heaven to strengthen Him.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray that's recorded in several places but in the book of Luke it is chapter 11:1-4. *And it came to pass, as Jesus was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our*

sins; for we also forgive every one who is indebted to us. And let us not be led unto temptation; but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and power. Amen. Jesus prayed for His disciples many times and even in this passage in Luke chapter 22 He prays for Peter. He says, *But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not; . . .* (32) He asked His disciples while He was entering the garden to pray that they might not enter into temptation. Jesus taught they will be done as in heaven so in earth, and He prayed the second element of this prayer, let not my will but yours be done.

The prayer that can transform our times of weakness into times of strength are the ones that are less concerned with moving God to our will as it is with moving us toward God's will. Billy Graham once wrote, "I watched the deck hands on the great liner the United States as they docked that ship in New York Harbor. First they threw out a rope to the men on the dock. Then, inside the boat the great motors went to work and pulled on the great cable. But, oddly enough, the pier wasn't pulled to the ship; but the ship was pulled snugly up to the pier. Prayer is the rope that pulls God and us together. But it doesn't pull God down to us; it pulls us to God. We must learn to say with Christ the master of the art of praying: 'Not my will but Thine be done.' We need to realize that Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane was not a prayer of hopelessness and defeat. It was a prayer of surrender to His Father's will and in that surrender Jesus found the strength to overcome. It was when Jesus prayed that prayer that the Father reached down and comforted Him, an angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him. It is that kind of strength from God that I want in my life but first I must be willing to pray the way Jesus did.

A Sunday School teacher once asked her group of children if any of them could quote the entire Twenty-third Psalm. That sounds like something George (Knotts) would challenge us to do. A little four and a half year old girl raised her hand but the teacher was a bit skeptical that this child could really quote the entire Psalm. She told the child to go ahead and try. The little girl hesitated a moment and then said, "The Lord is my shepherd. That's all I want."





REPENT! - FOR THE KINGDOM IS COME NIGH UNTO YOU



High Priest H. Alan Smith
Mt. Ayr, Iowa
August 14, 2011

For a scripture reading this morning, I have a short verse out of the 3 Nephi 4:58 as Christ was ministering on this continent. *“O ye house of Israel, whom I have spared, how oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if ye will repent and return unto me with full purpose of heart.”*

I'd like to talk about repentance this morning, how we repent and how we call others to repentance.

We are going to specifically look at what Jesus taught about repentance from his own ministry, but there are plenty of scripture about repentance. In which book of scripture do you think repentance is mentioned the most? If you chose the Book of Mormon you were right. There are twice as many references to repentance in Book of Mormon as there are in the Bible and three times as many as the Doctrine and Covenants.

Repentance - A Change For the Better

What do we mean by repentance? One dictionary definition is “to feel or express sincere regret or remorse about one’s wrongdoing or sin”. That is probably what

many of us think of most often when we think of repentance.

But I believe the call of Christ for us to repent and teach repentance is much more than this definition of feeling sorry or regret.

The Greek word used in the New Testament is *metanoia*. This word means, “To change the mind or course of action in consequence of regret or dissatisfaction with something that is past. To make a change for the better as a result of remorse or contrition for ones sins.” In other words, repentance isn’t just feeling sorry, repentance is doing something about it, making a change in our lives so that we go in a new path.

One writer puts it this way: *The word in Greek is metanoia and it has a variety of meanings including turning, or returning. Changing or reorienting are other possibilities. Underneath it is awakening. It is a change of awareness. Jesus and John the Baptist before him were calling on people to “Wake up!” When you read the Bible and run across the word repent, substitute “wake up” and see how it changes the meaning. Wake up, become conscious, open your eyes, open your ears. See that there is something new that you need to be doing.*

Another definition is a transformative change of heart, a spiritual conversion. In fact, I’ll show later that the word conversion is used in place of repentance in at least one scripture.

Another definition is “to have another mind”. This brings to mind to me the words from Phillipians 2, where Jesus talks about us becoming like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind, esteeming others better than ourselves. Then it says, “Let this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus.” In other words, repent.

Repentance is more than being regretful and remorseful for the sin in our lives. To truly repent we need to make a change, wake up, turn our lives around, have a change of heart, have another mind. Repentance is a call to action and to truly make changes so we are following Christ.

Jesus taught about us when we need to repent. In Matthew 13: 13-15 he said, *And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias concerning them, which saith, For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with*

their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

Repentance is opening our eyes and hearing with our ears. But what does waxed gross mean? I looked it up. It means you have a fatty heart. When the “heart is waxed gross,” fatty degeneration has set in, and the individual is in the last stages before death results. I don’t know about a fatty heart, but I’ve been dealing with a fatty liver and I know it surely isn’t healthy. It leads us to lethargy.

When we repent, we see with new eyes, we hear with new ears, we understand with new hearts -- we are converted. Isn’t that what you really want in you life? There’s a sense of when we are truly repentant we have a conversion experience.

Jesus Came to Save the World

Jesus said it this way when ministering in the Americas: 3 Nephi 4: 51 *Behold, I have come unto the world to bring redemption unto the world, to save the world from sin: therefore whoso repenteth and cometh unto me as a little child, him will I receive; for of such is the kingdom of God.*

Compare that with Jesus’ teaching in the Bible. Matthew 18: 2 *And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*

He’s using the word converted in the same way he uses repent. In other words, he wants us to change. To really repent, we need to be converted to the fact that what we are doing is not going to bring us to the kingdom and then make a change so we are humbly following Christ. In fact when he says, “Repent, the kingdom is nigh unto you,” what Jesus is really saying is, “The kingdom is nigh unto you if you will do it. You can have the kingdom if you will live that way. I want you to do it. Wake up!”

Here are some of the other calls that Jesus made to his people to repent. This one from the scripture I read as an opening. 3 Nephi 4:58 *O ye house of Israel, whom I have spared, how oft will I gather you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, if ye will repent and return unto me with full purpose of heart.* Part of our repentance is returning unto



Christ with full purpose of heart as we change the way we live.

3 Nephi 12:32 *Therefore nothing entereth into his rest, save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end.* Repentance involves being faithful to the end, as well. There is a change in our lives and we remain faithful to it to enter his rest.

Here's one that might hit close to home for most of us at one time or another. Matthew 7:2-9 *Now these are the words which Jesus taught his disciples that they should say unto the people. Judge not unrighteously, that ye be not judged; but judge righteous judgment. For with what judgment ye shall judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And again, ye shall say unto them, Why is it that thou beholdest the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and canst not behold a beam in thine own eye? And Jesus said unto his disciples, Beholdest thou the Scribes, and the Pharisees, and the Priests, and the Levites? They teach in their synagogues, but do not observe the law, nor the commandments; and all have gone out of the way, and are under sin. Go thou and say unto them, Why teach ye men the law and the commandments, when ye yourselves are the children of corruption? Say unto them, Ye hypocrites, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye. Go ye into the world, saying unto all, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come nigh unto you.*

Hypocrites means actors. "You guys are just going through the motions, you're just pretending," to paraphrase. "I want you to repent so you can be part of the kingdom. It's right here is you will change your ways, open your eyes, unstop your ears, cast off your fear, lay down your guilt, get converted and put the kingdom first in you life. The kingdom of heaven is right hear if you will just repent."

