

April 2018

Church of Jesus Christ

Mount Ayr Restoration Branch

NEWSLETTER

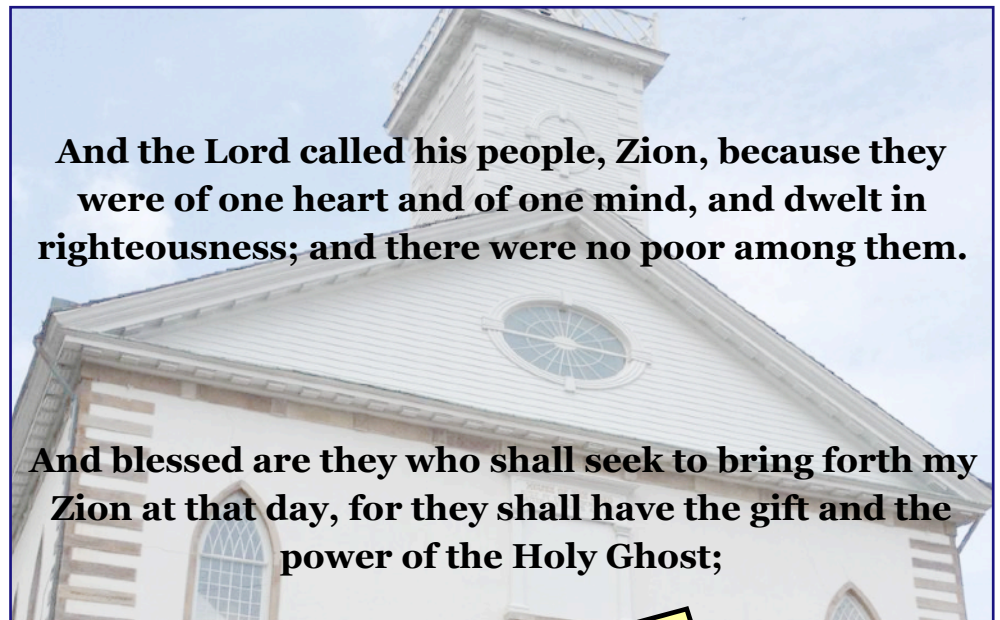
2320 State Highway 2, Mount Ayr, IA 50854

Joel Loving, Pastor Lamoni Iowa

www.gospelrestored.org

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Suffer little children to come unto me...for of such is the kingdom of God.



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.

And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost;

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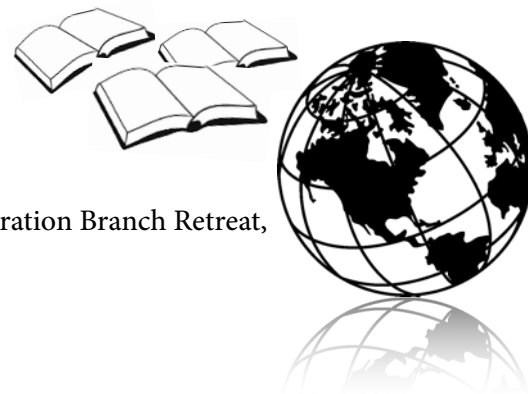
News & Notes

On Saturday March 17, many friends and family gathered at the Lamoni Community of Christ church to remember brother George Knotts. The service lasted two hours with many testimonies and remembrances shared by those touched by George at various times throughout his life. (See his obituary on page 13.)

A congregational prayer and fasting weekend will occur March 30-April 1st. Under commandment to do so for the souls who know not God the Branch will fast from 6PM Friday through Sunday morning,

where the fast will be broken after the communion service. Participants may gather at the Jordison home in Lamoni on Friday evening at 6PM to pray and then again on Saturday morning at 7AM. Saints are encouraged to stop to pray on their own at times normally reserved for eating.

On Sunday April 1st we will hold an early morning prayer and communion service at 8AM at the church. Following, brunch will be provided with a preaching service at the 11AM hour, with guest minister, Elder Peter Cornish speaking.



SAINTS MINISTERING ELSEWHERE

March 17 Sisters Diane Anderson & Di Smith ministered at the Cameron Restoration Branch Retreat, teaching the youth.

March 18 Brother Rob Rolfe preached in Keosauqua.

March 25 Seventy Bob Moore spoke in Mount Ayr.

April 1 Brother Michael Jordison is speaking at Gospel Park in Independence.

April 4 Brother Joe Mickelson will be speaking at the evening service during the JCRB conference.

April 5 Brother Sherman Phipps speaks the next night at the JCRB conference.

SELFLESS LOVE

Elder Michael Jordison

Lamoni, Iowa

February 25, 2018

For a scripture Michael Jordison shared Doctrine & Covenants 22:23. *And the Lord God spake unto Moses, saying, The heavens, they are many and they cannot be numbered unto man, but they are numbered not me, for they are mine; and as one earth shall pass away, and the heavens thereof, even so shall another come; 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.*

The scripture that I shared with you came from 22nd section of the Doctrine & Covenants. I just want to reiterate that last sentence ... *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.* (23)

Well, today is the first day of the rest of your life. The question is: what are you going to do with it? I am going to throw some dates out here. These kind of popped into my head as I was pondering things last night. What do these dates have in common with each other?

1/27/1986

4/17/1906

12/6/1941

10/23/1929

8/22/79

8/12/1961

4/14/1912

The commonality that we find is that some kind of tragedy

happened the very next day.

January 27, 1986 (On January 28th the Space Shuttle Challenger blew up.)

April 17, 1906 (On April 18th an 8.0 Magnitude earthquake hit San Francisco killing over 3,400 people.)

December 6, 1941 (On December 7th the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, killing 2,402 Americans, wounding another 1,282 and bringing the United States into the worst war of modern day, costing over 400,000 U.S. lives.)

October 23, 1929 (The next day the New York Stock Exchange would begin to collapse ultimately bankrupting millions across America and sending the nation into the worst economic depression of its existence.)

August 22, A.D. 79 (On August 23rd, thousands of the inhabitants of the Italian city Pompeii were covered in ash and toxic gas as the nearby mountain, Vesuvius, erupted with 100,000 times the energy of an atomic bomb.)

August 12, 1961 (That night 30 miles of barbed wire were woven through Berlin in what would become the iconic "Iron Curtain" or Berlin Wall, sealing off the West from East Berlin in Germany. This effectively would separate families and friends for nearly 30 years as Communism sought to destroy freedom and shield its captives from Western ideology, politics and Christianity.)

April 14, 1912 (Early the next morning the H.M.S. Titanic would strike an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland tragically sinking and killing 1,500 passengers and crew.)

