

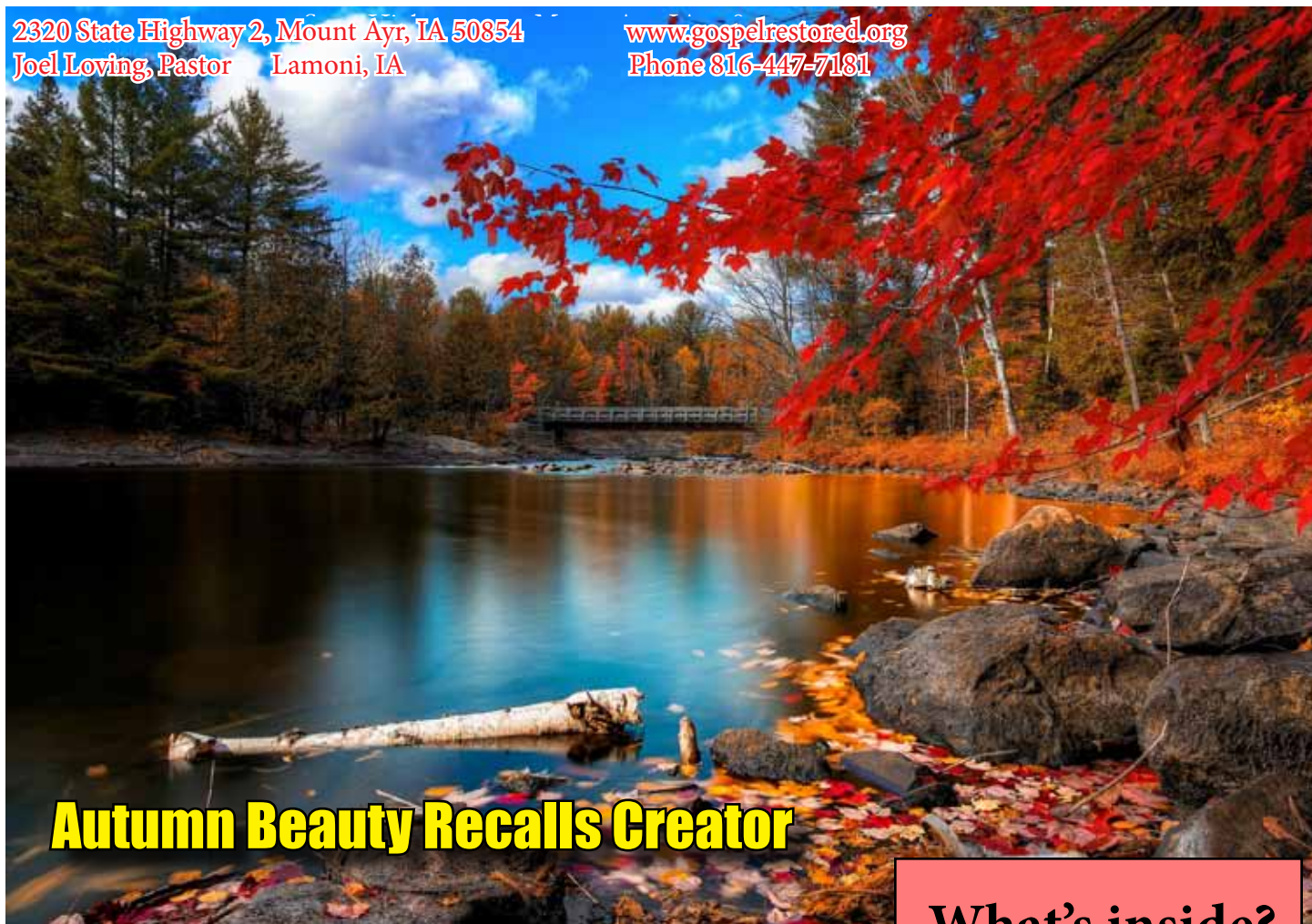
Church of Jesus Christ

Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

NEWSLETTER

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Autumn Beauty Recalls Creator



News & Notes

Retreat held in Lamoni

The end of September the congregation was please to host Seventy Jim Noland and his wife Bonnie from Independence, Missouri for an Aaronic Priesthood retreat, with approximately 25 members and priesthood attending Friday evening through Sunday morning.

A lot of information was packed

into the marathon sessions, with an emphasis on the necessity of home ministry for a healthy congregation.

The culture is won or lost in the home and the effectiveness of the church in its mission and the vitality of its membership is reliant on the Aaronic ministry routinely in the homes, brother Noland told those in attendance.

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Be Not Ashamed to Take Upon You the Name of Christ

Priest Joe Mickelson
Lamoni, Iowa
September 3, 2017

As a Call to Worship Brother Rob Rolfe read Matthew 26:1-2; 14; 22-25. *And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days is the passover, and then the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified. And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples. And as they were eating, Jesus took bread and brake it, and blessed it, and gave to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is in remembrance of my body which I give a ransom for you. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. For this is in remembrance of my blood of the new testament, which is shed for as many as shall believe on my name, for the remission of their sins. And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall observe to do the things which ye have seen me do, and bear record of me even unto the end. Ye know that after two days is the passover, and then the Son of Man is betrayed to be crucified.*

For a scripture Brother Joe Mickelson read Mormon 4:52-53, 93-95. *Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ? Why do you not think that greater is the value of an endless happiness, than that misery which never dies, because of the praise of the world? (52-53) Doubt not, but be believing, and begin as in times of old, and come unto the Lord with all your heart, and work out your own salvation with fear and*

trembling before him. Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and living God. See that ye are not baptized unworthily; see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ unworthily; but see that ye do all things in worthiness, and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God: and if ye do this, and endure to the end, ye will in no wise be cast out. (93-95)

As I prepared for this morning, I quickly began to realize that every subject or topic I was drawn to was one that I, myself, struggle with on a regular basis. Therefore, I am not sure whether what I have to share is truly a sermon, or if it is a personal confession. Either way, my hope is that it resounds with at least one of you the way it does with me.

The scripture I shared with you this morning starts off with the question posed by Moroni, “Why are ye ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ?” I have no doubts that if I were to ask for a show of hands, who among you is ashamed to take upon you the name of Christ, there would not be a single hand in the air. I wouldn’t expect there to be. After all the changes that the Spirit has wrought in my life in recent memory, how could I ever be ashamed to take upon myself His name?

However, when I step back, and look objectively, I realize that there are times in my daily interactions and conversations in which the Savior must say to Himself, “Is my disciple ashamed to bear my name?” Although it is never

my intention to cast aside my association with Christ, it likely happens more often than I even realize. Usually, I have found, this occurs because of one of two reasons: iniquity or fear.

Iniquity, as you know, deals with sins that have become so widely and universally accepted that we, as a society, no longer perceive them as sins. F. Henry Edwards states that, “A life of sin is a life twisted out of proper relation to God because the sinner is unresponsive to the love of God. Sin is life lived as though the sinner wished that, for that moment, and for this particular experience, God did not have to be taken in to account.”

When we take that attitude enough times, our concept of our sinful act evolves from “this is sin,” to “this is acceptable sin,” and, finally, “this is not sin at all.” This is the process of iniquity.

When the Spirit moved in my life, and I caught a tiny glimpse of the love that God has for me, I began a process of awakening to the sins in my life that I had allowed to become sins of iniquity. It started out with some habits and behaviors that were pretty large in terms of their sinful nature – things that, whether I admitted it or not, I always knew were sinful, but, as F. Henry stated, I had convinced myself God would overlook. I found ways to justify a small sin, which gave precedent to finding justification for larger and larger deviations from God’s commandments. I knew immediately that these aspects of my life had to be surrendered in response to the Lord’s movement in my life.

Surrendering those “larger” sins of iniquity was difficult in a certain sense, but also quite easy in another. It was



difficult because it required a pretty significant lifestyle change. However, it was easy because those sins were easy to identify – they were obvious, and I had been awakened to the fact that there was no justification for them.

