

Zion's Advocate

"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift and power of the Holy Ghost."—I Nephi 3:187.

Vol. 46

Independence, Missouri, April, 1969

No. 4

Suit Yourself Like Men

By

David H. Smith



Are you a man? Assert your manhood then.
Break off from evil ways beneath a man.
They do not contribute to make you men.
Shame! Do not say, "I can not"; say, "I can"
Are you a woman? There is the same need.
Behold the little ones round your knee,
To all your words and actions they give heed,
And imitate with aptness what they see.
Are you a young man? Oh, then while the light
And dew of Life's sweet morn is round your path,
Serve ye its Giver in your fresh young might.
For lo, his word a thousand beauties hath.

Are you a maiden? Truly serve the Lord
Before your friends and brothers; make them know
The power of purity in his great word:
Your influence is large, for weal or woe.
Do you love wisdom? Who so wise as he?
Or poetry? Come, you will be at home
With all things fair and beautiful and free.
Do you love wickedness? Then do not come.
From Noah down all prophets cried repent;
And I of passages that might find a score
To prove the doctrine. But my time is spent;
And all that I might say was said before.

CONTENTS

	Page	Page	
Condemnation — Not a Saving Grace	50	The Rod of Iron	56
The Old Jerusalem Gospel	52	Gospel Dimensions	60
Security	53	Come, Let Us Reason Together	62
Springtime of Life	64		

Zion's Advocate

Official Publication of the Church of Christ
Headquarters on the Temple Lot, Independence, Missouri.

Phone: Temple 3-3995

EDITOR

Kenneth J. Smith, 209 South Chrysler, Independence, Missouri 64050

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Harvey E. Seibel, 1502 South Logan, Independence, Missouri 64055
Lovita Seibel, 1101 W. Orchard Street, Independence Missouri 64050

BUSINESS MANAGER OF ZION'S ADVOCATE: C. LeRoy Wheaton, Box 472, Independence, Missouri, 64051. Subscriptions and changes of address.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE CHURCH OF CHRIST (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri. 64051.

Second class postage paid at Independence, Missouri.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: One Year, \$1.50. In bundles of twelve or more for missionary purposes, \$1.00. Canadian and all foreign rates, \$1.75.

Send all donations for the Temple Fund, the Storehouse, Consecrations, Tithes, Offerings, and Subscriptions for the Advocate to: Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051.

CHURCH OF CHRIST PUBLICATIONS

Send all orders to:
Church of Christ (Temple Lot)
Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051.

	Price Each
Book of Mormon—Missionary Edition.....	\$1.00
Book of Mormon—Cloth Binding	\$2.50
Outline History of the Church of Christ.....	\$2.00
Book of Commandments (Leatherette).....	\$1.25
Book of Commandments Controversy Reviewed.....	\$1.00
The Autobiography of B. C. Flint.....	\$1.50
What the Restoration Teaches Concerning God.....	\$0.50
Temple Lot Deed	\$0.20
A Brief History of the Church of Christ.....	*
The Principles of the Gospel, Faith and Repentance.....	*
The Principles of the Gospel, The Laying on of Hands.....	*
The Principles of the Gospel, Baptism.....	*
The Latter Day Restoration	*
Apostasy or Succession, Which?	*
The Book of Mormon (Tract)	*
Articles of Faith and Practice of the Church of Christ.....	*
Articles of Faith and Practice (Spanish)	*
Articles of Faith and Practice, No. 1, (English).....	*
Changing of the Revelations	*
What the Church of Christ Teaches in Respect to Matrimony, (Spanish).....	*
What About Israel?	*
Priesthood, Divine Authority	*

Note: *Donations accepted to cover postage and printing costs. Lot prices of tracts exclusive of postage are:
In packs of 6, 30c; or of 100, \$4.50.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES

INSTRUCTIONS IN ORDERING

Our quarterlies are not dated, but numbered, because they contain a regular course of study, and if the schools desire to make this study, they should order the quarterlies according to number so as to avail themselves of the entire course, so far as the study has been extended up to the present time. None of the courses are as yet, complete.

In compliance with the action taken at the 1960 General Sunday School Association General Assembly, all publications printed by the Association will be sent free of charge. Send ALL orders to: General Sunday School Association Treasurer, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), Box 472, Independence, Missouri. 64051.

