



Church of Jesus Christ

Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

NEWSLETTER

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News & Notes

New Officers Elected

New Branch Officers were selected at the August Business Meeting for MARB. See page 18 for a full list of the newly elected officers.

Pastoral Change

Brother Sherman Phipps will be passing the mantle of congregational Shepherding to Brother Alan Smith. We are grateful to Sherman for his service and intercession on our behalf as Pastor these last few years. Though he may be quick to dismiss any part that he has played in our Spiritual growth we would like to say how much we appreciate his efforts in seeking to follow the direction of the Spirit. Many things could be said but perhaps the best appreciation should be shown by our being quick to heed his admonition to both humble ourselves and

complete the course that is set before us. We also will uphold Brother Smith in prayer as he takes up again this responsibility. A setting apart service will be forthcoming.

Guest Ministry to Preach

Seventy Jim McKay, from Zarahemla

Branch, will share with the congregation Sunday, September 16th. A potluck will be held following the 11:00 service. The congregation is invited to share with Brother McKay on Saturday evening (15th) at Sherman and Cheryl Phipps' home.



Pastoral Considerations

by outgoing Pastor, Sherman Phipps

I have had two opportunities this summer to ride my motorcycle to Montana. When I get to the mountains that run through the Western part of the U.S., I am always amazed at the beauty of God's creation. In addition though they always cause me to stop and consider what it would have been like to have been one of the early pioneers who went west by covered wagon. I wonder what it would have been like to have survived crossing the Mississippi River, the vast prairies, etc. and then come to the mountains. What could have motivated someone sitting in a covered wagon, looking at the terrain of the Rocky Mountains to keep moving west? Remember: no cell phone, no 911, no Hy-Vee, Fareway, etc., no Wal-Mart or even small ma and pa restaurants or general stores – not for the early travelers. So what would motivate you to go on?

My purpose in writing this is not to answer that question. Rather, lately I have talked to a number of people who have expressed an intention to give up on their efforts associated with the sharing of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I would not be critical of someone who was sitting in a covered wagon after months of difficult travel looking at the Rocky Mountains saying, 'This is it. I can't go any farther. I'm staying here, (or going back).' Likewise I cannot be critical of anyone who looks at our present scattered condition saying, 'That's it. I've gone as far as I can. There's no future in pushing on.'

While I can't be critical, I can't agree either. What if none of the pioneers had been brave enough, tough enough or willing to make the sacrifices that many made to go on through the Rockies to the land west? What happened to the Israelites who said, 'We will never make it. I'm not going. I'm staying right here in Egypt (Babylon)'? What would have happened to Lehi's family if he had been unwilling to leave his home, riches and status in the community – leave Jerusalem and go where the Lord directed him? What would have happened if either Lehi's family or the families of Jared and his brother had said, 'No way, I'm not getting on/in that boat(s) and going into unchartered waters?' You can think of many other examples. The point is what happens if we decide that Zion sounds like a beautiful wonderful thing that could be crucial to the well-being of the souls of those who come after us (including our own children, grandchildren, etc.), but we decide we can't go any further and give up? It may be that we need to be on our knees asking the Lord to direct us, even if that means changing the course that we ourselves have picked and changing directions in response to the Lord's counsel. But, quitting is not the answer. Giving up short of the goal is not the answer. (continued on the back page...)

THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL

Seventy Tim Canfield
Independence, Missouri

July 22, 2012

I'd like to read a scripture that we usually hear around Christmas time, but as we go through the hour I'll explain why I chose this scripture today.

Luke 2:25-32 *And behold, there was a man at Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child, even Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.*

I appreciate the opportunity to be able to stand before you and share. It is my hope and prayer that we bring praise and honor to our Heavenly Father and I hope it is a strength and a benefit to each one of us.

That is a scripture that we usually hear around Christmas time so we are fairly familiar with it. They say at Christmas, Jesus is the reason for the season. But I believe Jesus is the reason for all seasons. Isn't that why we are here today? Sure we may come to fellowship with our friends and our loved ones, and we may come just out of habit. We may even come because our parents make us come or because people expect us to be here. Whatever the reason, the reason really is because of Jesus—because of what He has done for us, the promises in the scriptures that He has promised to us. That should be the real



reason why we are here and no other.

A few months back, as I was reading my scriptures, I came across that phrase “the consolation of Israel.” I’ve read it many times and heard it many times from the pulpit but it struck me in a different way—as something I needed to write down and remember because the Lord was going to ask me to preach sometime and I was supposed to remember it and use it. So over the next few months as I pondered it, I made it a matter of prayer. I wondered how many names and titles were synonymous with our Lord. I made that a study and I am going to share some of that with you today.

Once in a while when I was younger and in school, we would have a contest and there would be a prize awarded. Someone would get first place and the rest of the class might get a consolation prize just so that they would feel a part of things and not failures. She tried to console us. I thought that wasn’t what this scripture meant about Jesus. He is the first prize, not something that we consider second if something else doesn’t work out. He is the goal. He is the mark of the high calling. It is in His name that we are known as Christians.

As I thought about that, I thought it was rather obvious. They recognize the Lord had promised to deliver them from bondage. Jesus said that He had done that when He came, yet Roman’s still ruled over them. Jesus offered something else, not just the physical freedoms that we have known in this country, but freedom from the burden of sin, freedom from this life and all the suffering. When we claim Jesus, we have that freedom, that peace in our lives. It is consoling to us. We don’t have to think that in this life there is no hope. He offers us that hope. He promises us the Kingdom. In other words, that word consolation means “alleviation under stress of mind; that which a comparative degree of misfortune springing from any circumstance that abates the comforts or refreshes the spirit; happiness in distress or evil, or supports and strengthens the mind; has hope, joy, courage,” and so forth. That’s what Jesus offers to each one of us.

In Acts 1:6 the disciples asked Him, “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” He offered them freedom but not deliverance from the bondage of the Roman Empire. What He offered them was the opportunity to look beyond this life to a life of eternity with

Him and His Father.

Today I want to talk about Jesus’ name. When our children were little, we used to have family worship in the evenings where we would pray and sing and read some scriptures. One of the children’s favorite songs was, “Jesus, name above all names, Beautiful Savior, Glorious Lord, Emanuel, God Is With Us, Blessed Redeemer, Living Word.”

What is in a name? I go by many names. My legal name is Timothy Scott Canfield. In certain circles of my family, my friends, or my coworkers I have titles or other names. My children call me Dad. My parents called me son. My wife has called me several names such as Honey or husband. I’m known as a mailman. I used to be a bricklayer. I have a priesthood office. People recognize me at that.

When Kelly and I were first going to be parents, we had a book called “A Book of Names.” In that book it gave the origins of names and sometimes it gave a scripture reference or some kind of meaning to that name. As we talked and made it a matter of prayer, we named our first daughter Jenna Marie. Her middle name is the middle name of Kelly’s biological mother. We used family to help name our children. Our second daughter, Alisa June, her second name is the same as my mother’s second name. When we had our son Andrew, we named his middle name after my Dad’s middle name, Victor. So when we go through this process, sometimes we do it because people have made an impression on our lives. Perhaps we have a family member, a friend, or someone from church that we respect so we want to consider naming our child after that person. Or perhaps there is a scriptural name. I do not know why my parents named me Timothy. There is no one in our family named Timothy. Maybe they pulled it out of the scriptures. I don’t know. We go through a process.

If I were to mention certain names to you, we would already associate certain things with those people. If I mention Abraham Lincoln, we recognize him as the 16th president of the United States. If I mention George Washington, we recognize him as the father of our nation. If I mention Adolf Hitler, we recognize the horrors that were contributed to him. Napoleon is another name we recognize. Ghandi, Henry Ford, Thomas Edison, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Joe Montana, Tiger Woods, Mohamed Aly, and so forth, are all names

we associate with certain things or events. Those events didn’t transpire because they were named that. Their names got famous after those things took place. Some of them were presidents or dictator or inventors. Some of them gave us things in technology or were the best in their particular sports. They may have given us freedom and rights, showed us how power corrupts, or showed us problems in the world. Some made our lives more comfortable and convenient. Some have even entertained us.

What about Jesus’ name? Who is He and why should we give Him so much of our attention and our devotion? In Isaiah 53:1,2 *Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* When Jesus came into this world, He wasn’t the best athlete, He wasn’t the person who was going to be king at prom, He didn’t win the big game in any sport, nor was He going to win Mr. Universe or the best looking man of the world. It says that when He came He was going to be an average looking person. There was no form nor comeliness that we should desire Him. He was going to be just like you and me. He left His glory in Heaven to come to this earth because of you and me.

In Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.* I wondered when Jesus was ever called Wonderful. It is capitalized here, so that means it is a proper name. I looked through the scriptures, but I couldn’t find it anywhere except in this verse. We certainly can attribute wonderful things to Jesus. He has blessed us. We recognize the promises from the scriptures that He offers to us. We certainly would attribute wonderful to His name.

I want to read a testimony to you, one that is probably familiar to most of us, but I think it is very fitting, not just because of the name of Jesus but also what the testimony is about.

“In 1884 General Conference was held at Stewartville. Among other leading men of the Church present at this conference was Apostle Jason W. Briggs. He came



over to my house several times and told me about some of the conditions in Nauvoo.

He got me to doubting a little about some of the things of the Reorganization, and I got me to the point where I thought I would make it a subject of prayer, for the Lord knew I wanted to do right and be with the right people.

Sometime after the conference was over, I had the following dream:

I was at the Maple Grove Church and was to preach there at the eleven o'clock hour. While I was on the platform, getting ready to open the meeting, the door on the east side opened, and Brother Joseph (Smith III) came in accompanied by another man, a stranger to me. This was a pleasant looking man, about middle age. I walked up to the prophet and said, "Well, Brother Joseph, I am glad you have come; you are just in time to give us a good sermon. We are all glad to see you." I had been associated with Brother Joseph quite a good deal, and knew he lost no time in introducing his friends to each other, but this stranger stood behind him and Joseph did not say a word about him. I thought this strange, and as the prophet walked down the aisle, shaking hands with different ones, I went up to the stranger and said, "I guess I will have to make myself acquainted with you. T. T. Hinderks is my name." The stranger looked at me and said pleasantly, "My name is Wonderful."