Let's look at a couple of instances of how Jesus called people to this active repentance, and the results.

The first is the story of Zaccheus. Luke 19:2-10 *And behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, who was chief among the*

publicans; and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. And when the disciples saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner. And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by unjust means, I restore fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham; For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

The IRS in Rome?

I found in the Smith Bible Dictionary what a publican was.

The class designated by this word in the New Testament were employed as collectors of the Roman revenue. The Roman senate farmed the direct taxes and the customs charges to capitalists who undertook to pay a given sum into the treasury (in publicum), and so received the name of publicani . Contracts of this kind fell naturally into the hands of the the richest class of Romans. So instead of having the IRS, the Romans set the system

"So Jesus called Matthew, who was also a tax collector, to be one of his first followers."

up where you could contract to pay the taxes for a certain area. Then they would hire managers who would collect taxes from the people, and whatever the managers gathered above and beyond the taxation, they could keep. They appointed managers, under whom were the actual custom-house officers, who examined each bale of goods, exported or imported, assessed its value more or less arbitrarily, wrote out the ticket, and enforced payment. The managers were commonly natives of the province in which they were stationed as being brought daily into contact with all classes of the population. The name publican was used popularly, and in the New Testament exclusively, for the managers. The system was essentially a

vicious one. The publicans were encouraged in the most vexatious or fraudulent exactions and a remedy was all but impossible. They overcharged whenever they had an opportunity, they brought false charges of smuggling in the hope of extorting hush-money, they detained and opened letters on mere suspicion. It was the basest of all livelihoods. All this was enough to bring the class into ill favor everywhere. In Judea and Galilee there were special circumstances of aggravation. The strong feeling of many Jews as to the absolute unlawfulness of paying tribute at all made matters worse. In addition to their other faults, accordingly, the publicans of the New Testament were regarded as traitors and apostates, defiled by their frequent intercourse with the heathen, willing tools of the oppressor. The position of Zaccheus as a "chief among the publicans," implies a gradation of some kind among the persons thus employed.

You can understand the questions that arose when Jesus would even notice a publican. In fact, Matthew 9: 12-14 *And when the Pharisees saw them, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your master with publicans, and sinners? But when Jesus heard them, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what this meaneth; I will have mercy and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

Another way to say this is, "I desire mercy and not the sacrifices of the law". He was telling the Pharisees to go study this question out, knowing that it would be awfully hard for them. Jesus is referring to Hosea 6:6 which says: "For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

He was telling the Pharisees that they were so caught up with the law and sacrifices, so caught up in what they thought was their own righteousness, that they did not recognize that the people around them had worth in the sight of God too and needed to be ministered to.

So Jesus called Matthew, who was also a tax collector, to be one of his first followers. And somehow he recognized that the little man up in the tree, who was seeking Jesus to "know who he was" needed to talk. He was ready to make a change in his life. Maybe he had heard about Matthew. As the chief among the publicans he may well have been



acquainted and wondering how such a change was made in Matthew's life. Of course we don't know that from the brief description in the story.

Instead of Jesus stopping under the tree and giving Zaccheus a lecture on how bad publicans were and what a mess Zaccheus was making of his life, Jesus invited himself home for dinner. What was Zaccheus's response? He couldn't wait to get down the tree, rush home and joyfully receive Jesus into his home. Something in the way Jesus recognized him and agreed to break what was thought as normal for a religious teacher and come not only to visit but to eat with him, changed Zaccheus' heart.

Sometime during the dinner, Zaccheus decided to repent of his way of life. He wasn't just going to sit around and feel bad that he had been a cheat and a thief in his dealings with the people. On the spot he decided to give half of his goods to the poor. To those he had taken more than he should, he would restore four fold. (He must have been quite a rich man to be able to restore four times what he had taken illegally with only half of his wealth.) We don't know what he had left over.

And Jesus' response was one of joy as well for a new person who repented in the way of conversion, changing his life completely when he got a glimpse of the kingdom of God and how he would be freed to new life. "This day is salvation has come into this house," Jesus said. Though he was a publican, he was also a son of Abraham, no longer an outcast from the kingdom but working on becoming an integral part of it. Jesus had saved one that was lost.

Jesus used the publican in the same breath with a harlot in explaining who would respond in repentance to a new view of life and the what was important, when he gave the parable of the two sons.

Matthew 21: 26-34 *But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first, saying, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I will serve; and went not. Whether of these twain did the will of their father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and bore record of me, and*

ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him; and ye, afterward, when ye had seen me, repented not, that ye might believe him. For he that believed not John concerning me, cannot believe me, except he first repent. And except ye repent, the preaching of John shall condemn you in the day of judgment.

The first person who repented and took action to do what the Lord wanted him to do was the one that Jesus said was doing the will of the father. And he noted that publicans and harlots were thought of as some of the worst sinners, were the ones who were making the changes in their lives, were doing what the Lord wanted them to do, and had first repented and listened to the testimonies of John and Jesus.

Sometimes we wonder why, when Jesus was right there with the people he lived with, they didn't recognize him. How could they not recognize that this was the son of God? I wonder if people look at us and our movement and say, the kingdom was right there for them to have, how could they not recognize it? How could they not take the action to make it a reality in the world today? Zion is no further way nor any closer than the spiritual condition of his people, no further away than our true repentance and life changes.

A Woman of Sin in Need

Let's look at the story of the woman taken in adultery from John 8: 3-12 *And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken an adultery; and when they had set her in the midst of the people, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst of the temple. When Jesus had raised up himself, and saw none of her accusers, and the woman standing, he said unto her, Woman, where are those*

thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more. And the woman glorified God from that hour, and believed on his name. 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.

There is a lot of controversy in the religious world about this story. Some versions of the Bible leave it out all together. They say it was not included in the very first renditions of John. Others say that there were so many mentions of it in other parts of the scriptures that it had to be there, it had just been left out. There is a lot of controversy about if the woman was repenting and if Jesus forgave her sin. (Just a hint that I'll point out in a moment, there is something about this story in the Inspired Version that makes all the difference in what it says to us).

The scribes and pharisees brought the women taken in adultery to Jesus. What was their ulterior motive in bringing her to Jesus? They could have taken care of business without involving Jesus. But they wanted to trap Jesus.

The Old Testament law was pretty clear about what should happen. At least as far as the accusers were concerned, she was caught red-handed -- "in the very act". You can imagine the guilt and shame of that with all the people tromping in on you and the man with whom you are committing adultery. They then drag you into the street and head for the temple, being ridiculed all the way.