These are just a few tragic events in history which affected the lives of many through great loss and destruction. What do you suppose the people affected by these events would have done had they known what was about to happen that next day? Would they have done something different that night? Would they have done something different the next day that would have changed their routine, maybe changed the outcome? Do you suppose that in the weeks leading up to these events they might have made some changes? Lives were lost, fortunes ruined, families divided, evil manifested and courses were changed in the blink of an eye. Knowing what you know now, would you have boarded the Titanic before it sailed from England? Knowing what you know now, would you have allowed your family to remain in East Berlin that



night? Knowing what you know now, would you have signed up to be the first teacher in space?

George Knotts used to say, “Do the best you know until you know better.” We’ve all heard him say that many times. What if the better that we could know was something in our future, something that would allow us to escape some peril or judgment by this foreknowledge. What would you do with that knowledge? I’m asking myself these questions. How soon before you would begin to make changes in your life so you could avoid some future tragedy shown to you. Would it be 10 years? 5 years? 1 year? Would I wait until 6 months? 1 month? How about a week? Or a day? Or would I bother to change anything at all?

It’s no secret that our congregation has met with many difficulties and trials lately. We’ve lost loved ones. We have so many dealing with serious health issues and difficult circumstances. It’s made we think about mortality. It’s made me think about my mortality and my own family. I’m not prepared to say good-bye to any of my children or my wife yet. We are often told by those who have suffered loss to not take any time for granted. Make the most of every day that you have to spend with your loved ones. Don’t wait to say “I love you.” For the most part I think I understand what is being said but the reality is that it’s not very long until I’m afraid I’ll begin to become distracted with life and I’ll begin to slip back into old habits, forgetting to (again another of George Knotts’ quotes) “put first things first.”

Some of us think, wouldn’t it be great if we knew the future. If we had a crystal ball and could see all of the tragic things that would happen in our future before they happened so we could avoid them. Well, God has provided a crystal ball of sorts. In Amos he tells us *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, until he revealeth the secret unto His servants the prophets.* (Amos 3:7) According to this scripture God does foretell the future through His prophets. Do you believe that? It’s interesting how we can look back through the scriptures and see where God reveals first this part and then that part and maybe a little bit more until we begin to get a clearer picture of what is to happen. When we consider the birth and the life and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, looking back through the scriptures we can pick out passages and say yes this was all foretold.

We see God did foretell the coming of His Son, but this isn’t really what we think of when we consider the idea of knowing our immediate future and what will happen in our lives today. God doesn’t tell the prophets about everything that’s going to happen in

our lives and then expect us to seek their wisdom like going to some fortune teller who is going to open up the tarot cards and give us a reading. Yes, there are some people who have been shown what would happen in their lives if they followed a certain course. I was thinking of Sherman’s dad who was shown things that would happen before he passed on. But for the majority of us our futures are more obscure. God in His wisdom has chosen not to reveal every detail of our future to us. He has chosen to keep these things a mystery for us, a mystery to be revealed in time.

The scriptures say that God is outside of time, for time is measured only by man. In fact, time was created for us because of God’s mercy towards us. We were given *time* to teach us patience; *time* to teach us reliance; *time* to teach us to trust; *time* to teach us faithfulness; *time* to work out our salvation; and *time* to allow us repentance.

We don’t give our children everything they want. And we don’t give them things every time they want them. Why is that? Because in our wisdom, we understand that if we did, they would be set on a path of selfishness, learning a misconception that the world revolved around *their* wants, desires and whims, which would lead to their eventual self-destruction. Selfishness is a focus on oneself, looking and caring inward primarily. God calls us to selflessness, looking outward primarily in order that we might change the inward man. And if we can teach our children this value then they have a greater chance of becoming successful, caring and productive members of not only our society, but a part of God’s kingdom.

Josh (Jordison, who raises poultry) knows the answer to this and some others of you might know what happens when you pick apart the eggshell while a chick is trying to hatch? The chick has a greater probability of dying. You think you are helping it but really what you are doing is hindering its development and its growth. It’s difficult to watch a chick struggle and struggle. We’ve hatched them in the incubator and we’ve wondered and wondered, “is this chick ever going to break through? I just need to get in there and pull that little piece off and grab that leg and just bend it around a bit and help it out.”

Our lives are like one big hatching process, full of struggles and trials. Sometimes we get a leg caught in this or that trap, or we roll around aimlessly struggling, seemingly to no avail. If we were to know our future, and seek to avoid all the “bad” things that would happen to us, we would not gain the strength for the greater journey ahead - to meet and commune with God unhindered. The struggles we face are here to help us “WORK” out our salvation.

Alma said, *Now, we see that Adam did fall by partaking of the forbidden fruit, according to the word of God; And thus we see that by his fall that all mankind became a lost and a fallen people. And now behold I say unto you, that if it had been possible for Adam to have partaken of the fruit of the tree of life at that time, that there would have been no death and the word would have been void, making God a liar; For He said: ‘If thou eat thereof, thou shalt surely die.’ And we see that death comes upon mankind, yea, the death which has been spoken of by Amulek, which is the temporal death; Nevertheless, there was a space granted unto man in which he might repent. Therefore, this life became a probationary state, a time to prepare to meet God, a time to prepare for that endless state which has been spoken of us, which is after the resurrection of the dead.* (Alma 9:38-41)

The struggles that we face in this life are there to help condition us to a point where we are prepared to meet God. The challenges that we face are here to shape and mold us into the creatures we were created to be - selfless and completely reliant upon the God who created us.

Let me ask you another question. God says that we are to





praise and worship only Him. Right? Deuteronomy 6:13-14 says, *You shall fear only the LORD your God; and you shall worship Him and swear by His name.* In Psalm 96:4-5 we find, *For great is the LORD and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods.* In Genesis 3:1-4 it says, *And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying, That Satan whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning; And he came before me, saying, Behold I, send me, I will be thy Son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore, give me thine honor. But behold, my beloved Son, which was my beloved and chosen from the beginning, said unto me: Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him; and also that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten I caused that he should be cast down; and he became Satan.* In the New Testament we find these words, *Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name... for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever and ever.*

Why is it that we are to worship God alone? Is it because He is just so full of Himself that He wants us to look at Him and how beautiful He is. Is it because He created the vast cosmos and everything that's in it? Is it because He made us and therefore because He owns us we owe Him our allegiance? Is it because He's all powerful and can do anything. He could squash us like a bug if He wanted. Perhaps God wants us to praise and worship Him alone because He sits atop His kingdom on earth and as He is the ruling monarch He deserves our worship.

While all of these might be true, I want you to consider for a moment that we are to worship Him alone for another reason. It's true that God is all knowing, that He's all powerful, and He's everywhere all the time. We call that omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. God in deed has created everything that was, that is, and ever will be. He made us and He owns us in that respect. But here's how He said He did it. While talking with Moses on the mountain He said, *And by the word of my power have I created them, which is mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth.* What God has formed and breathed into existence He has done by the power of His Son, Jesus Christ.