This struck me very forcibly, and I mused, "Wonderful. Who can this man be?" He followed Brother Joseph down the aisle, and when they got to the front of the building He raised His right hand and laid it on Joseph's shoulder. Then He turned to me and said, "This is the true Prophet of God." He continued, "Do you see that over there?" pointing on the east side of our building, where there was a rock about three quarters of a foot square. The rock was rough in places, but in the center of the rock there was resting a piece of pure white marble, a square piece placed in the solid rock. He asked, "Do you see that?" I said, "Yes, sir." Then He said, "That piece of white marble resting in that head of rock is the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. It shall never be moved."

That is the only place I have ever found where Jesus was called Wonderful. In that same scripture in Isaiah, it says He was called Counselor. Lawyers are sometimes referred to as counselors. I

looked up the definition and picked this one out of all the definitions as the most fitting. "Any person who gives advice and who gives advice in relation to a question of law."

In Luke 2:42-47 *And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom, to the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind, in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not that he tarried; But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among his kindred and acquaintance, And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, and they were hearing him, and asking him questions. And all who heard him were astonished at his understanding, and answers.* Jesus knew the law. He understood the law. He was explaining it to them, even at 12 years old, to those who were considered the most learned men of the day perhaps. They were astonished at His understanding.

We also find in Matthew 4:3-10 *And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But Jesus answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then Jesus was taken up into the holy city, and the Spirit setteth him on the pinnacle of the temple. Then the devil came unto him and said, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. And again, Jesus was in the Spirit, and it taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. And the devil came unto him again, and said, All these things will I give unto thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Jesus quoted the law to Satan in that experience. He understood the law.

From Matthew 12: 1-6 *At that time Jesus went on the Sabbath day through the*

corn; and his disciples were an hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat. But when the Pharisees saw them, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungered, and they that were with him? How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them that were with him; but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and ye say they are blameless. But I say unto you, that in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath. Jesus understood the law. When He was tempted or confronted with a circumstance, He quoted the law. It's important for you and me to know the scriptures, to know how to respond in circumstances when the temptations come or when trials come into our lives. We all experience them from time to time. We have a Savior, Jesus. Just by speaking His name, evil flees and darkness flees from light. There is power in the name of Jesus. Isaiah 9 calls Him the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father.

John 1: 1-3 *In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the word, and the word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made which was made.* Everything in creation was created through Jesus. He was with God the Father. Jesus hears our prayers. He knows our thoughts. We cannot hide from Him. He is all knowing. Jesus said that when you have seen Me, you have seen the Father. I am the same who leadeth men to do good. He that will not believe My words will not believe the Father who sent me, for behold I am the light and the truth of the world.

I am going to leave this for you to think about. In Isaiah, He was called the Prince of Peace. In Matthew 10: 30 *Think not, that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.*

We understand what that peace is in our lives. It comes from Jesus. He sees us through hard times when we allow Him to work in our lives, when we are able to lay



our burdens at His feet. He sends that good spirit to bless us, to comfort us, to help us, to heal us, and to give us the assurance that there is someone up above watching out for us who loves us. I see people at my work all the time stressing out. At times I do also. It helps me when I stop for a moment to realize that I have a Savior I can pray to. I have a Savior I can lay that burden down to. I can see the bigger picture. This life isn't forever. There is something beyond this life that should give us hope in Eternal life. If you don't get anything out of what I say today, remember this, Jesus is coming and He is coming soon. And He is the Prince of Peace. When that Kingdom comes here, we know what the scriptures say. These nations of this world become the nations of God. They will go up to Zion to learn of her ways. There will be no more sickness, no more temptation, no more suffering, no more wars. Isn't that a place we want to be? That's a place I want to be. I hurt. When I see people suffer, it hurts me.

I just went through some suffering. I was released from the hospital Friday. As a parent, when I see my children go through things, I want to do everything I can to help that suffering to be lessened. Even sometimes when I don't think they deserve it, I do everything I can to help them through that, because I want them to know that the love we show them really comes from God. It is because God loves us that we love one another. It is easy to love your family members most of the time. Sometimes it is hard to love the person who accuses you, takes advantage of you, or spitefully uses you. We are told that we need to love them anyway, whether they ask for forgiveness or not. We do not judge them. God says I will forgive whom I will forgive but to you it is to forgive all people. We don't have a choice. That is what we are to do, even if they don't ask for forgiveness—and that's tough

When Joseph first heard that Mary was pregnant, I'm sure his first thought was not what they were going to call the baby. The scriptures indicate that he was concerned about putting her away privately. Matthew 2: 1-4 *Now, as it is written, the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise. After his mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph, her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put*

her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a vision, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. The angel told him what to name their son. What does the name Jesus literally mean? Jesus interpreted means Jehova saves. So when He was anointed after baptism with the Holy Ghost he was called Jesus Christ. Jesus saves the anointed. Have you been anointed? Have you been baptized with water and anointed with the Holy Spirit? Yes, we have. We are of the anointed. Jesus saves the anointed.

We recognize Him as the creator. God calls Him the Only Begotten Son. We recognize Jesus as a brother. He was known as the Son of Man because of the flesh. He was born of woman. He was known as the Holy One of Israel, the Redeemer, our Savior, a Mediator, an Advocate, Messiah, a Shepherd, a Lamb, an Heir, a Judge, a Potentate, a Prophet, a Physician, a Preacher and a Teacher, a Rabbi, a Master, Alpha and Omega, a Nazarine, a Servant, the Lord of Hosts, the Light and Life of the World, the Bright and the Morning Star, the King, a High Priest, the Cornerstone, the Word, and there are many others.

“We need Jesus in every aspect of our lives, not just on Sunday or Wednesday.”

I have read and hear many testimonies that when temptation or a dark presence has come upon people, they have called out the name of Jesus. When they did that, the darkness or evil presence has disappeared. There is power in the name of Jesus. Why is His name so important? Isaiah 3:11 *There is no other name given, whereby salvation cometh, therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God, that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives.* Have we taken upon us His name? Haven't we in the waters of baptism? Aren't we His representatives?

II Nephi 13:31 *And now behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God.* You know that we live in

a time when people say they just believe in a higher power. They don't want to associate any kind of masculinity to God because it offends those who want to think maybe He is feminine as well. We know there are many religions out there that promote many different prophets and gods, but I believe what these scriptures say. There is no other name given or way whereby man can be saved but in the name of Jesus Christ and the example He set for us when He walked this earth. He said those things you have seen me do, do also. Let us have the image of Jesus engraven on our countenance.

Jude 1: 24-25 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.* We too need to be looking for that consolation of Israel because we too are Israel. We need to be rescued. Look at the condition of the church. Look at the condition of our lives. We need Jesus in every aspect of our lives, not just on Sunday or Wednesday. Whenever and wherever we find ourselves, we need to remember to ask ourselves what Jesus would do, what He would say, how would Jesus respond. There is power in the name of Jesus. He loves each and every one of us. He will do everything in His power, as we continue to respond to Him, to make us successful in this life. That doesn't mean to have the biggest house or the most money but to bear His light to everyone with whom we come in contact. Each one has the responsibility to bear our testimony of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, not only in words but in our actions. Often our actions speak louder than our words. I trust that as we think about our Lord and Savior and what He means to us, that when we go outside these walls that we are His representatives. I think the promise of the Kingdom, and the promise of His return, is a good enough goal for us to set to strive to achieve in our lives. Thank you for inviting me. I love this work, and I love the Lord's people





SHARING SERVICE

July 29, 2012

Every month that there is a fifth Sunday, our congregation has a Sharing Service where we can share song, poems, and testimonies. This Sunday was one of those. Our service was opened with Psalm 100 as a Call to worship. *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God; it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise; be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.*

After singing several congregational songs, Michael Jordison accompanied himself on the guitar and sang, 'My Redeemer is Faithful and True.' Jennifer Rowland read a testimony that her grandmother, Dorthy Phipps, had shared with the family.

After my parents sold their cows and we moved into town in Des Moines, we continued with our milk routes only now we had another dairy which had just started up, bottle our milk and we delivered to our customers. It was started by two young men, _____ Anderson and Iver Erickson. That dairy which is now widely known throughout the country is now called "Anderson Erickson Dairy." Their operation started in the garage of one of the men, I don't remember which. I can just remember backing our truck up to their loading dock at the garage. They were fine young men.

We had bought an ice house to store our milk in and we loaded for our routes out of this building which was in our back yard, probably about 60 feet or so from the house. It was the type of building to store blocks of ice. We did not have electric refrigeration at this time, just big blocks of ice. It had very thick walls of pressed wood to insulate.

My mother and I had one retail route to the homes and my father also had a retail route. We would return to the ice house to store any left over milk. My

father would then reload and go on his wholesale route to the stores and restaurants.

One morning in the summer when I was 16 years old, my mother and I had just finished unloading our truck when my father came in from his route. He was running a little bit late so he quickly unloaded and reloaded for his wholesale route. While he loaded, my mother and I were busy combining the returning milk cases and stacking them in their proper place. My father left, and in his hurry he closed the door and flipped the bar over which locked the door. This was in the days before the plunger type doors as we have now which can be opened from the inside.

We finished our job and went to leave when we discovered what had happened and we were locked in. We knew Papa would not be returning until evening. The ice house was not very big and I realized that there would not be very much oxygen. Mama had some heart problems, so that would not be good. I will always remember how calm my mother was. She immediately said, "let's pray because we need to get more oxygen in here." After we prayed we looked around and saw the ice pick stuck in the wall, so Mama suggested that we would try picking through the insulated door so that perhaps we could pick a hole big enough to reach through and push that bar up. We took turns picking and praying. We were not making much of a dent in the door, but we kept on.