	Price Each
Primary, Vol. 1, No. 1, Childhood of Jesus.....	N/C
Primary, Vol. 1, No. 2, Jesus' Ministry.....	N/C
Primary, Vol. 1, No. 3, Jesus' Ministry con't.....	N/C
Primary, Vol. 1, No. 4, Life of Jesus.....	N/C
Sunday School Record Book	N/C
History and Religion—Chart	1.50

CONDEMNATION — NOT A SAVING GRACE

“Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven; (St. Luke 6:37).

A study of modern day reveals a trend in the determinations of men that strongly indicates the fact that CONDEMNATION has become a popular force in the considerations of nations and their governments. The destructive force of war is no longer waged entirely for the freedoms of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness with the right to worship God as we see fit. But, because of the machinations of political hierarchies of the earth, the devastations of war continue to slaughter innocent victims of so-called opposing ideologies in the vengeance of CONDEMNATION. It brings death, sorrow, misery, disease, starvation and promotes the increase of every evil the mind may imagine to exist. The rapid decay of the standard of morals we once enjoyed as a nation, which are withering upon the brink of disaster, are spoken of in warning by the prophet Ether. “And now we can behold the decrees of God concerning this land, that it is a land of promise, and whatsoever nation shall possess it, shall serve God, or they shall be swept off when the fulness of his wrath shall come upon them. And the fulness of his wrath cometh upon them when they are ripened in iniquity; for behold, this is a land which is choice above all other lands; wherefore he that doth possess it shall serve God, or shall be swept off; for it is the everlasting decree of God.” (Ether 1:31-32)

We are definitely forced to judge in order to survive in the world and still not partake of the world. But, we must be continually careful of the judgments we are forced to make in order to survive in a world which is filled to a high degree with the forces of CONDEMNATION of all that is good and holy. St. Matthew make it a little clearer as to how we must judge among ourselves to keep from disintegrating as a people. “For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considereth not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.” (Matthew 7:2-5) The power of the influence of our judgments travels far upon the great sea of life with its waves destroying the calmness of the deep.

The sharp increase in the far reaching rebellion of the youth of the earth as to the condemnation of authority becomes a bright danger signal to the future tranquility of our daily lives. This fulfills the words of the Apostle Paul in his letter to Timothy, “This know

also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their ownelves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good. Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lover of God;" (II Timothy 3:1-4) The rebellion in itself may not be an unpardonable sin against society. If we had the space to study the reasons for these iniquities with in our society, we might find the basic reasons involved in the rebellion coming close to us in the lack of proper foundation in American home life. **Disrespect had never bred respect, just as CONDEMNATION has never brought salvation of souls.**

As ministers for Christ, we must be about our Father's business. We are in the business of saving souls. We are in reality merchants of salvation. We cannot afford to become narrow-minded merchants of condemnation of the erring. We cannot afford to deal in the mistakes and elements that have brought about the downfall of the individual and may bring the self-destruction of his own soul. If we attempt to gather all the tares, we know not the amount of wheat that will be destroyed. The parable of the householder bears this out. As he spoke to the servants of the householder and said, "Let both grow together until harvest: and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn." (St. Matthew 13:30) Ah yes, we have been forced to judge in our Christian warfare. We pray the judgment has been a righteous judgment so as to protect the sheep already within the fold from the ravages of the onslaughts of the adversary. We must show the way to the erring, the way to a better life with in the sunshine of the Gospel of Jesus. In short, we must lift him out of his old self, without condemnation, to a better understanding. The church and the Restoration peoples have suffered for many years because of "pulling of the tares and the losing of the wheat."

The Apostle James uses this remarkable language concerning the erring, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass; for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:21-25)

We must not overlook the figure in the mirror. For in the Gospel of Christ we get a full vision of ourselves as we are. It is much more important to see ourselves as God sees us. Having been granted such a look into the gospel mirror, how foolish we are to condemn those

around us, to forget to rectify the defects seen in our own likeness. This glimpse of ourselves as we are, should arouse discontent. The erring may see himself as he is—black, with the most loathsome immoralities and deformed or all but ruined by excesses. And his discontent, by a look in the gospel mirror, could quickly give place to black despair. But, the love of God enters with the gospel hope, the "perfect law of liberty." Faith in God, repentance from dead works, regeneration in the waters of baptism, these set men free, and the Holy Spirit guides them on to all truth.