From the Book of Mormon we read again the words of Alma, *Behold, I say unto you, that I do know that Christ shall come among the children of men, to take upon him the transgressions of his people, and that he shall atone for the sins of the world; for the Lord God has spoken it; For it is expedient that an atonement should be made; for according to the great plan of the eternal God, there must be an atonement made, or else all mankind must unavoidably perish; Yea, all are hardened; yea, all are fallen, and are lost, and must perish except it be through the atonement which it is expedient should be made; For it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; yea, not a sacrifice of man, neither of beast, neither of any manner of fowl; for it shall not be a human sacrifice: but it must be an infinite and [ETERNAL] sacrifice. Now there is not any man that can sacrifice his own blood, which will atone for the sins of another. Now if a man murdereth, behold, will our law, which is just, take the life of his brother? I say unto you, Nay. But the law requireth the life of him who hath murdered; therefore there can be nothing, which is short of an infinite atonement, which will suffice for the sins of the world; therefore it is expedient that there should be a great and last sacrifice; And then shall there be, or it is expedient there should be, a stop to the shedding of blood; then shall the Law of Moses be fulfilled; yea, it shall all be fulfilled; every jot and tittle, and none shall have passed away. And behold, this is the whole meaning of the law; every*

whit pointing to that great and last sacrifice; and that great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God; yea, infinite and eternal; and thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name. Alma 16:207-215 "those who shall believe on his name;" Jesus Christ - Yeshua HaMashiach - The Lord's salvation, the Anointed One.

Jesus Christ. His name means the eternal sacrifice - he was anointed to carry out the work of God the Father, to bring to pass the Lord's salvation for mankind, and that mission was accomplished through this great and last and eternal sacrifice - in perpetuity. Do you know what in perpetuity means? It means forever and ever and ever. His sacrifice is going on right now. He may have been crucified nearly 2,000 years ago, but His sacrifice is still going on today and will continue in eternity - filling all of creation and holding it together like glue. That's why God is worthy to be praised. That is why He alone is to receive our worship. Because the omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent God of the universe who made all things in the heavens and the earth, became selfless; and thought more of you and I than of Himself. He lowered Himself. He became vulnerable. He became despised. He was rejected. He allowed Himself to become subject to whatever mankind would do to Him. He was beaten and He was crucified and killed - both physically and spiritually.

All of God's power comes because of this simple act - which is much larger than any of us really can understand. God's love, His mercy, His enduring faithfulness for us are all wrapped up in the atonement of the anointed one. This sacrifice wasn't completed at some point in history. This sacrifice is who He is. This is the power that allows Him to create - because His love never ceases or fails.

So as we consider our lives and where we are, what we do, we must discover that our probationary period is preparing us to meet with this selfless God. We were created in His image, but due to the fall of mankind, we have taken on a different nature - one that we call the natural man, who is an enemy to God. It is through the living of our lives that we must be re-created into the image of God, receiving His image in our countenance, so that we are like Him when we shall meet Him face to face. That is the work of repentance. That is the work of baptism.

This church teaches that repentance and baptism is necessary for salvation - not because it sets up some legal right of authority and membership criteria for only those in this church, but rather, because repentance and baptism work together to change both the physical and spiritual man into the image of God. The body and the spirit combined are the soul of man and will remain in eternity; a physical immersion in water to mirror the complete and utter immersion of the spirit into a melding with Christ in His selfless death. Jesus is alive today because of His sacrifice. And our salvation comes when we too partake of that sacrifice - not just in acceptance in word, but in our acceptance in deed and action. We are to become selfless beings - not selfish.

I gave some dates earlier. I am going to throw one more out a little more recent. What is significant about the date February 13, 2018? That was a week and a half ago, the day before Valentine's Day. That was the day before Nicholas Cruz walked into a high school in Parkland, Florida, and opened fire, killing 17 students and faculty. Do you suppose the loved ones of those killed would have wanted to know what was going to happen that next day? Do you suppose that they would wish they could go back and change the outcome? I know that I would if in that situation.

And I know that many, if not all of you, would like to go back in time in advance of some great tragedy in your past and either



change the outcome, or take more time to be with loved ones who are gone. It seems like we never have enough time with each other before we're gone. God wants us to take advantage of the time that we do have, and He wants us to do it living selflessly for each other.

Whatever hardships we have and will face, they are there to help condition us for the journey ahead. Just like that chick trying to scramble out of that eggshell. While at times it may seem that these difficulties are just too much to bear, God has and does promise to be with us every step of the way. He has born our sorrows. He has felt our pains, He has taken our sicknesses. He has walked through all our temptations. And He promises that He will wipe away every tear; that He will turn our mourning into joy; that He will strengthen us to overcome all that we encounter in life; just as He will strengthen us to overcome death and find eternal life.

Word came to us a few months ago about the possibility that the Lord was again moving in the Restoration down in Brazil. There was quite a bit of excitement as news spread like wildfire that Moroni had entrusted the Book of Mormon plates again to men on earth. Now the truth is, we don't know what exactly is happening in Brazil. Whether or not you believe that the Lord is working there, consider for a moment that if you are a Book of Mormon believing Latter Day Saint, then you must believe that someday this will be a reality. Whether it's now or later, God will continue His work to restore the house of Israel and fulfill the remainder of His covenants. He will pour out His spirit and endow His people with power and arm them with righteousness. The Book of Mormon will be unsealed, translated and the vision proclaimed unto the whole world. Jesus Christ will come down and reign on earth with His saints in Zion.

When will that day or those days be I ask you? It might be tomorrow. It might be 10 years from now. Do you know? What if today was the day before these things began to be revealed? How would you live your life? Would you change a thing this afternoon if you knew it might be tomorrow? Are you prepared now? I'm asking myself these questions. Do you know enough to be able to share these things with your neighbors when they come to your door, and say, "Tell me about the Book of Mormon, tell me about Zion, tell me the plan of salvation. What is the fulness of the Gospel?" Will you be able to look Jesus in the face tomorrow and tell Him that you've done all that you could for His work, that you hadn't procrastinated the day?

It's not enough for a Latter Day Saint to find salvation. What a Latter Day Saint is called to do is lay his or her life down and become selfless, made into the image of God - so that we can fulfill the commission we have been given: "*Now, as you have asked, behold, I say unto you, Keep my commandments,*" (Now that's the part of salvation that we talk about: repent, have faith and be baptized in water for the remission of sins and receive the laying on of hands and the Holy Ghost.) *and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion. Behold I speak unto you, and also to all those who have desires to bring forth and establish this work; and no one can assist in this work, except he shall be humble and full of love, having faith, hope, and charity, being temperate in all things whatsoever shall be intrusted to his care.* (D&C 12:3-4)

We have been entrusted with a great privilege and a great responsibility and we will be held accountable for what we've been given.