Mama had a cousin by the name of Wallace Strong who lived in Olathe, Kansas. Having lived in Des Moines, Iowa all of my life, I had no idea where Olathe was but I knew that he and Mama had always been very close. Wallace had a brother and sister in law who lived just a short distance from our house and whenever he and his family came to Des Moines to visit them, he would also come to see us.

We did not know that Wallace at this very moment was seated at his relatives table having breakfast. He told us later of his experience. He was eating breakfast when he heard a voice say, "Go to Melissa's." (My mother's name.) He thought this was odd, but did intend to visit us. He said he continued with his breakfast when the voice spoke again and repeated, "Go to Melissa's." He said silently, "Yes Lord I will go as soon as I

finish eating." The voice came again and this time it said "Go now." He excused himself from the table and drove over to our house. He parked in the driveway near the house and went to the door. He knocked, but got no reply. He said he thought that strange as the door was open, but no one was there. He went back to his car and said he stood with his hand on the car door praying. He said "Lord I know I heard your voice tell me to come here, but there seems to be no one here." Just then he thought he heard a little noise and started to walk towards the ice house as that seemed to be the direction of the sound, but when he got there the door was locked. As he stood there he realized the sound was coming from inside the ice house. He flipped the bar back and my mother and I fell into his arms.

Many times after this when we would see Wallace at family reunions, tears would come to his eyes and he would say, "If it weren't for the good Lord you wouldn't be here."

While this was a pretty traumatic experience, yet it is something that I shall always remember. It let me know in my young life that I could always count on my heavenly Father for any need that I might have. I have relied on this many, many times throughout my life and still do for He is always faithful. This is something I want all of my children and grandchildren to know. You can always come to your Heavenly Father at any time any place with whatever need you might have and he will help you.

After singing a hymn Michael Jordison shared a scripture from Galatians. *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance; against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* [Galatians 5:22-25]

After reading this scripture, Jim Barber and his daughter Debbie sang "Blessed Assurance" and his grandson Jackson played a piece on the piano. Di Smith shared a personal testimony about tithing. Steve Smith and Sue Beck shared songs and Cheryl Phipps shared another of Dorthy Phipps' testimonies.

Prayer has always been a very important part of my life, and I want to share something with you that I hope will be a great help to you, and that is about the power of prayer in your life.



I believe the best way for me to convey that to you is to share some of my experiences. I am sure you have heard people say "All I could do was to pray," almost having a connotation that praying is the last thing left to do, when actually praying is the first and most powerful thing you can do.

I remember as a child nine years of age, when my family had just moved to a new farm. My sister, Thelma, who is 2 years younger, and I decided to "explore" our new surroundings. It must have been early summer as I remember that we were barefoot. We always got to start going barefoot on the day school was out. Anyway, there was a small creek running through the pasture which was not too far from the house. It was a beautiful little creek, shallow and so clear that you could see the sand and rocks in the bottom of the water as it gently babbled along. I can hear the gentle sound yet as I think of it. It was the perfect place to go wading, which was one of our favorite things to do. We played in the water for some time and then picked wildflowers to take to Mama. Finally we decided to go back to the house as our mother had cautioned us not to be gone too long.

It had rained and there were puddles of water everywhere. As barefoot kids, we walked not around, but through every puddle we came to. We each picked up a stick and were using them as a cane or walking stick. We started up the path toward the barn, when we came to a large puddle. For some reason we did not wade through it as we had the others. We "raked" through the puddle and decided it must be kind of deep as our sticks didn't touch the bottom, so we sat down on the edge with our feet in the water. We were laughing and splashing the water when our older brother who had been working in the barn came running, shouting, "Don't stand up. Stay where you are." We were so frightened we didn't make a move. When he reached us, he snatched us back from the edge of the puddle where we were sitting dangling our feet in the water. He told us that the "puddle" was an old well which he had just discovered and was on his way to get rocks to fill it up when he saw us there. He quickly took us to the house and told Mama what had happened. I remember that she told us that she prayed for our safety every day and that she felt the angels had been there to prevent us from standing up in the puddle.

Michael Jordison shared a scripture from Jacob 3:9-11. *Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways, save it be revealed unto him; . . .*

The service closed with the singing of the hymn, "Great and Marvelous" and the prayer of benediction.



HOPE AND CHANGE



High Priest H. Alan Smith
Mount Ayr, Iowa
August 5, 2012

Hope and change was the topic for Alan Smith as he brought the message for the Lord's Supper on the first Sunday of August.

I'm going to be talking about hope and change this morning. (And we're not being political this morning, if you remember the old campaign catch phrase.) I'd just like to talk about hope and change from another angle.

I've been thinking about change this week after we signed the papers making me no longer the owner of the Mount Ayr Record-News on Wednesday. It's one of those times in your life when you recognize that there is a big change. I don't know that I recognize all of that yet, but I

know that for more than 30 years I've been the boss and meeting deadlines every week. For the first time in all that time I'm a part time employee now . . . for a little while anyway.

We prayed mightily over the years that the business would succeed and thrive and the Lord has met our needs at the moments that we needed them in one way or another. We will continue to pray that the new owner Tom Hawley will be successful as he's going to paying us over the next nine years, so we need to the Record-News to continue to be successful. But changing from being responsible for all that, to asking what I should do instead of trying to decide what everyone else should do will be very different, I'm sure.

It's a time of change in my life -- and it has reminded me of the ability to change the Lord gives us and calls us to in our lives.

It was several years ago now at a communion service in the Auditorium where brother Sherman Phipps asked us to stop and listen to what the Lord wanted us to do. The thing that came to me was that it was time to sell the paper and maybe do some other things. It's taken me several years now to get to the point where that change was made in my life. I wonder at times what the Lord would have been able to do with me if I'd responded faster. You never what opportunity or things that haven't been done that might have had I made the change earlier.

I just know that now that I've finally responded to that call in my life, it's exciting and I have a lot of hope that the Lord is leading me in new directions. I have hope for the future -- and in a time of change it's kind of exciting, but kind of scary at the same time.

The concept of hope and change is key to the gospel and what we do this morning in the communion service. I have two little short phrases that I would like you to focus on this morning.

1. The gospel gives us hope that we can change. We can change our feelings. We can change our actions. The gospel gives us hope that we can change and that others can change.

2. The gospel gives us hope that we will be changed.

First, because of the gospel we have the hope that we can repent, that we can make changes in our lives to become the sons and daughters that God wants us to be.



And second, we have the promise of eternal life . . . that we will be changed so we can live with God eternally.

What a great message hope and change is.

What am I talking about when I say hope and change?

I'd like to give an example of King Benjamin and the people he preached to. The older I get the more I understand what King Benjamin was doing when he wanted to get all the people together to make sure they understood what he knew before he "retired." After he shared with the people gathered around the message that the angel had given him, this is what happened:

And now, it came to pass that when King Benjamin had thus spoken to his people, he sent among them, desiring to know of his people, if they believed the words which he had spoken unto them.

And they all cried with one voice, saying, Yea, we believe all the words which thou hast spoken unto us;

And also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.

And we, ourselves, also, through the infinite goodness of God, and the manifestations of his Spirit, have great views of that which is to come; and were it expedient, we could prophesy of all things.

And it is the faith which we have had on the things which our king has spoken unto us, and has brought us to this great knowledge, whereby we do rejoice with such exceeding great joy; Mosiah 3:1-6

Do we really believe the spirit of God can make a change in us so that we only have a disposition to do good -- not evil? This is what these people said happened to them. Wouldn't it be a lot easier to live if our disposition was always to do good? The first thing that came into our mind was to do good. The first thing that came into our mind was not to be selfish. The first thing that came into our mind was to ask ourselves if the thing we are about to do will move the kingdom forward. The promise that if we have in the communion this morning is that can have that spirit to be with us always -- the experience of the

people at this time -- to help us make a change in our minds and in our hearts. In the world today, there are many people who need to know that they can change. There there is that ability, that there is that hope, that making that change in their lives can bring them to the great joy that the people at King Benjamin's time had.

The scripture goes on:

And we are willing to enter into a covenant with our God, to do his will, and to be obedient to his commandments in all things that he shall command us, all the remainder of our days, that we may not bring upon ourselves a never ending torment, as has been spoken by the angel, that we may not drink out of the cup of the wrath of God.

And now, these are the words which King Benjamin desired of them; and therefore he said unto them, Ye have spoken the words that I desired; and the covenant which ye have made, is a righteous covenant.

And now, because of the covenant which ye have made, ye shall be called the children of Christ, his sons, and his daughters:

For behold, this day he hath spiritually begotten you; for ye say that your hearts are changed through faith on his name; therefore, ye are born of him, and have become his sons and his daughters.

And under this head ye are made free; and there is no other head whereby ye can be made free.

There is no other name given, whereby salvation cometh, therefore, I would that ye should take upon you the name of Christ, all you that have entered into the covenant with God, that ye should be obedient unto the end of your lives. Mosiah 3:7-11

Our lives become very dark if we ever lose the hope that we can change -- the hope that the grace of Christ will make up the difference between what we can do and where we need to be in our lives. We have a tendency to have blind spots when we look at our own lives. -- like when Valle tells me when I'm passing someone in the car that I haven't looked over my shoulder to see if there is someone in my blind spot. We have our own blind spots. There are things in our lives that if we would change

would make all the difference. But we have a hope that we can change and see those blind spots -- that we can see ourselves as the Lord sees us and respond to where he wants us to be.

There's a similar experience of change was experienced by the Lamanites after the ministry of the sons of Mosiah and Alma that I would like to share with you from Alma 12:176-180

And they did all declare unto the people the self-same thing; that their hearts had been changed; that they had no more desire to do evil.

And behold, many did declare unto the people that they had seen angels, and had conversed with them; and thus they had told them things of God, and of his righteousness.