This process then opened the door to a realization that there are other sins of iniquity engrained in my behavior, as well; iniquities that initially seemed smaller and more insignificant – yet things that block my spiritual growth just as obstructively as anything else. These stumbling blocks are those times in which the Lord must wonder, “Is my child ashamed of me?”

If I were to dive in to each of these behaviors in my own life we would be here all afternoon, so let me just use a couple as examples. The Word of Wisdom is an element of our faith that has caused much debate over the years. Because it was not given as commandment, it is easy for us to take its council lightly. For a long time, I also took that council lightly. However, what I came to realize is that the Word of Wisdom, in its simplest sense, is another means for us to take upon ourselves the name of Christ. By choosing to adhere to this principle with promise, we are surrendering to God’s council, rather than the council of man. We are showing that no matter what dieticians and studies may tell us concerning the health benefits of this or of that, we trust in the Lord’s council.

Furthermore, when we are approached about our abstinence of certain food, drink, or behaviors, we must remain firm in our reasons for our sacrifice. We mustn’t try to avoid an awkward conversation about Mormonism by attributing our decisions to any other reason than that we are doing so in an attempt to take upon ourselves the name of our Savior.

I am, by nature a shy person. I feel that I am personable, but not often bold. Being a follower of Christ requires – even demands – boldness. I often struggle with the knowledge that I should discuss sacred things more frequently and in more depth with people in my life outside this congregation. There are people whom I love dearly who are

completely oblivious to my testimony because of my own insecurities, or shame, or fear, or whatever the reason may be. I have been awakened to this iniquity in my life and I struggle with it daily. I need to be bolder in my personal testimony of Jesus Christ in order to truly take His name upon me.

As disciples, we are called to live lives that are different, even peculiar. The world around us will think it odd when we pray over our meals, whether in private or in public. They will think it odd when we not only refuse to use the Lord’s name in vain, but when we ask others to refrain from doing so in our presence as well. They will think it odd when we take seriously the commandment to keep the Sabbath holy as a day to give honor to our Creator. They will think it odd when we correct the term lucky to the more appropriate term – blessed. These are all little ways in which we, as followers of Christ, can prove to Him that we are unashamed to take upon ourselves His name.

There are seemingly small, everyday decisions we make in which we choose to either take on Christ’s name, or to be ashamed of that name. At times, we are called to take on His name in larger, less ordinary ways. We are all familiar with the following verses from Mark chapter 14. *And Jesus said unto them, all ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered. (28) But Peter said unto Jesus, although all men shall be offended with thee, yet I will never be offended. And Jesus said unto him, verily I say unto thee that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice. But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.” (33-35)*

The apostles were sure that no trial or tribulation could ever be so great to deny their Christ. As we know, they were mistaken. We, too, are likely confident in our commitment to our Lord. After all He has done for us, it is hard to imagine ever denying our relation with Him. But if a man as close to Jesus as Peter could thrice deny him, should

we not also take heed to ensure that we are ready to bear the cross when we are tested?

Staying with the book of Mark, Jesus tells us: *But whosoever shall be willing to lose his life for my sake, and the gospel’s, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Therefore deny yourselves of these and be not ashamed of me. Whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels. (Mark 8:38-41)*

Perhaps one of the greatest tests of our willingness to take on the name of Christ lies in the ways that we treat the gifts that we’ve been given as a church. Treating the Book of Mormon lightly – or as anything other than truth – indicates to our Lord that we are too ashamed of public opinion to take on His name with boldness. Shying away from the truthfulness of our church’s history and the experiences and revelations of the prophet Joseph imply that we are not willing to endure criticisms for the sake of our Lord.

We have a unique calling to uphold these fundamental messages, for if we don’t, nobody else will. Author and restoration minister F. Edward Butterworth states, “The greatest iniquity to be exposed is the denial of the mission of Zion.” Without the Book of Mormon and modern day revelation, the mission of Zion cannot exist. In the words of Alma 3:62. *Behold, I say unto you that the good shepherd doth call you; yea, and in his own name he doth call you, which is the name of Christ. Later on, Alma warns that if we should transgress the commandments of God... and be ashamed to take upon us the name of Christ, the Lord should rend us even as they had rent their garments.*

Let me preface my next thoughts with this statement: there are few things more important than unifying with other followers of Christ. Time and again the scriptures tell us to be of one mind and one body. It is essential. However, in our effort to unify we must never sacrifice or diminish the message that



God restored to the earth in the form of the Book of Mormon. By minimizing the Book of Mormon in our message, we are casting aside in shame the name of Christ. Like Nephi, we must talk of Christ, rejoice in Christ, preach of Christ, prophesy of Christ, and write according to our prophecies, that our children might know to what source they may look for a remission of their sins.

Several weeks ago, in one of our evening home gatherings, brother Jim Major made the point that the world around us is seemingly falling to lower and lower depths of immorality and unrighteousness. As more sins evolve into the category of iniquity in our society, as the world around us disregards more and more the doctrine of Christ, we are called to higher ground. We are called to testify of our Lord in all things that we do and say, and to do so unashamedly. Our goal should be as the Psalmist when he stated: *I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in thy commandments, which I have loved.* Psalm 119:46-47. Or, perhaps, as the Apostle Paul put it, *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.* (Romans 1:16)

One of the realizations I've come to recently is that there is no political or economic strategy that can change the course of our nation or our world. The only source of salvation is Christ, which means the only strategy capable of turning the tide is to take Christ's name upon us individually and collectively. The more things that we do that testify of Him, the more opportunities will arise to spread His message and His love to those around us who, like us, desperately need to hear that message. In Paul's letter to the Colossian Saints, he puts his finger on this issue – *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.* (Colossians 3:17)

We are told in Section 17 of the Doctrine & Covenants that when we were baptized into the church of Jesus Christ, we witnessed before the church

that we are willing to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end, and truly manifest by our works that we have received the Spirit of Christ.

When we partook of the Lord's Sacrament this morning, we renewed that witness and the corresponding covenant. Within the prayer over the bread, we ask that God, the eternal father, bless and sanctify it to all our souls, that we might witness to Him that we are willing to take upon us the name of the Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments. The act of taking the sacrament witnesses to God our willingness to do these things. It is then our duty to turn that willingness into action. We must be clean vessels, physically and spiritually, in word and in deed, no matter what hat we're wearing at the time. The line between spiritual and sacred must be removed so that there is never a situation in which we feel too afraid, or ashamed, to glorify our Savior.

Doctrine & Covenants Section 119 is given to the elders of the church, but I feel the following statement is applicable to us all: *Lay aside lightness of speech and lightness of manner when standing to declare the word, and study to approve your ministrations to the people by candor in speech and courtesy in demeanor, that as ministers of the gospel you may win souls unto Christ. (2b) Be of cheerful heart and countenance among yourselves and in intercourse with neighbors and men of the world, yet be without blame in word and deed... that your counsel to be temperate may be made effectual by your example. (3a) Similarly, in Section 85 we are told: If your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you, and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things. Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him: for he will unveil his face unto you... yea purify your hearts, and cleanse your hands and your feet before me, that I may make you clean. (18a, b)*

As I mentioned from the outset, this is more of a confession than it is a

sermon. I have not mastered the ability to cast aside my indoctrination of putting God in the background, rather than in the forefront where He belongs. Whether it's out of shame, fear, weakness, ignorance, or some combination of these things, there are times (almost daily) in which I know my actions spurn the question from the Master, "Is my disciple ashamed of me?"

When I fail to offer a thankful prayer over a meal because of how it might look to the people in the booth next to me - I have failed to bear the name of Christ. When I fail to invite my most beloved friends and family to church with me because of the potential negative reactions they might have - I have failed to bear the name of Christ. When I see a loved one or a neighbor indulge in iniquity without asking if they know the love that God has for them - I have failed to bear the name of Christ. When I see a brother in need and fail to offer help, even if that help is a simple sharing in prayer - I have failed to bear the name of Christ.