Perhaps some of you might be like me at times, caught up in the realities and business that make up our everyday lives. Perhaps we're locked with tunnel vision about the things we have to do today, or the things that we must deal or cope with. We might be weighted with loss, cancer, family issues, job frustrations, bills or sins we can't overcome. That's life! That's what's in the world that

God has placed us in. But thankfully He's not left us alone. He gave us each other as well as Himself, and though we don't know the timing of all things, there are some things we can be certain of. Much of what we deal with today will be forgotten, but some things won't. The pain of these struggles will be lifted when we behold the character that is being shaped and the image that is being constructed into a likeness of the selfless and loving God who gave Himself for us.

Jesus still bears the scars that were inflicted on Him at Calvary. But they are not bitter reminders of the wrong that was done to Him. They are reminders that He willingly went through a great trial of difficulty, more than we can possibly imagine - and He came through it with no less love for each of us. Our trials prove that we in deed are created in His image, born to walk a difficult road, which will both challenge us and tax us perhaps to our limit, but in the end will prove out that we have overcome all and gained the victory.

As we live our lives today and move forward as a church- as a congregation - let us be faithful in relying upon the Lord and trusting in Him to bring us through whatever it is that we are facing. Let us exercise our faith in new ways knowing that He has a plan for us beyond what we see today. Let us keep sight of the promise of a new day - and the days in-between when God will set His hand again to recover His people and strengthen His church for the work ahead.

Today is the first day of the rest of your life. What are you going to do with it?



A Farmer Gives Thanks

I am thankful for life.
 Everyday the sun rises and sets
 I am thankful for the harvest of the field
 For the newborn calves
 (And even kittens)
 I am thankful for the rains,
 that make the grass green and luscious
 And that God made farmers who feed the world
 (And the farmer's wife who feeds him)





LESSON FROM THE STORY OF TWO SISTERS

High Priest Robert Rolfe

Lamoni, Iowa

March 4, 2018

You probably remember this morning that my wife, Lynda, died. I think it is also likely that I remember it more. I remember every morning and all day long. Because of those memories, I have been thinking about resurrection of the dead. One thought came to mind. Did Lynda get into paradise? Then I thought, if she didn't, what chance do I have?

Our lesson today starts in a small village about 15 furlongs from Jerusalem and it concerns 3 people that are known to you all. Mary, Martha, and their brother, Lazarus, lived together in Bethany, (not named after Bethany, MO which is named after a limestone outcropping on "Big Creek" west of town, "the Bethany Falls Limestone formation." The falls are no longer there, so don't try to find them.) Anyway, the three of them were faithful followers of Jesus, and Jesus loved them very much. We don't know how they met, or how their relationship grew. It is interesting to me that all of them were single. Ordinarily, children were contracted in marriage about age 12 and then married at 14 or 15. If Mary, Martha and Lazarus were ever married, the text does not reveal. Jesus and his disciples visited them often. Apparently, they had a house large enough for their family and the disciples as well. This is one detail that suggests they were not poor.

Martha wanted to be sure that Jesus and the disciples were well cared for. This could be an additional 13 people to feed and care for. I'm going to start reading at Luke 10:39. *Now it came to pass, as they went, they entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister, called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his words. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me.* (39-41) Instead of helping Martha, Mary sat at Jesus' feet, listening to Him. The harder Martha worked, the more upset she became with Mary. You can see how their relationship worked as Martha was not bashful about telling "God" what to do. "Tell Mary to help me." Apparently, Mary wasn't "helping" upon being asked/told by Martha.

Jesus understood Martha's feelings, and He answered tenderly, *"Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.* (42-43) Jesus wanted Martha to know that it was important for her to care for her home and that He appreciated all she had done for Him. But it was even more important to learn about God and to grow spiritually. He told her that Mary has chosen that "good part." Have you chosen that

"good part" in your life. Are you more concerned with the potluck to follow than the spiritual truth during our service? I hope each of you have chosen that "good part" this morning.

Sometime later Lazarus became seriously ill, and Mary and Martha were worried. They knew that Jesus could make Lazarus well, but He was with His disciples in Peraea. Let's start at John 11:1 They immediately sent Jesus a message: *Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.* (3-4) Jesus stayed in Peraea two more days. Then he said to his disciples, *Let us go into Judaea again.* (7)

The last time Jesus had been in Judaea, some of their "church



people" had threatened to stone Him. They were angry with Him because He said He was the Son of God. Jesus' disciples were worried about His returning to Judaea, and they tried to persuade Him not to go. But Jesus said, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.* (11) His disciples did not understand what Jesus meant; they thought Lazarus was just resting. Then Jesus said plainly, *Lazarus is dead.* (14)

When Jesus and his disciples neared Bethany, they discovered that Lazarus had lain in his tomb for four days. Many of Mary and Martha's friends were visiting the sisters to comfort them. Hearing the news of Jesus' arrival, Martha ran to meet Him, crying, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* (21) Then Martha showed her great faith by adding, *But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.* (22) Tenderly Jesus said, *Thy brother shall rise again.* (23) Martha replied, *I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection.* (24)

Then Jesus taught her an important lesson. He said, *I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? Saints, believest thou this this morning? I believe it. In fact, it is an anchor in my faith when I think about Lynda's death. To believe she is alive in Christ. It would be tough to think Lynda no longer exists in any form. Martha answered, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* (27) This is an interesting declaration of faith. Do you remember what Jesus said to Peter in Matthew 16 when Peter made a very similar declaration? "Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee but my Father who is in heaven. Do you think that Martha received the knowledge of Jesus being the Christ in the same way?

Martha then returned home and told Mary, *The Master is come, and calleth for thee.* (28) Mary left quickly, followed by her



friends. When she reached Jesus, she fell down at his feet, and she, too, said, *Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.* (32) Seeing Mary and her friends weeping, Jesus felt sad and troubled. He asked them where the body of Lazarus was. While they walked to Lazarus's tomb, Jesus wept, and the people said, *Behold how [Jesus] loved him!* (36) It is comforting to me that Jesus wept over the death of one that He loved dearly. Particularly, when He planned to raise him from the dead immediately after the tears.