And it came to pass that there were many that did believe in their words; and as many as did believe, were baptized; and they became a righteous people, and they did establish a church among them;

And thus the work of the Lord did commence among the Lamanites; thus the Lord did begin to pour out his Spirit upon them;

And we see that his arm is extended to all people who will repent and believe on his name.

Paul says this hope that we can change is the anchor to our soul. In Hebrews 6:18-19 he says:

That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us;

Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

The fact that God has given agency to us and that we have control over our lives -- and the fact that he tells us that we can change -- because we believe that God cannot lie -- gives us an anchor for our lives that can keep us from drifting around on every tide of life that comes.

I've told you before the experience I had in an English class in high school in Texas.

But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected; hereby know we that we are in him. ~ 1 John 2:5



The teacher was starting a discussion and said, "How many people in this class there will be a day when the world will live in peace and there won't be any more war?"

I stuck my hand up quickly, then looked around and saw that no one else had raised their hand. For a moment you are a bit embarrassed that you are the only one who has responded. I wondered why I was so different? Why do I have that hope? I realized that it was because of the teachings and understanding of Zion and the kingdom -- the hope that I had within me for that day.

I wondered why the other people in the class did not have that hope. What was different about me? I came to realize it was the gospel and the understanding that we have. Sometimes hope is a rarer commodity in the world than we realize because we have been around people who have hope, who believe that God is in charge of the world -- and that his purposes never fail.

Rob Rolfe in his call to worship this morning reminded us that the same time that we have hope that we can change in our lives, there is hope that other people can change too.

For unto such ye shall continue to minister, for ye know not but that they will return and repent and come unto me with full purpose of heart and I shall heal them and ye shall be the means of bringing salvation unto them.

3 Nephi 8:64-65

The scriptures promise us that if we can help other people understand this change that can come in their lives, that's where we find true joy.

As well as reminding us that we can repent and make changes in our lives, I'd like to remind us of the hope we will be changed -- resurrected -- in the future - that when we die this is not the end of our story.

Just as I was reminded of change in the business I was reminded of this hope for being changed with this with the passing of Fred Wilson, one of the employees of the record news, this past week. He fought the battle with cancer and died this last week. In fact the funeral is this afternoon. There is hope in knowing that life goes on -- that Christ died so that each of us have the ability to have eternal life.

Jesus taught this before he proved that he had power over life and death by raising

Lazarus. I'd like to share this story from John 11:20-27.

Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him; but Mary sat still in the house.

Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live;

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

She saith unto him, Yea, Lord; I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

Then Jesus raised Lazarus to show her that what she said was true. We have the hope that every man will be raised from the dead to be judged and have a final determination made on how they will spend eternity.

But how can we insure eternal life with Christ?

I love the pattern shared in Second Nephi about the hope of eternal life. Here's the scripture from 2 Nephi 13:26-30:

And ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye enter in by the way, ye should receive.

And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask, if all is done?

Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far, save it were by the word of Christ, with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save;

Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men.

Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: Ye shall have eternal life.

Do we want eternal life?

After we have the hope that we can

change and have gotten into the path -- these are the things that ensure eternal life with Christ.

1. Press forward with a steadfastness in Christ.

2. Have a perfect brightness of hope. (Don't let it get dimmed)

3. Love God and all men. (This is generic, all people, not just the easy ones to love).

4. Feast upon the words of Christ -- study the scriptures.

5. Endure to the end.

I have a way for you to remember this by making some hand motions for each of the steps. Let's start with press forward (press your hands together in front of you, then move them forward).

For our perfect brightness of hope we will need goggles. Make some goggles with your hands and put them up to your eyes.

Now make the shape of a heart with your two hands, then point up the your pointing fingers and then open up your hands. That will symbolize loving God and everyone.

For feasting on the words of Christ, pretend you are eating and then open a book of your hands.

For endure to the end, let's pretend we are running a race like in the Olympics.

Now let's go through the motions again so we will remember the five steps to eternal life being shared with us. We'll always be able to remember this scripture with this help. I'll have a pop quiz on this at the end of the sermon.

We have that hope that we can have eternal life if we will do the things God wants us to do.

In Ether 5 it says:

Wherefore, whoso believeth in God, might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God. Ether 5:4

We are reminded again that hope is the anchor in our lives that can help us through those times when we feel for a moment that we are lost.

Here is the testimony of Alma, the son of Alma, who was a high priest over the land.

And again I ask, Were the bands of death broken, and the chains of hell which



encircled them about, were they loosed?

I say unto you, Yea, they were loosed, and their souls did expand, and they did sing redeeming love.

And I say unto you that they are saved.

And now I ask of you on what conditions are they saved? Yea, what grounds had they to hope for salvation?

What is the cause of their being loosed from the bands of death? Yea, and also, the chains of hell?

Behold, I can tell you: Did not my father Alma believe in the words which were delivered by the mouth of Abinadi? And was he not a holy prophet?

Did he not speak the words of God, and my father Alma believe them?

And according to his faith there was a mighty change wrought in his heart.

Behold I say unto you, that this is all true.

And behold, he preached the word unto your fathers, and a mighty change was also wrought in their hearts; and they humbled themselves, and put their trust in the true and living God.

And behold, they were faithful until the end; therefore they were saved. Alma 3: 16-26

His testimony was that allowing our hearts to be changed through the hope that we can change was tied to the hope that we will be changed and brought to that eternal life.

I've told you the story of Roger and Mary Ann Lane before. I'd like to share that again. Roger was losing his farm during the 1980s farm crisis. His father had said on his death bed, "Roger, you take over the farm." Not only was he losing the farm from a financial point of view but he felt he was losing the trust he felt his father had in him when he passed the farm on.

At the same time, his wife Mary Ann, who had been fighting with hepatitis that had been destroying her liver, had come to the point where she needed a liver transplant, but the doctors said she was not a good candidate for the procedure.

One Sunday morning under the influence of the spirit I stood and spoke to Mary Ann and promised her for the Lord that he had a great blessing for her. The Lord didn't tell me what the blessing was but just the assurance that she should have hope in the Lord.

And so at a time when things looked pretty hopeless, when Mary Ann had been

told there was no hope, Roger had lost the farm and his livelihood, Roger talked with a friend at a class reunion who said there might be a job in Tennessee. They moved, Roger found a good job with good medical benefits. Mary Ann went back to the doctors there and they said that she was a candidate for a transplant.

There were times along the way where Mary Ann and Roger would give me a call and say, "What was that promise? What was it that God said again?"

I'd tell them that I didn't know what the Lord had in mind but that he was giving them hope -- he had promised them a blessing.

We had the funeral for Mary Ann a couple of months ago where the story was shared also from the point of view of people where they went to church in Tennessee. They told of administration and things like that through the years as Mary Ann had ups and downs with her liver problems. But she lived not only to see her children grow up but to share with her grandchildren.

They received a word of hope, but it meant big changes in their lives as well. But we can face even those kinds of changes if we have hope in the Lord working in our lives.

Are we willing to make the changes that God is calling us to make in our lives this morning?

We have the promise that if we will remember Christ and his great gift for us and make changes in our lives so that we are more faithfully keeping his commandments, we can make the changes that will allow his hope to have his spirit with us always.

Think of times you have had experience with the spirit. How would it be different if these experiences were continuous instead of once in a while? What more could we accomplish if we were in tune with the leadings of the spirit each day -- all day? How would it be to have no more disposition to do evil? That can be our test of how much further we need to change has come in our lives. Did I have some disposition to do evil today -- to say something unkind? Then there needs to be some more change in my life so that I can come to the point where evil isn't even in my disposition.

I know I have not given my life over to the point where I am always aware of the spirit and its leadings. But I hope that I

can become change to be more that way. I'm at one of those major change points in my life where I can make some decisions and make some changes that will help in the ministry I am able to bring. I pray that that hope that I had in English class years ago can truly become a reality.

I hope that you'll pray for me and I'll pray for you that the promise of this morning will grow to be a part of each of our lives to a great degree. That we will use the hope that we can change to actually make some changes in our lives -- that what we have done this morning will make a difference.

And remember that we have the hope of eternal life if we will remember the scripture we read earlier.

Remember:

1. Press forward with a steadfastness in Christ.

2. Have a perfect brightness of hope. (Don't let it get dimmed)

3. Love God and all men. (This is generic, all people, not just the easy ones to love).

4. Feast upon the words of Christ -- study the scriptures

5. Endure to the end.

Remember the motions? Let's do the motions again to make sure they would remember the steps. And those sharing in the service all did.

Following the sermon, Sherman Phipps, our pastor stood and spoke.

"For some time now I have been trying to ask the Lord about a number of things including priesthood calls. I've felt for a long time that Chris Cunningham has a call to the priesthood. I've visited with Chris about this and we are not going to do it today, but I'll have Chris share his experience with you some day.

I'll just tell you this morning that Chris has told me that he is willing to accept that call and that responsibility if the congregation is willing to let him do that.

I want you to think about it, pray about it, and see what your experience is with that call. Sometime before the end of the month here I'd like to have a business meeting at which we would address the call and give you the opportunity to express your experience with Chris's call and your willingness to accept his ministry in that call.

My experience led me to believe that



Chris's call is to the office of Teacher, but you pray about that and see what the Lord tells you and then we'll visit about it later. I wanted you to know that this is there and wanted you to think about it and pray about it and be supportive of Chris."



