



# Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch



# NEWSLETTER



## News & **Notes**



### Annual Hayride A Success

34 gathered at Jim & Linda Barber's for a beautiful afternoon of fellowship and fun. A scavenger hunt for "all things wild" kept old & young alike busy while hot dogs were roasted over the coals. Ron Smith had everyone reaching for their "specs" while anxiously searching the Quartermaster's Store.

### Birthday Celebration

The family of George & Beth Knotts, eager to celebrate George's milestone birthday, invited the congregation to join with friends and family of the community Sunday, November 6.



## Contents

FEATURE:	PAGE:
Sermons	
Priest Rodney Bastow	99
Eld. Steve Cunningham	99
Seventy Ted Webb	99
Elder Norman Nelson	99
Elder Joseph F. Smith	99
.....	
News & Notes	1
Pastoral Considerations	2
Calendar	99



# Pastoral Considerations

by Sherman Phipps

Starting in Genesis 37 we have the story of Joseph, the son of Jacob/Israel. It is a story that is often told, even to the children, about a young boy and his “coat of many colors.” Probably every Christian knows the story of how Joseph’s ten older brothers were jealous of him and felt their father loved him more than he loved them. The coat of many colors seemed to symbolize Jacob’s love for and favor of Joseph. As the story goes on Joseph’s older brothers, because of their jealousy, sell Joseph into captivity when he is about seventeen years old, in exchange for twenty pieces of silver. He was eventually sold into Egypt where he served as a servant. He also spent time in prison because of false allegations and his determination to obey the commands of the God of Israel. In all of this he was, in spite of his status as a servant and then a prisoner, upheld by God who blessed him for his obedience and acknowledgment of Him.

When Joseph was approximately 30 years old he was brought before Pharaoh to interpret a dream – which he was able to do by the power of God. Because Pharaoh recognized that God worked with and through Joseph, he appointed Joseph to rule over Pharaoh’s kingdom, except as to Pharaoh’s throne. (Genesis 41:39-40)

You are all familiar with the rest of the story; how when Joseph was approximately thirty-seven years old there came an extreme famine upon all of Egypt and the surrounding lands, even as Joseph had prophesied seven years earlier by the power of God; how his brothers ended up coming to Egypt to buy food from their lost brother who they did not recognize; and how Joseph ended up, as God had planned, being an instrument in God’s hand to preserve his family, the whole house of Israel, in desperate times.

As I reread this story recently I was struck by Genesis 45 where Joseph finally reveals his true identity to his brothers – the ones who had sold him into captivity approximately twenty-two years earlier. They were surely terrified to find that they were now completely in Joseph’s hands and at his mercy. If he had spoken the words they would surely have suffered any fate he pronounced upon them. But, in Genesis 45:5 Joseph, after assuring them that he held no grudge against them (in fact, he counsels them not to be upset with themselves), proceeds to say with reference to their selling him into captivity, “. . . for God did send me before you to preserve life.” In 45:8 he says, “So now it was not you that sent me hither; but God: . . .”

As those of you who read this consider the past twenty-five to thirty years or so and what has taken place in your lives as a result of your being cast out of what you had considered to be your church homes and separated from what you had anticipated would be your inheritance in the church, please consider Joseph’s experience and attitude. Is it possible we have been brought out of a setting where those who remain are destined to starve to death spiritually? Is it possible we have been “sent hither” by God so that He can use us, by His power, to provide spiritual food for our brothers and sisters when they flee from “the famine” and the grip of

*Continued on back page....*

## LOVE



Priest Rodney Bastow

Mount Ayr, Iowa

October 2, 2011

*Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.*

*And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth; but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

*For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to*





*face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*' (1 Corinthians 13: 1-13)

"Sometimes when I come here I don't know what to expect. But almost always I leave here feeling better than when I came. That is what I pray for today, that because of the power of the Holy Spirit we might all leave here feeling better and if so, may we give all praise and glory to our heavenly Father.

"Many of you have heard me testify of the wonderful experience I had with my nephew's wedding. I want to share with you some more of my observations from that experience."

### Marriage Is Ordained of God

"When I was in high school I was in the musical 'Oklahoma'. One of the songs in this musical had a verse that went like this: 'It's a scandal; it's an outrage; how a gal gets a fella today. You make one mistake while the moon is right, and they tie you to a contract so you can make it every night.' I know that song was in jest but it would make you think that marriage is an idea that some woman came up with. But marriage is God's idea. He tells us in Genesis 2:23, 24

*'And I, the Lord God, said unto mine Only Begotten, that it was not good that the man should be alone; Wherefore, I will make an help meet for him.'*

"My oldest sister lost her husband a few years back. Since that time she has tried to find a helpmate—someone to love and to be loved by. She has met a guy who seems to be meeting her needs. I hope that it works out. They both need each other. I saw my sister and met her boyfriend a few weeks ago. It reminded me of what it was like to first be in love - that feeling I had when I got married. But did I really understand what love was back then? Ephesians 5: 25, 33 tells us.

*'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.'*

"What is it like to love someone as yourself? Have we thought about this? If we truly love someone as ourselves would we do things to hurt them or make them angry? When we do something do we

think about the effect our actions are going to have on that person? I have had accidents or made mistakes when I wished someone else would have been there for me to put the blame on. It's not always easy to take responsibility for our own actions. It's hard to scold yourself or get angry with yourself. When we make the commitment to get married the scriptures say we are to become a new person. The two of us become one. We are to love each other as ourselves. We are to share each other's joys and sorrows - to become completely devoted to each other.

"While I was preparing to perform my nephew's wedding this summer I read about how we become a new person when we get married, and it reminded me of another commitment I had made. Over 40 years ago I indicated my love for Jesus Christ and I made a commitment by being baptized in His church to follow him and to keep His commandments. I came out of the waters of baptism a new person. Jesus tells us in Moroni 7: 50-53

*'And if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity, he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.'*

*And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail; but charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth for ever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with them.*

*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, that we may have this hope, that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.'*

"If we are to be followers of Jesus Christ we must be filled with His love. We must love others as ourselves and treat them as we would want to be treated.

"Love is patient. Love is kind. It does not envy. It does not boast. It is not proud. It is not rude. It is not self-seeking. It is not easily angered. It keeps no records of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres.

"I told the young couple that God wants them to have joy. He promises great joy to us also if we love Him and follow His commandments.

### The Pure Love of Christ Renews Us

"Today I want you to think about that feeling you had when you came out of the waters of baptism. You can have that same feeling of joy today as you renew your covenant.

"I pray that when Jesus comes again we will be found possessing the pure love of Christ so that we will be counted as one of his followers.

*'And now my beloved brethren, I have said these things unto you, that I might awaken you to a sense of your duty to God, that ye may walk blameless before him; that ye may walk after the holy order of God, after which ye have been received. And now I would that ye should be humble, and be submissive, and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long suffering; being temperate in all things; being diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times; Asking for whatsoever things ye stand in need, both spiritual and temporal; always returning thanks unto God for whatsoever things ye do receive, And see that ye have faith, hope, and charity, and then ye will always abound in good works; And may the Lord bless you, and keep your garments spotless, that ye may at last be brought to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the holy prophets who have been ever since the world began, having your garments spotless, even as their garments are spotless in the kingdom of heaven, to go no more out.'*

*And now my beloved brethren, I have spoken these words unto you, according to the Spirit which testifieth in me; and my soul doth exceedingly rejoice, because of the exceeding diligence and heed which ye have given unto my word. And now, may the peace of God rest upon you, and upon your houses and lands, and upon your flocks and herds, and all that you possess; your women and your children, according to your faith and good works, from this*



time forth and for ever. And thus I have spoken. Amen.' (Alma 5: 38-44)



## CALLED TO OBEDIENCE



Elder Steve Cunningham  
Boone, Iowa  
October 9, 2011

*Behold, this is your work, to keep my commandments; yea, with all your might, mind, and strength; seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit, and my word; yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men; but now hold your peace; study my word which hath gone forth among the children of men, and also study my word which shall come forth among the children of men, or that which is now translating; yea, until you have obtained all which I shall grant unto the children of men in this generation; and then shall all things be added thereunto.' (D&C 10:10a-d)*

“Good morning. I have been reading a couple of different books. I don’t know if any of you have read Heaven is for Real. It’s a book that makes you cry and smile at the same time. I have also been reading a book that I have that every once in a while I put up and then I’ll bring it back out and read the things that I have highlighted. This book is called Destination Success. I ask myself once in a while what my goal is

when it comes to religion? I know we set goals many, many times but in Destination Success it states that it is absolutely critical to have a personal definition of success. If you want to achieve it you must have a clear mental picture of what you want to accomplish before you can move forward to do it at all. I found this out after reading Heaven is for Real. It’s a book that really got me thinking. I know that we talk about heaven, about hell and about Zion but do we really, really look at them as a goal or destination? Destination Success says that one of the most common yet dangerous approaches to success is to ignore it or worse yet just believe that it will show up one day. I see this with a lot of people. They talk about their religion but really what do they know about it? What do I know about my religion? I have come upon a few people at work that I have been able to share with. As those opportunities open up it’s amazing what I don’t know about my own religion. Also, it’s amazing what we don’t know about what heaven really is.