Taking upon myself the name of Christ, in all things, is often difficult and frightening. It frequently pushes me outside my comfort zone. I've found, for me, it's often the little things I can do daily to glorify God that become more difficult than the big things that I am only called to do from time to time. The call to discipleship is not a call to convenience, but a call to diligence and discipline. We can take comfort, however, in the words that Paul wrote to Timothy: *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* (2nd Timothy 1:7-9)





Do You Bear Good Fruit?

Priest Rodney Bastow
Mount Ayr, Iowa
September 10, 2017

As a Call to Worship Brother Ed Anderson read Alma 17:22. *Yea, and from that time, even until now, I have labored without ceasing, that I might bring souls unto repentance; that I might bring them to taste of the exceeding joy of which I did taste; that they might also be born of God, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.*

As a scripture reading Brother Rod Bastow read Matthew 24:46-51. *Then shall be fulfilled that which is written, that, In the last days, Two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two shall be grinding at the mill; the one taken and the other left. And what I say unto one, I say unto all men; Watch, therefore, for ye know not at what hour Lord doth come. But know this, if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to have been broken up; but would have been ready. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.*

I appreciate this opportunity to speak to you today. I hope that what I have to say may have some meaning to you and that our worship here this morning might be pleasing to God. I hope that you'll see what I'm trying to get across and I hope that we will all be blessed by the Holy Spirit.

Wow! Where has the summer gone? I can't believe it is fall already. It's time to put away the hay equipment and get out the hay feeding equipment. It's time to anticipate the crops coming in and maybe have a little money in the bank account for a little while. I have fall calves that are coming and I have spring calves that need to be located somewhere because they have a tendency to want to roam at this time of year. It's busy, busy, busy.

I have had some different experi-

ences this summer. I presided over two graveside services. I need to give you a little background here. I used to have a phobia about funerals. If I could avoid one I would. To be involved in one just wasn't me. I just couldn't handle something like that. I have done a couple of eulogies before which went well but when I was asked to do a graveside service I didn't think I could do that but it was for my sister Joyce and I knew God would bless me. Isn't God amazing! I believe that He blessed me on both of those occasions. That He gave me the right words to say and that He allowed me to bring comfort to those families.

The first service was for my brother-in-law Carnie Anderson. It was easy to find a lot of good things to say about Carnie. He was such a good man. At the grave side service I mentioned his success in farming and in business. I mentioned his great love for his family, for his wife, his sons and his grandchildren. I mentioned his faith. Carnie was the type of guy who could give a better prayer than he could a sermon. He was like my Dad and John Irving. They were just filled with the Spirit and the words just seemed to come to them. That is kind of like Diane Anderson when she prays because the words just flow out without her having to even think about what she is going to say.

Carnie also loved to share his testimony. The last time he was here at church he tried to share a testimony. It wasn't really the right time for it but he so much wanted to share that with you. I shared this testimony of his at his graveside service. I thought I might share this testimony with you again this morning.

A few weeks before Carnie passed away he had a vision. In this vision he saw a bright light coming down from heaven. He said it was like the bright light that he saw when he was coming out of the waters of baptism but this time he saw Jesus who was holding out His arms to him. He also saw his mother. Jesus showed him around but

Carnie said, 'I've got to get back because Joyce won't know where I am.' That vision helped him accept that his time on earth was about over and his final days were here.

The other graveside service was for my cousin Elton Long. Elton was one of my favorite cousins. He was one of my oldest cousins. He was a great storyteller. Some might say that's a Bastow trait. I don't know if that's true or not. I talked about how he believed in hard work. I talked about his love for his family, his three sons and his grandchildren. A lot of his stories were about his sons or about his grandchildren. I didn't know what to say about Elton's faith. He was rather a rough character if you know what I mean but he always did for others. I could tell that he had done a good job raising his sons. They all turned out well. They all have good jobs and work hard. They are all good family men and clean cut. I've heard George Knotts say you can tell about a person by the fruits he bears.

I never did know where he got that so I looked up about bearing fruit in the scriptures. Matthew 12:30-32 tells us this. *A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things. And again I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* Also in John we find in the 15th chapter the 5th through 8th verses, *I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*



Elton bore great fruit, his youngest son especially. I asked his youngest son how many sons he had and he said five. I thought that was a little unusual to have five boys. I didn't realize until a couple of weeks ago that four of these boys were adopted. He took four of these boys into his home and has been raising them and doing a good job from what I could tell. The one that I met seemed like a really good boy.

After I did these services I wondered what will people say about me when it is time for me to be buried? I don't know that they can say that I was a successful farmer like Carnie. I have accumulated a lot of acres but it all seems like it was accidental. It wasn't anything I did it just happened. I don't know in my years as a teacher and coach if I have affected any lives. I don't know if I've made any differences there. I doubt you could say that I was a hard worker like both of these men were. I would think that they could mention my love for my family, my wife and my three sons and my granddaughters. But what will they say about my faith? Will they be able to say that I could be found doing for others? Will they remember any testimonies that I have shared?

There is a scripture that you are familiar with that comes from Matthew 25:1-12. It's about the ten virgins. *And then, at the day, before the Son of Man comes, the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five of them were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Lest there be not enough for us and you, go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage;*

and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, Ye know me not. Watch therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh.

I read that scripture to you because I found a reading about the ten virgins in modern times. It goes like this---

The Ten Virgins in Modern Times

I have often read the Parable of the Ten Virgins in the Gospel of Matthew and wondered what a modern version of the story might look like. I came up with prevailing attitudes that are cross-generational.

Times change, but people don't. We make the same excuses for serving and not serving. I am sure you will be able to guess which of the virgins are wise and which are foolish.

1. I am Tally Talk-A-Lot.

When I visit with a friend, I have so much to say. I tell you about my dog, my cat, my kids, my clothes, my house. I tell you about my aches and pains, my present, past and future plans. I listen to every conversation just long enough to turn the conversation to my favorite subject - "Me."

2. I am Lilly Listener.

My ministry to be like Jesus is not a simple task. I have to put myself on hold and try to hear my sister's heart. She may have a hidden hurt that I will miss if I don't listen to her words. I must listen with my eyes as well. She may tell me volumes in the way she speaks and what she doesn't say. I pray daily for my sister because I know I am a messenger for Jesus. I must learn to be her friend. You see, my sister must know I care about her life in order for her to share the troubles of her soul. I have promised to bear another's burden. I can't do that if she doesn't share. For just a little while, I will listen with the ears of Christ and bless as He would bless.

3. My name is Terry No-Time.

I am so, so busy. I have kids and school and church and my TV shows and Facebook and my job. I can't take time to make a cake or make a friendly call, much less visit anybody. Every minute is tied up with house cleaning,

shopping and work. I just don't have time to breathe these days. I can't imagine how I could possibly visit anyone or do service of any kind. I am so busy that I don't have time for me.

4. I am Charity Care-A-Lot.

I am so, so glad to be busy. Someday I will not be able to do so much. My health will be gone, and I will depend on others to meet my needs; therefore I will do all the work I can today. I have a full-time job, but I know God needs me in other places. Last week I taught a merit badge for the Boy Scouts. I helped my daughter make refreshments for mother-daughter night. I helped a friend clean her house, and I made a cake for a neighbor. I don't really know her, but I wouldn't miss the chance because Jesus said, "If ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me." I tutor a high school student who cannot read. I am so worried for his future. He wants to go to college, but the reading will stand in his way. It is the least I can do. Someone taught me how to read. I felt I needed to visit Sister Senior Citizen; she needs a visit to make her feel loved. Someday I will be in her chair. When I visit her, it lifts my spirit. I am so, so busy. I have learned the more I stretch my capacity, the more the Lord opens the doors, and I feel His presence lifting me and making me stronger. I allow the Spirit to dictate when I say "no" to service. I have found that I can do so much more than I ever thought I could. I have learned to organize. If I just did what I thought I could do, I would never have felt the angels carry my burden. Yes, that has happened so many times.