EXPERIENCES WITH GOD



Patriarch Milo Burnett
Logan, Iowa
August 12, 2012

President, Michael Jordison, read from Colossians chapter 3 for the Call to Worship. *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience; In the which ye also walked sometime, when ye lived in them. But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed*

in knowledge after the image of him that created him; Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Good morning, Saints. I am glad to be back in your midst and I'm happy to see that you got a little bit of rain last night. I was impressed with the Call to Worship that was read to us where we heard the Apostle Paul reaffirm those things that we should have in our lives to be heavenly. Particularly, the fruits of the spirit were mentioned in those scriptures. Those things should automatically be in our lives but it takes effort to do that. You can't do it by osmosis. You have to work at it and you have to work hard in order to have these fruits of the spirit in your life all the time because we are subject to emotions and to things happening to us that are inadvertent that we cannot plan on. These things all affect us. Sometimes it will affect us in ways that are counterproductive for us and may bring a sense of despair, perhaps a sense of anger

but we need to learn how to put that aside quickly so that we can be true to the fruits of the spirit that to be in our lives all the time. I am starting this sermon differently than I planned to today but I was touched by the opening scripture, Michael, and the content of it and the things that it said to us.

What I'd like to do today is bear some of my spiritual experiences and others in my family. For a scripture reading I would like to read from the Book of Helaman in the Book of Mormon, 4th chapter beginning with the 58th verse. *For behold, the dust of the earth moveth hither and thither, to the dividing asunder, at the command of our great and everlasting God; Yea, behold, at his voice doth the hills and the mountains tremble and quake; and by the power of his voice they are broken up, and become smooth, yea, even like unto a valley; Yea, by the power of his voice doth the whole earth shake; yea, by the power of his voice, doth the foundations rock, even to the very center; Yea, and if he say unto the earth, Move, it is moved; yea, if he say unto the earth, Thou shalt go back, that it lengthen out the day for many hours, it is done. (58-61)*

The scripture I read to you talks about God's power, the things God can do with His power. With the sound of His voice He can cause mountains to actually move and with the sound of His voice He can cause mountains that have been moved to move back into the place where they were before. Have you heard scripture that has said that if you have enough faith you can move a mountain? Have you thought about that? Do you remember reading about it? If you have that kind of faith you can move a mountain. Well, that's a pretty spectacular thing to have happen. We are called upon to have faith, to have faith in God and His Son Jesus Christ that throughout our lifetime we will be blessed in ways that will be fitting for the needs that we have and that other people will be blessed as well. One of the greatest ordinances placed in the restored church was the ordinance of the administration of the sick. Some of the experiences that I am going to share with you this morning deal with that.

I would like to begin with one that took place in the 1930's during the great depression when my Dad and Mom lived in Sioux City, IA. At that time I wasn't alive. I wasn't born until 1939 but my two sisters were already born. Dad had gotten



a call to go over to visit an older couple. The wife had been sick in bed for two weeks. Mom usually accompanied him when he did that during the day because there often were no other elders available because they were working. He went to the house of Walter and Martha Callahan on the West side of Sioux City. They walked into her bedroom and my Dad anointed her head with olive oil and prayed the prayer for the administration of the oil and then the confirmation of that oil. As he was praying for her the Spirit spoke to his mind and told him that this woman was not sick. She was starving to death so my Dad made the prayer short. As soon as they left and got in the car, my Dad told Mother exactly what he was told. She replied that he knew what they needed to do.

They went to a grocery store nearby. Dad told Mom to go pick out some fresh vegetables and fruits and he would go to the meat counter and get some meat. They bought some groceries and put them all in one sack and drove back to this house and went in. Dad told Walter that he knew it might sound presumptuous on my Dad's part but my Dad was told by the Holy Spirit during the time he was administering to Walter's wife that his wife needed food. Martha broke down in tears and said that the only food that they had had in the house for the last two weeks had been salt pork. Since Walter worked physical labor down on the river unloading rock off barges and putting it in what's called the riffraff, he needed the food. So she would send the meat with him for his lunch. She wasn't eating anything. For two weeks she hadn't had any food. After my parents left the sack of groceries on the bed they left the home. The Callahans bore testimony later, Martha particularly, that as Walter took the food out of the sack it was in the order that she had prayed for food to be delivered to them. She knew that it was going to be brought and she listed in her mind the things that she felt she needed. As Walter took them out of the sack, they were in that exact order that she had prayed in her mind that she might receive. Now this is the power of God working through an elder who had his mind prepared to receive. During that administration he was given that light and knowledge that this woman was not sick she was starving to death.

My Dad has shared that testimony many times and I've shared it too because

it illustrates the power of God in a different way of bringing to pass meeting the needs of an elderly woman and man who did not have enough money to buy sufficient food for themselves. By the way the Saints of that Sioux City congregation, after my Dad and Mother shared this with them in prayer meeting, brought sacks of groceries to this couple for several weeks to keep them supplied until they could get themselves established and back on their own feet.

The reason I selected the scripture I did is because one of the earlier experiences that I had involved the power of God. In 1974 I took my family, my children were young, my oldest was only 6 years old, to a reunion at Park Rapids, MN. It was actually the Red River District Reunion. The Red River District was centered around Fargo, ND. Manitoba was included in that group and other congregations in the eastern part of North Dakota and in Western Minnesota. The Red River District rented the Minnesota Reunion District's grounds. It was on a lake and the little community nearby was named Park Rapids.

There was a patriarch there, Milton Broadfoot who was from Des Moines, IA. Some of you may have known him. He went up to that reunion on a regular basis and brought patriarchal ministry and gave patriarchal blessings. He had a boat that he brought with him from Des Moines which was sitting in the lake attached to the dock. He liked to fish and he told me that I was free to take the boat out if I wanted to take my son fishing in the afternoons when he was busy giving blessings. So I took him up on that offer and one afternoon David and I and another man, Don Thompson, who I asked to go with us who was probably 6 foot 7 in height went out in the boat. I had Don sit in the front of the boat so he could man the anchor because he was a strong man and it was easy for him to do that. I sat in the back where the motor was and David sat in the middle.

We went out on the lake during one of those lazy day afternoons where the water didn't even had a ripple on top and the sun was hot. For those of you who are fisherman you know that when it's hot like that the fish are not going to be biting much. They go down deep where it's cooler but we didn't know that. We weren't catching anything on the east side of the Lake so I told Don that maybe we

should pull up the anchor and go over on the west side of the lake which was a mile. So we pulled up the anchor and chugged away across the lake to the west side where we busied ourselves fishing. Have you ever heard lightning hit the ground close to where you are? It's extremely loud and it sounds like an explosion. Have you ever heard a light transformer blow up? That makes pretty much the same sound. We heard the sound KABOOM and I looked up and there was black, boiling clouds just off the shoreline coming right at us. When the lightning hit the ground that was when I was aware of what was happening. We pulled up our lines and decided what we should do. Should we make a run back to the reunion or should we pull into the shore that was very close to us and wait out the storm even though we didn't know how long it would last. We were afraid that the people at the reunion would worry about us if we didn't come back in the midst of the storm. I told Don that I thought we should make a run for it and so we did. We turned the Johnson motor up on high, as high as it would go, and headed for the other side of the lake as fast as that little boat would go.

Here's what happened. As the storm came on the lake the wind came up and I could see the white caps behind us. This storm was coming right at us and we hadn't even gotten half way across the lake. I started planning in my mind what I was going to do because I was certain in my mind that the storm would capsize us. I knew I could swim. David could not but he had a life jacket on but I didn't know about Don. He was tall enough I thought he could probably reach the bottom of the lake. Literally I was making plans for capsizing.

As we continued on this is what happened. That storm with the rain beating the top of the water and the white caps went down the left side of us and passed us. That's an eerie thing to watch. I had never seen anything like that before. I didn't even know it was possible. I turned back and looked on the other side and the storm was going on the right side of the boat just chewing up the water and white caps from the wind going past us. I innocently knew that God was using His power to prevent that storm from reaching the boat. That storm never did reach the boat until we reached the shore. When we reached the shore I told Don not to bother tying the boat up on the dock. I was just



going to run the boat up on the bank and have Don jump out and wrap the cord around a tree. David jumped out of the boat. I turned around to lift that motor up out of the water and the first wave came and hit me waist high. It knocked me down in the boat and the following waves were just as high and came into the boat and pretty well filled it with water. I scampered out of the boat as fast as I could and got up on the bank.

The first thing I did was to go to the cabin and I took David with me. We went into an empty bedroom and David and I got down on our knees and prayed. We thanked our Heavenly Father for saving our lives and for showing us His power of moving water in such a manner. What a blessing. Then I asked David if he was praying while this was going on? He said that he was praying harder than he had ever done in his life. He didn't have much life but that's how hard he was praying. He was touched by this experience too.

Back in the 1970's the church had a series of books they would send out from Herald House which had testimonies written by different people. One series had the testimonies of District and Stake Presidents. So I wrote this experience up and submitted it to the Herald House and it was included in this book of testimonies. Well, that was an experience showing the power of God moving water in a way that was miraculous.

I would like to share Marilyn's experience of being healed of breast cancer. She'd had problems with nodules in her breast. She had one removed and it

any unnecessary tissue. He could go right to that nodule and remove it.

The day of surgery I was in the preop with Marilyn who was being readied for surgery and then taken on a gurney to surgery. The staff told me that she probably wouldn't be back for a half hour or more. I was just sitting there biding my time and about ten minutes later here came Marilyn on the gurney with the nurses running. They ran into the room with her and I asked them what they were doing back there. The nurse asked me if I believed in miracles and I told her of course I did. She said that Marilyn had had one that morning. When Dr. Quibanni looked through the x-ray just before surgery, not seeing the nodule, looked with a different picture of the x-ray that changed the angle so that she could see it this time. The nodule was gone so Marilyn didn't have surgery. Dr. Quibanni called up the surgeon and cancelled the surgery. I failed to tell you before Marilyn even went into the area where the surgery was to be done an elder from Sioux City, Robert Eybers, came to the hospital and administered to her. I had heard Robert give administrations before but this particular administration was special. He was touched by the Holy Spirit when he prayed for Marilyn. It was obvious to me that that was true and then Marilyn had this experience of the disappearance of the nodule.