The law was clear. Leviticus 20: 10 *And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death. Deuteronomy 22: 22 If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman; so shalt thou put away evil from Israel.*

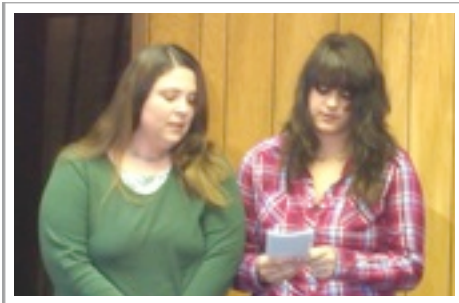
According to some research I have done, the reason that bringing the women to Jesus was a trap was that adultery was not a Roman crime. If Jesus said to stone her, that could have gotten him into trouble with the Roman authorities. If Jesus said to let her go, he was breaking the Jewish law and could be discredited there. So they thought they had him in a trap. They



weren't really as worried about the woman as they were about trapping Jesus.

Jesus' response was not to say anything, but to write in the dirt on the ground as though he hadn't heard them. Finally, they pressed the subject so long that he rose and said, "Let him who is without sin first cast a stone at her." This did two things. Stoning was a group effort. No one took responsibility for the death if the death came as a result of the action of the group, if everyone was throwing stones. You never knew which stone actually killed the person, like a firing squad. Jesus said instead of working as a group, which one of you want to go first? Who is brave enough to cast the first stone? What if you stone knocks her senseless and we all know who's stone it was?

The other thing may have had to do with what he was writing on the ground. The story doesn't tell us the details about the accusers. I can speculate a little bit. If the sin that Jesus was calling their attention to was their own, maybe Jesus was just writing a list of the names of women in the



dirt. If their sin was similar to that they were accusing the woman of, they would be convicted when they saw written the name of the person with whom they had sinned. Or maybe he was just writing the 10 commandments and people left as they saw the sin they were convicted with written in the dirt. We don't have the details.

By the time Jesus stopped writing, he arose and looked at the woman, who was all alone. Then Jesus asked her where her accusers were and she answered that there was no one left to condemn her, and she called him Lord.

Jesus, who must have known her heart was willing to give her a new start in her life.

"Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin to more" Jesus said. Jesus wasn't condoning what the woman had done., but he recognized that she hadn't lied to try to

cover up what had happened. She hadn't put blame on anyone else. Jesus recognized that she truly wanted to make a change.

Jesus could have said, "Look here, you are really in deep trouble because of your awful sin. You are guilty and you should really feel that way. You are in danger of losing you life here and eternally. What's wrong with you? But Jesus knew that just making someone feel guilty was not what could free them to make a change in their life.

The apostle Paul puts it this way: *II Corinthians 7: 9-11 Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance; for ye were made sorry after a godly manner; that ye might receive damage by us in nothing; For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. For behold this selfsame thing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

Paul sees that Godly sorrow brings true repentance, a vehement desire, a zeal, to change our lives, to have new life. And this was the case for this woman. Once she found that new life was possible, she took it. The woman truly repented. She just didn't feel remorse or sorrow at what she recognized was not a good thing to do. She allowed the master to free her from death to new life in him. "And the woman glorified God from that hour and believed on his name," the scriptures say. If you just read the King James version, you don't have that statement. "The woman glorified God from that hour and believed on his name." I truly believe that is another instance where Joseph and Hyrum were truly inspired to share a new insight into a scripture story that settles the question that many have had about this story over the years, the rest of the story of repentance that helps make this story special. Could Jesus forgive the woman of her sin when the Old Testament law was very specific in its consequences? Jesus said he could.

Mark 3: 2-25 *And then came certain men unto him, accusing him, saying, Why do ye receive sinners, seeing thou makest thyself the Son of God. But he answered them and said, Verily I say unto you, All sins which men have committed, when they*

repent, shall be forgiven them; for I came to preach repentance unto the sons of men. (Even repentance from the heart will be recognized as in woman taken in adultery) And blasphemies, wherewith soever they shall blaspheme, shall be forgiven them that come unto me, and do the works which they see me do. (Another definition of repentance, come unto me and do the works which you see me do). But there is a sin which shall not be forgiven. He that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, hath never forgiveness; but is in danger of being cut down out of the world. And they shall inherit eternal damnation. And this he said unto them because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

Jesus wasn't saving the woman in her sin. He in no way condoned the adultery. He in no way by his actions said that the woman hadn't sinned or that the sin was trivial. He took the consequences upon himself, however, so she could make a new life.

We Are Saved From Our Sin

Saving people in their sin is a long way from saving people from their sin as Amulek explained to Zeezrom in the Book of Mormon.

Alma 8: 87-92 *And Zeezrom said again, Shall he save his people in their sins? And Amulek answered and said unto him, I say unto you he shall not, for it is impossible for him to deny his word. Now Zeezrom said unto the people, See that ye remember these things; for he said there is but one God; yet he saith that the Son of God shall come, but he shall not save his people, as though he had authority to command God. Now Amulek saith again unto him, Behold thou hast lied, for thou sayest that I spake as though I had authority to command God, because I said he shall not save his people in their sins. And I say unto you again, that he can not save them in their sins; for I can not deny his word, and he hath said that no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven; Therefore how can ye be saved, except ye inherit the kingdom of heaven? Therefore ye can not be saved in your sins.*

The way to inherit the kingdom is to repent is to, to make some real change in our lives, not to be stuck in remorse and guilt and not taking any action.

My dad told the story about a grasshopper and a spider web. His father worked in a mill in Butler, MO, and sometimes he would hang around the



September 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	

Sunday Schedule

DATE	September 4th	September 11th	September 18th	September 25th	October 2nd
SPEAKING	Ron Smith	Jim Barber	Rob Rolfe	Business Meeting	Alan Smith
PRESIDING	Steve Cunningham	Ed Anderson	Alan Smith	Sherman Phipps	Rob Rolfe
PIANIST	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke
SPECIAL MUSIC	Ron & Di Smith	Beth Knotts	Yvonne Galusha	Diane Anderson	Jim Barber
FAMILY DEVOTIONS	Jim Barber	Darren Cunningham	Steven Cunningham	Michael Jordison	Sherman Phipps
GREETERS	George Knotts	Sherman Phipps	Bob Rowland	Rob Rolfe	Ron Smith
CUSTODIANS	Bob Rowland	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber
SUNDAY EVENING	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Norman Nelson	Rob Rolfe	Bob Rowland

Wednesday Prayer Service Schedule

DATE	September 7th	September 14th	September 21st	September 28th	October 5th
LOCATION	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler	JulieAnn Smith
PRESIDING	Rodney Bastow	Sherman Phipps	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber	Gordon Winkler

Special Events & Activities

Congregational fast every Wednesday evening

Sunday, September 4th: Priesthood Meeting at 8:30AM - Potluck following Communion service

Saturday, September 17th: Men's outing @ Ed Anderson home from 3-6. Bring your shotgun.

Sunday, September 18th: Priesthood meeting at 5:00PM before the evening gathering.

Sunday, September 25th: Business meeting to elect officers for up and coming year.