“This is an excerpt that talks about the book Heaven is for Real.”

*“Heaven is for Real is the true story of the four-year-old son of a small town Nebraska pastor who during emergency surgery slips from consciousness and enters heaven. He survives and begins talking about being able to look down and see the doctor operating and his dad praying in the waiting room. The family didn’t know what to believe but soon the evidence was clear.*

*Colton said he met his miscarried sister, whom no one had told him about, and his great grandfather who died 30 years before Colton was born, then shared impossible-to-know details about each. He describes the horse that only Jesus could ride, about how ‘reaally big’ God and his chair are, and how the Holy Spirit ‘shoots down power’ from heaven to help us.*

*Told by the father, but often in Colton’s own words, the disarmingly simple message is heaven is a real place, Jesus really loves children, and be ready, there is a coming last battle.”*

“One thing that I got a kick out of was that Colton kept explaining how God really, really loves His children to the point where finally his mom and dad told him that they understood that. The book talks about what heaven really was. I know that

we discuss it but do we really understand what heaven is? Do we really understand what happened on this earth when Jesus Christ came down and gave His life so one day we could be with our God?”

### Tragedy and Faith

“This year on Labor Day weekend we were over in Grinnell. Stephanie had a softball tournament over there. On Friday night we got a phone call from my mom. She told us that our cousin Billy’s daughter had been in a bad accident. They were on a pontoon boat in a lake and she was standing up front when the boat started to slow down and she went over the edge. She went under the boat and got tangled in the propeller. The only thing Mom told us was that we needed to pray. We didn’t know what was going on but it was a bad situation. When you go back and look at things that happen in life many times we don’t understand them. They don’t always turn out the way we expect them to. When Bobbi Jo fell over it took them two or three minutes to find out where she was because she wasn’t surfacing. When they got to the motor they saw that she was attached. A lot of things happened during this emergency and if you are not thinking you say lucky things happened but I say blessed things happen.

“My other cousin happened to be on the water at the same time in another boat and they were headed in and thought they would just come down and see if anyone wanted to ski one more time. It was getting dark and was a little misty out. Once they got to the scene of the accident and saw what happened Michael was able to jump in. Billy was in the water and so was Mark and they were able to free this little girl and get her on the boat. Mark happens to be a marine and just got back from Iraq. He’s had a lot of medical training and knew what he needed to do to wrap her wounds to get her into the pontoon so they could get help. They’d already called for help and by the time they got into the marina the ambulance was waiting to pick her up to take her to Bolivar the closest town.

“She was in critical condition. They’d already called Life Flight and Life Flight was meeting them there at Bolivar. It takes one hour to drive to Bolivar during normal conditions in the daylight. It was dark and rainy but they made it to Bolivar in under thirty minutes. Once they got her there they life flighted her to a hospital in



Springfield, MO where they took her to surgery immediately. We didn't know what was going on but talk about blessings. This happened to be the time when we'd been fasting and I can't explain the prayers that were given for this little girl. We prayed a lot for Dad when he was having his surgery a year ago but these prayers were different. I can't explain why these prayers were different. All I know is that I remember going to bed that night and praying. At 11 PM we got a phone call from her brother that Bobbi Jo wasn't doing good. He was really upset and said that every time the doctors came out there was something else wrong. The propeller had cut her stomach open and she had lacerations on her arms and legs. She had punctured both lungs. She was still alive though. The propeller actually cut her liver and he said every time the doctors came out it was worse and worse.

"By the time morning came we called Mom to find out what was going on. Mom explained to us that she had made it out of surgery but that it would be a minimum hospital stay of three to four weeks and she would have more surgery to go through because of all the damage. They asked us to pray for the family also because Billy her dad had lost a daughter probably ten years before. She was born perfectly healthy in the hospital and after two days she passed away.

"Time came and went. She had her surgeries. What they were really concerned about was the water that was in her chest cavity and the infection that could cause. They left all the wounds open literally so they could irrigate them on a daily basis. Before we knew it one week had gone by and she had no infection. Matter of fact the next week went by and on a Wednesday or Thursday she was actually released from the hospital. She has now gone back to school part-time. Talk about a blessing! The whole time we'd been reading this book Heaven is for Real and it opened up a new thought process of what heaven really is.

"That's the way our religion should be, it should be something we live. It should be something we look for on a daily basis. We get so busy in life. I know every time that I preach I say the same thing. I work full-time and do taxidermy. We coach once in a while with Jacob and Stephanie's teams. It is really easy to come in at 11:30 or 12 o'clock at night and then have to get up at 5:30 in the morning.

Right now Sue is working on a couple of endorsements for school. It's really easy to go in the house and go straight to bed. We might turn TV on for a few minutes and it's so easy not to pick up these scriptures.

"Sue and I question ourselves about whether Bobbi Jo went to heaven, was she given that opportunity in the time that she was unconscious. They actually had her in an induced coma for almost four or five days. It makes you think about what heaven really is, what our religion really is. It's given me a different outlook on what life and my religion really means. I know that Billy is still going through a lot of problems. He's having a lot of issues because one of the things his daughter asked him was whether she was going to die. It would be rough to live in that situation but after reading Heaven is for Real I feel a little bit differently about what heaven is.

"Recently a friend and I were talking about Christopher and my brother Mike, who passed away in a car accident. After reading Heaven is for Real I know where my brother is. There's no doubt in my mind that he walks in heaven today. What stymies me a little bit is that my wife miscarried and we lost a little one. It's exciting to think that that little one is in heaven with Christopher. It makes you look at different things and what you really believe. Do you believe in heaven?"

### Called to Be Obedient Servants

"I read the scriptures not as often as I need to but how many times have I really studied the scriptures. I know they tell you we are what we eat and also we are what we read; therefore we read we don't know what we don't know. If you don't study the scriptures and you don't study things out and ponder it in your heart, you won't know what you don't know.

"In Hosea 4:1- 6 it says, '*Hear the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel; for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood.*

*Therefore shall the land mourn, and everyone that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away, Yet let no man strive nor reprove another; for thy*

*people are as they that strive with the priest. Therefore shalt thou fall in the day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.'* (1-6)

"That concerns me when you actually look at that because how is our nation doing right now? Where is our nation at? Have we forgotten the law of God?

"Again in Definition Success it actually talked about the weather department of a television station that had a sign that said we have two classes of forecasters, those who don't know and those who don't know they don't know. I suspect the same rule applies to success. I looked at this as it applies to Christianity. A few people intuitively know that they have some learning and growing and developing to do while other groups use facts and move forward with a false sense of confidence because they have the look. You look at the different churches out there that we have right now. The different things they are doing to appeal to people instead of appealing to God's word. They have the right clothes, the right body size, the right car and the right house, the right jewelry, right cologne, right friends, right job, even the right toothpaste. Deep down inside though they know they are a sham. They feel the emptiness of a beautiful shell of a life that is really going nowhere.

"The beaches of the barrier islands off the southwest coast of Florida illustrate this. Sanibel, Captiva and Marco Islands are nestled in the Gulf of Mexico and have some of the most exotic shells, a few tropical species that can not be found anywhere else in the world. Popular shells can be found in huge mounds several feet thick. They are beautiful shells with diverse colors and amazing shapes but when you find them on the beach they are dead. These precious occupants stopped growing, died and washed up on shore. Their life is over and they are only good for children to collect in sand buckets and decorations for projects. It's against federal law to take a living shell from the ocean environment because living shells keep growing and moving and they never wash up. You can take as many dead shells as you like because they are worthless. Think about this as a gift.





Living ones keep growing and never wash up. Where are we in our Christian walk?

