

The Power of Meekness



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This magazine is dedicated to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and bearing witness to the everlasting promises of God. Our intention is to inspire the Saints to walk faithfully in the name of our Savior, bearing fruit worthy of the Kingdom of God.

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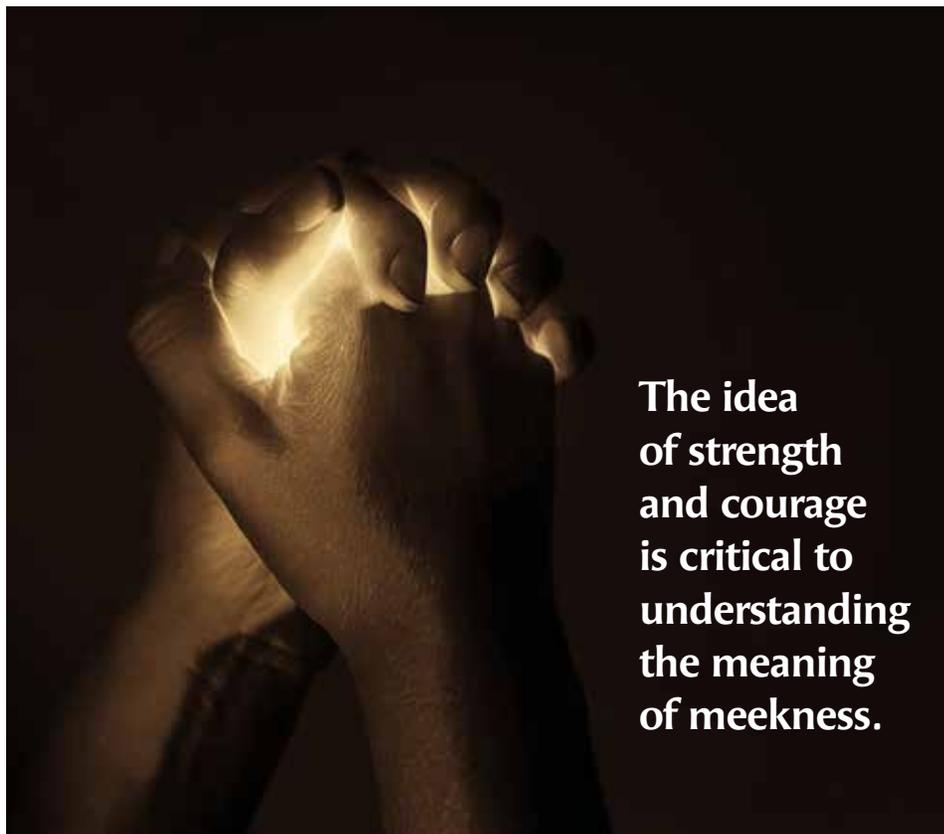
Editor's Letter**The Meek and Lowly***By Gary R. Whiting*

We have dedicated much of this issue to the idea of meekness. The articles address the subject of meekness. They attempt to describe what it is and how it operates in the life of the true disciple of Jesus Christ. In my study on this virtue, I found this definition which has helped me understand and practice meekness:

An attitude of humility toward God and gentleness toward people, springing from a recognition that God is in control. Although weakness and meekness may look similar, they are not the same. Weakness is due to negative circumstances, such as lack of strength or lack of courage. But meekness is due to a person's conscious choice.

It is strength and courage under control, coupled with kindness (Youngblood, R. F., Bruce, F. F., & Harrison, R. K., Thomas Nelson Publishers (Eds.). (1995). In Nelson's *New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc).

I believe that this definition fits the scriptural use of the word better than most other definitions. The idea of strength and courage is critical to understanding the meaning of meekness. Moses is described in Numbers 12:3 as more meek than all of the other men of the earth. Moses was a man of considerable strength and courage. He withstood the ruler of Egypt in the name of the Lord, commanded the Red Sea to divide, interceded for rebellious Israel and led



The idea of strength and courage is critical to understanding the meaning of meekness.

Israel through the wilderness and to the border of the Promised Land.

He did not stand in his own strength, but in the name of Lord. He was a man of great passion, as was demonstrated in his defense of the Israelites in Egypt, requiring his exile; when he broke the original tablets of the 10 Commandments; and in double striking the rock to obtain water. These outbursts were not the rule of his life, but when he strove to labor in his own strength and not the name of the Lord. These were the moments of his weakness.

Jesus described himself as meek and lowly (Matthew 11:29-30). As the definition suggests, Jesus showed humility and submission to the Heavenly Father and dealt gently with the people who came to him for ministry. Yet, Jesus was not at all weak. No, rather, he was firm and steadfast in the face of adversity. He withstood the temptations of the devil, but with self-control and free of histrionics and show. Against the religious leaders of the day who sought his life, he was firm and spoke plainly of their spiritual condition, but without fiery dialogue. Jesus had to restrain James and John who sought permission to call down fire from heaven and destroy a town in Samaria because they denied Jesus and the disciples a place to sleep for a night (Luke 9:52-55). Jesus told them they did not understand the type of spirit to which they were called—they did not understand meekness.

Some form of the word meek is used in the Doctrine and Covenants 19 times. Martin Harris was told to “Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit (D&C 18:2n). If he did so, he was promised peace in Christ. In D&C 18:6b, meekness was described as “conducting thyself wisely before me.”

The Lord’s counsel to Emma Smith contrasted meekness with pride (D&C 24:4a). Thomas Marsh, one of the first apostles and the first President of the Quorum of Twelve, was told, “Be patient in afflictions, revile not against those that revile. Govern your house in meekness, and be steadfast” (D&C 30:3c).

I recommend that the reader continue the study of the Lord’s use of the concept of meekness in the revelations to the church. It will reveal that meekness is to govern our conduct before God, the world and the church. It is the spiritual character of preaching and teaching. The warning voice is to be delivered in meekness.

If the church is to be healed of its self-inflicted divisions, a renewal of the spirit of meekness must be present among us. Let us pray that it will be so. †

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Pride or Humility: The Great Choice

By Alan Smith

Pride and humility. These two sides of a coin are talked about over and over again in the scriptures.

Pride, to paraphrase a dictionary definition, is having an exceedingly high opinion of oneself or one's importance in relationship to others. Humility, on the other hand, is a modest or low view of one's own importance.

Proverbs says pride brings shame, leads to contention, goes before destruction and will bring men low. Psalms says pride brings persecution of others and keeps us from seeking after God.

On the other hand, scriptures promise that humility brings exceeding joy, the blessing of the Kingdom, answer to prayer, the chance to be led by the hand of God and much more.

So why do we struggle with pride so much?

It comes down to a choice—will we revel in our own power and accomplishments, thinking they somehow make us better than others? Or will we marvel in what we can accomplish through God's blessing and power in our lives?

As followers of Christ, then, we need to look at our lives and see if pride is affecting our relationships

When we give him the glory, great things are promised.

Just how strongly worded are the commandments that we not be prideful? Jacob told the people in his day that being proud and puffed up was an abomination in the sight of God. Those are strong words that we usually don't want to think of in terms of a little pride in our lives.

And because some of you have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren, ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks, and high heads, because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren, because ye suppose that ye are better than they. And now my brethren, do ye suppose that God justifieth you in this thing? Behold, I say unto you, Nay. But he condemneth you, and if ye persist in these things, his judgments must speedily come unto you. O that he would shew you that he can pierce you, and with one glance of his eye, he can smite you to the dust. O that he would rid you from this iniquity and abomination. And, O that ye would listen unto the word of his commands, and let not this pride of your hearts destroy your souls (Jacob 2:16-21).

When Jesus was preaching against pride, he listed it with some of the sins we think of as the worst things we can do to rebel against the commandments of God:

For from within, out of the hearts of men, proceed

evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile man (Mark 7:20-21).

As followers of Christ, then, we need to look at our lives and see if pride is affecting our relationships with our Heavenly Father as well as with those around us.

Pride is an easy trap to fall into. Take the story of Moses recorded in the 20th chapter of Numbers. The people are complaining about not having water in the wilderness. God tells Moses to gather the people together at a rock of Meribah, to speak unto the rock before their eyes and it will give water. Moses takes the rod and gathers the people at the rock. What was to be an illustration of the power of God is thwarted by Moses in his frustration with the people.

"Hear now, ye rebels, must we fetch you water out of this rock?" he says, hitting the rock twice and bringing forth the water. Then God steps in and Moses is told the consequence for taking the glory of God unto himself for the miracle of the water.

"Because you didn't believe me to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, you will not bring this congregation into the land I have given them," God says.

"I'm going to have to bring about the miracle of the

Promised Land with someone who will not take credit to himself for getting the people into the land,” God is saying.

Or as Alma succinctly said it in his message to the people of Zarahemla:

Behold, are ye stripped of pride? I say unto you, If ye are not, ye are not prepared to meet God. (Alma 3:50).

Pride can be something we think of on an individual level, but it can also be part of our church experience as well. Nephi talked about the churches of our day and warned how pride can make our efforts to work together fall apart.

Because of pride, and because of false teachers, and false doctrine, their churches have become corrupted; and their churches are lifted up; because of pride, they are puffed up ... Wo unto them that turn aside the just for a thing of nought, and revile against that which is good, and say that it is of no worth (2 Nephi 12:14, 19).

As King Benjamin so eloquently told the people of his day, humility is recognizing our place in the big picture of eternity.

Even so I would that ye should remember, and always retain in remembrance, the greatness of God, and your own nothingness, and his goodness and long suffering towards you unworthy creatures, And humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel; And behold, I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; And ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true (Mosiah 2:20-23).

Being humble does not keep us from marveling at what can be accomplished when we give God the credit he deserves. Remember the joy of Ammon when he met his brothers and Alma after their 14 years of ministry to the Lamanites in which they had not seen each other? Humility can be expressed in recognizing what God can do with us when we humbly seek to serve him. He is quoted this way:

Now have we not reason to rejoice? Yea, I say unto you, there never were men that had so great reason to rejoice as we, since the world began: Yea, and my joy is carried away, even unto boasting in my God; for he has all power, all wisdom, and all understanding; he comprehendeth all things, and he is a merciful being even unto salvation, to those who will repent and believe on his name. Now if this is boasting, even so will I boast; for this is my life and my light, my joy and my salvation, and my redemption from everlasting wo (Alma 14:123-125).

In the Book of Mormon, the cycle of pride overcoming people as they prosper is played out over and over again. An example comes from Alma 2. The people began to be lifted up in the pride of their eyes, setting their hearts on riches and vain things of the world. From that point they began to be scornful of one another. Next, they began to persecute those that did not believe the way they did. This led to great contentions among the people. The result was envyings, strifes, malice, persecutions and pride. In this situation, the wickedness of the church became a stumbling block to those who didn't belong to the church, and the church began to fail in its progress.

Was prospering in itself the problem? No. Another example is given in Alma 29.

And they began to grow exceeding rich; but notwithstanding their riches, or their strength, or their prosperity, they were not lifted up in the pride of their eyes; neither were they slow to remember the Lord their God, but they did humble themselves exceedingly before him (Alma 29:59).

In fact, Alma says, in Alma 16:136, that people are more blessed who can humble themselves without being compelled to be humble by the poverty.

It comes down to this, as expressed in Doctrine and Covenants 59. This revelation describes how God made creation to gladden our hearts and enliven our souls (D&C 59:4d-5a). We are to use the blessings God gives with judgement, not to excess or extortion. This idea is followed up with this powerful statement: “And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments” (D&C 59:5b).

This principle works not only in terms of our own salvation, but in terms of the corporate efforts for the church and the world.

The promise in 2 Chronicles 7 has been shared many times recently as we look at the situation of the world. But the promise is sure only if we will be humble:

If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Will we continue to revel in our own power and accomplishments, in our own understandings and our own prejudices, or will we marvel in what we can accomplish through God's blessing and power in our lives and the lives of the world? Every day we have the choice of pride or humility.

For our own good, for the good of the church of Jesus Christ and for the good of the world, may we choose humility. †

“And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things, and obey not his commandments” (D&C 59:5b).

Replace Anger with Meekness

By Hugh Caldwell

God had good reason to choose a man like Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. Moses was handed a tough assignment. He had to guide a rebellious people through a harsh wilderness for forty years. He could expect to be the target of incessant complaints, criticisms, insults and threats. God needed a leader with the rare ability to suffer these offenses patiently without retaliating in anger—a man with meekness.

Moses had that distinct quality. The Bible says that he “was meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3). Because he had learned to exercise such a high degree of self control in the face of adversity, Moses proved to be a great spiritual leader.