Many of the people had seen and heard of the miracles Jesus had performed, and they wondered why He had not saved His dear friend from death. They did not know that Jesus had a reason for letting Lazarus die. A big stone covered the entrance to the tomb. Jesus said, "Take ye away the stone." (39) Martha hesitated, saying, *Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.* (39) Jesus turned and said to Martha, *Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?* (40)

Then they took away the stone ... And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. (41) Then he cried with a loud voice, *Lazarus, come forth.* (43) Notice he called Lazarus by name. If he had just said, come forth, there might have been a crowd coming out of that tomb. And Lazarus, still wrapped in his grave clothes, came forth. Jesus asked the people to unwind the cloth that covered Lazarus's face and arms and legs. Lazarus was alive! He could see and feel and walk and talk. The people were amazed. Never had they seen such a demonstration of power over death. If you thought the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus before, now they really had good reason. (From their viewpoint) *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.* (45)

But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What shall we do? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself; but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death. (John 11:45-53)

Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there; and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus. (John 12:9-11)

This miracle sealed, if you will, a death warrant for Jesus. The leaders had to kill him. And they did, only God had planned it in advance. When it was over, Jesus resurrected himself. We will celebrate Resurrection Day in a few weeks. This is the good news of the gospel. Death and hell has been overcome by our Lord Jesus.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? When Jesus knew in himself that

his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except he doeth the will of my Father who hath sent me. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. (John 6:56-69) We have done this very thing this morning. I pray that you will all live forever, because of your obedience to God's commandment.

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? (John 11:25) Do you?



DEFINING LOVE

Priest Joe Mickelson

Lamoni, Iowa

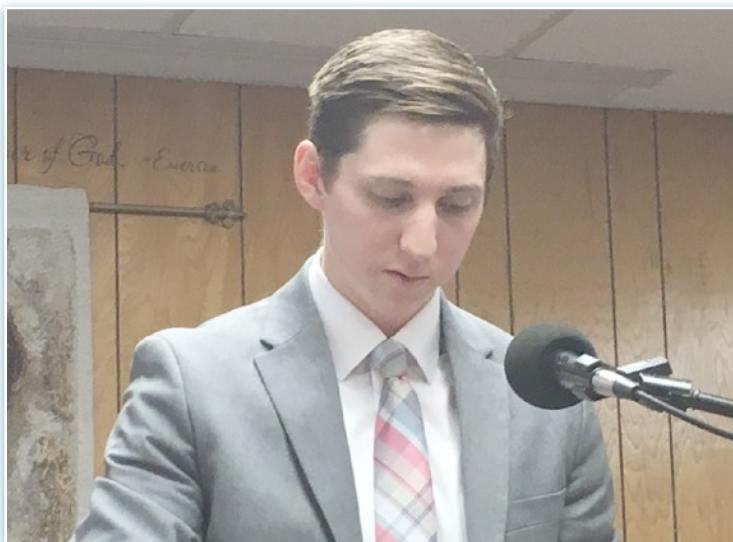
March 11, 2018

Brother Joel Loving read Moroni 7:52-53 as a Call to Worship. *Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail; but charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth for ever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with them. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son Jesus Christ, that ye may become the sons of God, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is, that we may have this hope, that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.*

Brother Joe Mickelson then shared Luke 23:13-25, 34-35 as his scripture reading for the morning. *And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people, Said unto them, You have brought this man unto me, as one who perverteth the people; and behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him. No, nor yet Herod; for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him; I will therefore chastise him, and release him. For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast. But they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man,*



and release unto us Barabbas; Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison. Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. But they cried, saying, Crucify him, Crucify him. And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him; I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. And they were instant in loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified; and the voices of them, and of the chief priests, prevailed. And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. And he released unto them him who for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; and delivered Jesus to their will. (13-25) And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Meaning the soldiers who crucified him,) and they parted his raiment and cast lots. (34-35)



My theme this morning centers on the concept of love. Love is a word that is thrown around a lot in today's society. In many instances, it is a word that has been abused, perverted, and warped into something entirely unrecognizable from the example of pure love we witness as we read of our Savior on the cross at Calvary.

In today's world, love has become synonymous with blind acceptance and tolerance of every lifestyle. We are told that everybody has the right to live their lives in whatever manner makes them feel best about themselves and the choices they make. Love, by that definition, equates to ensuring that everyone around you feels comfortable, safe, and secure in his or her own way of living. Christ, however, preached of a straight path that leads to a narrow gate. He spoke of *the way* and *the light* that leads to eternal salvation. Love, in today's worldview, has become the justification for sin, ungodliness, and discrimination against those who hold on to the concepts of the Gospel.

We are told by society that those of us who do not go along with the new social norms are lacking in love, and that it is only love that is needed to resolve the serious issues that we now face in this nation and in this world. I would tend to agree with that premise, though I would argue that its accuracy hinges upon the definition of love that is being used. Over the years we have mistakenly defined the "golden rule" as loving our neighbors as ourselves. That is not, however, the greatest commandment. When the lawyer asked Jesus, which is the great commandment of the law, the Master's response was, *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. (Matthew 22:35-37)

What we lack in our country, and in our world, today is not necessarily love for our neighbors, but love of God. I would argue that not one of us has ever fully lived up to this first commandment – to love the Lord with ALL our heart and ALL our soul and ALL our mind. Our lack of understanding of this first and greatest commandment as a society has led to our misconceptions surrounding what love is, what love looks like, and how love behaves.

In Wichita, KS – 1974, Arthur Oakman was given a revelation by the Lord, which included a prophecy that has inarguably come to pass: *Many believe that when the tribulation time begins ye shall be stoned and tortured thereby ye may know that this is the beginning--not so. For I say unto thee, Satan has planned a different approach. He has already advised his co-workers to deceive you in this manner. They must first gain thy confidence, then make a lie appear as truth, make sin as just entertainment, common, and as something ordinary; 'Do it because the majority sins. Make filth become common place.' I have warned in times past of Satan's other plans in trying to take thee but this strongest plan you know not of which is to take place in a peaceful way. He has said to his co-workers, he has tried to take many souls from me in times past by torture and such, he failed; for my children became martyrs and that caused the faith of many to be strengthened, so he failed. That is why it is most needed that we pray daily for the discernment of spirit. Again I say, beware of those who teach and practice "free love," for they are the sons of perdition. I do not say Satan has given up his plans to tempt thee or cause thee pain and distress physically, mentally, and spiritually. What he plans first is to snare thee in a peaceful manner.*

The adversary's use of the concept of "free love" has grown at an overwhelming rate. This concept has blinded much of the world from what true love really is, where it can be found, and from what source it originates. John writes in his first epistle: *They are of the world; therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God; he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one 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 in to 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.* (1 John 4:5-13)

We face a world that has taken the primary attribute and gift of the Heavenly Father (love) and flipped it on its head so that it can be used against those who profess faith in Him. If you are like me, this often creates bitterness and frustration against those who incorrectly profess to act in the name of love. I can easily become defensive, cynical, and judgmental with those who sit across the ideological aisle from myself.

Therefore, as I prepared for this sermon – one in which I fully intended to expose the ignorance of others who misunderstand the true nature of love – I was forced to ask myself the question, "Do I really know what love is, and what it looks like through the eyes of God?" I found it easy to identify what love is not, but it became difficult for me to define what it is, and how it should look in action throughout our daily lives.