Friday September 30th: Rowland & Williams wedding in Kansas City.

Sept. 30th - Oct. 2: Fall Retreat at Camp Nauvoo in Illinois. Sponsored by Forefront Restoration Branch.

Birthdays this month: Rob Rolfe & Jordan Thomas (1), Dustin Ruminer (4), Elyse Jordison (13), Ron Smith (15), Isaac Akers (19), Pat Bolingbroke (22), Ed Anderson (24), Debbie Bastow (28)

Anniversaries this month: David & Barbara Houston (19), Bob & Jennifer Rowland (23), George & Yvonne Galusha (26)



building waiting for his father to get off work. One day he noticed a grasshopper that was stuck in a spider's web. The grasshopper was struggling and the spider had not started trying to wrap up the trapped insect. Dad felt sorry for the grasshopper so he pulled the grasshopper out of the web and set him back on the floor. The crazy grasshopper took a minute to realize that he was free and then took a couple of hops and landed right back in the web. Dad pulled him back out, placed him so it was traveling in the opposite direction and waited for the grasshopper to get its bearings. The grasshopper took a hop, turned around and hopped a couple of more times and was right back in the web. This time Dad just let the spider have him.

Repentance is more than just getting out of a trap and feeling sorry that we got in. Repentance is being able to see the trap for what it is and to realize that we have to hop in a new direction if we are going to be free. Repentance is seeing a new way and determining that we are going to move in that new direction.

Jesus wants us to inherit the kingdom of heaven, to change our lives so his kingdom is our priority. He wants to save us all from our sin to his kingdom. We just have to decide to wake up, open our eyes, open our ears, work the fat off our hearts from being indolent and not loving enough. Repent and be converted, changed, become new creatures in Christ.

Repentance can be a joyful experience, a freeing experience. It's capturing a new glimpse of what living in the kingdom can be like and determining to try to live that way. It's not a one time thing. We continue to understand more about how Christ would have us live and what he would have us do and then we continue to grow in kingdom relationships.

Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand is an invitation to the kingdom. Wake up, look at what your life could be like. Here is perfect love. Here is peace that the world doesn't understand. Here is righteousness that will one day allow us into the presence of our Lord forever. Here is the spirit working with you always. Can you catch some thrill of eternal life today?

Will you repent today? Will you be converted today to be a son or daughter of the kingdom? That's what he's calling each of us to do. It is also our calling to reach out and give others a new vision of what their lives can be -- not in a spirit of

superiority or self-righteousness like the Pharisees but in a spirit of love, calling people to wake up and see what life can really be like. To live our lives together so we can invite people to come and see what the kingdom is really like.

I have shared before the experience I had at a senior high camp in Texas. Following the banquet, the campers gathered outside of the dining hall where we had the banquet and began to sing campfire songs. As soon as one song would finish, someone else would start a new song. The spirit of the Lord was so powerful in that experience, you could look around the crowd and you couldn't find anyone there that you didn't love. You could feel His love for those people in a way that was new to me. There wasn't anyone, not a single person, that the spirit of God did not allow me to love at that moment. And yet it wasn't an experience where you said, "Wow! I want to stay here all of my life." It was, Wow! Who can I have share this experience with sometime in the future?" It was the love of wanting to share the knowledge of what that love was like, what that kingdom relationship at that moment was like. Wanting to share that with other people.

Here is the promise that Nephi found as he sought for the kingdom: 1Nephi 3: 26-32 *I, Nephi, was desirous also that I might see, and hear, and know of these things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God unto all those who diligently seek him, as well in times of old as in the time that he should manifest himself unto the children of men; For he is the same yesterday, to-day, 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.*

We are soon going to be called to a period of fasting, prayer and study to help us open our eyes, ears, minds and hearts on how we can move forward to the kingdom. I hope each of us will take the challenge to repent this morning, and repent with action.

Jesus challenged his disciples to put the kingdom first, not to worry about the physical things of life. Luke 12: 34-35

Therefore seek ye to bring forth the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

The kingdom is no further away nor any closer than His people catching a vision of it and changing their lives so our combined spiritual condition allows it to be among us. Wake up, get going, the mysteries of God are waiting for us to discover them. The father wants us to have the kingdom among us. "Repent, for the kingdom of God has come nigh unto you."



BE UNITED BE YOU ONE SONG IN TONGUES

Given by one of the brethren in Canada -
Saints' Herald ~ October, 1900
Reprinted in "Infallible Proofs" by Alvin
Knisely, pp. 143-144

Hearken unto me, my people,
I will give to thee advice;
Think not you I have forgotten,
For before me thou art prized.
If in me you'll be united,
Then my power you would see;
But when vice, and grave disunion,
Then, oh then, how can it be?

I would speak unto my people,
Send my angels to their home;
If in me you'll be united,
Ne'er, O ne'er from me to roam!
Oh, my people, take the counsel
Of my servants o'er the land,
Cease to be in such disorder,
Then, oh, then, in me you'll stand!

Then you'll see my power displayed,
Then you'll have mine angels come;
Oh, my people, they are waiting,
They are waiting, will they come!
It is on you I am waiting-
For my storehouse it is full;
Oh, then cease, cease all your jangles,
Be united - be you one.



SEEING BEYOND



Priest Ed Anderson
Lamoni, Iowa
August 21, 2011

High Priest Rob Rolfe read the following scripture as a call to worship. *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.* (James 1:22-25)

As a scripture reading Ed Anderson read Alma 3:25-33. *And behold, he preached the word unto your fathers, and a mighty change was also wrought in their hearts; and they humbled themselves, and put their trust in the true and living God. And behold, they were faithful until the end; therefore they were saved. And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the church, Have ye spiritually been born of God? Have ye received his image in your countenances? Have ye experienced this mighty change in your hearts? Do ye exercise faith in the redemption of him who created you? Do you look forward with an eye of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality, and this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand before God, to be judged according to the deeds which have been done in the mortal body? I say unto you, Can you imagine to*

yourself that ye hear the voice of the Lord, saying unto you, in that day, Come unto me ye blessed, for behold, your works have been the works of righteousness upon the face of the earth? Or do ye imagine to yourselves that ye can lie unto the Lord in that day, and say, Lord, our works have been righteous works upon the face of the earth, and that he will save you?

I really want to let you know that you are looking at a new man. We now have an empty nest. Yesterday we watched Ben drive off into the sunset and we did a happy dance out in the front yard. We kind of gave him the sendoff that we were really glad to see him go. Well, we really weren't it was all a show. Deep down inside we are kind of missing them all ready. Matt is really the one we are missing because Ben has been gone for two years, coming home in the summers. However, Ben was the last one to leave for college this time because Matt was already gone. Any way we have an empty nest and a new life. Diane says we can act like newlyweds now. I wonder how long the honeymoon will last?

It's great to be able to speak. One of the things that happens when you speak is you have to dig in and do a little study. You have to do a little preparation. You may not do that on a normal basis or do it so intensely as you do when you are scheduled to speak.