Of all the virtues God loves, meekness is perhaps the least understood and most despised in the eyes of the world. The big push today is for self-assertiveness—the ability to stand up for one’s rights. Meekness is seen as a form of weakness.

But God sees it differently. He esteems meekness so highly that he rewards those who possess it with special honor. “The meek will he guide in judgment” (Psalm 25:9). “He will beautify the meek with salvation” (Psalm 149:4). “The meek shall eat and be satisfied” (Psalm 22:26). “The meek shall inherit the earth” (Psalm 37:11).

If the meek lack wealth or worldly renown in this life, God has decreed that they shall receive an abundance of riches and glory in the world to come.

Attaining this high standard does not come easily. Meekness is one virtue that usually must be demonstrated in the midst of conflict, when our natural inclination is to show anger. Suppose, for instance, someone crashes our boundaries, upsets our plans or aggravates us to the extreme. How do we respond? What is our typical reaction when someone unjustly accuses us or misrepresents us?

The human instinct, as we all know, is to become defensive, to push back, returning evil with evil. We become agitated. Typically, we find a group who will take our side and we listen to those who encourage

us to be angry.

The anger the world so readily justifies as “normal and healthy” can be outright destructive to both the giver and the receiver. Usually, after a round of blaming, complaining or criticizing, someone walks away with hurt feelings or wounds to the spirit. Some can appear to hide the outward emotions of anger, but seethe inwardly, producing bitterness, hardness of heart and stress-related physical problems.

The heathen rage, the scriptures say, but we are admonished to turn away from it. We are not supposed to be like everyone else. We are human, but called to be godly. The celestial standard of living should be our goal.

God, therefore, counsels us, nay, commands us to bless those who curse us, do good to those who spitefully use us. This is meekness.

Our Lord Jesus was abused, maligned and accused of being demon possessed, but never did he react to these offenses with anger. The things which did provoke his wrath were spiritual offenses: the obstinate stiff-neckedness and hypocrisy of the religious leaders and the defiling of the Father’s temple—the kinds of things most people simply do not care about.

When it came to personal attacks, Jesus always forfeited the opportunity to respond in like manner. He answered his opponents and confounded his enemies, but never for personal gain. Always it was for the kingdom’s sake, to teach a lesson or to glorify God. That is meekness. He yielded his will to the Father, in order that the Father’s will might be done. That is why he could say, “I am meek and lowly in heart” (Matthew 11:30).

Jesus went against the grain, and so should we. In today’s culture, meekness has become a hiss and a byword. When people get wronged, they sue. It satisfies the human desire for vengeance and offers financial reward, but God must be sorely displeased with the whole litigation mindset.

His instructions are clear: “If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have it; and if he sue thee again,

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let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him a mile; and whosoever shall compel thee to go with him twain, thou shalt go with him twain” (Matthew 5:42-43).

Along the same lines, God wisely admonishes us to avoid getting drawn into bitter court battles which place our souls in jeopardy. “It is better,” he said, “that thou suffer thine enemy to take these things than to contend with him” (Luke 6:30).

This is the way we are to deal with our enemies, but what about disputes with our own brethren in the faith? On this point, the Apostle Paul speaks plainly, “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? ... I speak to your shame ... brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do you not rather take the wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren” (1 Corinthians 6:1, 5-8).

A meek response does not guarantee that the wicked go free. “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.”

When we act impulsively to take our brethren to court, we set a poor example to the unbelievers, because we show that our standards of behavior are no different than the world’s. Our place of adjudication should be in an elders court, if efforts at personal reconciliation fail, seeking the intervention of the Holy Spirit.

A meek response does not guarantee that the wicked go free. “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.” Wherever there is wrong, the Spirit of the Lord is the first to know it. In all controversies, God will have the final word. All justice will be executed perfectly.

In the end, the meek will have lost nothing. Jesus will take the earth’s riches from the hands of the oppressor and give them to the oppressed (see Isaiah 14:2). The proud shall be humbled and the lowly exalted. Surely, at that day, all those who took the pains to develop meekness will be most happy that they did. Anything they suffered in this life will be more than repaid to them in the wonderful joy of God’s eternal kingdom. †

Everything Sad Will Become Untrue

When God tells us not to fear, He is telling us that, regardless of the outcome, someday it will all be okay, that He is with us, that He will take that fear from us and make it into something glorious that could never have been fashioned without our loss.

In the end, He is the God of Redemption. Every tear we cry, or pain we feel, every loss we endure, God will someday redeem and make all worthwhile and even glorious. As J.R.R. Tolkien reminded us in *The Lord of the Rings*, “Everything sad will become untrue.”

And at the end of it all, in the presence of the Son of Righteousness, fear will have no place to stand; we will gain what we can never lose.

As my pastor has often said, “The worst thing that will happen to you will never be the last thing that will happen to you. The last thing that will happen to you is Jesus” (Weir, Al, “CMDA Weekly Devotion: Fear Not.” Christian Medical & Dental Associations, March 14, 2017).

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The Goodness of God

By Kent Pedersen

Wherever real repentance is, there is obedience; repentance is more than sorrow for past failures and sins, it is also a determination to begin now to do the will of God as he reveals it to us. —A. W. Tozer

Perhaps the full understanding of repentance never dawns on us, yet, if such a thought be true, one cannot fault God for lack of trying to help us understand. Consider the story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. The pair were in the most splendid of places ever, for they walked and talked with God on a daily basis. There was no disease, decay, death, or dying. Not a mention of sorrow nor tears. No lacking, no poverty, no worries, no trials nor tribulations. Just complete satisfaction immersed in the Light and Life of the Father. So, their response was to go where they were told not to go.

How many times does our human nature lead us down paths where we ought not to go? Humans are created, given agency—the ability to choose—and fallible, thus subject to ignorance, error and sin. We are enticed, and perhaps even taught, to look for more than the apparel, equipment, and environment that godliness provides. Eve chose, Adam fell, and the carnal, sinful and devilish nature of man was manifest. The enticements and curiosities of the world are oft-times more than the carnal man can withstand and disobedience or disregard wins. If only we could see beyond the immediate. If only we had foresight to see into the depths of sorrow and despair our human choices carries us!

What a blessing for humanity that our God, our Creator, our Father, sees and knows all! For without his goodness in preparing the great plan of redemption, the war would be lost, we would be forsaken and our fellow man destroyed. He provided a great redemption, embodied in his Only Begotten Son, which allows for our return to the pristine environment and the privilege of dwelling in his presence. An angel came to Adam—with the Angel Message—to tell him to do all that he did in the name of the Son. Nephi tells us,

Ye must not perform anything unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that

he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” (2 Nephi 14:15).

How can one do anything ungodly after asking it in the name of the Son, and asking God to consecrate his performance to the welfare of his soul? When receiving any wonderful news, our first reaction is to share it. So, our message should be to all: the goodness of God leads us to repentance.

Adam, when told that he should repent, called upon God, in the name of the Son. The Lord began to call upon fallen men then, and still does today, by the Holy Ghost, everywhere, and commands us that we should repent. God allowed that as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved—all mankind, even as many as will (Genesis 4:8-9). Adam and Eve surrendered their will, determined to choose God as their Father, and began to teach the great plan of redemption to their children. For them, there was no hesitancy.

Adam and Eve recognized what Paul, in the fifth chapter of Romans penned many years later, “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8). Can you imagine Adam and Eve not seeing God’s love for them and the hope that the great plan of redemption that was brought through the name of Jesus? God wants us with him, even sending his Only Begotten to die for us, so we can be with him. Ezekiel tells us the Lord has no pleasure in the death of the wicked (Ezekiel 33:11). Hence, *the goodness of God leads us to repentance*. For without repentance, we cannot return to our Father to remain throughout eternity.

By the goodness of God, we are daily brought to repentance of our sins, not for ourselves alone, if we want it to be so. Arthur Oakman has eloquently stated, “the glory of the gospel is not that God grants forgiveness to those who repent, rather, the glory of the gospel is that God grants repentance to those

How can one do anything ungodly after asking it in the name of the Son, and asking God to consecrate his performance to the welfare of his soul?

How can we call others to the power of the great plan of redemption without ourselves knowing the renewing hope that comes to a repentant sinner?

who sin” (see Alma 10:30, 16:28, 19:104; Helaman 4:71; Acts 11:18)! Even though sin is repugnant to him, he gives us the spirit of repentance. As A. W. Tozer points out, real repentance brings obedience and a determination to do God’s will. We are cautioned to “not think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think,” (Romans 12:3). Thereby we, in humility, are brought to recognize the only hope we have is in Christ Jesus.

Yet, as with any gift, we do not have to respect it nor its significance to us. We often mistake the trickle for the stream and, as a result, we end up in a dry and barren wasteland of dead works and mean thoughts. In our best thoughts, however, we get it right. Ebenezer Scrooge changed after the visit of the three specters. From then on, it is said that no one kept Christmas better than Scrooge. Enos went into the forest to hunt, but there remembered the words of his father about eternal life and the joy of the saints which sunk deep into his heart. His soul hungered, and he longed to be forgiven. After he heard the voice of the Lord tell him his sins were forgiven—he knew God cannot lie—he proceeded to immediately pray diligently for the souls of his brethren and his enemies. The anti-Nephi-Lehi found forgiveness in their repentance, buried their weapons of carnal, sensual and devilish warfare and were willing to die that the glories of the gospel would be shown to their enemies. Thousands were converted because of their act of submission to God.

Jacob tells us,

Wherefore, we labored diligently among our people, that we might persuade them to come unto Christ, and partake of the *goodness of God*, that they might enter into his rest, lest by any means he should swear in his wrath they should not enter in, as in the provocation in the days of temptation, while the children of Israel were in the wilderness (Jacob 1:7, *emphasis added*).

Godly men of old prayed for the welfare

of the souls of their fellowman. This should be an example to us. We are truly repentant when we tell the story of our salvation. The story of Alma and the sons of Mosiah who had set out at one point to destroy the church of God, were overcome by the Spirit and dedicated their lives in service to him who is mighty to save. The goodness of God leads us to repentance. And from repentance, to action. We cannot withhold.

A repentant spirit is of vital importance in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps that is why God has talked of it and admonished holy men of old often to teach it, even at times to say, “Preach nothing but repentance” (see Mosiah 9:53; D&C 6:4b, D&C 10:4b). How can we call others to the power of the great plan of redemption without ourselves knowing the renewing hope that comes to a repentant sinner? *The goodness of God leads us to repentance.*

When we truly recognize our sinfulness, and fully grasp the significance of the sacrifice of Jesus on our behalf, we should welcome any chastening stripes the Lord of heaven and earth gives us as just with thankfulness for his mercy and grace. The Psalmist David gives us reason for hope when he admonishes,