“God wants obedience not sacrifice. He doesn’t expect us to sacrifice. He expects us to be obedient to His word. God wants us to be thankful not to be good. My wife wondered how I could say that God doesn’t want us to be good. There’s a lot of good people out on this earth that do good things who aren’t faithful to God’s word. Therefore God wants us to be faithful. Right is right and wrong is wrong. As a nation we have accepted that wrong is right. Again this concerns me. I had read the Book of Mormon several times but one day I read Mosiah 6:44-47. *‘Now, the Lamanites knew nothing concerning the Lord, nor the strength of the Lord; therefore they depended upon their own strength. Yet they were a strong people, as to the strength of men; they were a wild, and ferocious, and a bloodthirsty people, believing in the tradition of their fathers, which is this:’*

“That’s happening to us. Wrong has become right in this nation. *‘Believing that they were driven out of the land of Jerusalem, because of the iniquities of their fathers, and that they were wronged in the wilderness by their brethren; and they were also wronged, while crossing the sea. And again: that they were wronged while in the land of their first inheritance, after they had crossed the sea;’* Now let’s go down to verse 53. *‘And thus they have taught their children (this is what is happening to us) that they should hate them, and that they should murder them, and that they should rob and plunder them, and do all they could to destroy them; therefore, they have an eternal hatred towards the children of Nephi.’*

“Now it concerns me that after just a few generations we change what we teach. God has given us what we need and that is the scriptures. Read the 11<sup>th</sup> Section of the Doctrine and Covenants starting with 2b, *‘Behold, the field is white already to harvest; therefore, whoso desireth to reap, let him thrust in his sickle with his might, and reap while the day lasts, that he may treasure up for his soul everlasting salvation in the kingdom of God; yea, whosoever will thrust in his sickle and reap, the same is called of God; therefore, if you will ask of me you shall receive, if you will knock it shall be opened unto you. Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, Keep my commandments, and seek to*

*bring forth and establish the cause of Zion. Behold, I speak unto you, and also to all those who have desires to bring forth and establish this work; and no one can assist in this work, except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things whatsoever shall be intrusted to his care. Behold, I am the light and the life of the world, that speak these words; therefore, give heed with your might, and then you are called. Amen.’* (2a-5b)

“He calls us to be servants. Many times we have opportunities to share about the gospel but we don’t. Once in a while it’s because we don’t have the time. I had a young man who started working with us about four months ago. He claimed that he was an atheist. So many times I tried to share a little bit with him and finally I asked him why he was an atheist? He said just because I am. The last day he was working there we sat down and were talking about different things. I finally

“...God wants us to be faithful!”

said, ‘Chuck, I am telling you right now you are not an atheist. There’s too many things that you know to say you are an atheist. You say you are an atheist so people will leave you alone. I told him that God had a work for him to do and I said that one day God was going to grab hold of him and he wouldn’t know who it was. I have no idea what he will do. He’s only been gone for a couple of weeks but I truly feel that he does have a work for God.

“The other day I stopped by a guy that I worked with. He told me about a car accident that his sister was in and there were three girls in the back seat of the car. They didn’t know if his sister was going to make it but three days later she walked out of the hospital. He said that his sister was lucky. We could agree with him or we could take the time to say she was blessed. It opens up these little doors that let you in. So many times there are ways that we can share the gospel with our neighbors and our friends.

“One of my biggest concerns is being up in heaven and seeing one of my friends sitting outside the gate asking why I didn’t tell him about the gospel. We have a responsibility to expound the gospel. I could stand up there in front of Jesus Christ and God in this big awesome chair

and tell them that I was sorry I had too many deer to do or I had too many ducks to do. My son had a baseball game or my daughter had a softball game but I truly, truly, truly feel that I have no sense of what sacrifice is. I do pray that I will look at my life and find a way to put Jesus Christ first.

“Doctrine and Covenants 34:6a-d says, *‘Keep all the commandments and covenants by which ye are bound, and I will cause the heavens to shake for your good, and Satan shall tremble, and Zion shall rejoice upon the hills, and flourish; and Israel shall be saved in mine own due time. And by the keys which I have given shall they be led, and no more be confounded at all. Lift up your hearts and be glad; your redemption draweth nigh. Fear not, little flock, the kingdom is yours until I come. Behold, I come quickly. Even so. Amen’*

“God wants us to have the things that He talks about in the scriptures but it’s us that have to accept the responsibility God gives us. Praying is the only thing I find myself doing lately. I pray that the God will be with certain individuals and then I start thinking. God is with them. Now I stop and pray, ‘Dear God, please open their hearts to receive Thy Spirit.’ God stands with us each and every day. The Holy Spirit is here to walk with us. It’s we who have to be willing to accept that Spirit.”



A member of the High Priest’s Quorum was strolling with his wife and the talk was on the subject of losing and finding things. The elder remarked with an air of importance, “One time I knew a man who” - the wife looked up expectantly, and he continued, -”who lost his balance and no one ever found it.” Then he added, “My wife frequently loses her temper and I always catch it.”

Elbert A. Smith  
Autumn Leaves, January, 1905 p.30



## TRUST & OBEY



Seventy Ted Webb

October 16, 2011

"It's good to be with you today. I've enjoyed reconnecting with people at my 35th year class reunion at Graceland. And it has also been good to reconnect with Sherm and Cheryl and visit with them. Sherm, in the life of a teenage boy at seventeen or eighteen years old, was a vibrant man who was at the youth camps that I was participating in, and he showed to us that you could be "cool", if you will, that you could be "hip", and yet love your Lord. He taught us that. I haven't always lived my life the way I know I should have after that example that was set for me, but it certainly set me on a good path and a good course, and I appreciate that and thank him for that.

"I'd like to read to you from Mark 10:25-29. The rich young ruler had come and asked how he could get into the kingdom, and Jesus told him to give away his things and come follow him.

*"And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved? And Jesus, looking upon them, said, With men that trust in riches, it is impossible; but not impossible with men who trust in God and leave all for my sake, for with such all these things are possible. Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, But he shall receive a hundredfold now in this*

*time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life."* "What a beautiful promise!"

### With God All Things Are Possible

"There are three people that are not here that I wish were here. Those are my three sons. My oldest is 31, the next one is 30 and the last is Derick's age about 24 of 25. I wish they were here with me because they are the joy in my life, but they also have provided some of the thoughts and things that have gone into what I would like to share with you today.

"Specifically I would like to start off with a testimony about my second son Eric. Eric right now is 30 years old, is married and has given me a grandchild that is one year old. When he was three or four, he was found to be missing a valve in his heart and there were various other complications that went along with that. They have done in his lifetime at least three surgeries that I remember. They have put in a tube between his heart and aorta with a valve in it. One of those was the result of staph infection. The original tube had staph infection and it had gone to his heart and his heart had begun to fail. They had to replace the tube and as they were doing so, they ran into some difficulties, needless to say. After about four hours of surgery they came out within a half hour of putting him on the heart-lung machine. They told us they were having difficulty connecting the tube with his aorta because of the mush that the infection had caused on his aorta. Each time they connected the machine to let the blood flow back in his body, it would leak so much that it wasn't acceptable, it would never hold. And they told us at that particular time that they were on their last try. At this point if it didn't hold, there was nothing more that they could do for him. They left and my wife and I immediately went to the chapel in the hospital and prayed and we cried. But ultimately the conclusion that we came to was that we were simply going to put him in the hands of the Heavenly Father and that whatever happened would happen and we would deal with it after that.

"Needless to say he is 30 now as I share with you and I have the most beautiful grandson. It worked. It was successful. But the point I am trying to make is that when we are faced with burdens, whether they be economic, financial, physical like this or spiritual,

when it comes down to it -- to life of death -- who do we put our trust in? Who are we going to rely on?

"That is what I was trying to get at with Mark 10. In Mark 10:26 it says: *'With men that trust in riches, it is impossible; but not impossible with men who trust in God.'*

"I'd like also for you to consider *Proverbs 3:5-6. 'Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not into thine own understanding. In all ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.'*

"It is that that point that my wife and I learned a very great lesson in our lives. That was when things got the lowest for us - when things got tough - that we needed to put our trust in the Lord, and that He would support us, He would raise us up, and He would protect us. And that is why I so much appreciate Lynda Rolfe's song (On Eagles Wings) this morning and I get so emotional. I think there have been times the Lord has lifted me up on eagles wings, and put me in the palm of His hand and He has protected me. And so it touched me. I really appreciate that song."

### Knowledge By Obedience

"Every Wednesday and Sunday in the congregation that Jolene and I attend at Missouri Valley, we meet together to study and learn how we can make our lives better and become more obedient to God's commandments. I was telling Sherm and Cheryl that Jolene and I sometimes get confused because while we are studying out of one book, we'll come to class and the person who is leading the class will pull out a completely different book and say, 'While I was reading last night I thought this was interesting' and take us in a different direction. I find that exciting and challenging, but sometimes it's also confusing. But we do seriously sit and talk and try to study how we can be more obedient to God's commandments? We've talked about that you must follow all of God's commandments. How many of us do that in our lives? How many of us make excuses and say, 'Well but this one isn't all that important, we'll get by without doing that.'

"In my studies I've found a quote by a man named Vance Havner: 'You have not really learned a commandment until you have obeyed it.' You can hear it, you can see it on paper, but until you actually live it, it is not a part of your life. As I thought about that, I thought about the old days.



I'm kind of a western fan and like to watch the Western Channel; I enjoy those old time movies. At some point they used to take the wagons out to the field. To get them out there they had to harness up the horses or the oxen or whatever they had, and put a yoke over the shoulders of the horses or oxen and strap them in - I don't know exactly how they did it all - but they would get them strapped up so they could pull the wagon out to the field. What Havner was saying and what we've been studying is that we sometimes feel like what those oxen must feel like all yoked up. When we learn the commandments we are being strapped in and are putting on that yoke so that we can pull this heavy wagon, if you will. As we've studied and talked and I've prayed to my Heavenly Father, until we have willingly (maybe that's the problem that I don't put it on willingly), until we have willingly put on God's yoke and set to work making our lives and the lives of people we come in contact with more Godlike than it was before, we can never understand the joy that comes with obedience to God's commandments.