So, in response to this dilemma, I turned to the life of Jesus. I began at the beginning, and worked my way to the cross. I believe that, by the example of the greatest love ever shown, I have been able to identify 7 defining characteristics and attributes of love, as demonstrated through God incarnate.

Love is:

Obedience - Baptism of Jesus

And then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him; but John refused him saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and why comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer me to be baptized of thee, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And John went down into the water and baptized him. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and John saw, and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon Jesus. And lo, he heard a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him. (Matthew 3:41-46)

In contrast to the worldly view that love equates to blind tolerance and acceptance, Christ showed us in the waters of baptism that obedience to the will of God is the first foundational instrument of love. Jesus' complete obedience, whether or not it made sense to those around Him, was obviously something on which He placed immense value. Even John – a man who was held in high esteem by a large number of Jews at the time – questioned the need for Jesus' obedience to this particular ordinance. Christ was unwavering in His response, and His resolve, however, to “fulfill all righteousness.”

When we discuss the need for baptism by immersion within this church, I fear we too often fail to emphasize the concept of obedience. The necessity of this ordinance does not derive from church rules and bylaws, or even from revelations given to Joseph Smith. It is necessary because Jesus taught us by example that to love God is to be obedient to His will and commands. We may, at times, be like John the Baptist, questioning why we really need to do this or do that when it can seem almost trivial at times. In those moments, it behooves us to remember the response of the Master as He descended into the waters of baptism. If we are to love the way God wants us to love, we must, first and foremost, be willing to be obedient to whatever command He gives, whether it makes sense to us or not. Obedience, when practiced over a period, develops into the next characteristic of love: discipline.

Discipline - Temptations in the wilderness

And Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. And after forty days, the devil came unto him, to tempt him. And in those days, he did eat nothing; and when they were ended, he afterwards hungered. And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread. And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God. (Luke 4:1-4)

There are numerous examples of the discipline of Jesus within the verses that discuss the temptations in the wilderness. It is important to remember that, though He was the Son of God, when on this Earth, Christ suffered the same afflictions, the same trials, and the same temptations that many of us face every day. At this moment, He was obviously hungry beyond what I can imagine. He was likely fatigued, both physically and spiritually. He was in a moment of vulnerability, and the devil knew it. Because of the discipline of Jesus, however, He was able to overcome. He was

disciplined in His practice of fasting and prayer. He was disciplined in His study of scripture – made evident by His continued response to the adversary, “It is written.” He had disciplined Himself in such a way that His will no longer entered into the equation. His love of God was such that it was God's will, and God's will alone, that dictated His decisions.

Love, no matter the form, is characterized by our discipline. The example has been used before, but those who love golf will practice with discipline those things that are likely to improve their swing. Lovers of music will study it in great detail, practicing whenever they get the chance. If we love God the way we say that we love God, we must be disciplined in doing those things that bring us closer to Him, and to a greater understanding of His will for our lives. This includes prayer in the homes, studying scripture regularly and with real intent, fasting with purpose, and seeking out direction from on high.

Courage

And after these things, he (Jesus) went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the place where they received custom; and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast, in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans, and of others, who sat down with them. But the scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners? Jesus answering, said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:27-32)

Attribute of love number 3 is courage. The courage that it took for Jesus to sit at table with known sinners and men of low regard amongst the religious elite is difficult for us to fully comprehend. Our love must be courageous love. We must never be afraid to display our love, and the love of Christ that shines through us, no matter the place, no matter the time, and no matter who is present. Levi showed courage by leaving all to follow Christ, and Christ returned the favor by showing the courage to publicly commune with him and his fellows in front of the chief religious leaders of the time. We have that same promise. If we are courageous enough to choose Christ, and to put our love of our fellow man on display for all to see – no matter the circumstances – Christ will return the favor.

Independent of reciprocation

But I say unto you who hear my words, Love your enemies, do good to them who hate you. Bless them who curse you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you. And unto him who smiteth thee on the cheek, offer also the other; or, in other words, it is better to offer the other, than to revile again. And him who taketh away thy cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also. For it is better that thou suffer thine enemy to take these things than to contend with him. Verily I say unto you, Your heavenly Father who seeth in secret, shall bring that wicked one into judgment. Therefore give to every man who asketh of thee; and of him who taketh away thy goods, ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them only who love you, what reward have you? For sinners also do even the same. (Luke 6:27-33)

Attribute number four, which is that love is independent of reciprocation, is, perhaps, the most difficult of the seven characteristics for me to emulate in my life. I mentioned at the outset that I often grow frustrated, discouraged, and even downright angry when I hear of Christians, and those who hold to more



conservative ideals, being chastised by media outlets or Facebook users for believing differently than they do. Often our beliefs are misrepresented, and often it is intentional and intended to cause division, hatred, and strife. This makes it difficult for me to show love in those instances, and to those people.

But this passage from Luke makes it abundantly clear that Christ expects me to love them just as I would love you all here today for if I do not, I am no better than they or anyone else. Anyone and everyone can love those who agree with their principles, ideas, and values. To love those who not only disagree, however, but those who intentionally cause you harm... that is the love of Christ. That is the love that we are called to have for our fellow man. That is the love that we must strive for each day, because it is the love that God has for us. Whether we know it or not, we are often at odds with our Creator. There are times when we contend with Him. There are even times when, I am sure, we spitefully use and persecute Him. Yet He loves us. Each and every day, He loves us. That does not mean that we can take advantage of that love and expect to reap all the rewards in the end, but He loves us nonetheless. Our calling is simply to love, and allow God to bring the wicked into judgement.

Commitment

And he said unto another, follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God. (Luke 9:59-62)

If we, as individuals and collectively as a church, are to profess that we love God, we must be fully, completely committed to Him. We say we love our God, but how many of us are ready, right now, in an instant, to abandon our homes, our jobs, our community, even our friends and family, if Christ asked us to. There are times that I'm not even committed enough to muster up enough energy in the evening to study the word of God. The restoration churches over the years have not been committed enough to lay aside our doctrinal differences and unite in our love of Christ. We like to profess to be committed, until that commitment is called into action. Then, like the man in the verses from Luke, we say to our Savior, "can't I first go tie up some loose ends at home?" or "can't this wait until a better day, perhaps one in which I don't have so much on my plate?"