5. I am Shelly Shy-One.

The Spirit asked me to visit someone I don't even know. She is Sister New-in-Town. I told the Spirit, "I couldn't possibly do that! I don't know her. She might have dogs. I am afraid of dogs. She might have cats. I am allergic to cats. She might even think I am weird for coming over to visit." The Spirit said, "Take her a welcome basket." I can't do that! She would probably think I was a salesman or something. I hate salesmen. I can't meet new people. It's just too hard for me.

6. I am Sally Self-Confident.



I have not always been self-confident. I was like Shelly Shy-One. I was afraid everyone was looking at me and thinking that I was not very smart. I was clumsy and made lots of mistakes, but I prayed, and the Lord taught me that if I would go out of my way to be friendly, it would work out. I tried, and guess what! I found that other people were feeling the same way I did. We shared our fears and became friends. Now I try to make every stranger a friend. All it takes is a smile and a "Hello." They are always glad that I spoke first. We are all brothers and sisters in the Lord. I learned that it is not all about me. It's all about us in the brotherhood of God.

7. I am Contessa Comfort Zone.

You might as well know right now – I don't like change! When they hired a new minister, I nearly quit going to church. Pastor Long-timer was the only pastor I could talk to. He knew all my problems, and he knew what I should do about them. This new pastor has a few things to learn. If he wants to change things, I won't do it. He just doesn't know how hard change is for "me."

8. I am Cynthia In-and-Out-of-the-Box.

Change isn't easy; you get comfortable. It feels good to know exactly how things are and what is expected of you, but I have found over the years that being flexible is an opportunity to see the world through different eyes. It gives you a new perspective and an opportunity to make a new start. That is what "being born again" is all about. We walk in the newness of life. You can't do that in a comfort zone. It certainly would be easier to be lulled to sleep if we didn't get shook up once in awhile. Think about it! Changing church leaders is an opportunity to make new friends. You never abandon the old friends; you simply widen your circle.

9. I am Patti Pity-Party.

I don't like to complain, but people have not visited me since I moved into this church. They never come over or call. People seldom speak to me. I just don't feel a part of anything. I come to church and sit in the back row in the corner. You would think someone

would come and talk to me, but they never do. I don't like to come to the church because I just sit by myself. I don't think anyone cares about "me."

10. I am Cilia Solve-the-Problem.

People are awfully busy. Sometimes they don't take time to call me. I know they should, but I can't feel sorry for myself. I have learned that the phone rings both ways. If my friends haven't called me, I call them. I know they must be having trouble, or they would have called. Ministering for Christ is so important. Every sister needs a phone call or a visit. If I hear that my sisters are sick, I go and visit them. So what if someone doesn't like me? Not everyone liked Jesus either. I heard a saying once: "She drew a circle and shut me out, but love and I had the will to win. I drew a circle that took her in." I used to sit in the back row in the corner and wait for someone to talk to me, but I don't like feeling lonely, so I speak to other people first. Who knows, they might be feeling lonely just like me. I especially reach out to those who seem shy. I have been there, and I will do all I can to help someone feel wanted. That's what Christ would do.

The difference between the foolish and the wise virgins is easy to see. The foolish virgins make excuses while the wise virgins make a difference. I need to make some changes.

I need to stop thinking of reasons why I can't bless the lives of others and start doing something to make a difference. Becoming more Christ-like is not easy, but it is the one ingredient that will bring peace to the world faster than anything else.

As many of you know I coach Junior High football. That sounds weird doesn't it? I'm 66 years old, working with Junior High kids coaching football. This is my third year. I started doing this because they couldn't get anyone else to do it so I said sure. For the first two years we had an elementary principal that ran the show and he did run the show. All I had to do was show up for practice and just kind of go along for the ride. Right after the season last year he quit. I wondered what we were going to do. Could Tucker and I handle this

alone? Ever since that time I just kept worrying about this and getting nervous about what was going to happen. I prayed about this a lot that Tucker and I would be able to do this. I really believe that we've been blessed. Everyone has a helmet and a mouth guard, girdle pads, knee pads, all the things they need to be football players. I think we've collected all the money we needed to collect except for maybe a couple of dollars.

It seems like my days right now are checking cows and going to football practice. After practice I'm totally wiped out but I still have to go check cows. After the first week or so I thought this has to be my last year. I'm too old to do this, too tired, too sore. This just isn't something that someone my age should be doing.

Last week a high school student in our school took his life. I can't understand why. This young man was involved in a lot of different activities. He came from a good family. He had to have known that there were a lot of people who cared about him. He attended church regularly and came from a good church group. This made me rethink what I am doing. I have 33 young men that I work with, 34 if you count Tucker. I hope I am doing right by those boys. I hope I'm teaching them about life as well as football. I hope they understand how much I care about them.

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit; and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another. (John 15:16-17) When I meet my Savior I want Him to know that I loved Him and I loved others. I hope He says that I bore good fruit. How about you? Isn't that what we are all about?





Are You An Advertisement for God?

Priest Samuel Jordison
Warrensburg, MO
September 17, 2017

As a Call to Worship, Brother Michael Jordison shared from the book of Moroni. This is from chapter 7 verses 45 through 50. *And again my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning hope. How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope? And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you, that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal; and this because of your faith in him according to the promise; Wherefore, if a man have faith, he must needs have hope; for without faith there can not be any hope. And again, behold I say unto you, that he can not have faith and hope, save he shall be meek and lowly of heart; if so, his faith and hope are vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly of heart; And if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity, he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.*

The scripture reading for this morning continues where my Father left off. Actually I'll start again at Moroni 7:50-52. *And if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost, that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity, he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity. And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things; wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for*

charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail; but charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth for ever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with them.

It is wonderful to be with you all this morning. I'm sure you can gather from the scripture reading, the Call to Worship and just now in the ministry of music, that today's sermon will probably have something to do with charity.

The night before I was ordained I was talking to my Father about what would I ever preach about. What would I try to offer to teach the branch that had taught me? He told me to just share what I know. When I was young and grandmother was teaching our Sunday School class there was a period of time when we talked about charity. There was a bookmark handed out to some of you in the branch. It was yellow and spelled out the Keys of the Kingdom that dealt with charity. I think even from a young age God knew what He was doing. He wanted to prepare me for that topic, to let me know that that would be a major cornerstone in my life.

My testimony of Jesus Christ actually deals with charity. Some of you have heard it but I also know that there are some other people in the branch who haven't. I don't know anyone that's ever complained about hearing a testimony twice so I hope if you are upset to hear it again that you will forgive me.

This happened back in February 2014. I was a junior in high school and had just gotten out of a dentist appointment in Osceola with my mother and sister Elyse. We decided to stop at Subway to eat. As we stepped into the Osceola Subway, there working at was a girl who had been a senior when I was a freshman. She was not on the right path.

She had not made very many good decisions in her life. I could talk a lot about the wrong she had done.

My first thought when I saw her was, 'Oh, no she's here. I don't really want to be associated with her.' As I walked in the door and began to place my order she was very peppy and excited. She took my order and as she filled it she was making conversation. My answers were very curt and short with her. I did not want to have a conversation with this girl. She actually said, 'You're from Lamoni right?' And I thought, 'Oh, no she's recognized me.' As this disdain for her grew she kept up her good attitude and mine got progressively worse.

When it seemed it could get no worse and the disdain could not grow anymore for her, I was immediately overcome with the Spirit and I saw how Christ loved her. It was a complete 180. I don't how to explain it besides it was completely on the other side of the scale and then some, this love that I had for her. I was honored to be in her presence.

I was immediately ashamed of the thoughts I had been thinking. I loved her and I knew I would die for her if I had to. I was actually ashamed to have her working on my order. I felt like I should be doing whatever she wanted so that she was taken care of. The thought came to me that she was the daughter of the King of the Universe. Here she was working for me, and who was I to make this princess of the universe, in a way, make my sandwich. Nothing she could ever do would make the Lord love her any less and I could not love her any less than in that moment.