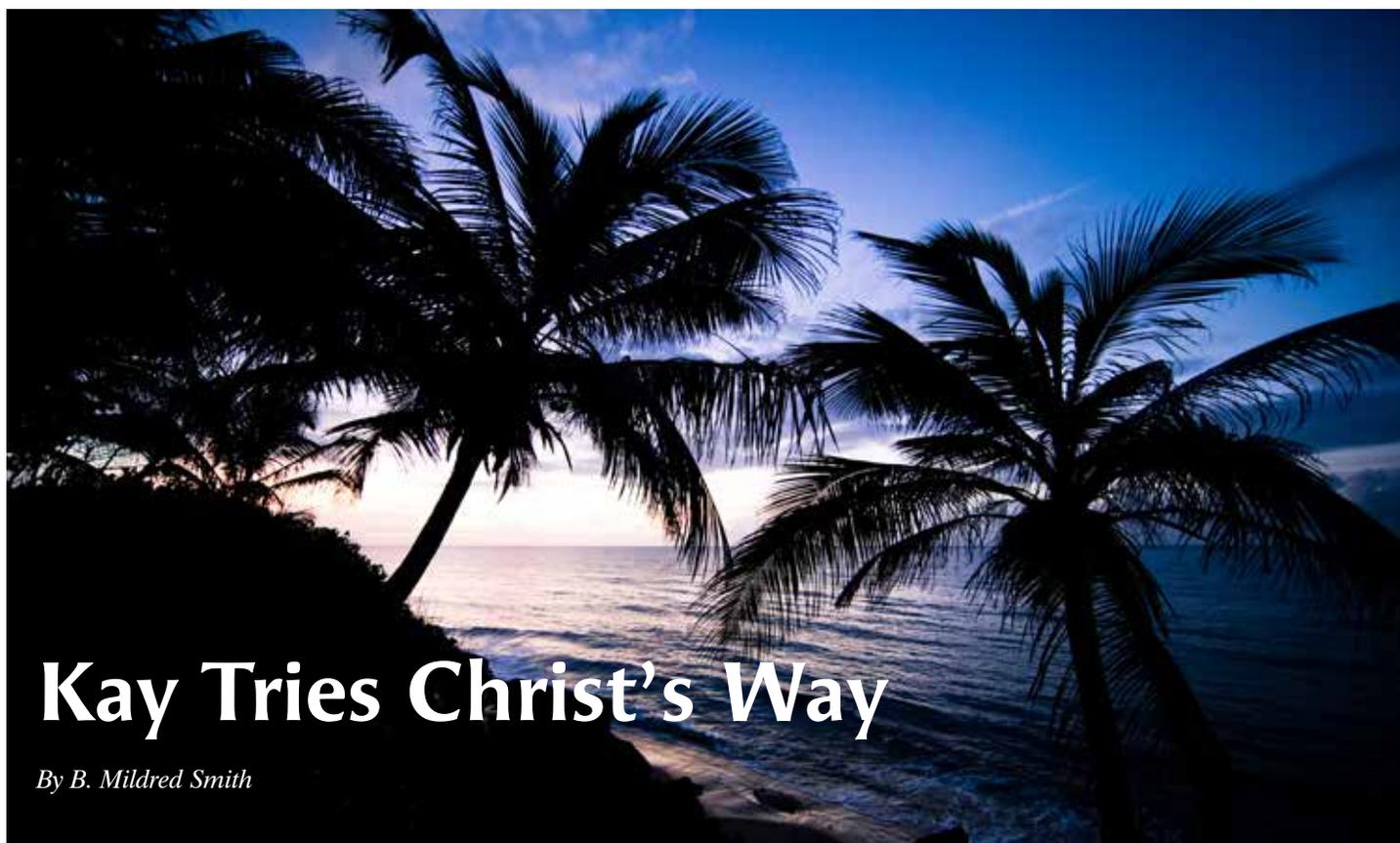
Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. For his anger kindleth against the wicked; they repent, and in a moment it is turned away, and they are in his favor, and he giveth them life; therefore, weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning (Psalm 30:4-5).

What a God we worship! As we study and seek communion with God, we find that our repentance, which is a gift of God, not only leads us to his presence, but is given us as a testimony so that we can lead others to repentance. We can speak, because we have experienced it:

The goodness of God leads us to repentance. †

Prayer is Faith

Prayer puts God’s work in His hands, and keeps it there. It looks to Him constantly and depends on Him implicitly to further His own cause. Prayer is but faith resting in, acting with, and leaning on and obeying God. That is why God loves it so well, why He puts all power into its hands, and why He so highly esteems men of prayer (Bounds, E. M., *The Weapon of Prayer*, Nook edition of The Complete Works of E. M. Bounds, chapter 2).



Kay Tries Christ's Way

By B. Mildred Smith

I was delighted when we saw them coming, Kay Tanabe, newly baptized, and her husband, Dick. But there was something wrong. Instead of climbing lightly up the stairs to the mission house living quarters as she was accustomed to doing, Kay was trudging, her eyes downcast instead of dancing merrily as if anticipating a joyous reunion with the Seventy and me. Dick rarely came at all. He was very busy in his profession and did not share his wife's enthusiasm for her new faith. A successful businessman, active in politics, religion of any sort did not often concern him.

Kay was a nurse, very proficient in her profession, and a good friend of Yoshiko Hara. Yoshiko had shared her faith in Christ with Kay with such joyful enthusiasm that Kay had come with her to the church to learn the reason for her joy in him. What she found pleased her, and she asked to be taught by the Seventy. In fact, she brought three of her good friends to learn as well. And now she was hurting. What could have made her so unhappy?

"She has to quit her job!" Dick declared when they were properly greeted and seated in the mission house living room. "That man is driving her crazy!" Kay sat leaning forward in her chair, quietly sobbing into a soft white tissue. When she could finally compose herself, she began to explain.

Kay was the director of the Olaa Old Folk's home

nestled in the tropical foliage just off the main road up the side of the mountain to Kilauea Crater. Even before she became director, she and sister Castro had conducted regular worship services for the residents there, and the youth of the congregation had been their chief confederates. Delbert and I had spent many hours visiting there and sometimes assisting in the services. One resident in particular was dear to us. She was Dorothy, a comparatively young patient who was there because of a debilitating illness, not old age.

We had met Louie, the chief cook of the establishment. Louie was a Caucasian man, short and stocky, fairly large when compared to the Japanese men of Kay's immediate family, and endowed with very large hands. It was the hands that seemed particularly prominent in Kay's revelation of her fears.

For some reason that Kay could not understand, Louie had not been cooperative with the new director. In fact, it seemed to her that he deliberately went out of his way to make life difficult for her, and she was afraid. Scheduling seemed a regular point of contention for the fractious cook. Kay would schedule the nurses to begin lunch at 11:30. Louie would change the time to 12:00. Kay would accede to his wishes and change the schedule to have the lunch begin at 12:00 and Louie would change it back to 11:30. It made no sense at all, but Kay seemed incapable of changing the situation. The very sight of

Louie's big hands seemed to terrorize her. What she thought he might do with them was never quite clear, but she was afraid.

"I have done everything I can think of to get him to follow my instructions," the distraught woman declared. "I have tried everything!"

"Everything but Jesus' way," the Seventy responded.

"Jesus' way?" Kay returned questioningly. "What do you mean, Jesus' way?" She had learned that she could trust Jesus, but that he had a way to solve such a pressing personal problem had never entered her mind.

"You think of Louie as an enemy right now, don't you?" Kay nodded assent. "Then treat him as an enemy!"

"What?" Dick almost jumped out of his chair, and Kay looked askance at the minister.

"Well, Jesus said to love your enemies." Delbert couldn't resist a smile.

"Here." He opened the Bible that was always kept close to Matthew 5:45-46 (43-44 KJ). "This is what he said: 'Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;'"

"You mean she is supposed to love that man?" Dick was almost indignant. "Why, he has made her life miserable for so long, she is a nervous wreck!"

"I know," Delbert answered gently, "but let's just give it a try. Kay, every time you have a chance, be nice to Louie. Show him some gentleness. Don't go out of your way or make a big show of it. Just compliment him when the food is especially good. When you make up the schedule, ask him when it is most convenient for him to serve. Greet him with a smile when he comes into the room. Let him hear you say something nice about his work, if you can honestly say it. And, Kay, you can't change his mind on your own. Really pray for the man. I know it won't be easy, but Jesus said to do it, and it's worth a try."

A bit of mischief crept into the Seventy's voice. "If nothing else, it will drive Louie mad. He will wonder what on earth has happened to you. Why are you acting so strange? What do you know that he doesn't? What do you want from him?"

Kay smiled in spite of herself and Dick gave a sort of approving nod.

Kay went back to work, and we heard nothing more about her difficulty with Louie or of her effort to settle the matter. A few months passed and we were getting ready to have a fund raiser for the church. Kay was in charge, and she proposed that we make and sell haupia—lots of haupia. She was certain we could sell 600 plates of the luscious coconut

pudding at \$1.00 a plate. Kay called us together to plan. Some were to gather the coconuts. We were to meet one evening in their spacious lanai (veranda) to crack the nuts, dig out the meat and shred it, heat the water and press the shreds through cheesecloth bags to extract the coconut milk. Actually, we sent back to Missouri and had our old lard press sent to facilitate that process. We would store the milk until the day we would make the pudding. And we would sell the haupia ahead of time so we could deliver it fresh from the boiling pots to eager customers. Shigaro Hara offered to make trays that would just fit two plates at a time for the distribution.

But where would we cook the puddings and how would we make sure the puddings were really good? Kay had the answer. "We have the best cook on the island up at Olaa" she said confidently. Delbert looked up expectantly. Surely Louie had been replaced and Kay was free of her exasperating employee. "I know Louie would be glad to make the puddings," Kay continued, "and he would make sure they were all the very best! We even have an extra institutional size gas range we could move down to Waikea Kai to use."

So it was that when the time came, six hundred aluminum pie plates were stacked near an array of Shigero's neat trays. Louie was there on the lanai of the mission quonset, sleeves rolled up high. Long paddles were being whisked through huge pots of bubbling coconut milk being thickened with cornstarch and sweetened with sugar. There were others of us stirring the hot liquid, too, but it was Louie who saw to it that the cooking was stopped at just the right minute and each pot full was just as good as the last.

Months went by and Kay proposed another way to raise funds. Portuguese sausage was a wonderful item that would be sold without difficulty. Who knew how to make Portuguese sausage? Why, Louie, of course! Louie's sausage was always the best and he already had a clientele that would gladly snap up all we could make. How much would he charge? Why, nothing, of course! He would just be happy to help.

Well, Louie was happy to help. In fact, he found just the right pig, bought it and finished it off in his own pen to just the right size. Then he butchered the pig, boned and ground the meat, seasoned it, stuffed it in the casings and sold a good three-fourths of it almost before we knew it was time.

In the meantime, Louie had fallen in love. He was a Catholic and so was his fiancée, but Louie wanted to be married in the little quonset church where he had supervised the production of six hundred plates of haupia for Kay's church, and he wanted the Seventy to marry them. Obviously, Jesus' way had worked. Kay's practice of loving gentleness had won! †

Food for Thought about “Never Forget Gethsemane”

By George Galusha

Paul cautions his readers in 2 Corinthians 11:3-4 about people coming to them and teaching another, more complicated Jesus. He was worried that the Corinthians might be willing to listen to a different spirit and gospel, like Eve did when she accepted the Serpent’s deception in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-7 “IV verses 6, 8-12”).

Have we been teaching a different Jesus? While growing up in the RLDS church, as well as recently from the pulpit of a popular restoration branch, I was taught that Jesus loves us so much that he continues to suffer the pains of the cross whenever someone sins. This story may succeed at convincing a naughty child to behave by telling him he is hurting Jesus, but I have found no scriptural basis for this teaching—quite the contrary.

A similar story is that Jesus, “felt it all.” Quoting from “Never Forget Gethsemane,” in the *Latter Day Saints’ Beacon*, vol. 8, issue 1, for December 2015-January 2016, on page 11: Jesus felt, “every pain ever inflicted by sin, every act of abuse, every sensation of hurt resulting from rejection, ridicule, betrayal, mistreatment of any kind—all this descended upon him as he prayed in the Garden. Considering that billions of souls—all of them born into sin—have added their transgressions to this equation, it becomes more than we can fathom. And yet, the scripture says, Jesus took all of this pain, all of this sin, unto himself.”

I do not know where “scripture says Jesus took all of this pain, all of this sin, unto himself.” I do know where scriptures say that, Jesus voluntarily suffered the pain of death that all of us must suffer (including 2 Nephi 6:46, which was quoted in the article) so that we do not have to stay dead. Is that not the simple good news of the gospel Paul was talking about in 2 Corinthians 11:3?

God sent his son (John 3:16), the being of Christ the Messiah, to suffer an excruciating death (Matthew 20:18-19 “IV verse 17”; Mark 10:33-34; Luke 18:31-33; Luke 23:46 “IV verse 47”; John 12:32-33; John 19:30), in order to cover, or pay, the penalty of death we all inherited from Adam—ONCE (1 Corinthians 15:21-22, 26; 1 Peter 2:24; Romans 6:9-10) as well as for some other sins of the world (Romans 5:16; 1 John 2:2). God volunteered Jesus for the job (John 14:31; 1 John 4:14) and he (Jesus) actually prayed to get out of it (Matthew 26:37-39, 42, 44 IV verses 34-36, 39, 41”; Mark 14:34-36, 39 “IV verses 38-40, 44”; Luke 22:42-44) when the time came to execute. He had just spent thirty some years as a mortal human under Roman rule and knew what was about to happen. He had orchestrated what was about to happen.

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin (Hebrews 9:22; 1 Peter 1:18-19), but the blood of

anyone who has sinned cannot satisfy justice because he cannot undo his sinful behavior. We all have to die but without any effect on justice; and, we were hopelessly stuck there. Jesus’ sacrifice did satisfy justice for past sins through the forbearance of God (Leviticus 17:11; Romans 3:23-25) because he is without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:21-22; 1 John 3:5).