Loving God, just like loving one another, entails a commitment. That commitment often means that we will be faced with inconveniences that disrupt our lives. Those disruptions, however, should we commit ourselves to doing the will of God, are miniscule in comparison to the rewards that await those who love and serve Christ in this probationary state. Always remember, "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Sacrifice

Jesus called them and said unto them, Ye know that they who are appointed to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister. And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give his life a ransom for many. (Mark 10:42-45)

Similar to the topic of commitment is that of sacrifice. Sacrifice is, perhaps, the ultimate culmination of love. In the days and weeks ahead of us leading up to the Easter holiday, we will hear a lot about sacrifice. Nobody loved the way that Christ loved when on the earth. That is why nobody has ever sacrificed as much, for as many, as Jesus sacrificed. He came to sacrifice Himself for us, not just on the cross, but in His daily life, as well. He continues to sacrifice for each of us, even today. One of the best descriptions of the atonement that I've ever heard came from our brother Ron Smith. He described it along these lines: *Imagine that you have passed on and now sit at the judgment seat of God. You are aware that you have committed sins in your life that are deserving of much punishment. It is decided that your punishment will be that you will lose some of the fingers on your right hand. As the blade is descending toward your knuckles, another hand appears in place of your own. It is the hand of Jesus, willingly sacrificed so that you can be spared the pain.* That analogy of the ongoing sacrifice of the Lord Jesus has stuck with me. If we are not willing to sacrifice ourselves for our God and our fellow man, we are falsely professing our love.

Forgiveness

And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. (Meaning the soldiers who crucified him,) and they parted his raiment and cast lots. (Luke 23:34-35)

Finally, the attribute of forgiveness is a critical element to true and pure love. It is the reason for the sacrifice. It is the means whereby we can overcome our temporary lack of commitment, discipline, courage or obedience. It is there should we ever fail to offer our love to those who do not reciprocate it back to us. There was no greater miracle wrought by the Lord during His time on Earth than His plea to His Father while on the cross to forgive those who were responsible for His pain and suffering. No healing of the blind or lame could compare to this act of pure love. Christ was able to forgive the adulterers, the drunkards, the liars, and the thieves. He loved them into repentance, and many of them became His disciples. Even the very men who nailed Him to a cross, the Lord forgave.

What do we do when someone offends us even in the slightest degree? Do we respond the way Christ responded, or do we get angry, resentful, and cold? Do we forgive those who hurt us, whether they deserve our forgiveness or not? Or, instead, do we draw away from them and surround ourselves with like-minded folk who are easy to forgive because they never offend our points of view?

Arthur Oakman also once discussed the difference in the way Jesus loved and forgave, even while nailed to a cross, compared to the way we handle situations today. He said: *"You're not looking at a poor, unfortunate fellow who was innocently killed through misunderstanding. You're looking at God as He eternally is, submitting Himself to the sin of men and bearing it in His own body and burying it there. How else can we be delivered from sin? But we, what do we do? Every time a brother is overcome in a fault we must tell it. And every time anyone injures us, instead of bearing in our own soul that injury and believing in those who have injured us in spite of themselves, we must bear to them the same spirit they have borne to us. That's why Zion isn't redeemed."* Without a willingness to forgive, there is no love in us.

In closing: This world is in desperate need of a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the term love and how it is



applied to daily life. There are times that we become so concerned with tolerance that we begin to care more about the feelings of man than the will of God. We must remember that to love one another must first stem from our love of God, and the relationship we have built with His son, Jesus. If God has our hearts, He will have our bodies, as well, and all that we do will testify of that mutual love in our hearts.

Our love of God, just like our love of one another, must bear fruit. It must be more than just an empty profession of the tongue. Our love must entail obedience to the word and will of God. It must result in becoming disciplined to that will, even when it requires courage to do so. Our love will always be reciprocated by our Creator, but as we learn to let the love of Christ flow from us outwardly to others, it must not be contingent upon reciprocation from others. Our love must entail a commitment to the object of that love, especially when dealing with our love of God. Our love must be a sacrificial love that offers up every bit of who we are. Finally, our love must be a love that is full of forgiveness, just as the love that God has for us allows Him to forgive us time and time again.

I'd like to close by reading the following passage from 2nd Nephi 13:27-32. *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. 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. And now behold, this is the doctrine of Christ, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen.*

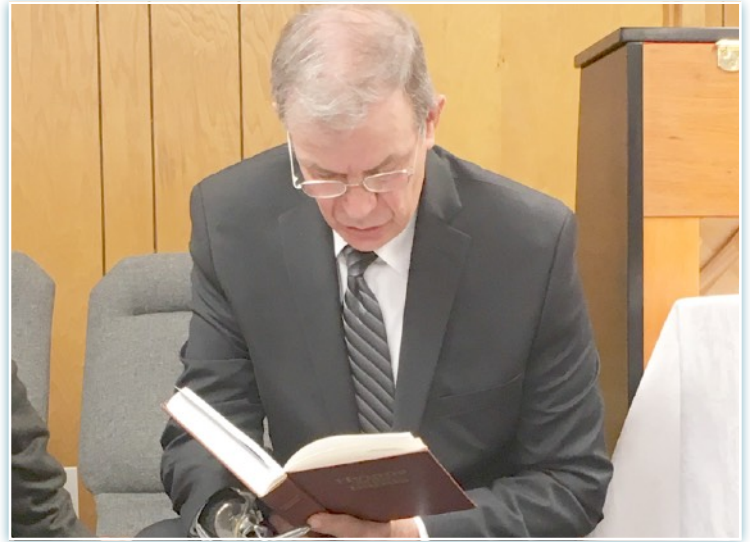


Thank You Lord

I thank you, Lord, for
the beauty of the world I live in.
I thank you for the grace to follow
the teachings of Your Spirit.
I thank you for all the love in my life.
I thank you for being who You are.

KEEPING THE SABBATH HOLY

Priest Jim Barber
Bethany, Missouri
March 18, 2018



Brother Jim's sermon did not get recorded because of equipment malfunction so these are the scriptures he shared. Webster states: The seventh day of the week was observed from Friday evening to Saturday evening. This was a day of rest and worship by Jesus and some Christians. Sunday is observed among Christians as a day of rest and worship: a time of rest.

I am going to share several scriptures from the Old Testament. The first is from Exodus 20:8-11 which says *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.* Also in Exodus 31: 12-17 we find that *The Lord told Moses that his people should keep the sabbath day holy as it was a sign between the Lord and them; anyone who defiled it should be put to death; anyone who did any work on the sabbath, his soul should be cut off from among his people; they were to work six days but not on the seventh; keeping the sabbath holy was a covenant between the Lord and his people.*



Isaiah also talks about the importance of keeping the Sabbath day. *If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.* (Isaiah 58: 13-14)

In the New Testament we find several times that the Sabbath day was mentioned. The ones I am going to share all had to do with Jesus and His ministry. In Matthew 12: 1-6 it says, *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.*

Mark 2: 25-27 says, *And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Wherefore the Sabbath was given unto man for a day of rest; and also that man should glorify God, and not that man should not eat; For the Son of man made the Sabbath day, therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.*

Jesus went into the synagogue on the Sabbath and taught and healed a man whose right hand was withered. The Pharisees tried to find fault with him for doing this, and he asked if it was lawful on the Sabbath to do good or evil; to save a life or destroy it? (Luke 6: 5-11) Also in