This happened in the winter. She got dressed and we put on our coats and went to the staff elevator which was closest to go down the stairs to the parking lot. Dr. Quibanni and her aide stepped up right

here we were sitting in a Mexican Restaurant. Who would have figured that? The Lord is good and He blesses His people when their needs are there. Why did Marilyn have the surgery cancelled? Is it possible that the nodule disappeared because God wanted to bless Marilyn that way? Was Marilyn a faithful woman? Yes, she is a very faithful woman and has always been so. She has always been a person who has, to the best of her ability, gone to church. She raised four children by herself and got her children to church. She played the organ and the piano for church and for reunions. Marilyn was a person who was involved. She sang in the choir but that's all been taken away from her today.

In 2005 Marilyn had an accident. We had just returned from Mexico. I had gone down there to give blessings at Oaxaca, Mexico. When we returned from there after two weeks we had not unpacked our suitcases. Marilyn's suitcase just happened to be sitting on the floor. She lost her balance in the bedroom and fell backwards and sat on that piece of plastic that was in the corner of her suitcase and broke her tailbone. She was in agony and the only way she could find comfort was to lie on her side in bed and not move. She laid in bed for a year, the rest of 2005 and a good share of the next year. I learned to cook. I had never had to cook but I suddenly had to. I made a lot of trips between the kitchen and the bedroom to get advice on what I was doing. We didn't starve and I learned to do some things I had never done before because of necessity.

Our doctor we were seeing at the time

And again, it shall come to pass, that he that has faith in me to be healed, and is not appointed unto death, shall be healed; he who has faith to see shall see; he who has faith to hear shall hear, the lame who have faith to leap shall leap; ~ D&C 42:13a

was benign. When she went in for her mammogram this time there was some suspicious tissue in there. The doctor who saw her was named Dr. Quibanni that's an Indian name from the country of India. Dr. Quibanni saw something in there that she thought needed to be surgically removed. Marilyn was worried and I was worried for her. The day before the scheduled surgery in the doctor's office the doctor had stuck a needle into Marilyn's breast in the exact location of that nodule so that when the surgeon got in there he wouldn't disrupt

beside us and I turned and looked at her. I told her that there was a miracle in the Burnett family that day and she said indeed there was. I don't know if she was Hindu or if she was Christian or something else but what struck me was that she acknowledged what had taken place for what it was, a miracle. So Marilyn was blessed that day.

Fifteen minutes later we were sitting in a Mexican Restaurant ready to have lunch. I said to Marilyn that 15 minutes ago she would have been in surgery but

was in Sioux City. He took an x-ray of her lower back. When he put it up on the screen we could see where the tailbone was broken. The last two digits were broken and they were detached in one place and then skewed off to the left. You could definitely see that. We eventually changed doctors since we lived in Logan then. We got a doctor in Missouri Valley. He suggested that Marilyn see an orthopedic surgeon and arranged that she would go to see one in Omaha. Previously she had had an MRI of her lower area of



her back. She went into the new doctor's office and they took their own x-rays of her lower back before the doctor came in to talk to us. When he came in to talk to us he said that there wasn't really anything that he could do for her. He asked her what she wanted him to do. Marilyn looked at me and I looked at her astounded that he had said that he couldn't do anything for her. Finally, Marilyn told him that she had come there with the idea that he would surgically put her tailbone back in place. He told her that he had been an orthopedic surgeon for 25 years and that he could see from the x-ray that had been taken that morning, which he put up on his computer monitor, that the tailbone wasn't broken nor was it out of place. I could see that but I couldn't put it together with the previous x-ray that showed that her tailbone was not only broken and detached but it was skewed off to the left. He was showing us an x-ray where the tailbone was fine.

We left the doctor's office and went to a Chinese Restaurant. I told her to go ahead and get her plate first and I would wait. While she was gone I prayed to God. I said, 'God, what happened here? I know what we saw the first time. What happened?' Have you heard of the still small voice? That still small voice spoke to me and said, 'I moved it.' The first thought that came to my mind was why of course there was no other explanation for it. It had to be the power of God. The orthopedic surgeon, by the way, told us that it wasn't possible for the human body to move a bone back if it's out of position. The human body can't do that but it was moved. God had moved it back. When Marilyn came to the table I told her of my experience of praying and what the still small voice said to me that God moved it and put it back in place. Marilyn has a lot of pain still. She has a large amount of arthritis in her lower back. She doesn't have pain from the tailbone any more but she does have pain which will probably never go away. Marilyn and I have talked about that. She has been administered to so many times for her fibromyalgia and the constant pain she feels all the time. She told me her headaches are so bad she dreams about having headaches. I have told her that God could heal her, that He could have healed her on any number of administrations that have been done by the elders but He hasn't. What He has done instead is He gave her the ability to cope

with her pain and to be able to do other things in spite of that pain.

Last Sunday night we returned from a trip where our oldest granddaughter drove us to the Oregon coast to a beautiful little place called Winchester Bay that we'd been to six times before. I didn't know how Marilyn was going to handle that trip but I asked her last spring if she would like to see the Pacific Ocean one more time in her life. She said that that would be wonderful. I told her I would try to arrange that so that we could do that. We drove to the Pacific coast and Marilyn got to see the ocean one more time. We spent several days on the beach. She has a large rather heavy folding lounge chair that we take for her sit on. She heard the ocean waves and saw the ocean. I hadn't seen it for a long time either. I was glad to go there and see that part of the United States.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you my testimonies of the power of God in our lives. The things that have happened in the Burnett family can happen in your family too. I am sure there are many here that could stand and bear testimony of the power of God in their lives where a miracle has happened to someone in their family, maybe even to themselves. Those are the kind of blessings that God wants to give His people if His people are prepared to receive them. He wants to pour out His blessings upon His people and He only asks that we prepare ourselves daily that we will be in the right mindset that we will be worthy of receiving the blessings He desires to give us.



HUMOR IN THE RESTORATION

"Elder L.G. Holloway, who is descended from Daniel Boone the famous trapper, was at Boone, Iowa, a few Sundays ago and spoke twice to large crowds. Brother Holloway does not say whether the baptisms in this place were a tribute to his powers as a trapper, but three were brought into the kingdom and baptized by one of the local brethren while he was there."

Zion's Ensign, Sept. 23, 1923. p. 624

MY TESTIMONY OF JESUS CHRIST



High Priest Robert Rolfe
Lamoni, Iowa
August 26, 2012

Brother Rolfe read his Scripture Lesson from the first Section of the Doctrine and Covenants, verse 5: *"Behold, I am God, and have spoken it; these commandments are of me, and were given unto my servants in their weakness, after the manner of their language, that they might come to understanding; and inasmuch as they erred it might be made known; and inasmuch as they sought wisdom they might be instructed; and inasmuch as they sinned they might be chastened, that they might repent; and inasmuch as they were humble, they might be made strong, and blessed from on high, and receive knowledge from time to time; and after having received the record of the Nephites, yea, even my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., might have power to translate, through the mercy of God, by the power of God, the Book of Mormon; and also those to whom these commandments were given might have power to lay the foundation of this church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity, and out of darkness, the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth, with which I the Lord am well pleased, speaking unto the church*



collectively and not individually; for I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance; nevertheless, he that repents and does the commandments of the Lord shall be forgiven; and he that repents not, from him shall be taken even the light which he has received, for my Spirit shall not always strive with man, saith the Lord of Hosts."

Sue Beck then sang a lovely hymn and Brother Rolfe presented his message.

When I was a young man, I believed I belonged to the true church of Jesus Christ. The church to which I belonged was the same church that began in Adam's day, was reintroduced by our Lord when he came in the flesh (See Mt. 16:19 IV; 16:18 KJV) and was reorganized again in 1830 by the prophet Joseph Smith as commanded by the Lord. Being the true church was based upon our having the fullness of the gospel. How did we come to have the fullness of the gospel? By revelation, of course! I believe most of the saints with whom I attended church, believed the same things, regardless of where in the USA I went. Today, one of my concerns is that, even in the restoration, many now believe the restoration movement is just "another church". This leads me to this question, the question I would like you to consider this morning: What was it that changed the minds of our members to lose faith in the precept that we belonged to the "true" church?

Another concern and question I have had, was the speed in which some of the people in the Book of Mormon fell away from a belief in Christ or a belief in righteousness. Sometimes as short a time as 2-3 years after a revival, the people would return to wickedness. What could change the minds of the people to return to their wickedness in such a short time? I've come to the conclusion that it is what is in a person's mind that causes his/her heart to turn to evil. But just what is it that gets into our minds that makes us lose faith? What is it that causes us to change our minds and in effect, call evil-good and good-evil? (Isaiah 5:20)

Another concern I have this morning is the fact that we have not created the spiritual condition in our lives that the Lord can bring Zion, or His kingdom of heaven on earth. I see the end-time forces moving quickly upon us "like a thief in the

night", and we have no city of refuge to which we can flee for peace and safety. The entire middle East is at war with someone else, if not with those within their own country.

What do you know about Gaza? Gaza is a small strip of land about a township wide and a county long located at the Southernly end of Israel. It is essentially a desert with little or no resources, and little means for the people now living there to make a living. A high birth rate and lack of resources has some people speculating Gaza cannot last more than a few years, even if aid continues. If it weren't for humanitarian aid coming into the country, most of the poor people would have starved already. To refresh your memories about Gaza, in December 2003, Israel's Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced a plan to remove all Jews from the area. The theory was this "removal" would make Israel safer. Those Jews who wouldn't leave were forced out by the Israeli military. This was a very controversial decision and hard to justify for those Jews who believed that Gaza was part of the land that was biblically ordained for the Jews. Many others, not living in Gaza, didn't believe it would make Israel more secure from violence. Binyamin Netanyahu, who was Finance Minister at the time, resigned in protest to the government order removing the Jews from their land in Gaza. (Netanyahu is now Prime Minister of Israel.) Sharon claimed the withdrawal (after the Jews had been there about 40 years) would reduce Palestinian attacks on Jewish citizens. This proposal was strongly pushed by the U.S. with the idea of showing Israel was willing to make significant concessions for peace. Was peace the result? Of course not! What actually was the result? The first thing that happened after the removal of the Jews, was the Palestinians burned all the synagogues left in Gaza. (This was illegal, but who cares?) Since August 2005, more than 8000 rockets have been fired into Israeli towns and villages from Gaza. In 2011 alone, 627 rockets from Gaza has bombarded Israeli towns. The rockets were aimed at schools, kindergartens, homes and the like, not military targets. So much for lessened violence!