I used to wonder what the point was for all the grotesque blood and guts symbolism of animal sacrifices in the Old Testament as well as for the symbolic consuming of Christ’s body and blood through the bread and wine ceremony of the New Testament. That is until I came across Hebrews 9:11,16-17,22 in the NIV Bible: the RSV, the Philips, and the Diaglot New Testament also. The KJV and the RLDS IV Bibles did not explain it very well: Blood is the life of all flesh (Leviticus 17:11, 14), and spilling of blood is proof of death so the inheritance from a will can be implemented. In other words, someone has to die before a will can be brought to fruition. Salvation is our inheritance kept in a will in Heaven ready to be revealed in the last time (As long as we are successful at navigating our trial of meat which is a condition of the will). The connected verses in 1 Peter 1:3-4, 6-7 can also help to Biblically address the question, “Why do bad things happen to good people? Modern English does help illuminate the meat, or maturity, or perfection of following the Gospel by adding “perseverance,” and “stand firm to the end,” to the recipe, alongside the KJV or IV’s, “patience,” and “endure to the end,” of James 1:2-4, and Matthew 24:13 (IV verse 11 says steadfast) as well as the “from thenceforth,” of Alma 5:28 (This is in reference to Hebrews 5:11-6:12 regarding baptism, forgiveness, repentance, faith, etc. as the milk or baby food of the Gospel, compared to the meat, but those are other subjects).

Jesus is more than royalty. He is the actual literal Son of God. He did not have to die. He willingly left glory at the top of the food chain of all existence and went to the bottom as his Father asked him. A fear of death is obvious as demonstrated in the previously listed prayers he said for himself. Add his prayer in John 17 and we find that he knew where he was from and where he had to go (also stated in John 8:14) in order to save from extinction that portion of mankind God had given him. He had to become one of us, a real mortal human. He was willing to suffer the same trials of life and death we all share (Alma 5:20-22), except that he was without sin, and all that entails. This prayer in John 17 was about him doing his job and about getting himself, as well as his people, back to the glory he had at the top of the food chain, so to speak.

Notice the verses 1-5-8, 14, 16, and 24, of John 17. The final state for those selected by Jesus is to eventually be on a new and refurbished Earth (Revelation 21:1; Isaiah 65:17; Isaiah 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13) like it was before the fall, but that also is another subject.

The essence of the Gospel is that his innocent blood reclaims us ALL (good or evil) from the first death, but God did not ask him to atone a second time nor does He suffer often or from the foundation of the world (Hebrews 9:12, 25-26, 28; Hebrews 10:10, 14, 18, 38). Jesus did atone for the first death so we ALL come back to life in either the first or the second resurrection but he did not atone for the second death which happens after the final judgment (Revelation 20:5, 13-15). We are warned in both the Old and New Testaments (Ezekiel 18:20-32; Hebrews 6:4-6).

God did not ask Jesus to continuously suffer the pains of the cross. The danger in this idea is that some people may mistakenly take this “other Jesus” as license for casual sin because they have been told he will continue to pay for their future indiscretions.

According to these verses, God has asked his Son to suffer death only once and so, we are all responsible for our own behavior, especially after coming to an understanding of that sacrifice Christ gave (Hebrews 10:24-26, 31).

I do not think speculation about feelings Jesus may have had is good ministry. The trauma he may have experienced when, “his sweat was as it were great drops of blood,” certainly did take place in anticipation of having to go through the crucifixion in a few hours (Luke 22:44.) Note that some biblical scholars question the validity of this event because it is exclusive to Luke and it is missing from a number of important and most ancient manuscripts. Some consider that verses 43 and 44 may have been added by an overzealous editor or scribe. If he did sweat blood as Mosiah 1:101; and D&C 18:2i also mention, it would be an example of his humanness. Hematidrosis is a rare phenomenon brought on by great emotional stress but is not unique to Jesus.

The *Latter Day Saints’ Beacon* article said, “The agony of sin that fell on Christ in the Garden is something no man has ever known.” Yet it quotes the D&C as saying, “If they would not repent, they must suffer even as I.” The article also says, “He never cowered out of fear, never begged God to spare his life,” but quotes the D&C, “and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink.” Hebrews 5:7 says Jesus

prayed and cried to God who could save him from death and that he was afraid.

D&C 16:3c says: “the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh, wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come unto him.” The pain or suffering of all men that this and other verses discuss is referring to the “death in the flesh” we all must suffer (except for maybe a few exceptions, but that, once again, is another subject). The “pain of all men” that Jesus suffered is NOT scripturally defined as feeling “every pain ever inflicted by sin, every act of abuse, every sensation of hurt resulting from rejection, ridicule, betrayal, mistreatment of any kind ... billions of souls ... have added their transgressions to this equation,” as quoted from the *Beacon* article.

At first glance this might seem like much ado about nothing but there are substantial differences between feelings and actual death. The real Jesus was asked to suffer real death—once, the same death men are appointed to once (Hebrews 9:27). In order for salvation to be accomplished he had to suck up his courage and voluntarily suffer through the crucifixion moment by moment alone without calling for the more than twelve legions of angels God would have given him if he had asked (Matthew 26:53-54 “IV verse 51-52”). All of this took place while faced with the cruel taunting recorded in Matthew 27:39-44 “IV verses 44-47;” Mark 15:27-32 “IV verses 34-37; and Luke 23:35-39 “IV verses 36-40,” which he forgave them for (I probably should repent for this but I would like to have seen him come off the cross at that point just to see the looks on their faces).

There are many clues in scripture about the real Jesus and he is not always kind and gentle, or all-inclusive and tolerant (for example see Matthew 23). Nor is God always forgiving, for there is a limit to his patience. He started over from scratch with Noah and considered starting over again with Moses. Sodom is another example. We have been given six thousand years to get our act together, so to speak, at the end of which Jesus himself takes over in the nick of time with total control for an additional one thousand years. During this seventh millennium, an Eden will be rebuilt, but these are other subjects.

What eternal value or use can there be in attempting to spread his Gospel, or in trying to establish the cause of Zion if we, first of all, are not careful about teaching the real Christ? This is the main question and food for thought of this dialog. †

I do not think speculation about feelings Jesus may have had is good ministry.

God's Faithfulness

By Jim Crawford

I was asked to preach in Ft. Scott, Kansas. I did not know if I could make it to Ft. Scott and back to Maysville, Missouri, on one tank of gas. I asked the Lord if I should take some money with me. He said "How have I told you to go?" I left all money, check book and credit cards behind, and drove to Ft. Scott.

I had more than half a tank of gas left when I arrived in Ft. Scott. After preaching, they took me to lunch, and I started back to Maysville. I was on U.S. 54 and had just entered Missouri when the engine stopped running.

I was able to pull off out of traffic. I checked the engine and discovered it was not getting any gas. The fuel pump was not working and I could not repair it. It was 92 degrees as I waited in the car and prayed for the help I knew was coming.

Soon a pickup drove by and stopped, turned around and pulled up behind me. There were a fellow and a girl in the truck. He came up to the car and asked what was wrong. I told him the fuel pump had gone out. He offered to take me to a motel in Nevada.

I told him I was a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ and had been preaching in Ft. Scott and explained I had been sent with no purse or scrip and what that meant, so I had no money for a motel room, but he should not worry about me; the Lord would send someone to take care of the situation. He went back to his truck and talked with his girlfriend.

He came back and said "I'm not a Christian, but my boss is" (he lived in Arkansas). Then he said "I can't leave you out here in this heat." I again told him not to worry, the Lord would send someone. He could go on and not worry about me. He went back to his truck and talked to

his girlfriend again.

He came back and said "I'm not a Christian but my boss is and I'm not sure that the Lord didn't send me." He offered to find a motel for me and pay for the night. I told him he would have to decide if the Lord sent him or not, but if he really didn't think so he should go on and the Lord would send someone. He said, "No, I think he sent me."

With that we got in his truck and went to Nevada, and I shared some testimonies of the Lord on the way. When we got to the motel he handed me a \$100.00 bill as we went into the motel. He told everyone that I was a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ and I had broken down on the highway and he had been sent to help me.

The room cost \$40.00 and I tried to return the \$60.00, but he refused saying, "You will need that for food and expenses here in Nevada." They left and I went to my room and called my wife on my cell phone, to let her know where I was and what happened. We talked for a little while and then she suggested I should call Dick Hahn.

I could not think of a reason to call Dick. He was in Maysville and I was in Nevada—he was too far away to be much help. I called him despite my doubts. He said "I'll pray about it. Give me another call in the morning."

In the morning I called him back. He had borrowed a pickup and trailer from Johnnie McKee and would be down to pick up me and my car that day. We loaded the car on the trailer and we headed back for Maysville. The money I had left after buying food was just enough to fill Johnnie's truck when we got back.

The fellow that helped may not have been a Christian, but the Lord sent him anyway. †

Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? ... He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint (Isaiah 40:28-31).

For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel (Isaiah 41:13-14).

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord, and depart from evil. It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones (Proverbs 3:5-8).

And thou shalt take no purse, nor scrip, neither staves, neither two coats, for the church shall give unto thee in the very hour what thou needest for food, and for raiment and for shoes, and for money, and for scrip; for thou art called to prune my vineyard with a mighty pruning, yea, even for the last time (Doctrine and Covenants 23:7c).

Testimonies from Iowa

By Lynda Rolfe

There is a fund set up to assist with **International Delegate Travel** to the General Conference.

Send Contributions to: JRCB/Delegate Travel Fund, 1100 West Truman Road, Independence, MO 64050 (USA)

Please note on your check the funds are for **International Delegate Travel**.

Send us your testimonies

How has the Gospel changed your life? Write 200 to 1000 words and send them to beacon@conferenceofbranches.org or JCRB/Beacon, 1100 West Truman Road, Independence, MO 64050

2015: The Diagnosis

A year ago, 2015, I was diagnosed with cancer called “soft tissue, abdominal wall, excision; malignant mixed Mullerian tumor with homologous and heterologous elements.” Following the diagnosis, an extensive surgery was performed. A 7 cm by 6 cm by 4.5 cm mass was taken out of my abdominal cavity. It started on my left ovary, fastened to my bladder then to my colon then up my belly button causing a rupture. The wall of the cavity was also removed.

On my first visit back to the surgeon, my son asked the doctor if he was going to do a CT scan to determine if he had removed all of it. He commented there was no need for another scan because I had stage 4 cancer and would probably only live a couple of months.

A nurse friend of mine called the cancer center and asked them where they would advise me to go. We chose the University of Kansas institute. The doctor we were assigned felt I was strong and positive. He gave me a 20 percent chance of living 6 months. The cancer was rare and would need heavy treatment. I had abdominal and upper ports implanted. He would have a team of experts helping him with the procedure.

After completing a set of low-

er abdominal chemotherapy I was rushed to the hospital with kidney lab work consistent with kidney failure. After a week of forced fluids, my kidney readings improved and I was well enough to go home. I was informed that my kidneys would not allow any more of that type of treatment.