Seeing Is Believing?

I thought I would talk about something that maybe I know a little bit about, veterinary medicine since I am a veterinarian. I have a question for you. What is a parasite? There are a couple of farmers here that are active in farming and might know what a parasite is. Steven (who is a veterinarian) knows what a parasite is. (Michael Jordison said that a parasite fed on others. Someone else said that a parasite was a flea or tick.)

What does a parasite do? Someone said that it eats you. (Pat Bolingbroke said a parasite is an organism that can live in or

on another organism. It either eats the food of the organism or the actual blood of the organism.) Well I went to the internet and the definition of a parasite according to dictionary.com is *an organism that lives on or in an organism of another species known as the host from the body of which it obtains nutrients.*

Farmers and pet owners deal with internal parasites as well as flea and ticks. I am going to be talking about internal parasites. There is such a thing as giardia. Does anybody know what that is? If you go down to Mexico and drink the water you get Montezuma's revenge. There is toxidia, ground worms, hook worms, tape worms and each of these has its own life cycle involving man and animals. In veterinary medicine controlling them is important to farmers and pet owners. The reason why they want to control parasites in pets is because they are zoonotic that means you and I can get them from our pets. For farm animals that is a different story. You can still get them but it's not as easy since you don't live with your farm animals like you do with your pets.

Jim (Barber), what's the importance of parasites in your cattle? (He answered that 'there was loss of weight and they were pretty poor animals'.) Rod (Bastow), if you are looking out across your cattle, can you see if your cattle are infected? (He answered, 'not necessarily'.) When you ride a horse you aren't thinking about parasites or whether that horse could have parasites. The thing about parasites is that most times the clinical signs are not apparent in pets or farm animals. You really don't know if they have parasites unless you test for them.

I know you are not interested in parasites unless you have them. A large animal veterinarian has a chore to try to convince the producer that controlling parasites is important. The farmer looks out at his cattle and he doesn't see anything wrong with them. He doesn't see anything that he needs to do. There's a problem because to worm them you have to put out money first when you really don't see a benefit. What does it cost, Rod, to worm a cow nowadays per animal? He answered that it was \$5 to \$10 per head. If you have a 1000 head and you spent \$10 for each of them that would cost \$10,000. (Someone said if you had that many cattle surely the veterinarian would give a discount. Ed said that maybe he would give a discount of 25 cents.) If you

Restoration News:

Deseret News reports that recent DNA testing on six men has disproved allegations that they were descended from Joseph Smith Jr. from a polygamous marriage.
www.deseretnews.com - July 9, 2011



had a 1000 head of cattle you probably wouldn't have any trouble paying it no matter what the amount was.

So you have to convince the farmer to spend \$10 a head when he doesn't see anything wrong with his animals nor does he see anything at the end. It's not apparent that that animal gains more weight after you have wormed them. What do you have to compare it with? You can't weigh them every day and see how much weight they've gained so the farmer is kind of doing it on faith. The farmer is taking the responsibility of spending the money to worm his cattle. What would be a weight loss for an animal that is heavily parasitic? How much more can the animal gain if you worm it? Let's say if you worm it the cow gains 50 pounds. What's the current market value of cattle? Rod answered that you could get \$1.10 a pound so an increase of \$50 per head on a herd of 1000 cattle would be \$50,000. On a hundred head it would be \$5000. But there are farmers that you really have a hard time convincing that it is a benefit for them. They fail to see that the parasites are causing weight loss costing them money.

Faith is Not Seeing With Our Eyes

What does this have to do with what I want to say today? It seems that mankind has a distinct problem of seeing beyond what they observe. Let's go back to the ancient Israelites wandering in the desert. They had already approached the land of promise once and went in but were afraid of the inhabitants of the land because they were much stronger. Because they didn't believe with God's help they could conquer the land, God gave them 40 years back out in the wilderness to see if they could figure out how to do it. They came up again to the land of promise *And the Lord spake unto Moses in mount Sinai (that's where all the good stuff comes from. Whenever Moses wanted to receive something he went to Mount Sinai), saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye come into the land which I give you, then shall the land keep a sabbath unto the Lord. (Does anybody know what the Sabbath of the land was? Does anybody remember?) Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy*

vineyard. That which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed; for it is a year of rest unto the land. (Leviticus 25:1-5) Do you think that the people of Israel when they entered the promised land kept that? Here came Moses down from Mount Sinai telling the people to produce for six years and the seventh year let the land rest. The first question that the people had was how they were going to eat. That's exactly his question. In Leviticus 25:21 He said, Then I will command my blessing upon you in the sixth year, and it shall bring forth fruit for three years. (Now how does that work?) And ye shall sow the eighth year, and eat yet of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in ye shall eat of the old store. (22) Do you think the Israelites kept the Sabbath of the land? They had God's promise that He would make the land produce enough for three years in one year. Do you see where I am coming from? Veterinarians have a hard time getting farmers to understand the benefits of worming and here we have God telling the people what they should do with His help. Veterinarians, no we don't care about them but we don't care about God either. The Israelites didn't believe that in one year three years' worth of crops could be produced.

What happened? Let's go over to 2nd Chronicles 36:19-23. This is kind of picking up in the middle of the story. This is what Nebuchadnezzar did to Israel. *And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof. And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; (for what purpose) To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths; (so the reason that Jerusalem was destroyed was because they did not do what they were told to do) for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years. (So for 70 years Israel was not a nation and they were in Babylon.) Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus*

saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. So the Lord charged Cyrus to build the house in Jerusalem and that's when he told the people who he had carried away from Jerusalem that they could return to Jerusalem and build their temple again. They could build up the city of Jerusalem. We can go through all of the commandments and I am almost sure and certain that there is a reason for each of those commandments otherwise God wouldn't have given them.

My next question is do you think that the people of Israel are keeping the Sabbath of the land now? Rob (Rolfe) says that they are not. What they are doing is trying to fake God out. It doesn't work but they are trying. They are selling their land to a Gentile in the seventh year so the land can produce. The Gentile is in on this plan not to let the land rest the seventh year because he is going to sell it back to the Israelite at the end of the seventh year. Since 1948 when Israel became a nation until now is how many years? Sixty-three years divided by seven equals nine Sabbath years. I am just throwing this out. Do you suppose that there will be nine years of desolation coming to Jerusalem at some time? Is that possible since they are still not keeping the law of the Sabbath?

What about keeping our Sabbath holy? On the seventh day of the week we rest. Since 1830 until now is how many years and how many Sabbath years? I figure that is 25 ½ years so if likewise what happened to Jerusalem can be applied to what happens to us we could expect desolation for 25 ½ years. I am just throwing this out but like I said before God's commands are there and they are there for a purpose.

Take the law of tithing. We don't seem to be able to understand that when God says something like the land can produce in one year enough for three years that that can happen. We don't seem to understand that if we pay our tithing and take account of ourselves and do the things that we should do that our cups will be full and overflowing. For some reason we don't want to observe because we want to do what we want to do rather than what we are supposed to do.