The reason that testimony is significant to me is that completely changed how I saw the world. I say "I" in these instances. I am not saying you are not all perfect but I'm sure some of you may be able to think of times where you



might not be with the nicest or the most Christ-like people. I just encourage you to put yourselves in my shoes and try and see how I saw it. I could no longer see the world that same way. I have felt that love and I have felt that power and I know what the Lord requires of me.

He does not want me to wait. He requires this of me. I can no longer be good by the world's standards to get into Heaven. Before that experience it was I am following these commandments. I am not swearing because I want to get into Heaven. I knew that it was the right thing but I am not engaging in bad activities just because it's the right thing.

I now know that that power will change the world. I could no longer wait on building the kingdom of God. I could no longer wait on someone else coming along to build the kingdom and then me stepping into it and saying, 'I'm here. I'm in the kingdom.'

Last week I was at a church service. As I sat down the speaker opened his scriptures to the scripture reading. He said, 'I'd like to turn to Moroni 7 and I thought, 'Oh, no he's going to steal my sermon before I have had a chance to preach it.' He ended up preaching on hope and as you might know in Moroni 7 the three subjects laid out there are faith, hope, and charity. He pointed out that faith, hope, and charity is like a three-legged stool. I really liked that. I don't know if that is a saying, but one leg cannot stand without the others and without one the two are worthless. There is no reason for them. We know in the scriptures it says that the greatest of these is charity, but hope and faith are still built on that charity.

One of the positive effects, I guess you could say, of charity besides just being in the presence of it is found in Moroni 7:46-47. *How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope? And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you, that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal; and this because of your faith in him according to the promise.* To be raised unto life eternal that is the gospel. The gospel is that Christ came, laid down His life and now we can live with

Him. When we die, we can have salvation.

Every Christian faith has some form of Heaven and that Jesus died and that if you accept Him you will be able to be with Him in the end. 1st John 4:9-10 says, *In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. It's the cornerstone of our Christian faith that when we die we will be able to be with Christ and experience His glory.*

Section 22:23b explains the work of the Lord. . . . *and there is no end to my works, neither to my words; for this is my work and my glory, to bring to pass the immortality, and eternal life of man.* What a great scripture. That just lays out what God wants to do. He wants to bring us back to Him and He did that through sending His Son to lay down His life. His Son through that charity laid down His life so that we can be with Him.

Moroni 7:53 says, *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, that we may have this hope, that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.* Charity is the mark of His true followers. I haven't read every single verse in the scriptures but as far as I know there are not very many promises or rewards for fake followers. We have to have that true desire to be with Him and we have to have those true actions that go with it.

What sets the Latter-Day movement apart from regular Protestant religions is that we have a clearer understanding of what God can do on this world we are living right now. John 13:34-35 says, *A new commandment I give unto you. That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if*

ye have love one to another. Following His rules is vital and the Kingdom of God is what we are called to preach and to be a part of. That's something that needs to be here on this earth right now.

Charity is the key in changing the world. Ether 5:4 is one of my favorite scriptures because this lays it out very well. *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, (It doesn't say this but hope cometh of charity too.) 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.* A world that has charity is going to be a world with the Kingdom of God in it. I don't know of a better world to live in.

I'm down in Warrensburg, MO going to UCM. Right now I am rooming with two guys in a basement apartment and above us are three other people. One of the guys that I'm rooming with is technically a church member but he told me on the first day, 'You know I am not really religious anymore.' They have been respectful of my beliefs, but you can imagine the college environment and what goes on.

As I was preparing for this sermon in my room, the three people upstairs came down and there were five of them outside and as I listened to the inappropriate jokes and the rude comments and not the most spiritual music being played I thought, 'What better place to be.' Being in that environment is where charity can shine the brightest.

There's that song that everyone sings when they are little, 'This Little Light of Mine.' I was thinking about that today on the way over. If you took a lightbulb outside in the daylight and turned it on it wouldn't make much difference. No one would notice it as they passed it on the side of the road but if you took that light outside in the dark and turned it on that's where that light shines. That's where it matters.

I don't mean to judge. I don't mean to condemn any of my roommates or anything they are doing. I don't believe what they are doing is right but I also know that I may be the only example to



some of them in what a Christian is, and I may be the only one that they come across that understands that charity will change the world, that understands that I need to have that charity for them. No matter what they do, no matter what they say I have to love them. Nothing they could do would make me angry or make me respond badly to them. I am advertisement almost for Jesus Christ. That's what we are called to be. If I am not correct in how I act that advertisement reflects badly on my Lord and Savior.

We also know that in the Latter-Day movement that Zion is the cornerstone of a promise, an ensign for us that we will assist the house of Israel in building it. Zion needs people with one heart and one mind. Unless all of you are going to have the same heart and mind as Samuel Jordison, than there will be a problem. That is, of course, unless we decide that we'll not use me as the perfect template we will use Jesus Christ which starts with His love.

Love is an action, love is a verb. I think that's a saying. Love has to be in action. You can't be lukewarm in your love I guess is what I'm trying to say. There is no I love them a little bit. That love has to be active. We're called as a church to be a living church. The church is not these buildings. It's not the congregation. It's a complete body that we are called to be as a church.

Romans 2:1-2 says, *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that thus judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.* We can't judge. We can judge actions and say that is not good or that's not bad but we're not allowed to judge others on whether or not we can love them. Section 64:2d-e speaks to this. *Wherefore I say unto you, that ye ought to forgive one another, for he that forgiveth not his brother his trespasses, standeth condemned before the Lord, for there remaineth in him the greater sin. I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men; and ye ought to say in*

your hearts, Let God judge between me and thee, and reward thee according to thy deeds. There's no part in here where it says I'm allowed to judge or for you to judge. It's all God. God can forgive who He wants but for us it's required that we forgive all men and that we love all men.

When the Israelites couldn't follow the Ten Commandments Jesus had to make it even simpler for them. *Then one of them, a lawyer, tempting him, asked, saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.* (Matthew 22:34-39)

Proverbs 3:1 says very simply, *My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments. Let thine heart keep my commandments.* The greatest commandment as I just said is that you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind and the second is like unto it. He had to simplify it so much for the Israelites because they understood the Ten Commandments but they couldn't understand why they were keeping them. He wanted to see the love in their lives. That's what we are called to do.

Have we done that? Have we loved the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind? I don't really know that we've done that with our neighbor at least. I've felt charity and I know that there's still stuff going on that would not happen without charity. It also says, *On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

Romans 2:13 says, *For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.* So I guess if you follow those two commandments you will be justified which I think we all understand is a good thing. Going back to what I said earlier that love is an action, *I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because*

thou are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. (Revelations 3:15-16)

You are not allowed to coast in loving others. Lynn and I talked about this in the Book of Mormon Internship. We were driving back from Nebraska and it was late at night and everyone else was asleep. We talked about charity and what it is and how tolerance is a form of love. I agree with that. I think tolerance is a form of love but it is not charity. Being kind isn't charity. Charity requires one hundred percent. I think tolerance is a part of charity but it doesn't meet the mark.

Going on to 1st Corinthians 13:1-3, *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.* So you are nothing without charity. It's extremely important. I don't know how to really tell you that besides that it's important. It's needed. Without charity you are not His and without charity you can't change the world.

As I was preparing for the sermon I wondered, 'Well how do you get charity?' If charity is so important, it should come with an instruction manual on how to obtain it. From my own understanding I feel I've found it. I hope if any of you have any other insight I would be happy to hear it. The "formula" for charity is found in Moroni 7:53 plus James 4:8 plus 1st John 4:12. I would like to go through those. Moroni 7:53 says, *Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, that we may have this hope, that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen. Going back to the first part, my beloved brethren,*



pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love. That sounds a lot like love the Lord your God with all your heart, might, mind and strength. If you had to sum up heart, mind and strength I think energy is a good word. So you should pray for it. You should pray with all your energy.