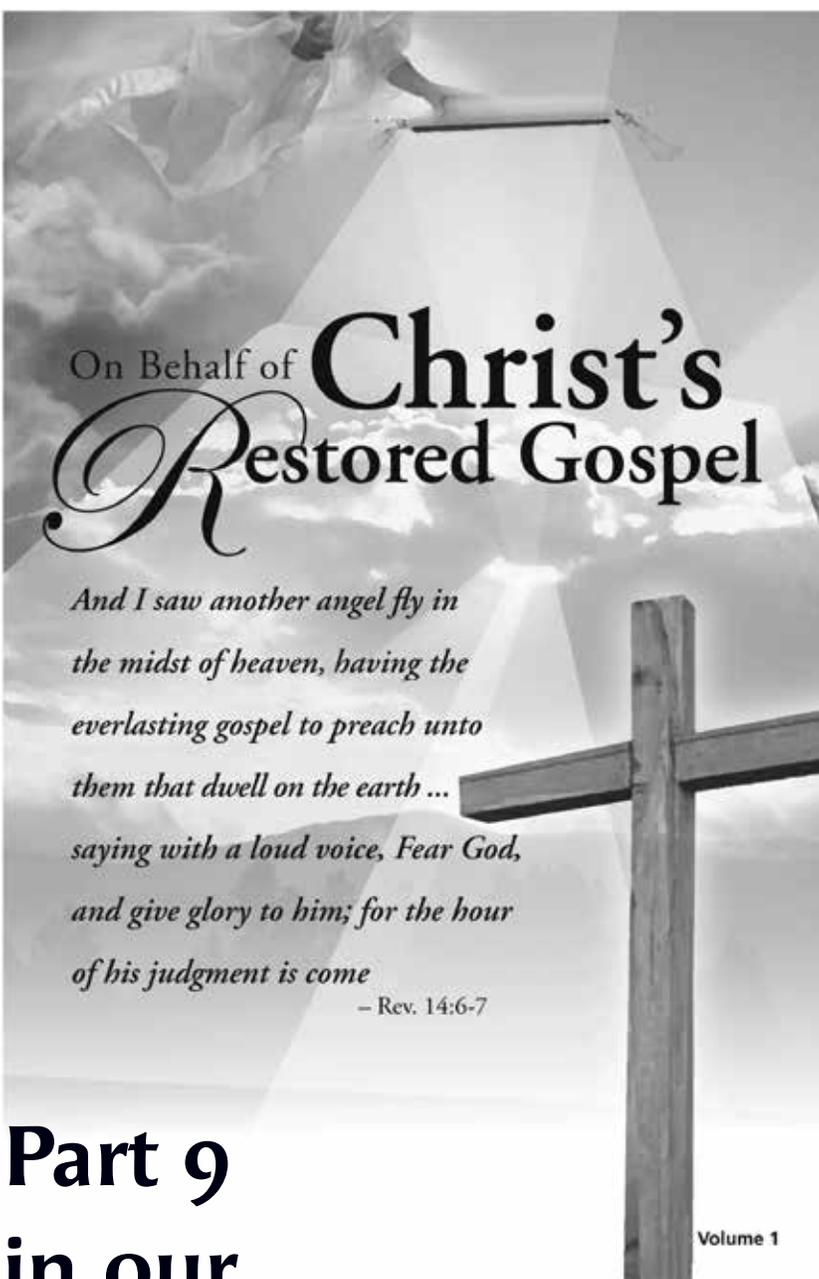
After a reprieve in the treatments, I finished the course of therapy. Since that time, a repeat CT scan showed my cancer to be in remission.

My family has been a great support, with my middle son driving me to most of my appointments. Throughout the winter of 2015 and into 2016 I have been surrounded with prayers from the Saints. I feel the prayers and know they are a significant part of my healing process. The world is a beautiful place and I have much enjoyed living another year.

The last CT scan indicates the cancer has returned. I have a fingernail spot on the left side of my diaphragm and another comparable size spot where the cancer was before. My C25 reading has increased from 8 to 15 in three months so they are recommending another round of chemotherapy much like before but with different drugs. I ask for prayers again. God is good and I appreciate your and his support during the weeks ahead.

1986: Twisted Water Diné Land

We had just finished our spaghetti meal at Twisted Water on the Navaho Reservation in Arizona when the rest of the group decided to go to town for more groceries. Mary Hosteen, one of the Diné, and I were left cleaning up. As the group left, a truck full of Diné boys flew into camp. Mary looked at me and said “What will we feed them? The spaghetti is almost gone.” I told her to dump a gallon of water into the pot. The boys rushed up to eat. We dished up heaping plates till the boys were all fed. There was still spaghetti in the pot. As the boys went over to play volleyball, Mary and I could no longer understand each other, for Mary only spoke Navaho and I English. †



Part 9 in our continuing series

Answers to Textual Criticisms of the Book of Mormon

By Jon Tandy

Believers in the Restoration movement claim that the Book of Mormon confirms biblical truth, and that the teachings in the two books are harmonious. In their efforts to oppose the Book of Mormon, critics point to a number of passages that they see as discrepancies between the Book of Mormon and the Bible (Carol Hansen, *Reorganized Latter Day Saint Church: Is It Christian?* (Independence, Missouri: Carol Hansen, 1999), 154-156). Below is a list of answers to several such criticisms.

1. Adam fell that men might be.

There are a few places in Restoration scripture that indicate that the sin of Adam and Eve and the Fall of mankind resulted in their ability to have children, and also that they would experience joy in their redemption because of understanding the difference between good and evil. These are quoted below:

And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed, he would not have fallen; but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created, must have remained in the same state which they were, after they were created; and they must have remained for ever, and had no end. And they would have had no children; wherefore, they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin. But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things. Adam fell, that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. And the Messiah cometh in the fullness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall (2 Nephi 1:111-116).

And Eve, his wife, heard all these things and was glad, saying, Were it not for our transgression, we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient (Genesis 4:11, IV).

These passages are criticized because it is claimed that in the first chapter of Genesis, Adam and Eve were told to “be fruitful and multiply” before the Fall.

If Adam and Eve had not fallen into sin, they would not have been expelled from the

Garden, and thus would have remained in the same state that they had been created. They would not have known good and evil, had they not partaken of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is reasonable to suggest that Adam and Eve would have experienced more joy in their redemption after having sinned and been redeemed than if they had never sinned. Jesus said that those who are forgiven the most will love the most, “but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little” (Luke 7:37-47).

It is not reasonable that God expected Adam and Eve to remain in their sinless state. God gave them a commandment, and he knew that mankind was destined to fall through disobedience. By so doing, they would learn the horrible consequences of sin and the need for redemption.

Because of God’s foreknowledge, Jesus was predestined from before the foundation of the world to offer salvation to mankind (1 Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 13:8). Salvation is the ultimate source of joy for mankind, to be reunited with our heavenly Father.

The main point of contention in these latter-day scriptures is the statement that Adam and Eve would have no children before the Fall. If God told them to “be fruitful and multiply” in the first chapter of Genesis, why would the Fall be a necessary condition for this commandment to be fulfilled? The following points suggest that these two ideas are not contradictory.

- As a result of sin, the earth began to bring forth “thorns and thistles” (Genesis 3:18). The body of the woman now experienced sorrow in conception of children (Genesis 3:16). After the Fall, the Earth itself was different, and specifically the woman’s body experienced a major change, specifically related to childbirth.
- The first mention of procreation resulting in childbirth was after their sin (Genesis 4:1).
- In 1 Timothy 2:14-15, it says the woman “shall be saved in childbearing.” The interpretation of this verse is contended among Christians, and we will not pretend to understand the full meaning of the verse. However, we will note that whatever salvation through childbirth is referred to here, it would not have been necessary if Eve had not been deceived.

- In 1 Timothy 2:14, it says that “Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” One theory on this passage is that Eve was deceived by the serpent, but Adam was not “deceived.” He willingly partook of the fruit, knowing he would be expelled from the Garden and experience death, in order to remain with his bride. Christ willingly chose death on the cross in order to redeem his bride, the church. Through Adam and Eve’s sin of partaking of the fruit, Christ was able to come through their descendants and bring salvation to mankind. The Book of Mormon verse could be interpreted as saying that if Adam (only) had not fallen, they could not have had children, because they would have been separated (with Adam in the Garden, and Eve cast out). Being separated, Christ could not have been born through their seed, and God’s plan of salvation would have been frustrated.
- The Bible says that Christ was “foreordained from before the foundation of the world” (1 Peter 1:20). Yet, there would have been no need for Christ to come, had Adam and Eve not sinned. The Book of Mormon says, “Behold, he created Adam; and by Adam came the fall of man. And because of the fall of man, came Jesus Christ ... and because of Jesus Christ came the redemption of man” (Mormon 4:71). Thus it seems clear that had they not sinned, at least one of Eve’s descendants (Jesus Christ, through his mother Mary) would not have been born, even though his coming was foreordained. In the same way, even though the promise of children was given in Genesis chapter one, the actual fulfillment of the promise could have depended on certain conditions.
- Another statement in Genesis is prophetic in nature, as opposed to being literally true at the time of its introduction. Genesis 2:24 says, “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.” This is a classic statement on marriage, which is usually considered to have been instituted at the time God brought Eve to Adam. Yet at the time of this scripture, Adam could not “leave his father and mother” because he had none. It is a

If God told [Adam and Eve] to “be fruitful and multiply” in the first chapter of Genesis, why would the Fall be a necessary condition for this commandment to be fulfilled?

statement that could not be literally fulfilled until the next generation.

A complete understanding of the first chapter of Genesis is difficult. Among Bible-believing Christians, there is a wide diversity of understanding, based on a scholarly view of archeology, history, and linguistics. Bible-believing scholars have tried to align the text with the scientific evidence and have come to widely differing conclusions. Among these positions are those who hold to a literal twenty-four-hour-day creation; a long creation of millions of years; some form of evolutionary aspect to God's creation; some who suggest that Genesis chapter one relates to a limited geographical scope rather than the creation of the entire universe; and still others who believe that this chapter is an ancient Hebrew "creation myth" that represents essential truth about God, but which should not be interpreted as a modern textbook on the science of creation (American Scientific Association, Aug. 2003 <http://www.asa3.org>. For policy statements representing a wide diversity of opinion among Christians, see Dembski, et al., "Statement on Creation," ASA Commission on Creation, Aug. 2000, Aug. 2003. http://www.asa3.org/ASA/topics/Evolution/commission_on_creation.html). Scholars hold honestly held but differing opinions and give various reasons why the other interpretations do not adequately explain the scientific facts that are presently known.

Among the various competing theories, the question of Genesis 1:27-28 ("be fruitful and multiply") remains unclear. Is this statement being made specifically to Adam and Eve after their physical creation, or is it a more general statement concerning the whole human species? One theory of interpreting Genesis chapters one and two is that a spiritual creation is described in the first chapter, and that the physical populating of the Earth is discussed in the second. This is suggested by Genesis 2:4-5 in the King James Version, and elucidated in the Inspired Version, that "every plant of the field [was created] before it was in the earth." This would suggest that the words "be fruitful and multiply" was a statement concerning the nature of mankind, not a specific commandment to Adam and Eve at the moment of their physical creation.

With the above points in mind, the following explanation is advanced for 2 Nephi 1:113-115. God designed mankind with

certain purposes, potentials, and characteristics in the genetic composition. One of these characteristics was the ability to have children. However, that doesn't mean that humans would necessarily have had children in their initial, created state—that is merely an assumption. Adam and Eve were first created with a perfect nature, but it was substantially changed as a result of the Fall (Genesis 3:16-18). God knew that Adam and Eve would fall, and that they would receive a mortal body, which could produce children. Thus, his former decree to "be fruitful and multiply" would be obeyed after the Fall.

Perhaps this is why God had foreordained Christ to come through Adam and Eve's offspring to bring redemption (1 Peter 1:18-20), and the promise could only be fulfilled on the condition of their sin. The assertion that God created Adam and Eve so that after their fall their bodies could produce children is an equally valid and logical assumption. It also agrees with the Book of Mormon verse that says, "All things have been done in the wisdom of Him who knoweth all things" (2 Nephi 1:114).

2. *Jesus born at Jerusalem*

The prophet Alma, speaking in approximately 83 B.C., declared what the Lord had revealed to him about the birth of Christ: "And behold, he [Christ] shall be born of Mary at Jerusalem, which is the land of our forefathers, she being a virgin, a precious and chosen vessel, who shall be overshadowed, and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God" (Alma 5:19).

The charge that this contradicts the Bible, which says Jesus was born in Bethlehem, is without foundation. If Joseph had written the Book of Mormon himself, as the critics suggest, we wonder how he could have made such a glaring blunder in mistaking the birthplace of Jesus Christ, when a basic knowledge of the New Testament would have revealed otherwise. Why would Joseph intentionally include such an obvious error?

The answer is that Joseph did not write the Book of Mormon. The prophet Alma was not mistaken in writing the prophecy! Alma declared that Jesus would be born "at" Jerusalem, not "in" Jerusalem. Further, he says, "which is the land of our forefathers." Taking these two statements together, it is

Joseph did not write the Book of Mormon. The prophet Alma was not mistaken in writing the prophecy [of Christ's birth]!

There are numerous examples where different biblical writers truthfully prophesied about the same event, but used different words and details.

clear that he is referring to Jerusalem as a general region or landmark, rather than specifically saying that Jesus would be born within the city limits of Jerusalem.

We would use the same type of generalization when traveling abroad if we were to tell a person, “I am from Kansas City,” even though our residence is in Independence, Missouri. We are not mistaken, nor are we misleading him. Kansas City is used as a broad term to include the entire Kansas City area. It gives a recognizable description to someone who is not familiar with the specific area.

“The land of Jerusalem” could refer to “the land around the city of Jerusalem,” in the same way as the “Kansas City area” takes in many distinct city limits. Bethlehem is only about six miles from Jerusalem. To someone in the New World who was 6,000 miles away, Jerusalem was a recognizable landmark of reference.