For instance in keeping the Sabbath holy I hear a lot of excuses for not doing so. I hear a lot of people say that they absolutely needed to do something on the



Sabbath day. I am not trying to pick on farmers now. I have done it myself. I tell myself that I have to get something done but God's promises are to those who keep the commandments. If I do something on Sunday and I feel I have to would it have been better if I had not done it? Would the work have gone faster if I had done it on another day? Would I have been able to find the tools I needed? Would it have worked when I was done? If God is in charge of everything He can make those things that need to be done go a lot smoother if you don't do it on the Sabbath.

It's the things we don't see. God is in charge of our entire existence. He has a plan from the start and He really is in charge. He could change things to make them go easier. If we are so insistent on violating laws then those things which we try to do can be more difficult. Does this all make sense to you?

I think that the Spirit of God is throughout the world. I think that during Christ's life when He was on the earth and His ministry in the church the Spirit of God was here until the church went into apostasy. Of course, we are dealing with treading on some Catholic footsteps but if the church went into apostasy what happens to the Spirit of God in the world? It's not there is it? Then the dark ages happens. If you read about the dark ages the attitude and the educational level, there was no light, there were no inventions, there was no Spirit of God moving upon the people. When did the reformation start? When did God move upon the people to reinstitute His church? Columbus was part of His plan. It wasn't just an accident that he got in a ship and discovered America. Is God starting to fill the earth with wisdom and knowledge again? When was the industrial revolution? That started in the early 1800s. Men's minds were enlightened just the same as when the Golden Age after Christ showed Himself in America. That was the golden period of civilization.

We have been in a golden period. Does anybody see any possibilities that our golden age is coming to an end? Do our politicians have wisdom in making their decisions or are they just coming off the wall at us? Are people making inventions or are we becoming dumbed down. I can see the difference between when I was in college and now. We were expected to know a lot more and to do a lot more and to be able to read when we graduated from

high school. All I am saying is that if the Spirit of God the cause of the righteousness of the people is being withdrawn from society we could expect what we are seeing. We could expect the problems with education. We could expect the problems with society. We could expect drugs. We could expect people not caring about others. We could expect these things because that's what happens without the Spirit of God.

How many of you remember your childhood? Becoming an empty nester brought me back to thinking about myself when I was a kid. I didn't want to leave childhood. I didn't want to leave home. I didn't want to leave the security of the things which I had experienced. I just wanted to curl up in the same bed and go through the same situations. I remember one of the things that Dad and Mom did for me, it wasn't one of the greater things in the world as far as food goes, but they would buy us cinnamon rolls. That was more of a symbol of their caring for us then it was that I really liked those rolls. But I would die for my parents to buy cinnamon rolls for me again for me to go home and be able to be home. I think that God is asking us the same things. We should be dying, we should be anxious to go back home, to be back with Him and participate in and search out the things that can get us back home to God. Unfortunately it seems like we let the world get in the way. Our memory isn't strong enough. Our desire isn't strong enough to return to that Father who made us.



On the "Lighter" Side....

I'm going on the upward weigh,
New Pounds I'm gaining every day,
Still praying as scales upward bound
"Lord, let me lose another pound!"

I'm daily eating less and less
But have to wear a bigger dress;
No food at all goes with my meals,
But fat o-erwhelms me, cheek to heels.

Oh, could I find some food divine
To give me grace and slim waistline,
I'd far abroad thy goodness sound-
please let me lose another pound!

Saints' Herald, September 10, 1935, p. 1154

**YE SAINTS
ARISE AND LIVE;
YE SINNERS
STAY AND SLEEP**



High Priest Sherman Phipps
Lamoni, Iowa
August 28, 2011

I sat up here this morning and listened to the music and thought if that had been recorded you could go home and listen to that two or three times today and get what I wanted to share. The words that Rob just sang, 'may goodness and mercy follow you all the days of your life,' are really my prayer this morning.

I have to take just a second for a bit of humor. Most of you weren't sitting where you could hear but Rob stepped up to the piano and told Pat he needed a low A. I was instantly reminded of being in school only my thought was I would have been standing there looking at my feet in front of the teacher saying I needed a C even a low C. That's where my mind went. Perhaps it will be like that when I stand before the Lord begging for mercy.

I want to read a scripture to you this morning from Section 43 of the Doctrine and Covenants. I have to tell you this too. As I stand here this morning you can see I am a little shaky and my voice quivers and I am reminded it's always been like that since the first time I preached when I was 14. I know as I stand here that I am



completely dependent upon the Lord. If you are to receive anything worthwhile you won't get it from me but I am grateful that He allows me to be here with you. I really do appreciate being here. I want to read this scripture from Section 43. *Hearken ye, for; behold, the great day of the Lord is nigh at hand. For the day cometh that the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven; the heavens shall shake and the earth shall tremble, and the trump of God shall sound both long and loud, and shall say to the sleeping nations; (and I think to each one of us) Ye saints arise and live; Ye sinners stay and sleep until I shall call again: wherefore gird up your loins, lest ye be found among the wicked. Lift up your voices and spare not. (5a, b, c) I want to read a little bit more of this. Prepare yourselves for the great day of the Lord: for if I, who am a man, do lift up my voice and call upon you to repent, and ye hate me, what will ye say when the day cometh when the thunders shall utter their voices from the ends of the earth, speaking to the ears of all that live, saying: Repent, and prepare for the great day of the Lord; yea, and again, when the lightnings shall streak forth from the east unto the west, and shall utter forth their voices unto all that live, and make the ears of all tingle, that hear, saying these words: Repent ye, for the great day of the Lord is come. And again, the Lord shall utter his voice out of heaven, saying: Hearken, O ye nations of the earth, and hear the words of that God who made you. O, ye nations of the earth, how often would I have gathered you together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not? How oft have I called upon you by the mouth of my servants, and by the ministering of angels, and by mine own voice, and by the voice of thunderings, and by the voice of lightnings, and by the voice of tempests, and by the voice of earthquakes, and great hailstorms, and by the voice of famines and pestilences of every kind, and by the great sound of a trump, and by the voice of judgment, and by the voice of mercy all the day long, and by the voice of glory and honor, and the riches of eternal life, and would have saved you with an everlasting salvation, but ye would not? Behold, the day has come, when the cup of the wrath of mine indignation is full. Behold, verily I say unto you, that these are the words of the Lord your God; wherefore, labor ye, labor ye in my vineyard for the last time: . . . (5e-7a)*

Have You Heard The Word of the Lord?

Have you heard the word of the Lord lately? If you haven't then you are not listening. Have you seen the lightnings and the thunderings and the earthquakes, etc? They are all around us. He's calling out to us to repent, to be His people, to listen to Him so that He can save us and grant us everlasting salvation. He's calling to us, 'Arise and live,' and then He says to the sinners, 'Stay and sleep.' Sometimes I think that's me. It seems like the older I get the more I just want to sit down and just stay where I'm at and sleep. I really don't want to and I hope you don't want to. I hope that somehow the Spirit of the Lord will motivate you and cause you to hear His plea to arise and live. Come unto Him. Do not ignore Him any longer. I want to remind you of one other thing, these words I just read were spoken in February of 1831 so how far into to this do you think we are? Do you think we still have time to sit and sleep? I don't think so. I think we may have heard this call for the last time, 'Arise and live.' I keep leaving out the first couple of words. It really says, 'Ye saints arise and live.'