Politically, the UN human rights council has passed five more anti-Israel resolutions condemning Israel for violations of human rights. Israel probably

has the best human rights record on the planet. It is the members of the UN that complain about Israel that are the real human rights violators. Now, with the take-over of Egypt by Mohammed Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, the peace treaty with Egypt looks like it will be ignored by Egypt. It is my understanding that Egypt is now massing troops at their Eastern border. The mind set which now exists in the area (other than in Israel) is that the Palestinians are good and Israel is evil; or at least the world media and the UN continue to rant against Israel. Calling good evil and evil good...Israel is the most productive country in the Middle East, exporting goods and technology to the whole world. Why is it that Israel provides jobs, industry, hospitals, a good and decent living for both Israelis and Palestinians, but the Arabs keep calling Israel, evil. And speaking of ranting,

On August 17, 2012, about 1 week ago, the President of Iran said in a speech:

"The very existence of the Zionist regime is an insult to humankind and an affront to all world nations," the news agency's English-language report on the speech quoted him as saying. "Confronting Zionists will also pave the way for saving the whole humankind from exploitation, depravity and misery."

Calling good evil and evil good...There is a strong push to classify Israel as something other than what it is. If you have read the prophets, and I know some of you have, Zechariah tells of the day when ALL the nations of the world will make war against Israel. (Zechariah 14) I believe that the events going on in the Middle East are the precursors of the fulfillment of that prophesy.

If you haven't done so lately, you should read Isaiah 17 and Psalm 83. If you study these prophecies, you will be able to see part of the schedule of events that are leading to the second coming of Christ. One of those events is the total and complete destruction of Damascus. Damascus is believed by some to be the oldest continuously inhabited city in the world. Some writers claim it existed 7 thousand years before Christ. In any event, greater Damascus is supposed to contain about 2.5 million people. Isaiah says the entire city will be a ruinous heap. By the way, Israel won't escape death and



destruction during this period. The same prophets have a lot to say about what will happen to Israel for turning away from God.

Today, there is also a strong push to **reinvent Christianity**. I'm also concerned about that trend because our nation will not survive unless it is a Christian nation. For example, some American Catholics are increasingly urging their members to ignore the Pope in certain doctrines of faith. There are others who in the protestant world, are proposing that we need a new style of Christianity. There are many voices calling for change, and sometimes without explanation of what they mean. What does this mean? Let me give you an example. This new style is not hierarchal or based upon a set of doctrines and beliefs. It is "based on community and conversations, not a set of beliefs and creeds." Robert Wilken, a professor at the University of Virginia is quoted as saying, "there is no original Christian faith, no native language, no definitive statement of the meaning of Christ for all times. There is no objective authority—only authority as interpreted by individuals." (Emphasis added) Do you believe that there was "no original Christian faith"? Do you believe there is "no objective authority"?

It is interesting to me that one of the beliefs that is sought to be changed is: There is no Hell or eternal punishment. As long as your heart is fine, and your actions, you'll be O.K. Calling evil good and good evil...When we as a church or society get to the point where, as a nation, we think that Hell no longer exists, what do you suppose the consequences will be? The Apostle Peter talks about it this way:

"But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you who privily shall bring in abominable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of." II Peter 2:1-2

I know that the rise and fall of our Christian faith has been occurring since the first century church, which church was established by Jesus Christ. It is our belief that the original church went into apostasy. Many of our protestant brothers and sisters

believe the same thing. Several centuries after the church went into apostasy, men started to try to reform the "church". Many of the first reformers were killed. Others had more success: Men like Martin Luther, John and Charles Wesley in the old world. America produced many good reformers as well. Historians have used the term, "Great Awakening" to describe what happened during several periods of religious revival during the 18th and 19th century. During these "awakenings" there were widespread revivals conducted by ministers of various faiths resulting in a sharp increase in the membership of churches and the formation of new religious movements and denominations. Some historians talk about 4 different periods of awakening, but I am only going to reference the 2nd awakening. This awakening occurred during the period of 1800 to about 1840; the same period in which Joseph Smith, Jr. the prophet, lived. Some of you will recall his experience at age 15. The churches of the day, including Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist, were holding joint revival meetings. I am going to use Joseph's own words to describe his experience because I would like for us to remember some of the forces and events that started Restoration movement.

"Sometime in the second year after our removal to Manchester, there was in the place where we lived an unusual excitement on the subject of religion. It commenced with the Methodists, but soon became general among all the sects in that region of country; indeed the whole district of country seemed affected by it, and great multitudes united themselves to the different religious parties, which created no small stir and division amongst the people, some crying, 'lo, here,' and some, 'lo, there;'" some were contending for the Methodist faith, some for the Presbyterian, and some for the Baptists. For, notwithstanding the great love which the converts for these different faiths expressed at the time of their conversion, and the great zeal manifested by the respective clergy, who were active in getting up and promoting this extraordinary scene of religious feeling, in order to have everybody 'converted' as they were pleased to call it, let them join what sect they pleased; yet, when the converts began to file off, some to one party, and some to another, it was seen that the seemingly good feelings of both the priests and the

converts were more pretended than real; for a scene of great confusion and bad feeling ensued, priest contending against priest, and convert against convert, so that all the good feelings, one for another, if they ever had any, were entirely lost in a strife of words, and a contest about opinions.

"I was at this time in my fifteenth year. My father's family was proselyted to the Presbyterian faith, and four of them joined that church; namely, my mother Lucy, my brothers Hyrum, Samuel Harrison, and my sister Sophronia.

"During this time of great excitement my mind was called up to serious reflection and great uneasiness; but though my feelings were deep and often pungent, still I kept myself aloof from all those parties, though I attended their several meetings as often as occasion would permit; but in process of time my mind became somewhat partial to the Methodist sect, and I felt some desire to be united with them, but so great was the confusion and strife among the different denominations that it was impossible for a person young as I was and so unacquainted with men and things to come to any certain conclusion who was right, and who was wrong. My mind at different times was greatly excited, the cry and tumult was so great and incessant. The Presbyterians were most decided against the Baptists and Methodists, and used all their powers of either reason or sophistry to prove their errors, or at least to make the people think they were in error; on the other hand the Baptists and Methodists in their turn were equally zealous to establish their own tenets, and disprove all others.

"In the midst of this war of words and tumult of opinions I often said to myself, What is to be done? Who of all these parties are right? Or, are they all wrong together? If any one of them be right, which is it, and how shall I know it? (These are still good questions today)

"While I was laboring under the extreme difficulties caused by the contests of these parties of religionists, I was one day reading the epistle of James, first chapter and fifth verse, which reads: 'If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.' Never did any passage of scripture come



with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God I did, for how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had, would never know; for the teachers of religion of the different sects understood the same passage so differently as to destroy all confidence in settling the question by all appeal to the Bible. At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs; that is, ask of God. I at length came to the determination to 'ask of God,' concluding that if he gave wisdom to them that lacked wisdom and would give liberally, and not upbraid, I might venture. So in accordance with this determination, to ask of God, I retired to the woods to make the attempt. It was on the morning of a beautiful clear day, early in the spring of eighteen hundred and twenty. It was the first time in my life that I had made such an attempt, for amidst all my anxieties I had never as yet made the attempt to pray vocally.

"After I had retired into the place where I had previously designed to go, having looked around me and finding myself alone, I kneeled down and began to offer up the desires of my heart to God. I had scarcely done so when immediately I was seized upon by some power which entirely overcame me, and had such astonishing influence over me as to bind my tongue so that I could not speak. Thick darkness gathered around me, and it seemed to me for a time as if I were doomed to sudden destruction. But exerting all my powers to call upon God to deliver me out of the power of this enemy which had seized upon me, and at the very moment when I was ready to sink into despair and abandon myself to destruction, (not to an imaginary ruin, but to the power of some actual being from the unseen world who had such a marvelous power as I had never before felt in my being,) just at this moment of great alarm, I saw a pillar of light exactly over my head, above the brightness of the sun; which descended gradually until it fell upon me. It no sooner appeared than I found myself delivered from the enemy which held me bound. When the light rested upon me I saw two personages (whose brightness and glory defy all description) standing above me in

the air. One of them spake unto me, calling me by name, and said, (pointing to the other;) 'This is my beloved Son, hear him.'

"My object in going to inquire of the Lord was to know which of all the sects was right, that I might know which to join. No sooner therefore did I get possession of myself, so as to be able to speak, than I asked the personages who stood above me in the light, which of all the sects was right, (for at this time it had never entered into my heart that all were wrong,) and which I should join. I was answered that I must join none of them, for they were all wrong, and the personage who addressed me said that all their creeds were an abomination in his sight; that those professors were all corrupt; 'they draw near to me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; they teach for doctrine the commandments of men, having a form of godliness, but they deny the power thereof.' He again forbade me to join with any of them: and many other things did he say unto me which I cannot write at this time. When I came to myself again I found myself lying on my back, looking up into heaven."

Notice the message from God that this teenage boy heard, didn't condemn the people, it condemned the creeds. Why? Because the creeds and their professors denied the power of God. When Joseph related this experience to one of the ministers of the day he was told it was of the devil; that there were no such things as visions and revelations in these days and there would never be any more of them! Joseph, despite the fact he was only 15 years of age, was hotly persecuted by the ministers of the day. Why they would think the opinions of a 15 year old were important enough to even take notice can still not be satisfactorily explained?