"A yoke, as I understand it, is a heavy device that's hard to carry around. I think of the sins and the cares of the world are often a heavy weight that we pull around. Maybe that's the wagon that we are pulling. Sometimes it gets so heavy that we can't go another step. As I watch those old westerns, I empathize with those horses or oxen, as they pull that wagon out to the field to bring in whatever the crop may be at the time, plodding along. It's as if they knew they were going out into the world to carry the sins and cares of the world so they plodded along real slow. They just weren't very enthusiastic about what they were going to try to do. But what was always amazing was that at the end of the day, when you would think that they were the most tired, when it would be the hardest time for them, it seemed like they could get back to that barn in no time. They knew that there was water, they knew there was feed and they knew that there was rest for them.

"I believe that that's what our heavenly Father is talking about when it comes to the joy. As we begin to understand the commandments, the burden that we carry becomes lighter as we move towards him and an understanding of what he wants us to do in our lives. The challenge I'm trying to bring to you is that

we need to continue to try to understand and follow the commandments in the scriptures, and to get into our scriptures and study them just as we did today in class with the Book of Mormon.

"I really appreciated the opportunity. I think it is great when people share their ideas and bounce scriptures back and forth off one another; what their understanding of those scriptures is because it gives us an opportunity to look at something a little differently and come to a new and greater understanding of Who our Heavenly Father is and as a result makes that yoke much lighter to carry. It allows us to more easily meet the sins and cares of the world and to actually be rid of them, getting them out of our lives.

"I want you also to imagine that as those animals are bringing that wagon back, the workers are also walking back home where they live. There are two workers that are walking along and are headed home from the hay fields for supper that evening. As they near the home of the first man, they see in the twilight this cottage back away from the road, a small house, and it has a shining light in the window. And one of the men says to the other, 'Do you know my friend, I can tell that Jolene loves me by the way she places the light in the window. There it is now. She wants me to come home, she wants me to find the way. She gives me that light so I know where I am.' You can visualize the cottage with the light in the window.

"But you know, your Heavenly Father has a light in His window for each and everyone of us. He has set a light in the words that he has given to us in the scriptures. And perhaps more importantly he has given us a light in His Son that we might find our way home, that we may find our way back to Him.

"Vance Havner, who penned 'you have not learned a commandment until you have followed it' went on to say: 'Churches suffer today from Christians who know volumes more than they practice.'

"Now I've kind of been on a kick that it's awfully hard to share the word or go out and preach or share with our Protestant neighbors the words of Christ if we don't know them, if we don't study them, if we don't get into the books and actually do some work with them. There's another step to that that Havner is getting at here. I was guilty of that up until about the last 10

years. There were a lot of scriptures and things I understood - I had knowledge of - but they weren't things that I actually put into practice. I think that's what he's getting at when he says that Christians today have volumes more in knowledge than they practice. So when we put on that yoke and become His servants and when the people around us put on that yoke, we sometimes lose sight of Jesus and the glory that awaits us at the end. We sometimes lose sight of that light that sits in the window of the cottage and we lose our way. The burden of sin and the cares of the world begin to become too much for us, and the trials and misfortunes seem to crush us into the ground.

"Just as Jolene places the light in the window for me, God has placed a light in every window. He's put it in the window of a lonely farm house. He's put it in the crowded tenement in the city and he's put it in the house in a small town in Iowa. He's put it there to help us find the way back to him - for us to come home to him; just like the horses who carry a load of hay with gusto towards home, our burdens become light as we travel that road toward the light at our heavenly Father's home.

"God's love will hold us up. It's at this point that we can begin even more to feast on his word and begin to understand and contemplate those commandments that He's asking us to follow. We can rest in the work of His Son. It's at this point that we can find comfort and we can find refuge in our knowledge and our faith in God. And I think that of those, knowledge is good but I believe that we must have faith. It's faith at times - like my son's dire situation - it wasn't knowledge that was giving my wife and I comfort, it was the faith that we have in our Heavenly Father that will bring us comfort, that will bring us strength during our troubles and will bring us peace in our worry and confusion. It's faith that takes the sting out of any misfortune that we come across and it's faith that makes our burdens light. Work becomes less monotonous, less dreary and less of a burden and our hearts become light and we begin to find the joy that comes in working for Christ. His work becomes easy and we begin to receive that reward that we're talking about - that Rob Rolfe was leading us to in the class. We begin to receive that reward sooner than our counterparts, because we have that understanding and that faith that God is looking for in our lives. Christ promised that we might find





joy. It's through faith that we can find that joy and we continue to love, honor and obey our Heavenly Father."

### To Abide is to Trust (in Christ)

"But how do we show this? I'd like to share a story with you that was written by a man by the name of Robert J. Morgan. He's the pastor of the Donnelson Fellowship in Nashville, TN, and he's the author of "And Then Sings My Soul" and "On This Day." He wrote this in a different book I found. It's about his daughter and he and their Great Dane.

"My daughter, Hannah, and I had a Great Dane named Samson that we dearly loved. And Samson, as it turned out, was well named because he was big and strong and muscular. And like his namesake, he also had a penchant for wandering. We built fences, we tried chains and dog runs. We tried everything to keep Samson at home but he'd dig under it or climb over it and it drove us to distraction. So we bought the bestselling book on the market on the subject of training dogs called "No Bad Dogs," written by the British dog trainer Barbara Woodhouse who raises Great Danes. One night I went upstairs to tuck Hannah in. She had a sad expression on her face and said, "Dad I know what Samson's real problem is. Let me read this paragraph from the book. In this paragraph it says: In a dog's mind, a master or a mistress to love, honor and obey is an absolute necessity. The love is dormant in the dog until brought into full bloom by a loving owner. Thousands of dogs appear to love their owners. They welcome them home with enthusiastic wagging of the tail and jumping up and they follow them about their houses happily and to the normal person seeing the dog the affection is true and deep. But to the experienced dog trainer this outward show is not enough. The true test of real love takes place when the dog has the opportunity to go out on its own as soon as the door is left open by a mistake, and it goes off and often and doesn't return home for hours. That dog loves only its home comforts and the attention it gets from the family. It does not truly love the master or mistress as they fondly think. True love in dogs is apparent when a door is left open but the dog still stays happily within earshot of the owner, for the owner must be the be-all and end-all of a dog's life."

"I read that and the thought came to

me with a little help from Morgan that the real test of our love for God isn't necessarily in what we know, in what we do in terms of working, like volunteering perhaps (the activities). It isn't even in how we follow the commandments. It's found when we have the opportunity to wander away or disobey or to leave God's presence and we choose instead to stay close to Him. We choose to abide in Christ and we choose to trust and obey. We must learn to trust and obey God even when we don't feel like it, when we don't want to and even when we don't think it will work.

"What is trust? I wrote down something here. See if you agree. It's a relationship with someone or something that you rely on. In doing so there are some associated feelings or emotions that come along -- companionship, friendship, love, agreement, relaxation and you become comfortable -- you have a comfort zone with them.

"So how do we build that trust in each

**"We must learn to trust and obey God even when we don't feel like it, when we don't want to and even when we don't think it will work."**

other and in God? Again there were three things I wrote down reliability, being truthful with one another and unchangeable. And when I think about reliability, I thought about being able to depend on that person to do what they said they would do. You build a trust with that person. You give something to them with the expectation that it is and will be repaid and overtime you build a trust. We've given something to God, or He's asking us to give our lives to Him. Just like with the rich young ruler who questioned Him; He replied, 'sell all, give it to the poor, give it to the needy and come follow Me.' And you all know what the rich young ruler did. He was unable to do that. He couldn't do that. He couldn't build that trust with his Heavenly Father, with Jesus, so he could be a part of the kingdom. Our Heavenly Father is asking us to give up everything and if we do as it tells us in Psalms 59:16-17 -- he will be our defense. 'But I will sing of thy power; yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning; for thou hast been my defense and refuge in the day of my trouble. Unto thee, O my strength, will I sing; for God is my defense, and the God of my mercy.'

"If we will give him everything, He will defend us. He will protect us. He will bear us up on eagle's wings, He will hold us in the palm of his hand, because God is reliable. If you turn to Psalms 118:5-6 it says 'I called upon the Lord in distress; the Lord answered me, and set me in a large place. The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?'

"God is reliable. He will be there when we most need him if we will but ask and put our trust in him.

"I want to share another story about my oldest son, Lance. When Lance was in kindergarten or first grade - let me back up. Lance has always had an innocence about him. I know you know your children are all different. Lance has always had an innocence about him that is endearing, lovable, he's a great guy. He's 31 years old. He's given me three great grandchildren (not great in the sense of lineage but they are great kids). He's also the one that had twins and we lost the second one. Someone asked me about the green pin on my collar. It's a donor pin. Gavin was six months old and passed away. They donated his organs. They had a hard time coming to that thinking that he would be disfigured in some way, but we talked and they donated his organs to help someone else.

"Lance is the most accepting, easy going person that you would ever know as a 31 year old. When he was in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade, they would send them to the restroom to wash their hands or use the facilities. He would go to the bathroom and come back. One of the janitors noticed that there was some writing happening on the walls in the little kids bathroom. It wasn't who hard to figure out who it was. It was Lance. So they came to Lance and said, "Lance, have you been writing on the walls?"