So who are His saints? I think we have a tendency to just assume we are but maybe we should look at that a little closer. What do the scriptures say which you have all heard. Of course, I am not going to be able to touch on all of it this morning. I can only mention a few things. Who are His saints? Section 38:6a of the Doctrine and Covenants says, . . . *if ye are not one, ye are not mine.* Actually that's one of the things I appreciate about this congregation. We have our differences I'm sure but I feel like as a congregation you folks really do care about each other and that if one, even one, were to fall and be hurt you would be there for them so that gives me hope. The scripture we have heard so often lately from John 13:35 says, *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* How many people around us don't have that? How many people around us struggle all day every day because they don't have anybody that they feel really loves them. They don't have anybody that they feel really cares. We could share with them that love and help to bring them hopefully to a knowledge of Christ who really loves them and is always there for them even though we might fail.

Section 52 says, *wherefore he that prayeth whose spirit is contrite, the same is*

accepted of me, if he obey mine ordinances. So if we are His saints surely we would be amongst those whose spirits are contrite and who pray continually and obey the commandments. *He that speaketh, whose spirit is contrite, whose language is meek, and edifieth, the same is of God, . . . (4c-d) Is that us? When we speak are our spirits contrite? Is our language meek? Does it edify? Do the words that come from our mouth reflect the words that God would speak or do we speak in anger? You know this isn't talking about just the people we like. It isn't talking about just when we are here together like this. This is talking about out in the world every day. Then in verse 9 it admonishes us that if we don't remember the poor and the needy we are not His disciples. How do we do on that? I know as a congregation again that if somebody needs something and we know it, we are probably going to be there to try and help and I really appreciate that. But when I look at my own life, and I hope that you will look at yours because I think this is important, I think it has something to do with how we'll spend eternal life. When I look at my own life I wonder how well I have done at remembering the poor and needy versus thinking, 'I'd sure like to have that. Yeah, I think I'll have that.' That's probably all I need to say on that subject. This is one of the things that's required of us if we are to be His saints, if we are to arise and live.*

Section 59:5b says, *and in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments.* We're back to obeying the commandments again. Do we do that or do we just kind of talk about it and then go ahead and live like we want to live? Do we acknowledge Him in all things? The week before last I was out in Wyoming and Montana. It's pretty easy when you are out there and you are looking at the mountains and the trees and all the rest of God's creation and you are viewing it without anything much to distract you. That's why you are there to look around and see the beauty of His creation. It's pretty easy to remember Him then but a big part of my life, I think, is spent in complaining; complaining about a whole lot of things that you don't need to hear about today. A big part of my life is spent sort of feeling sorry for myself. Wow, look at what those folks have and all this and that kind of



thing. I don't think the Lord is very impressed with that because He has given me and all of us much. I am not talking about physical things but we could talk about those too, He has given us so much. Ron, of course, just came back from Africa again. A lot of us think that we don't really have much but compare it to the people he has been working with. Compare it to the people who live south of the border and all over the world. We have so much, but that's really not what I was thinking about. I was thinking about the spiritual things we have.

We Are A Blessed People

Do you know how blessed we are to be here this morning and to know that there is a God and that He sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to the earth to die for us? Do you know how blessed we are to have that knowledge? Do you know how blessed we are to have the Book of Mormon as a second witness of Jesus Christ and how much plainer and clearer it makes His gospel? Do we really confess His hand in all things, even when things don't seem to be going so well? Do we understand that all things work to good for those who look to the Lord and worship Him and obey Him? Do we really understand that?

In Section 63:3c it says . . . *for without faith no man pleaseth God.* . . . Well I think that goes back to the last one. Do we really have faith that God's hand is at work in our lives if we let it be, if we'll obey His commandments? I know I already said this but I am going to ask you again to take just a second and look around you here in this group today. Do you know what a blessing it is for us to have this church family in addition to our own families? As I thought about who are His saints and whether or not we qualify, I wondered what there was about our lives that would attract others even in our own families, to want to be His saints, to want to be a part of the church family? Sam, is there anything about what goes on here that makes you want to be a part of God's family that makes you want to come back here on Sunday and Wednesday evenings? He is saying yes and I think he's being honest but we should be living our lives so that the people around us see God reflected in us, that they might want to come and be a part of His family and hear the call to arise and live and not be satisfied with staying and sleeping. I know you have

heard all this before, lots and lots of times.

I've been intrigued lately, and some of you have probably already heard me mention this, by Section 26 of the Doctrine and Covenants. I am not going to read it all but it had to do with a particular question and issue that was before the church. The Lord gave them instruction on that and then He said having given them that instruction, *Behold, this is wisdom in me; wherefore marvel not, for the hour cometh that I will drink of the fruit of the vine with you on the earth, . . .* (2a) Then He goes on and says and with Moroni and Elias and He names all these people, John, Elijah, Joseph, Jacob, Isaac, Abraham, Michael, Adam, Peter, James, and John. He says literally I will sit and drink of the fruit of the vine with all of these people. I don't know if you will feel it with me this morning but I hope you will by the power of the Spirit. You're invited to sit at that table with Jesus and with His Father and with all of these people that He mentions. I hope that you know something about these people and what great people they were and what a sacrifice they made in their lives that we might have the gospel and that the people that they ministered to and lived with could know Christ. He's going to sit here upon this earth and drink of the fruit of the vine with His people. He wants us to be there but where will we be? Will we have heard His voice? I don't know how it could get any lot louder than it's been lately with all the things that are going on in the earth. That's His voice. That's what He says. It's Him calling out to you. Please awake and arise. I wondered when I read this Section 26 and thought about the opportunity that will be ours if we are His people to sit at the table with Christ along with all these servants of old. I kind of had conflicting feelings. There's a part of me that says, 'Wow I want to be there,' and there's another part of me that says, 'Wait a minute, what if I look around the table and Rodney's not there, or Pat or Rob or Jim? If I am sitting at that table with Christ enjoying His company would my love for you folks be such that I would say, 'Excuse me I am sorry I can't do this. I've got to get up and look for my brothers and sisters.' Would we care enough about each other to have called upon them also to arise and come unto Him or will it be too late. Surely it would be very uncomfortable, even if we were allowed to be there, to be there and know that there are others of our loved

ones that are not there. I guess I can't figure out how I would be there if I hadn't cared enough to do something about it before that time comes.

We get everyone rounded up for Sunday dinner at our house, ready to eat and then you go, 'Wait a minute where's Ryder? Wait a minute we can't start yet because we have to find Ryder' or maybe it would be Tanner, but more likely Ryder and you go round him up. Well, I wonder when we come here and feel the love of our brother and sisters and feel the touch of the Holy Spirit does that prompt us to say wait a minute who else should be here?