The Apostle Paul enlarged on this simile of the gospel mirror, for this marvelous mirror has another quality. It not only shows us to ourselves, as we are, but it show us as we might be. It reveals to us the man we might become under God's direction. "But we all, with an open face beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty . . ." (II Corin. 3:18 4:1-2)

No, CONDEMNATION is not a quality of salvation, but a force of destruction which has been long among us. True repentance is the key to gospel success. The Apostle Peter faced bitter condemnation on the day of Pentecost. He faced the mockers who had said that the saints were all drunken. He faced men who would not hesitate to kill him and his associates. He faced the very men who had consented to the death of Jesus. But, endowed with that power from on high that Christ had promised them, he preached such a powerful sermon that those men were pricked in their hearts, and stood self-condemned, crying out, ". . . Men and brethren what shall we do?" "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:37-38)

Ah yes, lets stop the satanic forces of division by CONDEMNATION that is amongst us. The church of latter days is suffering because of it. The destructive influence that permeates from it will continue to cause further division and distrust among brethren. Innocent souls will suffer. But rather let us take a good look at ourselves in the gospel mirror. Let us seek, if possible, to extract the beam from our own eye that we may be found worthy to assist in the removal of the mote from the eye of our brother. May God help us is my prayer. **"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God."** (I Peter 4:17)

K. J. S.

"But this much I can tell you, that if ye do not watch yourselves, and your thoughts, and your words, and your deeds, and observe to keep the commandments of God, and continue in the faith of what ye have heard concerning the coming of our Lord, even unto the end of your lives, ye must perish" (Mosiah 2:49).

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

Original Articles are the opinions of the author and do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the church or the opinions of the editorial staff. Even though some articles may in some cases be interpreted as controversial in nature, we believe that such articles if written in an affirmative manner in which a belief or an opinion is expressed, and evidences presented to support that belief, said articles should be presented to the readers.

THE OLD JERUSALEM GOSPEL

J. L. Verhei

As a young man just beginning my public Ministry I was called upon to be the Pastor of the First Portland, Oregon Congregation of RLDS and President of the Oregon and Southern Washington district. It was a large well-organized congregation with many older men and women whose fathers and grandfathers had been members of the early Reorganized Church.

There was a high sign crossways on a vacant lot between the church building and a well-traveled through street. The top of this sign bore the large lettered heading, "The Old Jerusalem Gospel." Included in the sign were the church's foremost beliefs and a part of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost.

This sign seemed to disturb some of us younger leaders so we ordered it removed. Its wording seemed so far removed from some of our ideas, especially in respect to what Peter had to say on the day of Pentecost.

Today much is said about having faith, a strong faith in the Apostle's creed, faith in leadership, faith in a church organization, and faith in our government and its leaders, and faith looking toward the establishment of Zion and the building of "the" Temple.

Recently while attending one of the Restoration movement conferences I heard an outstanding leader of that organization state; "before I leave church headquarters to go out on an assignment like this one I check the records to see who is keeping up his tithing, and how much; then I can determine who is best qualified to be or to remain as your leaders; and who has the most faith." This is all well and good; we all owe a tithe and we are all accountable to the Lord for the amount we pay, as well as to our fellow men.

But, this isn't what they did or was commanded to do following that great day of Pentecost. That was the beginning of the Apostolic church. Listen to a small part of what is recorded, "And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." (Acts 2:44-47)

Time and space doesn't allow us to name all of the men and organizations who have tried to work this out; this plan given by our Lord through His Apostles. Those men, or leaders, and their people had started out in all sincerity and earnestness, but always something has been lacking. Either the Lord hadn't authorized the

movement or the people wouldn't abide by its principles.

Joseph Smith, Jr., our prophet, was so authorized by the Lord to put this order into effect, but the people didn't understand it and refused to obey because of ignorance, pride or selfishness.

There continually comes across my desk letters from old and new friends of various stations in life who are affiliated with different segments of the Restoration movement inquiring as to what we might think about the gathering, the building of the Temple, and what shall be the rules for us to go by, and the signs of the times.

From these various organizations and leaders have come different answers, serious answers from good men and leaders, but in all cases so far it has been a "leading away" from the principles laid down by the early Apostles. The personal and collective interpretations, mostly are from world standards, until "signs and wonders have failed."

Many contend that the change in world conditions and the way we live now somewhat nullifies or makes it impossible for us to follow the Apostolic blue prints, and that we misinterpret their meanings.

Yet, they didn't have our conveniences and still they accomplished wonders in a short time, until Satan undermined and duplicated part of their efforts.

The question before us is, can we live up to the real Apostle's creed? Are we qualified? Can we meet the Lord face to face as Enoch did? These are the big questions.