This usage is reinforced by internal geographical evidence in the Book of Mormon text. In their culture, the people referred to lands and cities using a “city-state” concept. For instance, the “city of Zarahemla” is mentioned along with the “land of Zarahemla,” which would include a larger area (Alma 28:9; 29:7, 16; Helaman 1:19). The city and the land around it are referred to by the same name. This type of geographical reference was also used in the Old World. The Amarna Tablets, which date back to the fourteenth century B.C., refer to Bethlehem as “a town in the land of Jerusalem” (The Amarna Tablets, discovered in 1887 at El-Amarna, were actual documents of correspondence

by the Egyptian government. Samuel A. B. Mercer, *The Tell el-Amarna Tablets* (Toronto, Ontario: Macmillan, 1939), 710711, 722. William L. Moran, *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 1992).

A relatively recent fragment discovered at Qumran, known as “Pseudo-Jeremiah” (4Q385), speaks of the Jews as being “taken captive from the land of Jerusalem” (Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Uncovered* (Rockport, Massachusetts: Element, 1992), 57-58). Professors Robert Eisenman and Michael Wise comment on this “interesting reference to ‘the land of Jerusalem’ stating that “this greatly enhances the sense of historicity of the whole, since Judah or ‘Yehud’ (the name of the area on coins from the Persian period) by this time consisted of little more than Jerusalem and its immediate environs” (Eisenman and Wise, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 57).

It might be objected that Alma was not as specific in his prophecy as Micah was in identifying the specific city where Jesus was to be born (Micah 5:2). This is using a faulty standard of judging a prophecy, in assuming that his prophecy was false because it wasn’t specific enough. There are numerous examples where different biblical writers truthfully prophesied about the same event, but used different words and details.

The statement that Jesus was born in the land of Jerusalem is internally consistent within the Book of Mormon context and is now substantiated by archaeological evidence. †

The Saint’s Haven Branch and the Evangelist/Patriarchs are holding a “Tent Revival” May 19 through 21 on the Saint’s Haven branch property. Five Evangelist/Patriarchs (Dan Sherer, Fred Greene, Neil Simmons, Jerry Vickery and Ron Smith) will conduct preaching, teaching and prayer services during the Revival. Additionally, there will be special services for the youth in attendance. The overall theme for the revival is “Become Sanctified by Yielding Your Heart to Christ” [Helaman 2:31].

We appreciate the response many of you have made to our request for paid subscriptions to the Beacon. We hope that many more of you will respond to our request and will provide at least a \$15 donation to help keep the Beacon in print and ministering with the gospel of Jesus Christ.



Report on Tahiti Mission

Prepared from journal notes of Seventy Dan Norman

October 2016

Dan and Ruthanne Norman and Chuck Sperry arrived in Tahiti on September 29, 2016. Tahiti is the most well-known island of French Polynesia, which consists of over 100 islands. This was a follow-up and continuation of the labor from the summer of 2016. Ruthanne accompanied the men in order to speak with and assist the women of the islands to organize and be more effective in their ministry.

The trio was hosted by Rereao Foster and his wife, Rose, at their home in Papara on the island of Tahiti. He is a long-time member of the church and a faithful adherent to the pure gospel. He and the many other faithful Saints in the islands call themselves Sanitos. This name is reserved for those who follow the true gospel as it was first taught in Tahiti by Addison Pratt, Noah Rogers and Benjamin Goroaud who arrived in 1844. The members who have adopted the doctrines propounded by the Community of Christ (CoC) are referred by the name of that church, but not as Sanitos.

Two good things happened immediately. Brother Foster agreed to accept a call to the office of Elder. This was first suggested to him during the initial trip. He shared an interesting testimony of a prophecy spoken to him in 1990 by a local Patriarch, when Foster was told the church would change its name in 10 years and that he (Foster) would be instrumental in bringing the true church back to the islands.

The second good thing was news about the planned radio interview. During the first trip arrangements were

made to allow for a radio announcement about the visitors from the U.S., their mission and the Restoration. The original plan was for a three-minute slot, but they learned that 30 minutes were reserved for them. They quickly expanded their material.

On Monday, October 3, they went to the radio station. A prepared statement was read, followed by interviews. Chuck Sperry was interviewed in French and Rereao (Foster) was interviewed in Tahitian. They were surprised to learn that one of the men in the station was a pastor in the CoC. When he caught their attention after the interview he flashed them two thumbs up and said it was “really good.”

The radio spot is still bearing fruit. Several invitations came in asking for the missionaries to visit various islands and speak with the Sanitos there. Where the Americans could not reach because of the lack of time, Raereao is traveling and spreading the good news.

Brother Foster was ordained an Elder under the hands of Seventy Dan Norman and Elder Chuck Sperry on October 2, 2016. Elder Foster preached and was able to administer the Sacrament emblems to his own people, including his wife. This ordinance was absent among the Sanitos until the elders came last summer. How gracious is God to provide local ministry for this people who were isolated from the fellowship of other Sanitos in the world until this year.

Above: Chuck Sperry (L), Rereao Foster and Dan Norman (R) at a meeting in Tahiti.



Top Left: Saints on Moorea with their new church sign. The translation is “Hear ye him.”
Bottom Left: Ruthanne Norman teaching the women on Tahiti.
Above: Rereao Foster administering the Sacrament to his wife Rose.

The Sanitos in Tahiti were unaware of the presence of the Restoration branches. They truly believed the rest of the church had gone after the direction of the CoC. They thought they were the last people from the original church to hold to and teach the original doctrines. The Normans reported some of the church people there were initially incredulous when these Americans claimed to be Sanitos. Soon, however, their sorrow turned to joy, as the Normans and Brother Sperry explained what they taught and surely believed.

The three missionaries traveled to the island of Moorea, which is a 20-minute ferry ride from the port on Tahiti. They met with several members and answered many questions. A second trip was made there before the Normans left. Dan and Ruthanne extended their stay for a week for the encore in Morrea. They held several classes which were well attended. A branch of 28 souls is now organized priest named Riro is presiding over the work on that island. They put up a sign which says Sanito with a facsimile of the church seal on it. The writing on the bottom of the sign is a Tahitian phrase meaning “Listen to him” or “Hear ye him.”

On October 6, the group flew to Rangiroa, a large atoll. From there they transferred to a boat and went to a smaller island named Tiputa. Classes were held with a variety of participants including Sanitos, CoC, Catholics, Protestants and Mormons. The first class lasted three hours. Every place they went, the missionaries found great interest among the people.



Ordination of Rereao Foster to Elder by Seventy Dan Norman and Elder Chuck Sperry.

While on Tiputa, two women received blessings from the laying on of hands for the sick. The first woman, their cook, had a headache and high fever. She

immediately received a blessing and after another administration the woman was fully healed. A second woman had a bad leg and required a crutch and even then, she suffered a great deal of pain. After the ordinance, she walked without pain and without the crutch for the first time in 10 years.

Several Sanitos and some inquirers are now meeting together there. They number about 30 souls. A man named Repas was recently ordained and is presiding over the Sanitos there. Since the American missionaries left, he has visited some of the other islands and shared the news of their visit.

The missionaries left Tiputa for Tikehau, another island. The owner of the place where they stayed, called a pension house, had parents and grandparents that were Sanitos. He did not charge for the room or meals while the missionaries were unique thing happened here. The police spent time announcing the arrival of the missionaries and inviting people to come and hear them. The missionaries spent two profitable days here with many prospects. News arrived about two other islands where people heard the radio broadcast and requested a visit.

They returned to Papara for a brief stay at Foster’s place and they returned to Moorea for a full week of teaching fter that week in Moorea, the Normans returned to the United States.

After the Normans returned to the states, Foster and Elder Sperry traveled to Raiatea, another island of French Polynesia. Similar success was noted and a branch of about 30 members is now organized there.

Sister Norman traveled with Dan and Chuck. She spent time with the women on Tahiti in the town of Papara helping them organize a women’s ministry there. She taught them about what women were doing in the Restoration branches and answered questions. The Sanito women are now organizing there.

This was a very fruitful trip into French Polynesia. Four branches are now organized and new members of the priesthood are in place. Since the October trip, there have been some baptisms. Rereao Foster is presiding over the work there. He is very busy traveling to additional islands with the fullness of the gospel.

There are plans in place for another trip in June 2017. This will be a youth visit. Those in the Center place will have the chance to assist with various fund raisers. Please keep the Sanitos of Tahiti and the islands of French Polynesia in your prayers. †

The Meekest Example

By Jerry Vickery

Come, Learn of the Meek and Lowly

by Grace J. Francis

Come, learn of the Meek and Lowly,
Come, sit at the Master's feet;
No place in the world so holy,
No place in the world so sweet.
His lessons are plain and simple,
A balm to the wounded breast;
He maketh our burdens lighter,
And giveth his children rest.

Oh, if we were more like Jesus
And more from the world apart,
Communing with him in spirit
And nearer to him in heart,
We should not complain so sadly
When trouble and care we meet,
But carry at once our sorrows
And lay them at Jesus' feet.

When considering what it means to be meek and lowly, there is little doubt that our Lord, Jesus Christ, is our utmost example. He said:

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light (Matthew 11:29-30).

We gain a lot of understanding from these two verses when examined in their context. Jesus was talking to the multitudes who had just witnessed a voice out of heaven and heard Jesus' answer to that voice.

In these verses the Greek word translated as "meek" means "mild, gentle, humble." Even in Jesus' response to the voice out of heaven he demonstrated these qualities, saying:

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight! (Matthew 11:27).

In another place, Jesus said:

I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. And he that sent me is with me; the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him (John 8:28-29).

Not only does Jesus show his agreement with his Father, he submits to the instructions of his Father. He, in turn, instructs the multitude to follow the example he has just shown in his answer to his Father.

In the world around us, meekness is often considered as weakness. Jesus was not, and is not, weak! When we come to him and learn from him how to be meek according to his definition of meekness, we are not learning how to be weak. Rather, we are learning from him how to walk in his power—not just the power he manifests as our resurrected Lord, but in the same power that guided and sustained him as he walked the earth as a mortal man.

His mortal life was like ours. He was born into the care of and was subject to earthly parents. He learned the disciplines of daily chores, going to worship, study, prayer and discernment. He learned the skills of his father's trade and later endured the joys and hardship of going forth in his ministry doing the Father's will and as Redeemer and Savior. Like him, we must learn the details and skills of daily life and how to do the Father's business according to his calling in us.

Jesus learned by suffering to be obedient. He learned to honor the Father. This is meekness; to honor the things of God, to live peaceably and gently with those who love him and to stand firmly for and in the Truth. He was gentle with the sick and the brokenhearted and was not ashamed or afraid to eat with publicans and sinners. At the same time, he stood against the Pharisees and Sadducees who sought to entrap him. He stood against

every illness, disease and injury, and devils and death itself. He stood for the Law. He knew the Law, advocated for it and obeyed it. With the power that came to him by obedience to his Father, he multiplied food, calmed the storm and prophesied. He invites us to be as he is.

Perhaps there are those who would say Jesus could do all of those things because he is the only begotten Son of God. But the scriptures have many references to men of power. For instance:

(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold (Numbers 12:3, 6-8).

Scripture records the many miracles performed by Moses in the name of the Lord. Through him came the ten plagues against Egypt, the dividing of the Red Sea, manna and water from the rock in the wilderness.

A strong part of the definition of “meekness” is “humility.” We have a lot of instruction from the Lord through his servants on how to be humble and what that means for us.

And now, because ye are compelled to be humble, blessed are ye; for a man sometimes, if he is compelled to be humble, seeketh repentance; And now surely, whosoever repenteth shall find mercy; And he that findeth mercy and endureth to the end, the same shall be saved ... Do ye not suppose that they are more blessed who truly humble themselves because of the word? Yea, he that truly humbleth himself and repenteth of his sins, and endureth to the end, the same shall be blessed; yea, much more blessed than they who art compelled to be humble, because of their exceeding poverty; therefore blessed are they who humbleth themselves without being compelled to be humble, Or rather, in other words, Blessed is he that believeth in the word of God, and is baptized without stubbornness of heart; yea, without being brought to know the word, or even compelled to know, before they will believe (Alma 16:134-138).