James 4:8 says, *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded.* We need to draw nigh to God. No one has charity on their own but if you draw nigh to God, if you exercise that tolerance, if you start exercising that kindness that is showing God that you are serious about this, that you want that love and He'll draw nigh to you.

1st John 4:12 says, *No man hath seen God at any time, except them who believe. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.* That is the third step to let Christ's love be your love. To let Christ perfect it with His Spirit living in you because there is no way that man can have that charity.

The whole chapter of 1st John 4 I think goes along very well with charity. I'd like to read that starting at 7. *Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time, except them who believe. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.*

I was thinking about what is a testimony and Rob Rolfe kind of touched on this in class. We are to be valiant in testimony. I could go around and share that experience that I had in Subway with

every person I ran into but I think that the real testimony would come with living my life to show how that experience changed my life. I think that's a greater testimony. If we are living our life with that love is that not a better testimony to others than sharing an experience that we had?

Moving on to verse 15 in 1st John 4, *Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear; because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. We love him, because he first loved us. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.* (15-21)

When I was in Belize this summer with the Book of Mormon Internship we did service projects and we put on a Book of Mormon day like a Bible School for the kids of the church there. One thing the interns try to do when they are down there is to go to visit a lady by the name of Celia. Celia was a principal of a school down there and was a very good one. She established her relationship with the interns one of the first years they went down. Ever since then she has invited them back into her home every other year when they go down and tries to stay connected with them too.

When we got to her house she had us all sitting out in the living room. She cooked a traditional Belizian meal for us and wanted to show us all the fruit and stuff that we might not have seen in the States. When we sat down, she, of course, knew Lynn and Sugar and Eldon Anderson as well but all the interns were new to her. She hadn't met any of us except maybe Mandy the one staff leader.

When all the interns were gathered in she came up and said, 'Welcome home.' Her English wasn't bad. She was a wonderful school teacher and she wasn't joking either as in 'Welcome home.' She knew what she was saying and she meant it. She said, 'Welcome home' because that home was open for us just as our own homes are.

She had cooked this meal for us and something else she had done was to make gifts for all of us. She made the guys a bracelet which I am wearing with jade in it and she had made the girls a necklace out of something that looked kind of like a buckeye almost. She had hand-made those but what was made known unto us later by Eldon was that she actually had cancer a couple of years before we went down. She was actually administered too and she was in remission by the time we had gotten there which was great news but before we got there when she was making the gifts she still couldn't use her arm. She had had surgery on her arm as well and she couldn't use her arm but she had still managed to make these gifts for us. She had actually drilled the hole for the string in these buckeyes by her own strength with just her hands even though her arm was hurting.

She had welcomed us into her home and that to me stood out as having charity for someone else. She's actually Catholic and besides the internship has no connection with the RLDS Church. This is what charity can do. It can connect us all. It doesn't matter the denomination or faith because that charity was there for us and we were able to experience that. What a wonderful gift it was.

I'd like to end with Genesis 7:19-23, a scripture you all know. *And the giants of the land also stood afar off; and there went forth a curse upon all the people which fought against God. And from that time forth, there were wars, and bloodshed among them; but the Lord came and dwelt with his people, and they dwelt in righteousness. And the fear of the Lord was upon all nations, so great was the glory of the Lord which was upon his people. And the Lord blessed the land, and they were blessed upon the mountains, and upon the high places, and did flour-*

ish. And the Lord called his people, Zion, because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them. One heart and one mind is a saying in the church that gets tossed around a lot but

until we actually follow the commandments of love the Lord and love your neighbor with everything you have, Zion can't come again until we align our hearts and minds with the Lord.

So I would like to implore you to pray for charity and be active in your pursuit of it so that this group of people can be a part of changing our world. Thank you.



Importance of the Aaronic Priesthood

**Seventy James Noland
Independence, MO
September 24, 2017**

When Wallace B. Smith was president pro tem around 1976 he gave probably the best sermon I've ever heard on Zion. I mean it was terrific and one of the things he said was, 'We're going to be sending the priesthood into your homes. Maybe you ought to get them cleaned up because we're going to prepare the Lord's Spirit to be in the homes so that Zion can be a reality?' Isn't that interesting? You see the priesthood need to be in the homes. Isn't that what the Doctrine & Covenants tells us, that the priesthood need to be in the home. If the priesthood is not in the homes what happens to the church? What has happened to the church? The priesthood have to be in the homes.

This morning I'm not going to talk about any more scriptures as I have done throughout the retreat. What I am going to do is bear a number of testimonies of what happens when your priesthood are in the homes. I say story but these are true stories, these are things that really happened.

There was a sister in the church whose sister and her husband were going to get divorced. She knew that I was pretty strong on the marriage covenant. She wanted her sister to come in for marriage counseling but she wouldn't do it. Neither one of them were members of the church but her husband was. What's interesting about him is that he's a full blooded Mexican that can't

speak Spanish. He was the top installer of windows and doors for a particular company in the United States. He won all kinds of awards and traveled all over the world because he would win these awards and got to go all kinds of places. Because of this he was unfaithful to his wife. They were married and had two children. Well, because of his unfaithfulness she was unfaithful to him. Who did she blame for her being unfaithful? Her husband. So that was the situation.

He came in for counseling. I counsel out of the Three Standard Books. I gave him the Book of Mormon and he read it fast. He just loved it. He and his wife were already in the process of going through a divorce and she had hired one of the top female lawyers in Kansas City. I happened to know what I call a junkyard dog lawyer in Kansas City. I sent this man to him because this lawyer would do what you asked him to do and what we were asking him to do was stop the divorce. Now there's a law in most states called 'Alienation of Affection' and that law is hardly ever recalled because it's such an ancient law. So this was going to be the argument in court. By the time she found out that we were going to fight this divorce she would call me from time to time and boy she had pretty good language and she would let me have it.

This man filled out twenty of these pages of the faith project that I have talked about this weekend at the retreat. I wanted to outline specific things to do so that he could keep his marriage

together. He had to believe that God wanted his marriage to stay together. Would that be the right thing to believe? So he had to start doing some experiments. We had some little small experiments at first like just send her a card and said "I love you." Over the course of almost two years he filled out twenty of these faith projects.

The first court date came up but the docket was running so late that they couldn't get into court so they scheduled the next court date six months later. Hurrah! Hurrah! Now we had six more months to work on this. In the meantime I got them to go McDonald's and share a drink together. I told him, "Now you can't spend more than 10 minutes there together with each other and you only ask her, 'Can I do anything to help with the children?'" I told him to come in different cars so that he could get out of there. Anyway those are the kind of faith projects that he did. One time he sent her flowers which she threw in the trash but I told him I didn't care if she did that that he should just keep sending them.

The next court date came up. Guess what happened? Her lawyer was sick and couldn't come. Guess how many more months we got? Six months. Here's a whole year we've been able to work on these faith projects.

Now the next six months came. I was a tool and die maker at this time at Western Electric in Lee's Summit, MO. At Western Electric there were 6,000 employees that worked there. Guess how many RLDS people worked there?



There were a lot. Tool and die makers have kind of a free run of the plant and I went to every member of the church that I knew that worked there and said, 'We have to start fasting and praying for this couple.'

We had people all over Independence and Western Electric, some even fasting and praying for this couple. On the court date the husband was driving to the courthouse, the wife was driving to the courthouse and both lawyers were driving to the courthouse and they heard on the news that the courthouse had been shut down because of electrical failure. Can you imagine?

She called me up and said, 'I think the Lord's trying to tell me something.' A few months later we baptized her and their children. He is now a practicing elder in the church. Isn't that something? It was because we got in the home. We insisted that we obey the law of the Lord. We insisted that we do God's commands. We practiced fasting, prayer and study. We insisted on that.