It takes a real Christian to come to the house of the Lord and lay all at his feet. Yes many do now, but how do they do it? With one hand they or we give and then with the other hand out, inquiring, "What's in it for me? How big a job will you give me?"

One has only to look back into the history of events and find that in Enoch's day these same questions were asked. Some looked with faith to our Heavenly Father. They prayed continually and their homes were in order. Our Heavenly Father heard these prayers and looked into their hearts. He looked around and found a leader whom He could trust and whom the people would follow.

He called upon Enoch and ordained him a prophet and the leader of the movement. They built a city and called it Zion. Now He wants us to build a city and call it Zion, by that same standard. Where there is no rich and no poor and every man is as much concerned about his neighbor as himself and will follow our Heavenly Father's directions, and will hear his voice.

The same Lord is there and millions of people are waiting, praying and looking for another Enoch, one who is big enough to lead the way under the instructions of this same Lord. Yes, faith will do it, aided by works and His divine grace.

SECURITY

Shortened Version of a Sermon by E. Leon Yates
Preached at Phoenix, Arizona, November 29, 1968
(Transcribed from a Tape Recording)

Introduction of the speaker by Elder John Jones: "It gives me great pleasure at this time to ask for your careful and your prayerful attention to our speaker this afternoon, our brother, and friend, our loved one, Apostle Leon Yates."

It is indeed a warming sensation around the heart to hear those that I love refer to me as "brother, friend, and loved one." For indeed I have come to learn and know beyond question that when there is even just a spark of love in the heart of any man for another, that there is just that little bit of God in him.

A young man in our service this morning testified that he felt like the Lord couldn't use him. Then, all of a sudden, it seemed like his life was saved by a miraculous power, and he was made to wonder why. I thought about that and I am sure the Lord has use for a great many people. As I look about me almost without exception everyone of the ministry here is living on borrowed time. For some reason they've been spared and that includes myself, as you well know, those of you who know me. As I have said upon other occasions—when I was younger, I am sure that my guardian angel had to work overtime to keep me breathing, because of some of the foolish things I engaged in in my youth. It took quite a few years for me to get over that and my wife insists that I haven't quite conquered it yet.

Everyone of you has a work to do for the Lord. Whether you are a minister or a lay member, you have a job to do, and I am certain that many of you are so important in the Lord's great plan that upon occasions your lives, too, have been preserved. But any one of us can try His patience, and if we are not up and about His business the time might come when it just might be that we won't have His hand over us in time of need. I believe it is necessary for each of us to accept the task that has been given into our hands and not necessarily cry out for the Lord to relieve us of the pain that we might often feel, but rather to give us endurance to serve Him in spite of the pain. If any individual feels that his problems are greater than anyone else has ever received, let us take comfort from these words:

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."—I Corinthians 10:13

From this we see that, be it temptation or other problem, a way of escape has been provided us. It is up to us to recognize that way of escape. The only way of escape in this life is a knowledge and acceptance of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that knowledge comes to us through the still small voice of inspiration to our souls. The scriptures, speaking of that spirit that is

within man says that "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding." If at any time in your life you have felt that inspiration from the Almighty, then was the beginning of wisdom. Then was the beginning of the time for you to take the right step, regardless of your age at that time. When you hear that "still, small voice" it is time for you to listen and to act.

The Comforter

Once having come to a comprehension of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and having accepted it, as we are supposed to do, and then continuing on in that road, we then have with us that Spirit that is sent from on high which is the outstanding feature of the gospel. This is the Comforter sent directly from God in answer to His

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you."—St. John 14:16, 17

It is possible to receive communication from God to man, and this is the outstanding feature of this great restored gospel. Through one of His inspired men Christ said: "Behold, I am in your midst but you cannot see me, even Jesus Christ . . . but the time will come that the day of darkness will be lifted and ye shall see me and know that I am."

Brothers and Sisters, if you accept the gospel of Jesus Christ and try to the best of your ability to be obedient to it, you won't have to wait for the veil to be cleft to where you can see the Master with the naked eye in order to comprehend the truthfulness of the fact that He truly lives, and that He is concerned about you and me, and the affairs of nations, and particularly about the affairs of His kingdom here upon earth. And I believe that you and I are members or subjects of that kingdom.