Is it true that God has stopped given people visions and revelations in our time? Is it true that that canon of scripture has been closed? There are many men over the centuries that have said this was true, but the scriptures don't support those claims. If you know of any scripture that says God closed the canon, or any scripture that says God doesn't speak anymore, I would like to see it. Of course, if you are one that takes the view that "no objective authority (such as scriptures) exists", then the issue of whether the scriptures are open or

closed is meaningless.

I don't have time this morning to recount all of the experiences of men who talked to God, face to face, both before and after Christ was born on this earth. But certainly after His death, those experiences continued as evidenced in the New Testament. Saul had such an experience when he was on his way to Damascus (yes the same city that exists today) to persecute Christians. Saul, after conversion called Paul, continued to testify of his experience during his life. Apparently during his life, at least, having visions and revelations were still permitted. (According to the view that they were later ended) When Paul gave his defense before King Agrippa, (Acts 26), this was his testimony:

"At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." (Acts 26:13-15)

So apparently, Paul's testimony is not to be believed, because according to the view of some of the seminarians of our day, visions and testimonies happened then, but not anymore. Did God change, or did we simply change our mind. The Bible and the Book of Mormon state that God does not change! (See Mal 3:6) But, if we believe that God is silent now or that he won't talk to us (God is dead, according to some), why should we pray? It is clear in the Bible and the Book of Mormon that Jesus commanded us to pray. Were we to expect a real response, or only a "warm fuzzy"? One of many examples in the scripture is: *Seek unto my Father, and it shall be done in that very moment what ye shall ask, if ye ask in faith, believing that ye shall receive.* (Mark 9:45) Another is, "Ask of God, ask, and it shall be given you...for everyone that asketh, receiveth..." (Mt 7:12-13 IV; 7:7-8 KJV) Just how are we to "receive" the answer to our prayers? When Joseph read James 1:5, he didn't know "how" he was to receive an answer. The "how" was up to God. Some of you within the sound of my voice have



had spiritual experiences in which you both saw and/or heard your Lord Jesus Christ. My message this morning is not addressed to those who have already experienced and know of the “visions and blessings, all so full and free.

Considering the years that I’ve accumulated, it seems to me that I don’t have many years left. I want to tell one of my testimonies in support of what I have been saying. I was a about the same age as Joseph Smith (when he had his experience) when this experience occurred, but it has elements of similarity. To start with, let me say, that this happened after I had been baptized, but I was then involved in serious sin. I was sinning unto death. Thanks be to Jesus for coming to my rescue. He came to me, I didn’t come to him. This is my experience.

In my opinion, I had an open vision. Some skeptics would say I was only dreaming. If I was only dreaming, then this dream was the only dream I ever had in which I “woke up” in a sitting position with my arms on my knees.

I believe I was transported back through time to the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus Christ. I was in a private home and recall there was a low couch on which a dead man lay. I don’t know any of the circumstances about how he was dead, but it didn’t bother me that he was lying there. I was pacing back and forth, waiting for news that Christ had died on the cross. Suddenly, the man on couch cried out, and came back to life. In doing so, he rolled off the couch, striking my leg with his arm. At first, it scared me, but the scripture immediately came to my mind, (quoting from Mt. 27:56-57 IV; 27:52-53 KJV) *“and the graves were opened; and the bodies of the saints which slept, arose, who were many, and came out of the graves, after his resurrection, went into the holy city and appeared unto many.”* I recall immediately thinking, Jesus is dead now. It is finished. Unless you have had an experience like this, you may wonder about how the stream of events are perceived. There is no time with God. Let me just say, it is hard to determine how much time (computing time like we do) all of these events could take. I know that after the man came to back to like, we talked. We decided that we should go to the cross and see Jesus. When we walked out the door, it was dark, very dark. I

remember putting my hand in front of my face and I couldn’t see my hand at all. Nevertheless, we seemed to know the way to go. I also remember we were walking on sheep pasture. Again, unless you have walked on grass that has been grazed by sheep, you probably wonder how you could tell. Let me say only, that I knew I was walking on that kind of pasture.

As we were walking, in an instant, the scene in front of me changed. It looked to me like the sky had been unzipped like a big black curtain, and instead of darkness, was filled with light. In front of me, standing in the air, was Jesus. He chastened me for my sin and told me I must repent. You don’t really have to be told to repent when you are in the presence of Jesus. What you are and what he is, brings such an awareness of your sin. When he finished speaking to me, I sat on the grass with my arms resting on my knees. Jesus then spoke to the man that accompanied me. He told him also to repent and that he was being given a second chance. When Jesus finished speaking to this other man I found myself sitting in my bed with my arms on my knees, just as I was in the vision.

I have thought about and questioned in my mind what all of the events in this vision meant. If I take the view that such things are of the devil, (as was told to Joseph Smith) then I had an experience in which the devil was telling me to repent. To me, such a view of the vision would be ridiculous. Like young Joseph, I know I had seen a vision and that the Lord talked to me. I cannot deny it.

I hope that many of the younger saints that are listening to me this morning will understand, that God is no respecter of persons. If you turn to him, he will turn to you. You also can have spirit experiences that will convince you that God is, and that he knows exactly who and what you are. The form of those experiences will be decided by God. He knows you and what you need. May you seek God’s Spirit and receive of his blessings.



New Branch Officers

Pastor: H. Alan Smith

Counsellors: TBA

Worship Coord: Jennifer Rowland

Worship Center Ministry: Sue Beck

Music Coord: Lynda Rolfe

Christian Ed Coord: Di Smith

Facility Coord’s: Jacob Cunningham, Bob Rowland, Tanner Rowland

Priesthood Visiting Coord’s: Ed Anderson & Rodney Bastow

Caring Coord’s: Pat Bolingroke & Diane Anderson

Fellowship Coord: Sue Cunningham

Missionary Coord: Ron Smith

Service Project Coord: Jim Barber

Bishop’s Agent: Gordon Winkler

Stewardship Coord: Cheryl Phipps

Youth Ministry Cood’s: Linda and Jim Barber & Deb and Rodney Bastow

Newsletter Editor: Michael Jordison

Newsletter Coord: Cheryl Phipps

Newsletter Publication: Alan Smith

Recorder/Secretary: Julia Jordison

Historian: Linda Winkler

Building Committee:(2 yr) Kent Clisby, Sherman Phipps & Steve Cunningham **(1 yr)** Michael Jordison, Bob Rowland

Email Coord: Yvonne Galusha

September 2012

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	SEP 2	SEP 9	SEP 16	SEP 23	SEP 30	OCT 7
SPEAKING	Seventy Ron Smith	Priest Ed Anderson	Seventy Jim McKay	High Priest Alan Smith	Sharing Service	Patriarch Milo Burnett
PRESIDING	Elder Steve Smith	Elder Steve Cunningham	High Priest Sherman Phipps	Elder Gordon Winkler	Elder Michael Jordison	High Priest Rob Rolfe
PIANIST	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke	Becky Starks	Pat Bolingbroke	Pat Bolingbroke
SPECIAL MUSIC	Ron & Di Smith	Anan Smith	Lynda Rolfe	Jordison Family	All	Alan & Valle Smith
FAMILY DEVOTIONS	Michael Jordison	Rob Rolfe	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Gordon Winkler	Steve Smith
GREETERS	Alan Smith	Steve Smith	Ed Anderson	Rodney Bastow	Sue Beck	Steve Cunningham
CUSTODIANS	Bob Rowland	Alan Smith	Ron Smith	Jim Barber	Ed Anderson	Rodney Bastow
SUNDAY EVENING	Ron Smith	Steve Smith	Norman Nelson	Rob Rolfe	Bob Rowland	Ron Smith

Wednesday Prayer Service Schedule

DATE	SEP 5	SEP 12	SEP 19	SEP 26	OCT 3	OCT 10
LOCATION	Ron Smith	Bob Rowland	Rob Rolfe	Norman Nelson	Gordon Winkler	Ron Smith
PRESIDING	Jim Barber	Michael Jordison	Ron Smith	Sherman Phipps	Alan Smith	Rod Bastow



Special Events & Activities

Sunday September 2nd: Priesthood Meeting at 8:30AM - Potluck following Communion service

Sunday September 16th: Guest Speaker, Seventy Jim McKay - Potluck following service

Wednesday September 19th: Day of Fasting & Prayer

September 3rd: Labor Day!

September 11th: Patriot Day!



Birthday's this month: 1st: Rob Rolfe; 13th: Elyse Jordison; 15th: Ron Smith; 22nd: Pat Bolingbroke; 24th: Ed Anderson; 28th: Debbie Bastow

Anniversary's this month: 19th: David & Barbara Houston; 23rd: Bob & Jennifer Rowland; 26th: George & Yvonne Galusha



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

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Lamoni, IA 50140



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High Priest H. Alan Smith, Presiding Elder
Mt. Ayr, Iowa Phone 641-464-62949



CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST - MT AYR RESTORATION BRANCH

SEPTEMBER 2012

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)

Pastor's Thoughts Continued...

The Lord has set a goal before each one of us and has given us the ability to achieve that goal by His power. We can 'complete the course' if we will just let the Lord be our guide instead of thinking we, of ourselves, can pick our own way. Not only can we finish the course, reach the goal, etc. WE MUST! Section 53:3c admonishes us, *And again, I would that ye should learn that it is he only who is saved, that endureth unto the end.*

My prayer is that we will not fear the way that lies ahead, no matter how impossible it seems. That we

will not give up but that we will pray always, remain faithful and endure to the end, that we will live together, as brother and sisters, and give the Lord the opportunity to include us in His work and in His kingdom. (Read Doctrine and Covenants 34:6)

*When I have used the word "we" in these brief thoughts, I do not have reference to any particular group other than those who are willing to truly obey the first two commandments, upon which all the law hangs.

OFFICERS

PASTOR/PRESIDING ELDER:

High Priest H. Alan Smith
TBA (Counselor)
TBA (Counselor)

BISHOP'S AGENT

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NEWSLETTER

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