You remember when Witnessing Weekends were popular? This couple went from place to place with my wife and I bearing their testimony of how the Lord saved their marriage. You see we can turn things around if we believe the right things, if we understand the right things, if we have the courage to defy what supposedly is politically correct. We are not supposed to live like we are politically correct. That's not who we are.

This lady that I went to high school with came into my office. Both she and her husband were members of the church and she knew my stance on marriage. They had already gotten divorced and she came in in a defiant manner. I said, 'Why are you here? You are already divorced.' She said, 'I'm here because my divorce is not working. He's bothering me all the time and every time I see him or if I share his name I go in the bathroom and throw up. I'm telling you that God told me to divorce him.' I looked her right in the eye and said, 'Some spirit may have told you to divorce your husband but it wasn't God.' That's how we started out our counseling session.

The husband hadn't really done

anything wrong except he was such an active priesthood man guess what he didn't do? He didn't take care of his family. Isn't there a section in the Doctrine & Covenants that warns the leaders of the church, even Joseph Smith himself, to take care of your home first? I would guess that there weren't any Aaronic priesthood men visiting in their home. Of course, I know there wasn't. There was no Aaronic help in that home to keep the home in order. It got so bad and the devil got so involved in their home that she would throw up just hearing his name. Guess what we did? We started working on faith projects.

You'll never guess what the first one was. The first one was we prayed that something would go wrong in the home. We didn't know what, just that something would go wrong where he would have to go and take care of it. Well, the heating and air conditioning went out. When you are divorced you are financially in trouble when these things happen. You have two homes that you are taking care of, etc. Boy was he anxious to go over there.

Guess what I told him? I told him to go but to leave her alone. Don't even tell her you love her. Don't tell her anything because she won't believe you. If you say you love her she will absolutely not believe you and you are just going to enforce her, 'No, I don't.' Just go in and fix the furnace and get out. He said, 'Can't I even touch her? Can't I hold her hand?' I told him, 'Don't you dare or she's going to throw up on you.' So he went and got the furnace fixed. The Lord had just done something simple. I can't remember but I think maybe just the thermostat control, something simple to fix.

After we got past that I sent them to McDonald's. In fact, I don't really like eating there myself but I knew they could go in and get out quick. Again, over a process of quite some time he couldn't say he loved her and in this case he couldn't even send her flowers or anything. Over a period of time she could be in his presence without throwing up. It took a while.

I kept inquiring with him, 'When do you think we could possibly have a re-

marriage where we could do your wedding again?' He gave me their anniversary date and I told him that that would be perfect. It was about eight months away. Did he have perfect knowledge that there would be a wedding? No, that was a pretty slim possibility. Did he believe that God wanted their marriage put back together? Did he have to do some experimentation on his faith? He filled out a bunch of these faith project sheets too to get that wedding planned.

Of course, I as a counselor had to discern what was going on too. Finally, I got up my courage to ask her what she thought about remarrying him on their anniversary date. She said, 'I've been thinking about that.' They had two boys and I think one of them was only eight years old and maybe the other one was twelve.

You know the little chapel in the basement of the Auditorium? I was pleased to perform their wedding there. I remember the eight-year old boy looking up at his parents with a big smile on his face. He was so happy that his parents were back together again. What joy there was. It was such a wonderful experience and they have been marriage longer than Bonnie and me, 57 or 58 years. I told them when people asked them how long they had been married. 'Don't put that disruption in there.' Just say, 'We've been married these many years.' They are still together and are a happy family.

I want to tell you another story. Another man that I went to high school and to Zion's League with, his mother-in-law was dying of cancer of the lungs, emphysema and all that kind of stuff. She smoked about two packs of cigarettes a day. She had a foul mouth. I can't remember how many children she had, I think it was five or six. She had been sent home from the hospital to die. They had given her two weeks to live. Her body had been filled with cortisone and you know what that does. It makes you bruise easily so she had bruises all over her body.

She looked terrible. She was just skin and bones. She was on oxygen and couldn't hardly breathe even with the oxygen. She wanted me to administer to



her and I said, 'Why?' That's a nice thing for an elder to say isn't it? She said, 'Well, I want to be healed.' I said, 'Well, you realize that you have been a member of the church all your life. You have practically ruined the lives of your children. Now you are at the point of death and you think the Lord is just going to heal you like that? What do you want me to do? When I lay my hands on you what am I supposed to say?' Do you think she was crying by then? So she said to me, 'What am I supposed to do?'

What do you think the first words out of my mouth were? 'Repent.' She said, 'How can I? I might not even be alive tomorrow.' I said, 'We can take care of that but you have to repent.' She said, 'How do I do that?' I said, 'You talk to each one of your children, one by one, and don't be ashamed of who you are. You open up your clothes and show what you have done to yourself. Tell them that what they see in your body is what you've done to your spirit because the spirit you die with is the spirit you take before our Heavenly Father when you die.' I told her that if she would do this I would administer to her because she had asked.

I don't really use the word Easter. I think some of you know why. Easter is the pagan god of fertility. She told me that she would like to live until Easter morning which was two weeks away. I did correct her and say instead of Easter it is Resurrection Sunday. I said, 'If you will do what I have asked you. If you will repent to your children and your family, I will administer to you and I'll ask the Lord to allow you to live so that you can take the communion on Resurrection Sunday.'

The next night I took another elder with me and visited her. She was sitting up in bed with no oxygen. She was calling her children in, one by one, and she was repenting to them. Another time I and another elder visited her. I said in my prayer, 'And, Lord, please help her have a peaceful passing.' The elder who was with me almost took his hands off her head. He said, 'That's not what we're praying for. We're praying for her to be healed.' I hadn't had time to explain to him everything that was going on.

Her countenance changed. Her attitude changed. She was off oxygen. Her front porch faced east and on Resurrection Sunday we went out on the porch and had a communion service. It was a beautiful communion service. The next day she died.

See the Lord didn't come to condemn her. He asks us to repent. That's all He wants us to do. He wants us to repent. He doesn't want us to justify where we are. He wants us to repent to our children. He wants us to repent to our brothers and sisters. He wants us to repent to our aunts and uncles. He wants us to repent to our best friends, anyone who has witnessed and been part of our sin, our transgressions and iniquities. He wants us to go to them and say, 'You know I've been a stumbling block in your life. Please forgive me.'

Do you think our friends, our neighbors, our children, our aunts and uncles would love us more if we did that? Instead of justifying where we are and what we are. Then do you think they would listen to our testimony of who Christ is once we repent?

My wife doesn't like to hear this story because it's hard to hear. There was a young 18-year old girl who was a straight A student. She had scholarships to a number of colleges. Her parents were very rich. She fell in love with a dirty greasy mechanic. Her mother didn't like that. This guy was soon to be thirty and they wanted to get married and she didn't want to go to college. So they got married and about a year into their marriage he started beating her up. He really treated her badly so now the daughter and the mother were in my office trying to find out what they could do about this.

Well, again I don't have time to tell you the whole story but after digging into it mother-in-law was always tearing down her daughter's husband as a greasy, dirty guy. She wanted to know why her daughter had married him. When he would hear that and his wife didn't know what to do about it he would get so mad and so angry that he would take it out on his wife.

I asked his wife didn't the scriptures

say to leave your mother and father and cleave unto your husband? Now the mother was sitting right in my office and I'm telling the daughter that she needed to get away from her mother and honor your husband. Well, she didn't do it and so the fighting and the abuse went on. Finally one day he beat her up so bad he put her in the hospital.

Her parents said, 'If you ever go back to him again, we will disown you.' So she stayed apart from him for a little while. Everything about him was good. He was a hardworking man. He was honest. He would bring home money to take care of his family. Everything about him was good except this thing.

After a few months of separation she decided to go back to her husband. Guess what the mother-in-law did. She kept digging and digging and digging. Finally one day he got so mad at his wife he pulled her up two flights of stairs by the hair of her head. He pulled her scalp loose. At that point they thought she was going to die. So they separated again and after about two or three years of separation the daughter said, 'My children need a father.' So she came back in for counseling. Didn't this take a lot of courage and a lot of faith?