Two Kinds of Security

I want to speak to you about the word "security". We are living in one of the most marvelous times of all history—a time toward which the prophets of old looked and which they longed to see. You and I don't know why we were born in this era and are privileged to live in one of the greatest eras in all history from the standpoint of increased scientific knowledge. Yet in spite of all this increased knowledge there is more breakdown of law and order and more disregard and disrespect for human rights and more disrespect for God than has ever been in the history of the world, unless we might say during the dark ages when the scriptures were fulfilled which said:

"Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."—Amos 8:11, 12

Even in this great enlightened time, men who will

reject the gospel can wander in just as much darkness as they did in the dark ages when they were thirsty and hungry for the word of the Lord and they couldn't find it. But today, if you hunger and thirst after righteousness you **shall** be filled, for that famine spoken of by Amos was broken by the restoration of the gospel. But it is necessary to develop that hunger and that thirst. I would say that this reunion is one of the times when there is evidence of a hunger and a thirst for righteousness. Many of you have traveled great distances—many miles in order to meet here with a handful of humble people assembled in this little old chapel right down here on Harvard Street in Phoenix, Arizona. You have come with a hunger, and a thirst and a desire in your hearts to worship the Master. In this way we become a "peculiar people" as we are told we should be. Peculiar means that which is different from the general run of the flock. If you have a desire to have Jesus Christ in your hearts you are different from the run of the flock.

There are those who profess to a desire of these things and make a great show of it—perhaps by being obedient to the commandment regarding the sabbath day, and yet go out immediately from the sabbath day and forget the other commandments. Yet they believe they are righteous. They believe they are "saved." The gospel of Christ teaches that we are never saved until we have finished the course. Though there isn't time to quote them here, the scriptures fully vindicate the position that no man has finished the course until he meets the Master face to face, and the question is put to him: "What did you do while you were upon earth?" What would be your answer if we were asked this question today? Would it be such that it would assure us salvation?

The security to be had in this great day and age is not in worldly things and not necessarily a physical security. We are living in a time when we cannot, in safety, walk the streets of our cities at night even in a friendly neighborhood. If we should cut out of one of our daily newspapers all the things that point to the wicked condition of this world today we would have better than half of the paper in our hands. One of the newspaper stories noted recently was a case in Tucson where some people were found melting coins and they had several hundred thousand dollars in U. S. coins. But even though the officers found this definitely going on (and it's a federal offence) the offenders were turned loose just because the arresting officers failed to knock before entering! Such technicalities of the law used to protect law breakers are beginning to become a common thing. I heard one of our recent presidential candidates elaborating on some of the numerous situations where men had positively been proven murderers yet were turned loose because some shrewd lawyer found a technicality in the law to turn them loose. That's the kind of a day we are living in—a time when you are not secure as far as your physical being is concerned and as far as that which you might possess in the way of worldly things is concerned.

But you are living in a day when you can have the greatest security—real security—that has ever been had in the lives of men and women. You can have that Comforter that the Master promised to send to His apostles, and He didn't confine it to the apostles only. But He told them to go out into the world and preach this gospel to all nations, and He promised:

"... and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Matthew 28:19, 20

That Spirit, that Comforter, comes to every individual who obeys the commandments: faith in God, repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands by the elders who have been chosen for this holy ordinance. Then it is that we too receive that same spirit, that was promised to the apostles. And what is that great Spirit? It is called the Spirit of truth that will lead you into all truth, and the Master of men has said that when you are led into all truth and keep His commandments that the truth will make you free. Now that's security—true security! It is the kind that even though a man should fall to the earth with the life taken from his body yet would he be secure. It is appointed to every man, woman and child once to die, and that refers to the physical body but not the soul. It's the soul I'm speaking about, and the soul can have security through all the chaos—through all the destruction that is going to come upon this earth. We need to pray for the strength to be able to serve regardless of the physical pain that may come to us in this life.

There are instances in which God's servants have been miraculously preserved from harm and even death, as was demonstrated in Biblical times in the case of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, three of God's servants who submitted to the heat of a fiery furnace rather than serve pagan gods and worship a man-made golden image. Though the intense heat destroyed the men sent by the wicked king to throw them into the furnace, yet Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were seen walking, unharmed, within the furnace, and a fourth person whose form was "like the Son of God" was seen walking with them. (Daniel 3:10-25)

I believe that those men in the fiery furnace had security—the highest brand of security—and they came out without even the smell of smoke on their garments. Now I am not trying to say that all who are obedient to Him will always receive protection of the physical body. There are many martyrs to the cause of truth. But I am trying to say that the Master set a peace and a strength in the hearts of men such as the world cannot give—a peace that will give us strength to endure even if the time ever comes that we be called upon to sacrifice our physical lives rather than deny Christ once we have taken His name upon us. This kind of security we can take with us even to the grave.