Luke 13: 10-16 we find that *On the Sabbath day, Jesus went into the synagogue and healed a woman who could not stand up straight. The Pharisees were angry, but Jesus asked them if they would not water their ox or ass on the Sabbath if they were thirsty?*

The Apostle John also shared John 5:8-16: *Jesus healed a man on the Sabbath telling him to rise up and take his bed; when the Pharisees were angered, Jesus said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.*

The Book of Mormon talks about the importance of keeping the Sabbath Day holy too. Jarom 1:10-11 states: *Two hundred years had passed and the people of Nephi observed to keep the law of Moses and the Sabbath day holy.* Mosiah 7:116-118 says, *Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day, the Sabbath of the*

Lord thy God, thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea and all that in them is: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. This quotes Exodus 20: 8-11. Also in Mosiah 9: 56 we find, *He commanded them that they should keep the Sabbath day holy and every day give thanks to the Lord.*

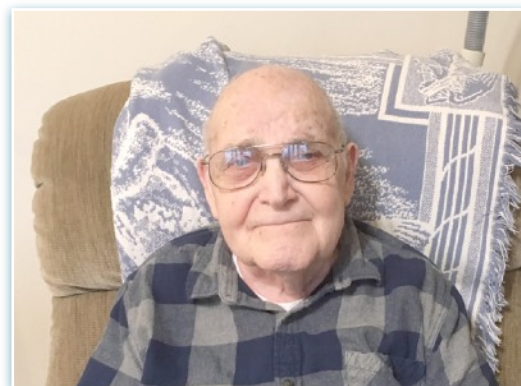
In our latter day scriptures recorded in the Doctrine and Covenants we also find mention of the Sabbath Day in several sections. D&C 59:2 says, *It is a reminder of the Ten Commandments and that on the Lord's day they should offer their oblations and his sacraments confessing their sins.* In D&C 68:4d it says, *And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy.* D&C 119:7 b-d says, *The Saints are to observe the first day of the week commonly called the Lord's day, as a day of rest, as a day of worship, as given in the covenants and commandments. And on this day they should refrain from unnecessary work; nevertheless, nothing should be permitted to go to waste on that day, nor should necessary work*



Ryder Rowland and Joshua Jordison performed at the Lamoni School Concert Choir and Orchestra/Band Concert in early March.



The congregation has been blessed to share in several prayer and Sunday night fellowships at brother Norman Nelson's home. We are grateful for the opportunity we've had to bring ministry and be ministered by Norman and his caregivers.





GEORGE CLARK KNOTTS

October 29, 1931 - February 13, 2018

Lamoni, Iowa

George Clark Knotts, age 86, of Lamoni, Iowa, was born October 29, 1931, in a log cabin in Langley, Oklahoma to Charles and Lola (Clark) Knotts. He left this life suddenly and peacefully on February 13, 2018, in his home. George often told stories of his mother's love and support and of his adventurous youth growing up on a ranch in the Grand Lake area of Oklahoma. While in school he played football, basketball, and baseball, graduating from Vinita High School in 1950.

George continued his education at Graceland College in Lamoni, Iowa, then a junior college, and completed his Bachelor of Science in Art Education from Kansas University in Lawrence, Kansas.

In 1953 as an art student at KU, George carved the first freestanding stone sculpture of the Kansas University Jayhawk. The hand polished limestone statue was purchased by the Chancellor and placed on permanent exhibit in the Kansas Memorial Student Union later that same year. The statue became known as the embodiment of the Jayhawk and was stolen by rival schools, including Kansas State University and University of Missouri, on numerous occasions. It was at KU that George met his beloved wife, Elizabeth Ann Fife, also an art student. They were married in Lawrence, Kansas in 1953, and two years later their first son, Daniel George Knotts was born.

From 1956-1965 George taught high school art in Des Moines, Iowa. George and Beth's second son, John David Knotts, was born in 1957 followed by their third son, Michael Matthew (Stretch) Knotts in 1965. In the late 1960's, the family of five moved to Stillwater, Oklahoma where George was hired to be the Director of the Graphic Arts Center at Oklahoma State University. It was there that he designed the OSU brand logo. It was also there that Beth gave birth to surprise twin daughters, Deborah Lola and Ruth Elizabeth in 1971.

George was an avid outdoorsman, camper, and supporter of the Boy Scouts. Much of his family vacations and ministry were completed in the camp setting. During his life, he directed countless summer camps. George had a gift for making complex subjects simple by using his creative and artistic talents. He developed a pamphlet called, "What's Your Heart's Desire?" which illustrates the scriptural promises linked to finding your life's purpose. He also designed the Agape symbol, used by Agape Camps in the 1960's and still used by Agape house at Graceland University today. He considered his service as a minister for Jesus Christ to be the most important calling of his life.

In 1976, George moved his family to Blue Springs, Missouri to work for Neighborhood Councils as a graphic artist in Independence, Missouri. In 1998, he and his wife, Beth, retired to Lamoni, Iowa.

George is survived by his wife, Beth Knotts, his five children, Dan Knotts and wife, Susan of Lamoni; John Knotts of Spavinaw, Oklahoma; Stretch Knotts of Lamoni; Deb Skinner and husband, Shane of Lamoni; and Ruth Seagraves and husband, Mike of Sacramento, California; grandson, Caleb Knotts of Eugene, Oregon; granddaughters, Jordan Knotts of Lamoni; Georgia, Maya, and Kendra Seagraves, all of Sacramento, California, and Samantha Skinner of Lamoni; niece, Leah Anderson of Vinita, Oklahoma; and many brothers and sisters in Christ, co-workers, and friends.





**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

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)

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 30-Apr 1 Congregational Fasting
Prayer & Fasting Weekend from Fri. 6 PM
thru Sun. 9:30 AM.

Apr 1 Early **Communion & Prayer** service at
8 AM with Brunch at 9:30 - Preaching
service at 11 AM with Peter Cornish

Apr 2-7 JCRB General Conference - Independence

Apr 6 Hymn Sing - 7 PM Stone Church - Indep.

Apr 5,12,19,26 Book of Mormon Night
Every Thursday evening at Joe & Anna
Mickelson's in Lamoni at 6:45 PM

Apr 10 Women's meeting, 5 PM at Liz Bells

Apr 14 Men's Breakfast at Pizza Hut 11:00 AM

Apr 21 Ladies' Brunch, 10-11:30 AM at the Lamoni Community Center

Apr 27-28 Book of Mormon Symposium - Independence (See above right)

SAVE THE DATE

**April 27 & 28
2018**

YOU'RE INVITED TO THE
Book of Mormon Symposium
The Book of Mormon, The
Restoration's Liahona

April 27 - Good Shepherd, Community of Christ 4341 Blue Ridge Blvd, KC Mo
April 28 - LDS Stake Center 705 West Walnut, Independence MO