Surely, we can see that Jesus was not compelled to be humble, but that he humbled himself. He voluntarily gave up his position in the courts of glory (albeit temporarily) to take upon himself the lesser glory of mankind with the intent of raising mankind into greater glory. By that atonement, he gained scars that remain with him throughout eternity. What greater example of meekness can be found? †

Column

Bishop's Corner

The Care of the Poor: A Study in Creative Stewardship Response

By B. A. Stuart

The February 15, 1864, *Saints' Herald* contained the following letter from the Presiding Bishop of the Reorganization:

To The Saints

There are a number of poor in the church who are dependent upon the church for assistance to obtain the necessaries of life; there are also several elders abroad preaching the truth to the people of different places, whose families are dependent upon the church for support. I have made every effort in my power,

and am still exerting myself to attend to the duties of my office; but owing to the scattered condition of the church, it is not in my power to attend to each one that is in need of assistance, neither am I furnished with church funds sufficiently fast to meet the constantly increasing demand; I write this article therefore; to ask the brethren in every branch, and also all scattered brethren who are able to assist me, in this, one of the most difficult, and yet, one of the most important obligations laid upon the people of God—the providing for the poor among them, and

the careing [sic] for the families of those elders sent into the field by the church, and for the support of whom the church stands pledged.

I need not attempt by a labored and lengthy article, to impress upon the minds of the saints, the very great importance of this matter, for everyone must see from the reading of the books, that it is one of the many provisions given, for the perfecting of His people. As the Bishop of the church, I feel a very great desire to discharge every duty devolving upon me, and I wish that in doing my duty, I may have the confidence of my brethren

in the faith; this I fear I have not as yet fully had; or my hands would not now be so nearly tied by the want of means to relieve the necessities of suffering saints. Again, we must remember this other very prominent item of law, that none but the deserving have any claim upon the church fund for support; the idler must not eat the bread of the industrious [sic]; whoso is able to labor let him do so, that they be not a burden, is an axiom of the saints of former days, and must needs be adopted by us in our efforts to do right in the sight of God. Those elders who have taken the more important missions; whose families are unprovided for, and are not in such circumstances as to provide for themselves, must also receive of the care of the church, and to this end it is necessary that we all make a united effort to obtain harmony of action in the promises.

I therefore propose, that the Presidents of branches and their assistants in time ministry, look to the condition of the poor in their respective branches, and that they report the same to me, together with what is being done towards their support and whether they can be sustained among them; and also reporting to me whether there is anything for the general store house in their hands, or to be sent from their branch, and this in order that we may arrive at a more intelligent and persistent effort to make ourselves a people free from the condemnation of the Lord.

Brethren, will you help me, will you come up to the help of the Lord, remembering that whoso ministers unto the necessities of the poor, is lending unto the Lord? Hoping that this short article will find you all rejoicing in the hope and assurance of happiness with Christ upon a redeemed and purified earth, I am,

Yours ever in the Lord,
ISRAEL L. ROGERS

True Latter Day Saints' Herald,
Volume 5, No. 4, February 15, 1864.

Bishop Rogers identifies two of the critical responsibilities of the Bishop. He must answer the cry of the poor for support and at-

Dear Saints,

We regret to inform you that some missionary trips this winter were canceled due to lack of funds. Please, as you complete your end-of-year bookkeeping, consider filing your tithing statement and paying your tithing. You may also donate directly to the missionary work by contacting:

JCRB

1100 W. Truman Rd.
Independence, MO 64050
816-252-1457
bookkeepers@conferenceofbranches.org

Please help us continue to spread the light of the Gospel in this dark and shadowed world.

tend to the needs of the families of those who are laboring in the mission field for the sake of the gospel. The church in 1864 was similar to the church of our day. It was composed of a relatively small number of Saints who were scattered widely. This presented two huge difficulties for the Bishop in 1864. He had insufficient funds with which to answer the needs presented to him and he could not be in all of the areas of the church to personally answer the needs.

These difficulties were compounded by the Bishop's desire to be faithful to God in his office and calling. His resources were low, his time limited and the geography was too vast to allow him to fulfill his duty as he understood it in the law. He knew he needed help and he wrote this short epistle to solicit the help of the branches and the branch presiding officers.

The stewardship responsibilities described in the scriptures of the church give the Bishop charge over this ministry. If Bishop Rogers had the ability and resources, it appears he would have gladly administered relief to every soul who had need. The fact was that he could not do that and he rightly made a plea for help.

Branch presidents are asked to see that as much relief as possible be given on the local level to as many of the needy as possible. When aid was given, he asked those local officers to

forward of record of what was done to his office. The branch officers were being solicited to act as his agents and he should know what was being done. It was also a shrewd way to avoid the duplication of gifts which could easily happen, particularly in those days of slow communication.

In making this plea, the Bishop did not absolve the Saints from their stewardship responsibility. He reminded them of the importance of stewardship by referring to what was written in the books of the church, the need to show confidence in the officers of the church and support their ministry, and that every person has the duty to do what he or she can do to support themselves by their own labor.

This is a very useful and informative article by Bishop Rogers. Stewardship is a team sport. The responsibilities of the stewardship can be delegated. Rogers would have been negligent in his duty if he tried to do it all by himself. He utilized creative management techniques, humility and persuasion to improve the overall stewardship response of the church. He left the overall responsibility for the church stewardship program on his shoulders were it belonged, but shifted the practical management of stewardship problems to the local areas as a way to more effectively carry out the scriptural mandate. †

Into All the World

Compiled and edited by Gary R. Whiting

An Epistle to the Restoration Saints December 11, 2016

Greetings to you in the name of Jesus Christ. This is a day of trouble and danger on many fronts. As the people of Christ, we should not be surprised by these events. What is surprising is the anemic response of the people of God to the day of trouble in the world.

The world's challenges include political uncertainty and tremendous social unrest between various people groups and religions of the world. There is an increasing degree of lawlessness in the societies of the world as well as governmental unrest. The economy is fragile worldwide. Terrorism and personal violence appear to be on the rise. Even the elements are in turmoil with storms, earthquakes, fires and water contamination.

If any day has ever seemed to fit the description of the last days, the days in which we live qualify. The issues of civil unrest, corruption, health crises, violence and family stress appear to ignore the reality that essential laws of truth and righteousness are beyond the scope of political solutions. We know the only cure for these ills is repentance with deep humility and honoring the God of this and all lands.

The Restoration gospel was especially prepared for such a day as this. We are stewards of this great gift today and we find ourselves unprepared, weak and divided. Now is a day for the Saints of the living God to come together to accomplish the work of the kingdom of God and the gathering of the House of Israel (see Psalm 50:5).

Jesus died for the souls of men, women and children. He died to liberate us from the grip of eternal death and bring us safe again into the

Father's presence through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our calling is to extend the declaration of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth. We confess the hand of the Lord is preparing the way for the gospel to move forward to meet the challenges of this day and to fulfill the words of the prophets.

The Restoration branches have two choices. We can continue to view ourselves as pieces of a fractured church, much like a window that has been broken by a rock. We can defend our piece of glass, using the sharp edges and points to harm or drive others away, or we can surrender our individual pieces into the hand of the Lord and let him make something new and beautiful out of us, as the craftsman does in creating a stained-glass window.

Agency of individuals and groups is a precious thing. Our Father gave us agency in creation and redeemed our agency in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He bought it for us by the blood of the Son. He preserves our agency by the word of his power.

Agency was given for the exercise of charity. In Genesis 7:39-40 the Lord told Enoch agency was intended to allow us to choose to love each other as brothers and sisters and to choose God as our Father. This is true love. It is consistent with the testimony of Jesus when he revealed the two greatest commandments of the law (Matthew 22:34-39) and John's witness in his first epistle.

One Protestant theologian has written that sin is disordered love. When any person chooses to love outside of the parameters of the love which God proposed, he or she is

committing sin. It is sin against God and his intent for our lives and his creation. This is inordinate love of self, idols or false gods.

The evidence of our disordered love is seen in fear, fighting, divisions, dissension, pride, bitterness and envy. Where is faith, hope and charity?

God is calling us to repentance. The words of Zenos regarding the olive tree in the vineyard of Jacob 3 apply to the Restoration branches.

Who is it that has corrupted my vineyard? And it came to pass that the servant said unto his master, Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard? Have not the branches thereof overcome the roots, which are good? And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold, they grew faster than the strength of the roots, taking strength unto themselves. Behold, I say, Is not this the cause that the trees of thy vineyard have become corrupted (Jacob 3:104-108)?

The word applies because rather than submit to the hand of the Lord of the vineyard, we have rebelled against him and exalted the branches above the root. He has called us to be one and we have continually refused. He has scattered and divided us to humble ourselves, but we have become proud in our independence and perception of right thinking. We give lip service to the scriptures and to the genuine calling of the Lord to the latter-day church while setting ourselves up as judges over our brothers and sisters and suffering them or refusing them based on standards of our own making. Do men preach the fullness of the gos-

pel? Do men follow the patterns of D&C 52:4 and preach by the standard of D&C 50:4-5? Why are we divided on minutiae? As in the days of his visit to Bountiful, the Lord can set things aright in a moment when the time is right.

This is a time to humble ourselves before the Lord. We are scattered and distressed because God's hand is on us to chasten us for our sin and pride. He is seeking to convince us that his wisdom, not ours, is all that matters. We must surrender pride of place and position and abandon priestcraft. Be generous one to another and in brotherly kindness serve one another in affection and charity that is worthy of the Saints of the Most High God.

Agency is a powerful thing. When used as our Father intended, it allows the fullness of the blessing of God and Christ into our souls. The misuse of agency, a refusal to love God completely as our Father and to love one another, excludes us from Celestial glory and perhaps consigns us to wait for the Second Resurrection and, at best, Telestial glory.

Ezekiel was told to raise a warning voice in his generation. Like other warning voices, Ezekiel was to call the people to repentance. And the Lord said:

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore, hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, when a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he

shall die; because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul (Ezekiel 3:17-21).

We, of the Restoration, have been charged to preach the gospel to all the people of the world, first to the Gentiles and then to the Jews. We are commanded to take the Book of Mormon to the remnant of the House of Israel. We have a message of repentance and a voice of warning to declare.

Let us now rally to the cause of Christ and labor together for the common cause of the gospel and Zion. Our organizational disputes are a distraction we cannot afford. It is time for the elders to come together to seek the Lord's direction and to be bold in preaching the gospel in the last days. It is a day for filling our vessels with oil, not comparing designs and functionality of our lamps!

It is, therefore, a day of repentance. Repentance from dead works and from whatever is more important to us today than the gospel and the salvation of souls. We must forsake our individual and corporate idols. We must repent of priestcraft in all its forms. We must abandon Babylon's system of secret combinations.

It is a day for humility and sore repentance before the Lord. It is a day of sackcloth and ashes. It is a day of fasting, mourning and mighty prayer.

Everything else is a distraction. Seek to love the Truth and sell it not. There is a day coming when these other matters will be dealt with for good.

Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days; and the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land; for verily, I

say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim; wherefore, they shall be plucked out. Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations; for it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion; and liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them; and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known (D&C 64:7).

Who will we be? Those who yield their heart with a willing mind and faithful obedience and thus eat the spoils of the land of Zion? Or will we be the rebellious who are cast out of the land?

The day will come when those who are not apostles and prophets will be made known. When that day comes, we can settle our secondary disputes. Until then, there is the real, urgent work of his Kingdom that must be done. Even in our fractured condition we can carry the same message of the fullness of his restored gospel. Let us, therefore, together become those with willing minds and hearts yielding to obey the Lord in all things. Secondly, let every man, every Saint, learn his or her duty and with one voice let us preach repentance and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ for the glory of the kingdom of God and the restoration of the House of Israel. Today is not a day of many words, but of choosing and of action, so let us therefore, in the name of Jesus Christ, rally to the gospel call and work while the day lasts. If we do nothing, the blood of this generation will stain our garments at that last day when opportunity for repentance and the cleansing power of the blood of the Lamb will have passed.

In Gospel Bonds,

Gary R. Whiting
Randy L. Vick
Apostles of Jesus Christ
by the will of God.

Restoration Women's Ministry

Teach Them to be Meek & Lowly of Heart

By Debbie Newman

Dear Sisters in Christ,

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Although I do not know each of you personally, I feel a connection through our Savior.

As we are now in the new year my thoughts have been drawn to the question: What can I do for my Savior that will benefit our children in making connections with his children of like faith and can help them draw closer to him? What do I teach by my life and what could I teach others that would make a difference in their spiritual life?

In Alma 17, Alma is instructing his son Helaman what not to teach and what to teach the people.

And now my son, remember the words which I have spoken unto you: trust not those secret plans [of darkness] unto this people, but teach them an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity. Preach unto them repentance, and faith on the Lord Jesus Christ: teach them to humble themselves, and to be meek and lowly in heart; teach them to withstand every temptation of the devil, with their faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; Teach them to never be weary of good works, but to be meek and lowly in heart: for such shall find rest to their souls (Alma 17:65-67, emphasis added).