Many years ago I heard from this very pulpit, from your pastor when he was just a young man and just called to the ministry—I heard him make this statement: "You are going to die for a cause, so you want to make sure that you die for a righteous cause." You will either

die with shackles and chains or the flaxen cord as spoken of in the Book of Mormon which leads slowly down to Hell—you either die with that around your neck, or you will die with the chains that bind you to righteousness—that bind you to a cause where you can die without a murmur, even with a smile upon your face, as did the Christians who were thrown to the lions and burned at the stake. This is possible and this is real security. Remember, the choice is yours in obtaining this kind of security. Here are some words of wisdom to that end:

“The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understand; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels; To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother;”—Proverbs 1:1-8

Unfortunately, there are many today who cannot say, “I have had discipline in my home as a child where my mother and my father directed me as to what was right and wrong or punished me when I persisted in doing wrong.” But the scriptures lay this responsibility upon parents. If you are fortunate enough to have had a Christian mother and father—not necessarily perfect parents—but those who taught you the way of life, if not by word of mouth, at least by example, then you are truly blessed. How fortunate, indeed, are those whose parents have not been off to some night club or somewhere in great sin while their little children wandered somewhere on a darkened street, not knowing what to do with themselves. This is a common thing today.

In Solomon's words the teachings of good parents “. . . shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.” Some of us might say: “I don't want any chains about my neck!” But it depends on whether the chains are leading us to evil or restraining us from evil. This difference is pointed up in my own personal experience as a boy. My father and my mother taught me the principles of the gospel, both by words and by example which is louder than words. Because of that teaching, when the temptations common to man were thrown at my feet, as a young man, there were chains about my neck so strong I couldn't burst them—chains that caused me to refrain from accepting and partaking of many of the things which, if I had partaken of them, would have utterly destroyed me, as far as the spiritual is concerned.

These are the chains I refer to and they are the chains Solomon referred to—chains around the neck which restrain from evil. If those who may have deprived of parents who taught them the right way—

parents who did not place chains of understanding restraint about their necks—there is yet a way of hope. Just one little step in the right direction when you have by chance come in contact with His Spirit, and the Lord be your mother and your father and will lead you step by step into greater spiritual things.

Recently I had a talk with a young man, a student of philosophy, psychiatry and other advanced studies. He told me the following story, though he, himself, did not advocate such methods as he related. He said there was a man who was having an affair with a neighbor woman—an illegitimate affair, and he had a desire not to do these things but it just seemed that he didn't have the strength to refrain. He went to a psychiatrist who prescribed this treatment: There was held up before the patient a large picture of the woman involved and at the same time he was given an electric shock hard enough to be painful. This was repeated time and time again, the theory being that sooner or later he would associate the woman's pictured face with the pain and would no longer desire her associations and would refrain from his evil ways. According to the story the man was cured. But that is not the way the Lord prepared for us to refrain from evil. By such a method as the one prescribed, the human mind and the human individual—the crowning glory of God and made in his image, and a little lower than the angels,—by such a method, man is put in the same category as the lower animals. That method is one used to train animals—the shock method. But that is not the way the Lord intended for us to be guided into righteousness—that everytime we saw something of evil somebody would give us an electric shock that would cause to associate this thing with the pain so that we wouldn't want to do those things any more.

Remember the verse from I Corinthians quoted above in which we were assured that there was no temptation that will come to us except that which is common to man and that He has prepared a way of escape. What and where is it?

A Way of Escape

The Master Himself said, in that great prayer which He commanded us to use over the bread and the wine, that if we do these things in the proper manner we would remember Him, and in remembering, would have His Spirit to be with us. With that Spirit of Christ with us there is no power on earth or Hell that can defeat us.

This is verily a way of escape. It's not the electric shock system but it is one divinely provided for those who have entered the kingdom. And this doesn't mean that the Lord is not interested in those who have not entered the kingdom. If the Master had no use for the sinner don't think you and I would have much of a chance. But He did love the sinner. He does love the sinner. He does not compromise with sin, yet He still reaches out His hand day by day to those who are in sin.

“. . . though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as

white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—Isaiah 1:18 And how may this cleansing be done? Only through obedience to the gospel, step by step. Once having accepted the gospel it is necessary to keep your feet on the straight and narrow path and cling to "the rod of iron" which is the word of God. If you turn loose of that rod of iron—when you rely on your own strength—it is impossible to remain in that straight and narrow path.