"With my other two sons the first words out of their mouths might be, 'Who, me? I didn't eat an apple or take a bite. No that wasn't me.' Not Lance. When asked he said that he had done it. He was going to tell the truth, he just did it. It was not in his nature to even consider lying. He was truthful.

"Well to develop trust, you have to have that idea of being truthful. That sense of being truthful no matter what. Paul tells us in both Titus and Hebrews that it's impossible for God to lie. God will not lie. We can put our trust in Him; that what He tells us is the truth. It is right.



“The third thing that I mentioned was being unchangeable. To me that means to be able to predict what somebody else will do. My wife can go to McDonald’s and she can order for me because I’m pretty predictable on what I’m going to eat. A lot of times when I go to a certain restaurant I get the same thing every time. I am predictable. Sometimes this frustrates her. She tries to change me sometimes but it doesn’t usually work. Being unchangeable, being able to predict what others will do, is important. As you know in Mormon 4 it tells us twice that ‘God is the same today, yesterday and forever.’ Malachi reaffirms this as well in Malachi 3:5-6. ‘And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the Lord of hosts. For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.’

“‘I change not.’ God is the one I want to put my trust in because He has three of the characteristics (and I’m sure you could add to it) that I think are important to trust: He is reliable. I’ve come to realize that obedience and trust in Him is the only way that allows God to begin to work in my life. Until we choose to trust and obey him, the circumstances that we find in our lives that come up are our responsibility and continue perhaps to be a heavy burden to bear, hard to carry. But once we choose to trust and to obey and relinquish our selves to him, that situation becomes a shared responsibility between you and your heavenly Father and the burden begins to become light.

“This is really important to me. It’s called Footprints by Mary Stephenson. Because I think it sums up what I’ve been trying to say.”

**One night a man had a dream. He dreamed He was walking along the beach with the Lord. Across the sky flashed scenes from His life. For each scene He noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One belonging to Him and the other to the Lord.**

**When the last scene of His life flashed before Him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of His life there was only one set of footprints.**

**He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times of His life.**

**This really bothered Him and He questioned the Lord about it. Lord you said that once I decided to follow you, you’d walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life there is only one set of footprints. I don’t understand why when I needed you most you would leave me.**

**The Lord replied, my precious, precious child, I Love you and I would never leave you! During your times of trial and suffering when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you.**

“In conclusion, in Isaiah 26:4 we are told to ‘Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.’

“He will direct our paths. We do not need to be afraid. God will be our strength. He is solid. He is sturdy, He is our rock. I long to be able to say as did Nephi, ‘O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee for ever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh. Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm. Yea, I know that God will give liberally to him that asketh. Yea, my God will give me, if I ask not amiss: therefore I will lift up my voice unto thee; yea, I will cry unto thee, my God, the rock of my righteousness.’ (2 Nephi 3:61-65)



**A MARB Hello  
to Ben Anderson  
in Rolla,  
Missouri.**

## TRY THE EXPERIMENT



**Elder Norman Nelson  
Lamoni, Iowa  
October 23, 2011**

For a scripture reading Brother Norman used Doctrine and Covenants 90:6a, b. ‘The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth; and light and truth forsaketh that evil one. Every spirit of man was innocent in the beginning, and God having redeemed man from the fall, men became again in their infant state, innocent before God.’

“In the Book of Alma we read where Alma and the group he had taken with him had been speaking to the Zoramites and were turned away. Then the poor of the Zoramites came out and talked to Alma. ‘Now as I said concerning faith-that it was not a perfect knowledge, even so it is with my words. Ye can not know of their surety at first, unto perfection, any more than faith is a perfect knowledge. But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith; yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words. Now we will compare the word unto a seed. Now if ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to swell within your breasts; And when you feel those swelling motions, ye will begin to say



# November 2011

## Sunday Schedule

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

DATE	NOV 6th	NOV 13th	NOV 20th	NOV 27th	DEC 4th
<b>SPEAKING</b>	Gordon Winkler	Rob Rolfe	Michael Jordison	Ed Anderson	Alan Smith
<b>PRESIDING</b>	Alan Smith	Steve Smith	Sherman Phipps	Ron Smith	Gordon Winkler
<b>PIANIST</b>	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	None	Pat Bolingbroke
<b>SPECIAL MUSIC</b>	Ron & Di Smith	Jordison Family	Alan & Valle Smith	Diane Anderson	Devon Cunningham
<b>FAMILY DEVOTIONS</b>	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber	Darren Cunningham
<b>GREETERS</b>	Rodney Bastow	Sue Beck	Darren Cunningham	Steve Smith	Michael Jordison
<b>CUSTODIANS</b>	Bob Rowland	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Ed Anderson	Jim Barber
<b>SUNDAY EVENING</b>	Bob Rowland	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Norman Nelson	Rob Rolfe

## Wednesday Prayer Service Schedule

DATE	NOV 2nd	NOV 9th	NOV 16th	NOV 23rd	NOV 30th	DEC 7th
<b>LOCATION</b>	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Gordon Winkler	Rob Rolfe	Norman Nelson	Alan Smith
<b>PRESIDING</b>	Kent Clisby	Sherman Phipps	Alan Smith	Rob Rolfe	Jim Barber	Steve Smith



## Special Events & Activities

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

**Sunday November 6th:** George Knotts birthday celebration 1-3:30 PM at the Lamoni Community Center

**Sunday November 6th:** Youth Planning Session at 5:00 before the evening gathering

**Sunday November 20th:** Thanksgiving Dinner at Church. There will be a sign-up sheet for food.

**Sunday November 20th:** Priesthood Meeting at 5:00 PM at Steven Smith's home

**November 24th:** Thanksgiving Day

**Birthday's this month:** Matthew Anderson (2), Jim Barber (6), Brandy Anderson (9), Josh Jordison (10), Jan Jordison (11), Yvonne Galusha (13), Alan Smith (14), Sam Jordison & Doug Calford (20), Jazmyn Galusha (25), Gloria Ross & Christopher Cunningham (30)



within yourselves, It must needs be that this is a good seed,' (Alma 16:149-154)

"Josh can you come up and help me for a minute? What do we have here? Josh responded, 'dirt.' What are these?"

Josh responded that they were seeds. Brother Nelson explained that they would put the seeds in the dirt. "Now if that was a good seed and you watered it, it would grow, wouldn't it?", and Josh answered, "Yes."

"What do we have here? A clod of dirt, isn't it? If we put that over that seed what would happen?"

Josh responded that the seed would die.

"It can't grow, can it? What do we have in our lives that would cause that to happen? If we allow things in our lives that put a damper over the seed we can't comprehend what's going on, can we?"

"What are those things in our lives that put a damper or clod of dirt over the Spirit of God that comes to us? Those things that we allow in our lives that make us forget what we've learned about God: TV programs, various things of the world that let us put our minds on those things and don't allow us to study the scriptures, to pray, to do the things that bring us into contract with God. The seed will grow **only** if we continue to seek the presence of God and not allow that stuff in our lives that lets us think only of filth and dirt and things not of God. If you want to be with God you **have** to be with Him. Every time we allow something else to separate us from God that seed can't grow and we can't become what He wants us to be.

"Intelligence is the light of truth. In order to have intelligence we have to be with God. Whatever we do that separates us from His presence takes us away from the intelligence we could have and the ability to understand His nature. It's so easy to do other things. It's so easy to find ways of distracting ourselves. . . . *for if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fullness and be glorified in me as I am in the Father: therefore, I say unto you, You shall receive grace for grace.*' (D & C 90:3c)

"You see Christ wasn't given everything at first. As He listened and He's worked in the presence of God, He received new intelligence on and on and on until He was with God. *'And now, verily I say unto you, I was in the beginning with the Father, and am the Firstborn; and all those who are begotten through me, are*

*partakers of the glory of the same, and are the church of the Firstborn.'* (D & C 90:4a)

"If you're going to be the Church of the Firstborn you have to eliminate these clods, this filth, this dirt that's in our society and seek to be with Him always, just like we promise every first Sunday. You must **always** seek to be with Him. Every time we allow something else to come between us and Him, we lose and we just can't comprehend what He wants to give us. *'Ye were also in the beginning with the Father; that which is Spirit, even the Spirit of truth; and truth is knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come; and whatsoever is more or less than this, is the spirit of that wicked one, who was a liar from the beginning. The Spirit of truth is of God. I am the Spirit of truth. And John bore record of me, saying, He received a fullness of truth; yea, even of all truth, and no man receiveth a fullness unless he keepeth his commandments.'* (D & C 90:4b-d)

"The glory of God is intelligence. The only way we gain in intelligence is to be with Him, not just once in a while but always. Every time we allow something else to separate us we lose somewhat of what we could have had. Try the experiment. See what happens when the seed grows, when you gain the intelligence you need, that you could have had. Plant the seed and help it grow. Pray and study. There is a lot of TV and junk in front of you. Remember you **have** to study and if you don't listen to the words of the prophets and the words of Jesus Christ Himself, your seed can't grow.