How are we going to know who else should be there and what we should be doing today to make sure they are there? Of course it's not that we make sure they're there but so we can be instruments in the hands of the Spirit to prompt them to be there. Of course the obvious answer is that we have to have the Holy Spirit for our guide and do we have that? How will we know that the Holy Spirit has been our guide and that we have not been deceived? Well I think one answer anyhow would be one that you have probably heard a lot. That is the old scripture that talks about how by their fruits you shall know them. So if we're producing good fruit, fruit that is acceptable unto the Lord then surely we are being led by the Holy Spirit but if not then surely it's time to awake and realize that we are not being led by His Spirit which wouldn't be the Spirit's fault. We are the ones that choose whether we are open to the leading of the Spirit or not.

We Are to Feed the Flock *Not* Lead It

I don't know how this fits in here right this moment but when we talk about being able to know what Spirit it is that's working with one another and the fact that we can tell that by the fruit that it produced I had to stop and think about the church. There is a scripture that you are probably all familiar with, Section 83:8a-b. I had a thought about this scripture and I want to share it with you and you can decide what you think about that. It says, *And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received, which vanity and unbelief hath brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all; and they shall remain under this*



condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which I have written. Have you ever thought about what it means when it says that we will remain under this condemnation until we repent and remember the new covenant, even the Book of Mormon? I think for years I have thought it just means that we're supposed to somehow remember to take that book to the nations and the message that is in it but I had a different thought as I was thinking about this last night. If you take the Book of Mormon and you step back from it a ways and try to look at generally what it's telling us; of course, first of all that it's a second witness of Jesus Christ but it also has a pattern in it. If you step back and look at it there's a pattern there.

Remember the Book of Mormon ended up with all the 'ites': Nephites, Lamanites, Jacobites, all of those ites. Why was that? Because they were always fighting and what were they fighting over? They were fighting over who was entitled to the inheritance, weren't they? Isn't that what happened to the Israelites and it happened again in the Book of Mormon. They are fighting over who's right and who gets to be important. Who gets to be in charge? Who's entitled to the inheritance from their fathers so they spend all their time fighting over that? You know we were to take the Book of Mormon to the descendants of the Lamanites but we were also to gain something from it and perhaps that's part of what we were to gain is to look at that and realize this gospel is not about being the one in charge. It's not about who's going to control the flock but who's going to shepherd the flock? Who's going to feed the flock? We are not called to shepherd the flock so that we can gather them in and cull them out and decide which ones stay and which ones don't. That's God's work. We are simply called to shepherd and feed the flock.

If you go to Ezekiel you will find that apparently it got to the point where the shepherds were not taking care of the flock in terms of feeding them and using the resources they'd been given to care for the flock. They were eating the flock and I think that's where we're at in the church. We've forgotten. We are called to serve. We can't do that without the Holy Spirit and so rather than bickering about who's in charge we need to be humbling ourselves

A MARB Hello
to Sam &
Judith Agwanda
from Kisumu,
Kenya, Africa.



and asking the Lord to forgive us and to allow us to serve. I want to read this scripture from Ezekiel. I am sure that you have heard it before but I think it says something about what I want to say to you today about our responsibility for each other and for the word and the fact that we're not the ones to decide who's a part of the flock and who isn't. We were sent to shepherd all of the flock. *And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, (and I think that includes us if we really believe we are part of His work in this last day) prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? (Is not this part of the problem in our present day? That we've been too busy trying to gain power and control for ourselves rather than caring for the flock?) Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed; but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, (Do these words say anything to you?) neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd; and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill;*

yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. (As we look at the scattered condition of the flock do we really care about the souls of our brothers and sisters? Do we care more about seeking after them and bringing them back unto the Lord than we do about being "right.") . . . O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock. . . neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore, for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. 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 his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where thy have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. (Ezekiel 34:1-6, 9-12)

The Lord is going to do this. He's going to gather His people. He is calling those who will listen to arise and live. He will do this and He says over here later, *And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God. (Ezekiel 34:31)* There is no mistake that He is talking about His creation, the men and women who were created after His own image. He wants us to arise and live. Quit bickering. Quit fussing. Quit wasting our time. I don't know what you waste your time on. It's easy for me to pick on television because I don't watch television so I can say, 'Look at the beam in your eye.' And probably if I gave anybody in here a chance they could tell me what the beam in my eye is. We need to get serious about what we're going to do with our lives. Some of us have long lives ahead of us. Some of us don't. Maybe that's why I feel the pressure, but I think we might all of us be surprised if we knew how short the time is that we have to either arise and live or remain and sleep. Please, brothers and sisters, don't sleep and don't give up but arise and live, live in Jesus Christ and be sure that our brothers and sisters have the opportunity to do likewise; all of them!





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

c/o Cheryl Phipps
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Words of Counsel

(cont. from page 2)

turn My face from you and reject your prayers for yourselves, as you bleat about aimlessly for safe pastures and the comfort of the Shepherd's rod and staff."

"Humble yourselves before Me, and cast off your pride and your righteousness, for it is as filthy rags before Me, and lest ye humble yourselves and repent, ye shall fade before Me as a dry leaf, and your iniquities, which I can no longer bear, shall take you away like the wind."

"And seek earnestly to be reconciled one with another, for if ye are not one, even as I have commanded that ye be one, ye are not Mine, saith the Lord. Contend with no brother, but come together in prayer and fasting. Invite all to fast and pray before Me—even those who will not meet with you in conference, or even at the Lamb's table. Your divisions and separations from each other over matters of organization are a stench to Me. It is the work of the adversary, and behold, he sifts you as he desires, for you have given yourselves over to him. Seek your brothers in prayer and fasting, and invite them all to pray and fast. Those who have My Spirit will hear My call to fast and pray, to repent, and to forgive. It is necessary that the Saints come together as My people in unity and single purpose of heart and mind, or I can in no wise minister unto you, or receive you unto Myself."

"The time is at hand, saith the Lord, that My people come out of Babylon! Look! The signs are before you, and ye seek that I should redeem

you before the end! How can ye be redeemed if ye repent not, if ye forgive not, if ye unite not as one?

How can ye hear Me, if ye hear not My servants? If ye reject them, ye reject Me, and ye shall remain a hiss and a byword— salt that has lost its savor and is trodden under foot—spewed lukewarm from My mouth." "Repent! Declare a fast! Pray for the sons of Joseph, and for the sheep who remain scattered! Call everyone who will hear to repentance and humility. I speak this concerning all the Saints who love Me, yea, all the children of the work that was restored through My servant Joseph in 1830, for there are many who will hear and who will respond. Come together in prayer and fasting, in humility and meekness, in charity one for another, esteeming each other above yourselves. This is My word and My will. Ye who will hear, see that ye do. Amen."

Humbly and respectfully submitted,
Kerry Lancaster.

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