The Master remembers in particular the members of His kingdom here upon earth. When they have received that Spirit which is called the Holy Ghost, which is the Spirit of truth that leads to all righteousness, they have no need to fear.

". . . Whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil."—Proverbs 1:33

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me."—St. John 14:1

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—St. John 14:27

Those promises and invitations are for the children of His kingdom and we don't need to be afraid of things coming on earth. His comforting Spirit will see us through. And if, tomorrow, we experience the natural deterioration of the human body that sends us to the grave—yet in the gospel of Jesus Christ there is such security that in it there is no sting. As Paul so dramatically expressed it:

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—I Corinthians 15:55

Even if we might someday, in some way, die a violent death, what difference does it make? There is just one time to die, and we do not need to fear if we have drawn upon our resources in such a way that **security** is written across the book of life under our name. The righteous are the only ones who will have such peace of mind as this.

While Jesus was once telling His disciples of some of the things to come in the future, He said to them:

"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."—St. John 16:33

Yes, Christ overcame the world, and His people can overcome it too, if only they acquire, through righteousness, the attribute of endurance—if only they seek and find and follow "The Way." And what is that way? Here are Christ's words:

"Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest;

and how can we know the way? Jesus said unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."—St. John 14:1-6

We, like Thomas, may ask: "Lord, what is the way?" The answer is clear: "I am the way, the truth, and the life."

Almost without exception, including Christ Himself, a violent death was the fate of His first chosen apostles, and this because they defended the gospel of Jesus Christ in the face of all odds. But they died with peaceful minds and hearts, and with the conviction that the true meaning of security transcends its physical meaning.

It is my desire that you and I will be able to so conduct ourselves in this life that no matter in what conditions we may pass from this life that we might know that true security and that peace of mind experienced by these early Christian martyrs or by those who were thrown into the fiery furnace. I hope there will be within us that power that comes from on high—that power which Christ alone can give which will enable us to stand, and if necessary, draw our breath with His name on our lips.

Here is another of Christ's invitations—an invitation and a promise of **security** and peace and everlasting life:

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."—Revelation 3:19-22

THE ROD OF IRON

Sermon by Elder Hubert E. Yates, Phoenix, Arizona,
February 9, 1969.

(Rearranged from transcribed tape)

The scripture I start with this morning is nothing new. You have heard it before, nevertheless it is just as beautiful today as it has been all through the periods of time from the very day it was uttered from the Master's mouth.

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock."—Matthew 7:24

Another scripture that goes hand in hand with the above words of the Master is from one of the prophets who lived upon this continent. They too, the Nephites, and the Lamanites, had prophets. The Lamanites were the people you and I know today as the Indians. They too, like the many others we find in Biblical history, when they were moved upon by the power of God Almighty, stood and delivered those things which were meet for the salvation of the souls of man. Here are some of those words:

"And he hath power given unto him from the Father, to redeem them from their sins, because of repentance; therefore he hath sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of the repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls.

"And now my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation, that when the Devil shall send forth his mighty winds; yea, his shafts in the whirlwind;

"Yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you, to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless woe, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build, they cannot fall."—Helaman 2:73-75

These are beautiful words but the most important thing about them is that they are true. They have rung forth from the very beginning of time, to those who have yielded themselves to the subjection of the law of God, and have gone forth with the desire to be obedient to those laws, and the examples He left for us that we might have eternal life in the kingdom of God. Why do we need this foundation in our lives? The answer is hidden in this clipping from a recent issue of The Arizona Republic:

"Girl Found Dead of Pistol Wound"

"Mary Agnes Hall, 20, of 1745 Lynn Lane, last night was found fatally shot in her bedroom in what Phoenix police said was an apparent suicide.

"Detective Wally Senn said Miss Hall, an Arizona State University student, was shot with a .357 magnum revolver which was found near her body. Senn said the girl's parents said she had been despondent for several months."

When we were sitting and waiting out the long minutes and hours to hear of the recovery of our Brother Al Voochies who sits with us here today,—there in the waiting room of Good Samaritan Hospital I picked up a copy of *Parent Magazine* for January, 1969. In it I found a startling report of suicide in our nation today. I quote from that article:

"During the most recent year for which statistics are available more than 10,000 people under the age of 24 took their own lives, and almost five times that many made unsuccessful attempts at suicide. Of the boys and girls that took their own lives, 4,000 were between the ages of 15 and 19, and 550 under 14 years of age. During the past ten years the suicide rate among boys and young men has increased 40%, and for young girls it has gone up nearly a third. It is the second leading cause of death among those 19 to 24, and third leading cause of death in the 15 to 19 year-olds.