"You know the other day I made a mistake and cut my finger. It would sure be nice if I could go back and not do that but that hasn't happened. What you've done you've done. There's a wise man who said, *'The Moving Finger writes; and, having writ, Moves on: nor all your Piety nor Wit Shall lure it back to cancel half a Line, Nor all your Tears wash out a Word of it.'* (Omar Khayyám 1859)

"What you've done you've done and you can't go back and change a thing. That's where Christ comes in. He alone can go back and erase your mistakes if you repent.

"I've told you this before but when I was in Nigeria one night someone asked me, 'Why did Christ sin in the Garden of Gethsemane?' and I said, 'Well He didn't.'

Christ said to me, 'You think I was afraid to die on the cross and you're wrong. The reason I sweat great drops of blood in the Garden of Gethsemane was because I knew the pain of having to be separated from My Father in order to take upon Me your sins if you repent.'

"IF YOU REPENT, remember Christ is the only way to bring us back to God, to forgive our sins, and help us to seek. Any time we allow ourselves to be separated from Him we can be forgiven. He alone forgives you if you ask Him and seek to be with Him.



## WHOSE WAY ARE WE WALKING IN?



Elder Joseph F. Smith  
*Springfield, Missouri*  
October 30, 2011

Our speaker for the day was Elder Joseph Frederick Smith who is a member of the Church of Christ, Temple Lot church. He resides in Springfield, MO with his wife Sue.

Seventy Ron Smith opened the service with a call to worship from 1 Nephi 6:43-48. *'Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; for the feet of those who are in the east shall be established; and break forth into singing, O mountains; for they shall be smitten no more: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But behold, Zion hath*

said, *The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me; but he will shew that he hath not. For can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee, O house of Israel. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Thy children shall make haste against thy destroyers; and they that made thee waste shall go forth of thee. Lift up thine eyes round about, and behold: all these gather themselves together, and they shall come to thee. And as I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament, and bind them on even as a bride.'*

Brother Ron Smith shared, "I am so pleased that Brother Joseph Smith is here with us today. I know many of you have heard my testimony about meeting him but I'd like to share that with you because some of you haven't heard it.

"I first met Brother Joseph at the Followers of Christ campground in Woodbine, IA several years ago when Di and I were asked to go to the reunion. We got there in the evening just as the service was starting. Royle Roden met us and showed us where we were staying. Instead of taking our stuff out of the car we went to the service that was starting since we didn't want to miss it. After the service we ran down the hill and across the bridge to move our stuff into our place of residence before the sun went down. We were busy at that for about three or four minutes when a knock came at the door. It was a young boy who asked me to come and administer to his sister who was sick. I asked him if his mother had anybody else that she would like to ask to help me and he told me no I could ask anyone. I went to the only other elder's place that I knew, Vince Argotsinger, but he wasn't back from the service yet. I started going randomly from place to place and I couldn't find anyone who was back from the service. After I had spent several minutes doing this and saw that the sun was sitting on the horizon, I thought that this was silly to spend all of this time looking for someone when I could just ask the Lord which I did. I have administered, of course, many times by myself but I told the Lord if He wanted someone to help me, He would have to send someone.

"Just then a car drove in and I saw what I thought was Vince's bald head. I

thanked the Lord and went over and tapped on the driver's side window. The person inside the vehicle looked up and I realized that I had no idea who he was. I asked him if he could come and help me administer to the little girl and he told me yes. I asked him if he was an elder and he answered yes. I told him that I was Ron Smith and he put out his hand and said that he was Joseph Smith. I thought oh my goodness what have I done now. The spirit prompted me that I had asked the Lord and He had sent me what I asked for. I thought that he certainly had the priesthood by lineage if anybody did and so maybe I should just take this as the Lord's prompting. I wouldn't have asked him otherwise but I felt like the Lord answered my prayer. We went and administered together and I know that Brother Joseph holds the Melchisedec priesthood. I have been grateful for that testimony. It kind of opened my eyes to some new thoughts about where the Lord is working and what He's doing. I am so grateful that he can be here today."

Brother Joseph read as a scripture reading 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:6-8, *'Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore who believe, he is precious; but unto them who are disobedient, who stumble at the word, through disobedience, whereunto they were appointed, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense. For the stone which the builders disallowed, is become the head of the corner.'*

"I do greet you this morning in the name of Jesus Christ, the name of our Lord and Savior. I am very thankful to have the privilege to be here this day. My wife and I were just figuring out on the way over here how long it had been since I was last here. It's been about eleven years. I pray that something that I will bring to you this morning will be helpful in your search for truth and righteousness. I have no funny stories to tell. I have many testimonies but I believe these should be given in a testimonial service.

"When I prepare to stand behind the pulpit to deliver the word of God, I think back to the discussion that Jesus had with Peter. He said to Peter, do you love me? Peter said, Lord, you know I love you. He said, Feed my sheep. He said again, Peter, do you love me, and Peter answered, Yes,

Lord, I love you. Jesus said, Feed my sheep. The third time He said, Peter, do you love me. Peter answered, Lord, you know I love you. Jesus replied, Feed my sheep. When I stand behind the pulpit I try to feed the sheep. They were talking in class this morning about some of our weaknesses. I have a lot of weaknesses. I am not filled with a lot of words. My vocabulary is not as good as many of them are. I'm just kind of a country boy. My ways are pretty simple. If I find anything to say I get it from these books, the Inspired Version of the Bible, the Book of Mormon, the Book of Commandments and the Doctrine and Covenants. I don't preach a sermon from Reader's Digest. It's fun to read on a Saturday evening but Sunday is the Lord's Day.

*'... Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore who believe, he is precious;'* (6)

"Yes he's precious to those of us who believe in Him and believe in His commandments. We believe in His teachings, His doctrines. We believe in the promise of a Zion. We believe in the promise of eternal life if we are obedient to His commandments. Some people may count that gift of eternal life as an ordinary thing but it's probably the most precious thing that we can work for in this world, that we can hope for in this world and yet we see many people who turn their back on the opportunity of salvation and eternal life and walk away from it.

### **Walk in Good Works**

"A few years ago I was called to go down to Florida to preach to a branch. I got to the brother's house where I was staying on Friday evening. He said, I've entered some artwork in an art show at the fairgrounds. I would like to go out and see how I did. I told him that I would go with him. We went to the fairgrounds and walked around this big building. We were going down this one area and there were people that had different things to sell and to advertise. There were companies that produced different products and they were displaying them there. Down at the end was an eight foot table and across it was this wooden arch that had three little doors on it. It said, "Behind each door is something you need to know for salvation." There was a lady standing behind it. I guess I'm ornery but I opened

one of the doors and it said, 'You're saved by grace not by works.' I said, 'Mam, do you have a bible'. 'Oh, yes', she said. I asked her to open it to Ephesians 2:8, 9 and read it to me. '*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; but it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast.*'

"I said, 'Now read the tenth verse.' '*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*'

"Now I said, 'God has ordained that we should walk in good works. If we don't walk in good works are we going to please God?' 'Oh no', she said. I said, 'If we don't please God what's our chances of salvation?' She said that we didn't have to please God to be saved. I said, 'Ma'am, I can hardly believe you said that.' I turned to look at her and she was standing there with an odd look on her face.

"We are created in Christ Jesus to do good works, and we are created in Christ Jesus when we repent of our sins not only the sins that we have done but those that we have not done. We go down into the waters of baptism and we lay this body down into the water and bring it forth an empty shell and into that shell is placed the gift of the Holy Ghost, God's abode with us. We receive that through the laying on of hands. This is the way a person becomes a child of God. We are not all God's children. The world will tell you that we are all God's children but my question to them is, If we're already God's children, why do we have to be born again? We are not God's children until His

stumble because we do not do good works. If we ignore the word of God, if we ignore His commandments, if we ignore His directions, His principles we don't walk in good works. This is a trap that the adversary has used over many years to entangle man in his sins and his ways.

"In Section 1 of the Doctrine and Covenants it says, '*prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come*', and I want you to listen to this carefully. '*. . . for the Lord is nigh; and the anger of the Lord is kindled, and his sword is bathed in heaven, and it shall fall upon the inhabitants of the earth; and the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord (let me read that again) and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people; for they have strayed from mine ordinances. . . .*' (3b-d)

"Now I was born and raised on a farm down in southern Missouri. We had milk cows on our farm. Sometimes they would find a hole in the fence and they would stray from our farm but they were on our farm before they strayed. Who is He talking to here? He says *for they have strayed from mine ordinances*, He's talking to those of us who have received His ordinances. We have gone down into the waters of baptism. We have been baptized

works are obedience to His commandments, to His directions that we might obtain eternal life. It goes on to say '*but every man walketh in his own way. . . .*' (3e) We have seen that especially in these last days. '*Every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.*' (3e)

### God's Promises Shall Be Fulfilled

"I know of several organizations, one of which I am a member, that believe that they are the sole proprietors of the kingdom of God. Just down the road a little ways from the Temple Lot there's another one and across town a little ways there's another one. '*Every man walketh in his own way. . . .*'

"As Saints we have some bad habits. Maybe more than we should. We live in two different worlds. This creates a problem because we have to make a living in this world. We live in this world and so we have to deal in the world but we tend to keep one foot in the kingdom of God and the other one in Babylon, in the world. It's a natural thing. We do it without thinking. We have not learned how to live in the world but not be a part of it. We strive to live the great American dream but, brothers and sisters, I testify to you this morning that the time for worrying about the great American dream is over for us Latter Day Saints. For the time now is to think of building the kingdom of God. The time now is to prepare ourselves for that

***"...for the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled." Mormon 4:26***

gift of the Holy Ghost dwells within us. Then we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Then we should be walking in good works which would include obeying God's commandments. Not only those in the Bible and the Book of Mormon but those in the modern revelations because these are commandments that we are given to obey.