We did some faith projects. We did some trials of her being with her husband. As long as mother-in-law was gone and was out of the picture they were fine.

So after some trials she went back with her husband but separated herself from her mother and her father. So they lived happily and there was nothing wrong for two or three years. Now she said my children need grandparents and so one Thanksgiving without telling her husband she invited her parents to come over for Thanksgiving Dinner. Well, because they hadn't seen her parents for several years she went through her whole house and just cleaned it perfectly. She even took the drapes and had everything perfectly cleaned, everything beautiful.

On Thanksgiving morning she said, 'Guess what, husband, I've invited my parents over for Thanksgiving dinner. He blew up but he didn't hit her or hurt her because in that period of time he had



learned to love her in a different way but he left the house. Of course, she didn't know where he was going. Her parents came and they waited and waited and waited. Finally, they sat down and said, 'Let's go ahead and have Thanksgiving Dinner.'

About the middle of the dinner he came in dead drunk, had a six-pack of beer in his hands and opened one can after another, cursing and carrying on, throwing beer all over the house, all over her drapes, just throwing it on everything everywhere. Then he fell down on the couch and just collapsed.

Guess what mother-in-law did? She went over and sat down beside him. She picked up his head and put it on her lap and said, 'Please forgive me.' That's all it took. They've been happy ever since, the whole family. This man was later called into the priesthood. All it took was repentance and admitting the mistakes

that she had made. Of course, over that period of time I kept telling her it was her fault. She would say, 'How can it be my fault. He's beating up my daughter.'

The Aaronic Priesthood needs to be in the homes to see that these things don't start in the first place. What is the teacher supposed to do? Don't you think the teacher should have gone to that mother-in-law and said this is not right? Isn't that the teacher's responsibility to stop the fighting and the quarrelling and all the stuff that's going on. If the Aaronic priesthood had been in both those homes I can almost guarantee you this wouldn't have happened.

Saints, we have to do something different than what we've been doing and the first step is to repent. That's the first step we have to repent. Is there anybody here today that doesn't need to repent? Anybody? So let's get started. I'm going

to ask everybody here to invite an Aaronic priesthood member in your home by the 15th of next month. Open your homes to the Aaronic priesthood.

Go to these men and say, 'Will you come to my home and visit with me? I want a visit from you.' It doesn't matter whether you're an elder or a high priest, whatever office you hold, it doesn't matter. Ask these Aaronic men to come into your home and share 15, 20 or 30 minutes with you, maybe an hour. Get them started. We have to learn how to do things and have the courage to do things. The church cannot survive without the Aaronic ministry.



October

- 5 - Becky Starks Hawley
- 7 - Michael Jordison
- 9 - Jim Major
- 21 - Diane Anderson
- 23 - Linda Barber
- 24 - Kent Clisby
- 29 - George Knotts
and anyone we missed.



October

None at the present time.



*And we talk of
Christ,
we rejoice in
Christ,
we preach of
Christ,
we prophecy of
Christ,
and we write ac-*

cording to our prophecies, that our children may know to what source they may look for a remission of their

sins. 2 Nephi 11:48



October 2017 9/14/17						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Potluck after svc Priesthood Mtg 8:30 Fellowship 6 PM Linda Boswell's Sherman Phipps	2 5 pm Women's Prayer Time	3 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Jim Barber	4 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Jim Barber	5 Bk Mormon Class 6:45PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Ringgold Singers @ church	6 JCRB	7
8 Fellowship 6 PM Bob Rowland's Ed Anderson	9 5 pm Women's Prayer Time	10 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Bob & Jen Rowland Tony Crandell	11 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Bob & Jen Rowland Tony Crandell	12 Bk Mormon Class 6:45 PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Ringgold Singers @ church	13	14 Anderson's Skeet Shoot 10:00
15 Fellowship 4 PM Barbers – Hay Ride Food for Center	16 5 pm Women's Prayer Time	17 Women's Mtg 5:00 Anna Mickelson's Devotions – Di Smith Teacher TBD	18 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Norman Nelson's TBD Joe Mickelson	19 Bk Mormon Class 6:45PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Ringgold Singers @ church	20	21
22 Fellowship 6 PM Ron Smith's Tony Crandell	23 5 pm Women's Prayer Time	24	25 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Ron Smith's Steve Smith	26 Bk Mormon Class 6:45 PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Ringgold Singers @ church	27	28
29 BUSINESS MTG 9:45 Fellowship 6 PM Joe Mickelson's Steve Smith	30 5 pm Women's Prayer Time	31	Nov 1 Prayer Mtg 7 PM Steve Smith's Ed Anderson	2 Bk Mormon Class 6:45 PM Joe & Anna Mickelson's Ringgold Singers @ church	3	4
November 5 Fellowship Steve Smith's Joe Mickelson						
Notes: Location of Sunday evening & Wednesday prayer service in green Presider is in red & italics. Specific assignments on reverse. Ladies – Women's Group meeting is 5 – 6:30 October 17; Anna Mickelson will host JCRB CONFERENCE OCTOBER 5-7						



October 1

Presiding	Ed Anderson
Speaking	Matt Anderson
Devotions	Rob & Lynda Rolfe
Pianist	Cheryl Phipps
Music Ministry	Diane Anderson
Greeter	Linda Boswell
Custodian	Sue Beck

October – 8

Presiding	Rodney Bastow
Speaking	Steve Smith
Devotions	Gordon/Linda Winkler
Pianist	TBD
Music Ministry	Sue Beck
Greeters	Bob/Liz Bell
Custodians	Joe/Anna Mickelson

October – 22

Presiding	Gordon Winkler
Speaking	Jim Barber
Devotions	Rob/Debbie Bastow
Pianist	TBD
Music Ministry	Rob Rolfe
Greeters	George/Beth Knotts
Custodians	Ed/Diane Anderson

Sherman Phipps in Osceola

October – 29

Presiding	TBD
Speaking	TBD
Devotions	Joel/Deni Loving
Pianist	Cheryl?
Music Ministry	Steve Smith
Greeters	Tony/Sandy Crandell
Custodians	Gordon/Linda Winkler

October – 15

Presiding	Sherman Phipps
Speaking	Joel Loving
Devotions	Sue Beck
Pianist	Cheryl Phipps
Music Ministry	Jordison Family
Greeters	Sherm/Cheryl Phipps
Custodians	Bob/Jen Rowland

NOVEMBER 5

Presiding	Jim Barber
Speaking	Michael Jordison
Devotions	Jordison Family
Pianist	TBD
Music Ministry	TBD
Greeters	Steve/Elaina Smith
Custodians	Tony/Sandy Crandell

PLEASE REVIEW YOUR ASSIGNMENTS AND LET SANDY CRANDELL (641-784-7204) KNOW IF THERE IS A CONFLICT. CHECK SCHEDULES AS PRINTED WEEKLY FOR CHANGES. Those giving Presiding Ministry, please share your hymns with the assigned pianist prior to Sunday: Music Coordinator: Rob Rolfe - 641-784-6030; text/call 641-442-5894; Musicians: Cheryl Phipps – 641-442-5570, Bonnie Major 6641-289-0535, Church cleaning should be done prior to Sunday date assigned. Church website is www.gospelrestored.org/.

Family Devotions- 9:30 Preaching Service- 11:00 Sunday evenings – 6:00 PM Wednesday prayer service-7:00



Church of Jesus Christ Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

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

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www.gospelrestored.org



CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST - MT AYR RESTORATION BRANCH

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)

News & Notes

Business meeting

A branch business meeting is set for Sunday, October 29, at 9:45 a.m. at the church in Mount Ayr.

Hayride held

A hayride and campfire activity was held at the Jim and Linda Barber farm near Bethany, MO, Sunday, Oct. 15. A good crowd attended and shared in the fun and fellowship.