Alma urges his son not to trust or have anything to do with the secret plans of darkness; those things would lead to destruction. To avoid this, Helaman was told to teach his

people to have an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity. They must learn to repent and have faith in Jesus Christ alone. Alma knew the proud and vain do not live by faith and told Helaman to teach his people to humble themselves and be meek and lowly in their hearts.

To teach something supposes that we know something about a subject that we could impart to another. An instructor without experience on a matter may be challenged to aptly apply principles to real situations.

As women and mothers, we know that even children can discern whether or not we are speaking from experience. It is that experience that adds credibility to what we are saying. People are more willing to follow direction when that direction is also embodied in the life of the one giving the instruction.

What kind of a life do you live? Does it draw people closer to God or does it encourage them to live separated from the Father? Every part of our life reflects our core convictions. Jesus said that out of heart comes the things we say and do. To teach one another to be humble, meek and lowly in heart means that we must exhibit these qualities in our lives. If we realize we are not exhibiting these qualities in all areas of our life then we must first have *an everlasting hatred against sin and iniquity* and then strive to study and learn what it means to be humble, meek and lowly in heart.

How do we do this? The scrip-

tures are the most precious place we can study it out and see how such qualities were applied in others' lives. We can also observe our fellow Christians and how they exhibit humbleness and are meek and lowly in heart. Study groups are another good way to gain a better understanding of the subject.

One such study is provided by the Restoration Women's Ministry. It is titled, "I am Kept for the Master's Use." This study will help you see the importance of dedicating every part of our lives to our Master, exclusively for his use. This study will encourage you in ways to live such a life. There are eight lessons to the study:

- My Life Kept for Jesus parts 1 & 2
- My Moments Kept for Jesus
- My Feet Kept for Jesus
- My Intellect Kept for Jesus
- My Voice, Lips & Treasures in Service for Jesus
- My Will Kept for Jesus
- My Heart Kept for Jesus

This study is available from the JCRB Office in Independence, Mo.

All learning can provide a foundation for a godly life, but when we begin to apply our understanding we build lives worthy to be examples of the Father's will. I encourage you to be God's women, to exhibit and teach all of his children, both by word and by deed, to be humble, meek and lowly in heart.

Your sister in Christ,
Debbie Newman †

We are grateful to those who have paid for their subscriptions to the Beacon. If you are able, please provide at least a \$15 donation to help keep the Beacon in print and ministering with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jots and Tittles:

A Collection of Thoughts, News and Quotes

The very pressing question of this hour is to ascertain whether each of us is making enough of personal contact with Christ. We hear about Him, read of Him, talk about Him, but how far do we really know Him? Might He not say rather sadly to some of us, as to Philip: “Have I been so long a time with you, and yet hast thou not known me?” On the other hand, Paul said: “I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord ... that I may know him!” (By F. B. Meyer in *Heritage of Great Evangelical Teaching : Featuring the Best of Martin Luther, John Wesley, Dwight L. Moody, C.H. Spurgeon and others.* (1997). Nashville: Thomas Nelson).

From the earliest days of the Restoration, the concepts of religious freedom were popular themes for comment by Latter Days Saints. From the Joseph Smith Papers website (<http://www.josephsmithpapers.org/articles/religious-freedom>) we present a few statements on the subject by Joseph Smith Jr.

“Church History,” 1 March 1842

We claim the privilege of worshipping Almighty God according to the dictates of our conscience, and allow all men the same privilege; let them worship how, where, or what they may (Joseph Smith, “Church History,” *Times and Seasons*, 1 Mar. 1842, 3:710).

Letter to James Arlington Bennet, 8 September 1842

When we see virtuous qualities in men, we should always acknowledge them, let their understanding be what it may in relation to creeds and doctrine. For all men are, or ought to be, free, possessing unalienable rights and the high and noble qualifications of the laws of

nature and of self-preservation; to think and act, and say as they please, while they maintain a due respect to the rights and privileges of all other creatures, infringing upon none. This doctrine I do most heartily subscribe to and practice (Joseph Smith, Nauvoo, IL, to James Arlington Bennet, Arlington House, Flatbush, NY, 8 Sept. 1842, JS Collection, LDS Church History Library).

Joseph Smith’s Journal, 9 July 1843

If we would secure and cultivate the love of others, we must love others, even our enemies, as well as friends. “Why is it this babblor gains so many followers and retains them?” Because I possess the principle of love. All I can offer the world is a good heart and a good hand. Mormons can testify whether I am willing to lay down my life for a Mormon.

If it has been demonstrated that I have been willing to die for a Mormon, I am bold to declare before heaven that I am just as ready to die for a Presbyterian, a Baptist, or any other denomination. It is a love

of liberty which inspires my soul. Civil and religious liberty were diffused into my soul by my grandfathers, while they dandled me on their knees ...

If I esteem mankind to be in error shall I bear them down? No! I will lift them up—and in his own way if I cannot persuade him my way is better. I will ask no man to believe as I do (Joseph Smith, Journal, 9 July 1843, JS Collection, LDS Church History Library, in *Joseph Smith Papers, Journals*, Vol. 3, 55–56).

“Pacific Innuendo,” *Times and Seasons*, 15 February 1844

Political views and party distinctions never should disturb the harmony of society. . . .

“A soft answer turns away wrath,” says the wise man, and it will be greatly to the credit of the Latter-day Saints to show the love of God by now kindly treating those who may have, in an unconscious moment, done them wrong. For truly said Jesus, “Pray for thine enemies.” Humanity towards all; reason and refinement, to enforce virtue, and good for evil, are so eminently designed to cure more disorders of society than an appeal to arms or even argument untempered with friendship. Our motto, then, is peace with all. If we have joy in the love of God, let us try to give a reason of that joy, which all the world cannot gainsay or resist (“Pacific Innuendo,” *Times and Seasons*, 15 Feb. 1844, 4:442, 443).

These quotes are from an article published July 5, 2016 on the Gospel Herald website:

A groundbreaking new study found that women who go to church at least once a week have a lower risk of suicide than women who never attend a service, prompting researchers to suggest that “religion and spirituality may be an underappreciated resource that psychiatrists and clinicians could explore with their patients.”

The study, published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, looked at associations between religious service attendance and suicide from 1996 through June 2010 using data from the Nurses’ Health Study.

It found that attendance at religious services once per week or more was associated with an approximately fivefold lower rate of suicide compared with never attending religious services.

Among 89,708 women ages 30-55, 17,028 attended a religious service more than once per week, 36,488 attended once per week, 14,548 attended less than once per week, and 21,644 never attended. In addition, women who attended religious services frequently were less likely to use an antidepressant and were also less likely to be current smokers and more likely to be married.

“There were 36 suicide events during follow-up, with suicide incidence declining with increasing religious service attendance,” said the study, led by Tyler J. VanderWeele at Harvard’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

“Our results do not imply that health care providers should prescribe attendance at religious services. However, for patients who are already religious, service attendance might be encouraged as a form of meaningful social participation. Religion and spirituality may be an underappreciated resource that psychiatrists and clinicians could explore with their patients, as appropriate.”

The study was conducted primarily among Catholic and Protestant women with repeated measurements of religious service attendance and detailed information on dietary, lifestyle, social, psychological and medical risk factors. The authors also noted that women in the study sample were mainly white Christians and female nurses, which can limit the study’s generalizability.

The JAMA study was released just months after the Center for Disease Control found that between 1999 and 2014, the suicide rate increased by a staggering 24 percent, with the highest rate for females being in girls aged 10-14.

In 2012, a ten-year study from *The American Journal of Psychiatry* found that children who were raised in their mother’s religion were better protected against depression.

“Individuals with no religious affiliation are at greater risk for depressive symptoms and disorders,” according to the study. “People involved in their faith communities may be at reduced risk for depression, and private religious activities and beliefs are not strongly related to risk for depression” (<http://www.gospelherald.com/articles/65114/20160705/groundbreaking-new-study-finds-frequent-church-attendance-decreases-the-risk-of-suicide.htm#closepopup> July 5, 2016). †

The Little Beacon

Mormon, the Warrior Librarian

By Genie Simmons

Mormon was born at a time when the Nephites were very wicked. Despite being surrounded by wickedness, his father, Mormon, raised his son [Mormon] to be a righteous person. Mormon states he was a descendant of Nephi and in another place descendant of Lehi, Nephi’s father. Mormon and his father are both named after the land of Mormon, the place where Alma hid from King Noah and established the church.

At the age of ten, Ammoron came to Mormon [the son] and said, “I understand that you are a serious child, and observant. When you are twenty-four I want you to remember all the things you have seen this people do.

“Go to the land of Antum to a hill called Shim. There you will find the records I hid as the Lord told me. All the records of this people are there. Take the plates of Nephi and leave all the others. Write on the plates of Nephi all that you have seen.”

At eleven, Mormon and his family moved to Zarahemla. Mormon later wrote that the whole country was covered in buildings. There were as many people as the sands of the sea. Mormon even listed the tribes living there, Nephites, Jacobites, Josephites, and Zoramites. He was very impressed with so many people living there.

By the time Mormon was fifteen, the Nephite people were so wicked that the Lord refused to give them his miracles and blessings. At the same time, Mormon was visited by Jesus and learned of the gospel. He tried to preach to the people, but they rebelled. Even the “beloved disciples” were taken away. The Lord forbade Mormon to preach any more.

When Mormon was sixteen, and large for his age, the Nephites appointed him to be the leader of their armies. His life between sixteen and twenty-four was spent leading the Nephite army against Lamanites. They would run to safety but then would fight again. He said, “The Lord did not bless us.”

Once they were driven west to the seashore, Mormon rallied his troops and they fought with such determination that the Lamanites fled before them. “We had 30,000 and the Lamanites were 50,000,” Mormon writes. Even though

they were greatly outnumbered, the Nephites chased them and beat them in battle.

During this time, the Nephites were defending the city of Jashon which was close to the place Ammoron hid the plates. Mormon went there and continued the record on the plates of Nephi. After winning this battle, there were ten years of peace between the Nephites and the Lamanites. At this time Mormon led the people to “prepare their lands and their arms against the time of the battle.”

Mormon also spent time preaching repentance to the Nephites, but they did not listen. They kept doing whatever they wanted, even though Mormon told them what the Lord wanted them to do.

During years of peace, Mormon may have spent time reading, condensing, rewriting and making notes on the plates Ammoron left him.

Again, there was a great battle with the Lamanites. The people slew a large number of Lamanites and won the battle. They then boasted they had won the battle by their own strength. They swore to go to battle again. This upset Mormon and he refused to lead them in battle again or to be their leader. The whole day before the battle, he prayed to God for their safety. The Lord had delivered them from destruction by the Lamanite army three times. They still rejected the Lord of the land.

Mormon did as the Lord had commanded and stood by and watched the battle so he could record what happened. Mormon warns us that everyone will be judged by Christ. Our works and our love and faith in Jesus will be the test.

Mormon preached repentance again to the Nephites. “Don’t you know that you are in the hands of God? Don’t you know that he has all power and command of the whole earth? Repent!” The Nephites did not listen.

Mormon changed his mind and again led the Nephite army against

the Lamanites. He prepared them for a final battle with the Lamanites. His son, Moroni, was a part of the army. Mormon died during this last battle. After the battle, the Lamanites hunted the few Nephites who had escaped and killed them until there were none left, except Moroni.

All was lost because the Nephites had become so wicked that they

rejected the words of God. The Nephites no longer recognized the blessings the Lord would gladly give his children. Those blessings are still available to all of God’s children today if we will hear and obey the word of the Lord.

Read the full story: Mormon 1:1-8; 1:14-18; 1:22-44; 1:63-81; 2:44-54; 3:1-33, 4:1-2. †



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When the Weak Shall Confound the Wise

And for this cause, that men might be made partakers of the glories which were to be revealed, the Lord sent forth the fullness of his gospel, his everlasting covenant, reasoning in plainness and simplicity, to prepare the weak for those things which are coming on the earth;

and for the Lord's errand in the day when the weak shall confound the wise, and the little one become a strong nation, and two should put their tens of thousands to flight; and by the weak things of the earth, the Lord should thresh the nations by the power of his Spirit.

And for this cause these commandments were given; they were commanded to be kept from the world in the day that they were given, but now are to go forth unto all flesh.

And this according to the mind and will of the Lord, who ruleth over all flesh; and unto him that repenteth and sanctifieth himself before the Lord, shall be given eternal life (Doctrine & Covenants 108:11a-d).