"I read in my scripture reading when we are disobedient we stumble at the word whereunto we are appointed a stone of stumbling, a rock of offense. If we choose to walk in disobedience then the word of God doesn't mean very much to us and we

and have received the gift of the Holy Ghost through the laying on of hands. He said that those who will not hear His voice, those who will not heed His directions, His words, His commandments, His servants will be cut off from among the people for they have strayed from His ordinances and have broken His everlasting covenant.

"Well, we make a covenant with God. We make a covenant with God when we go down into the waters of baptism and come up and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost so listen carefully to who He's talking to. We are called. We are created in Jesus Christ to do good works and those good

time when the Lord will come. We look at the condition of the Restoration today, the confusion, the division and ask ourselves, why? Is it because God changed His mind? Did God change His mind? Hardly. Section 2 of the Doctrine and Covenants tells us He doesn't change His mind. He doesn't turn aside.

"In the Book of Mormon, the book of Mormon chapter 4:26 it says, '*. . . for the eternal purposes of the Lord shall roll on, until all his promises shall be fulfilled.*' Every promise that God has made shall be fulfilled. God did not want this current condition for the Restoration. Stop and



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think about it. He didn't rip this continent off of that eastern continent and move it half way around the world for it to fail. He did it for a purpose and He didn't intend for it to fail. His purpose was to establish His kingdom here upon this land.

"2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 7:10 is probably my most popular prophesy that has been given. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of Peter 1:26 he said we have the more sure word of prophesy. We have that and this is one of them in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel. King David said to Nathan the prophet that he was going to build a house for the Lord for the arc of the covenant to rest in because it was out there in a bunch of tents. The Lord spoke through Nathan and said tell David that I didn't ask him to build me a house. He said in 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 7:10, *'Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them anymore, as before time.'*

"Now why he told King David that I don't know but he told it there so we would know it. He said I'm going to appoint a place for my people Israel.

"In August of 1831 Joseph Smith and several elders had traveled from New York to Jackson County according to commandment and they received this revelation Section 57:1a, b. *'Hearken, O ye elders of my church saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the Saints: wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion.'*

"Do you notice what He said? He said, *'... which is the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed. ...'* What do you think those elders thought? Three thousand years ago He told King David I'm going to appoint a place for my people and here He appoints it. He does what He says He's going to do. He appoints a place for his people Israel. That's why He ripped this continent around and pulled it to the other side of the world so He could have a place that He could appoint for the gathering of His people Israel.

"If you can read these words and it doesn't build a fire in your stove your wood's wet. If that don't stir your heart something's wrong. This is God's work that we're involved in. In 720 B.C.

Assyria captured the Kingdom of Israel which was led by Ephraim and Manasseh. They were known as the northern kingdom and they were carried away captive into the land of Assyria. One historian stated that on some of the tablets recovered that contain some of the history of that time that there were 2,280 of the higher class people and the most learned that were carried away captive. Some escaped the invasion of Assyria. A hundred and ten years later Babylon came along and destroyed Assyria. This let the captives be freed so they joined the general migration from this arid country up into Europe which was a much milder and better climate. The descendants of Israel that were freed went with them. History reveals that Reuben seemed to be in France and in the Netherlands and Denmark were some of the other tribes. England seemed to be the resting place for Ephraim and Manasseh. At the same time the Lord moved Lehi and his family across the ocean to this land. This is told in the Book of Mormon. We can trace the movement of these people through the Bible and through history.

"In Jeremiah 3:11-12 the Lord spoke to Jeremiah and said, *'... The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah. Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger forever.'*

"North of where Jeremiah was in Europe. The Lord knew that Israel was not going to come back. The Lord knew Israel would not come back but He sent this message so that we would know where Israel went to. The historians talk about the ten lost tribes of Israel. They didn't know where they went but we know where they went. They came to this country.

"This land of America is very special to the Lord. In Isaiah 5:1-2 He says, *'And then will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill; And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein; and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof. ...'*

"Let's see, in the United States we have the Atlantic Ocean on the east side, the Pacific Ocean on the west side, a border with Canada on the north side and a border with Mexico that's kind of loose on the south side. He fenced it. He gathered the stones out of it. He moved Spain, He moved Britain, He moved France and others out of this country that it could become a free country. A place where He could restore His kingdom because He could not restore it back in the eastern continent. The governments were too strong, too powerful. They would never allow it so He created a place. He appointed a place and He set a place up for this Restoration so that it could be restored. He planted Israel in this land, restored His church and His ordinances, His doctrines, His priesthood and it has produced wild grapes.

"When God's purposes with man fail it's because man has failed, not God. Man rebels against God. Mankind likes to do God's will when it's pleasing to them. When it suits their way that's fine but when it takes away from their own agenda or purpose or will that's another story. Then man decides to dilute the word of God. I'll just take part of the word of God or I'll water it down with some of my own ideas. The Restoration has been guilty of doing that plus they've been guilty of simply ignoring God's commands. There have been commandments that were given to the early church that they did not fulfill. We have been content to let those commandments lay there without moving to complete His work. When the Saints were driven out of Jackson County in 1833 that work was laid down and we've never picked it up. We have never picked it up. We've played with the idea but we've never picked it up.

"There are a lot of events and actions that have brought us to this condition of confusion or wild grapes. When we begin to visualize the condition that we are in we begin to look for reasons because we were created in Christ Jesus unto good works and Christ has ordained that we should walk in them. When we walk in disobedience or ignore God's work we're not walking in good works. When we diminish the word of God we are not walking in good works. When we ignore His commandments we're not walking in good works. I want to remind you of a passage of scripture that I think we sometimes read a lot but don't pay too

much attention to all of it. In John 4:36 Jesus says to His disciples who had been to the village to get food and they offered him some and he turned it down. They asked who fed Him and Jesus turned to them and said, ‘. . . My meat is to do the will of him who sent me, . . .’ We understand that. We know that Christ was sent to die on the cross but listen to the rest of what He said. *My meat is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work,* to finish God’s work. Jesus was sent not only to die on the cross but to finish God’s work. If you’re given a job you find a goal to work towards, don’t you? You want to see what the finished product is but what does the fulfillment of all your efforts produce?

“My favorite reference is 1 Corinthians 15:24. If I were you I would go there and put a marker so that when you open the Bible you will see it because it’s interesting. *‘Afterward cometh the end, when he shall have (that means He’s done it just before the end) when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power.’* I believe that the kingdom He is going to offer up is going to be perfect. I cannot conceive the idea of Jesus Christ offering up a half-baked kingdom to the Lord God Almighty. That’s just my viewpoint on it. What God did yesterday and what God is doing today and what God will do tomorrow hinges on this verse because it is designed to push forward the cause of God to that point, a perfected kingdom delivered up to God the Father.

### **A Choice Planting**

When He set this continent aside He had a purpose in mind and this is what Nathan was talking about when he spoke to David and said, *‘Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them . . .’* This is what God said to Nathan the prophet. Also in the quotation from Isaiah the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter it says, *‘My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill . . .’*

“The United States is one of the most fruitful nations in the whole world and here in the Old Testament it’s talking about the United States. *‘And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it. . .’*

“God prepared this land for the planting of Israel here on this continent, Israel becoming the choice vine and He

built a tower in it, His church. He gave them the tools to work with. Christ said to His disciples in Jerusalem in Ephesians 4:11, 12, *‘And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints. . .’* (The purpose He put these officers in the church was to bring the kingdom to perfection so that He could deliver it to God the Father.) *for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; Till we, in the unity of the faith, all come to the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’* Brothers and sisters, I believe that’s just about as perfect as you can get.

“His church in Jerusalem went into hiding because of apostasy. For many hundreds of years the opportunity to become a child of God according to the doctrines of Christ was gone from the earth, had disappeared. Then some of Israel after migrating up through Europe and mingling their blood with the Gentiles were brought to this country. In the 49<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah:22 God is speaking to Zion, *‘Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people* (and that’s what He did. He told His disciples to go to the lost tribes of the children of Israel. Where did they go? They had to go to the Gentiles because that’s where Israel was at.) *and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders.’*

“The children of the Gentiles carried the blood of ancient Israel to this land. This was the planting spoken of by 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 7:10. I think in Isaiah the 51<sup>st</sup> chapter you will find that Christ was anointed for several things there. One of them was the planting of Israel, the planting of His people.

“Let’s look at something that I think has a bearing on this question of wild grapes. With all this that has been given to us what has happened that we are in the condition we are in today? Section 45:12c in the Doctrine and Covenants says, *‘and with one heart and with one mind,* (wow, wouldn’t that be great if we had one heart and one mind today) *gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you, and it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the most high God.’*

“I looked all over Missouri, the land of Zion. I haven’t found that city New Jerusalem. They didn’t do it. Not only were they to purchase land in the land of Zion but in Section 94:3a-d it says. *‘Verily I say unto you, that it is my will that an house should be built unto me in the land of Zion, like unto the pattern which I have given you; yea, let it be built speedily by the tithing of my people: (Now listen to what God’s directions are and the reason for them.) behold, this is the tithing and the sacrifice which I, the Lord, require at their hands, that there may be an house built unto me for the salvation of Zion; for a place of thanksgiving, for all Saints, and for a place of instruction for all those who are called to the work of the ministry, in all their several callings, and offices; that they may be perfected in the understanding of their ministry; in theory; in principle and in doctrine; in all things pertaining to the kingdom of God on the earth, the keys of which kingdom have been conferred upon you.’*

“This was to be a place of instruction for all those who were called to the work of the ministry for all their several callings and offices that they might have been perfected in the understanding of their ministry, in theory, in principle, in doctrine and all things pertaining to the kingdom of God. The house was not built.

“The Saints in the land of Zion rebelled against Joseph Smith and against the word of the Lord. In one letter that Oliver Cowdery wrote to Joseph Smith he said you need to change the words of this revelation because it does not conform to the culture in which we live. Joseph wrote back and said we didn’t consider the orthography of the word. Boy, they told me he had an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education, orthography! That’s a \$2.95 word. I had to go to the dictionary and look it up. I’d never heard that word before. It means the spelling of the word according to the common usage. He said we didn’t think of the orthography but we thought of the manner and it was the word of God and it means that God’s word means what it says. They had rebelled. They did not seek to establish the Lord’s righteousness but they sought to establish their own. Every man walketh in his own way and after the image of his own god. Their rebellion caused them to be driven out of the land of Zion. They went there with the attitude that they were God’s people and the residents of Missouri could either join

them or be booted out. That was the arrogance that they had. You rub a match against something abrasive and it will catch on fire. They were driven out of the land of Zion.

“In Section 64:7a, b it says, ‘Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days; and the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land; for, verily, I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out.’

“Therefore, the ministry of the Restoration was not brought to perfection as the Lord had proposed and the house was not built. We are not in perfection today. We can see that by the lack of unity of purpose, the lack of unity of teaching, the lack of unity of belief, and the lack of unity of effort. If the ministry has not been brought to perfection then how can the Saints be brought up to that level? So we struggle. We struggle in a cloud of controversy, contention, division but the Saints will not be brought to perfection until the ministry humbles themselves and repents before the Lord and comes to the Lord with a heart and a willing mind because this is what the Lord requires, the heart. He’s not talking about that flesh thing in here that pumps our blood. He’s talking about our intentions, our purposes, our desires, our aims.

“This leads me to a story in Matthew 22:36-39. One of the lawyers came to Jesus and said which is the great commandment and the law. ‘Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (and then He says) On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’

“He wants our hearts given totally to Him. He wants us to take that foot out of Babylon and put both feet in the kingdom of God. We need to learn to be in the world but not of the world. We need to begin to build up the kingdom of God. To me this is the celestial law, this is the divine law, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.’ The Lord requires our heart and a willing mind.

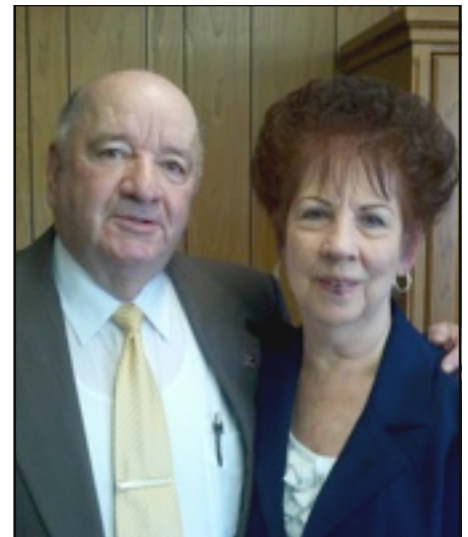
“What is our situation? Are we not converted to this celestial law? Do we not love the Lord with all our heart, mind and soul or do we love our new car or our way of life in this world more than we love God? If we do not love the Lord with all our heart why not? We’ve been given all of this gospel, this knowledge, this divine word of God. We’ve been given it. The world doesn’t have it. Because we have the gift of the Holy Ghost we can understand scriptures they can’t envision. From the very start of the Restoration Movement the concept of Zion was present. In years past the subject of Zion was so strong that we would sing song after song about it. What has changed? Zion is our ultimate hope, our sure foundation, the glory of being with the Lord when He returns. This is Zion! But Zion cannot be established except on the merits and for the reasons that God has given. The Lord is looking for Saints who sincerely desire to push forward the cause of Zion, and I am looking forward too. I want to know who they are. Are they sincerely interested in pushing forward the cause of Zion? That’s what I am about now.

“Two brethren came down to my home a couple of months ago and asked what would it take to get me to go out and preach and teach and seek out and encourage the Saints. I told them and they said OK. He wants people who are sincere in their belief, in their desire to see Zion, not only to say but to do. We use to sing a song, We’ve a Story to Tell to the Nations. Well, how’s our story looking to the nations? Brothers and sisters, it’s time to change. It’s time to lay down our differences because when you add up all our differences and our ministry and you put them over here on one side of the scale and you put the kingdom of God over here, the kingdom of God is going to outweigh it so much. It’s so much more precious than all your differences.

“So what if Brother Rob doesn’t do everything like I would do, he is still my brother. He’s still called of God. The Lord told us to be careful about how we judge. Judge not lest you be judged for by what judgment you judge so shall you be judged but He made us fruit inspectors. He sure did. He said by their fruits you shall know them so if somebody comes and he says he’s a minister in the restored church, look at his fruit. If he bears the spirit of Christ, fine because that’s

something you can’t fake, you either have it or you don’t. Look at his fruits. Brothers and sisters, we need to find peace one with another because this work of God is going to go forth.

“In the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of Jeremiah the Lord spoke to Jeremiah and said you go down to the potter’s house. I checked this out with Lynda (Rolfe) to make sure that I was right. He told Jeremiah you go down to the potter’s house and there I will give you my word. Jeremiah said he went down to the potter’s house and the potter was working a vessel on the wheel and it became marred in his hands and he remade the vessel. I asked Lynda now if that happens do you throw that clay away. No, you put it back in the bucket, mix it up and you reconstitute that clay and you rebuild that vessel. Then the Lord said to Jeremiah even as the clay is in the hand of the potter, O Israel, even so are ye in my hands. The kingdom fell apart in the Old Testament times but God did not throw His people away He plucked them up and brought them to this country. He is going to remold His kingdom here that He can bring it to perfection. We can either be a part of it or not. That’s our choice. So long as we pull against each other we’re going nowhere. We will go nowhere until we go back and obey the commandments that the Lord gave to Joseph Smith in the very beginning. We have to pick up the work that was laid down in 1833 and carry it forth.”



Joseph and Sue Smith





# Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

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



## CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST - MT AYR RESTORATION BRANCH

NOVEMBER 2011

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

### Pastoral Considerations

*...cont. from page 2.*

death (spiritual)? Will we be found obedient to His commandments so that we may have His Spirit to be with us and to bless us through whatever situations we may find ourselves in during our lifetime?

Are we willing and able to be faithful to God no matter how alone (separated from those who used to be our family) and how rejected by man we might feel? Can we let the love of God have place in our hearts so that we anxiously await the day when the Lord will allow us to do good for those who appear to have spitefully used us, that they might not suffer death (spiritually)

but might be saved according to God's plan and wisdom.

My prayer is that we shall become and remain faithful, obedient to God's commandments, and filled with charity. Surely if we do we may trust that God will/has gone ahead of us and that we will find that we have been "sent hither" to the places that we occupy by God himself, for His purposes, unto His honor and glory and unto our eternal joy.

May God bless you and preserve you to be a part of His family and may we treat one another as family looking forward to the day when the Lord will reunite us as family.

**FEAR NOT – REMAIN FAITHFUL.**



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Michael Jordison (Editor)  
Cheryl Phipps (Circulation)  
H. Alan Smith (Publication)

For content contributions please contact *Michael Jordison* at [jordi@grm.net](mailto:jordi@grm.net).

For subscriptions please contact *Cheryl Phipps* at [gmagpap.phipps@gmail.com](mailto:gmagpap.phipps@gmail.com).