"Girls make twice as many suicides attempts as boys, yet nearly three times as many boys actually kill themselves. The ratio is the same among the older males and females."

Can you comprehend such tragic statistics? That's

why I read to you today of that rock without which when the winds come and the rains descend a man cannot stand. That man who builds upon sand, or the precepts and knowledge and the poor understanding and wisdom of man will fall.

We ask ourselves many times, "What's the matter with our young people?" I'd like to ask, "What's the matter with the mothers and fathers?" The mothers and fathers are supposed to teach the young people. They are the ones who are supposed to lead the young toward that rock of salvation that they can stand above all things! That is the most important thing in the parent's life, to lead that individual, that small soul, to lead him to the position that when the world comes and confronts him that he can stand.

I asked for the song, "We Have an Anchor," to be sung this morning. "We have an anchor that keeps the soul, steadfast and sure while the billows roll. Fastened to the rock that cannot move . . ." Yes, that rock that was spoken of by the Master, the gospel of Jesus Christ which an individual can stand on and overcome **all** obstacles of life, and fear none. Upon this rock man can, with a surety, place himself in a position that God Almighty shall stand with him as a keel and give him the power that he might stand and testify of the love and the goodness and the tenderness of the very Master Himself.

Remember Helaman's words: ". . . because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build, they can not fall."—Helaman 2:75

Go back to the very beginning of time and the rock, or the laws that were given unto man were transgressed in Adam, and so by Adam man fell, but through the Lord Jesus Christ man lives and stands once again erect before the world.

All through the periods of time we find those individuals small or great in stature as to physical being, yet no matter how small or strong that physical being may be it can be a powerful giant as it goes forth with the influence of the power of God. And no matter how strong and how large you may have developed your physical being, without that source of power, you are in weakness and you cannot stand. The Lord knew this when He said that out of weakness man can be made strong, but only in Him. Not in the precepts of man. But in Him.

Look at our school systems today. We can't have prayer in the schools any more, but they can teach that there's no God. Our children can't be taught in our public schools of the supreme power of the very Being who created us and breathed into us the very breath of life which we are taking this day as we sit in these seats. No, we can't teach that. Listen to these words of admonition from the Book of Mormon:

"For if ye would hearken unto the Spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray: for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray."—II Nephi 14:11

Yes, the evil spirit teaches man that he should not pray; that he should not have any communication with the only source that can sustain the spiritual and physical being. Now the 12th verse from the above chapter:

"But behold I say unto you, that ye must pray always, and not faint; that 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."

That's only one step. If we take God away from our children or from ourselves, what do we have? What have you and I given our children? A court of law? It's a mockery today. Racial discrimination? Plundering and burning? Slaughtering one another in the streets? Is that what men, with his great understanding, has to give to his children? Yes, as a matter of fact, it is. We have given the very thing that is unstable—that which is built upon the sand and shall fall, and great shall be the fall thereof. We have built upon the sand, for our children and ourselves. It can't stand.

So we teach in the schools: "No God." And when we get all through with it what do our children have to live for? No wonder they commit suicide. What do they have? What strength can they stand on? The things of God, His rock, are the very things that we must stand on above all other things, in order to have eternal life. What are we doing about it?

Look at this great nation of ours today. As a whole, would this nation vote for something concerning the power of God? Or has this nation turned its back on the very God who founded it? Do we who are here today, when we go about our everyday living, do we turn our back on it? Or are we, as Peter brought out, always willing and able to tell others why we have the hope that is within us? Or have we sought the tangible things of life—possessions which, in many cases, become more important to us than the spiritual things? That's how, all too often, the young people feel, yet they and we must realize, when we see so much suicide, that those tangible things do not bring peace of mind. Worldly things do not give the sustaining power needed to be able to stand above all things, and to go on and have eternal life.

Nothing tangible that we have and support today is going to help us tomorrow, unless it is something that is developed to give to God, that we might use it as an instrument in His hands to carry forth the word of God and to preach salvation unto the children of men. Worldly possessions do not give the peace of mind that Christ can give. They do not give the strength, the rod of iron, to hold steadfast to all things that are true. Earthly possessions will be destroyed in the hereafter anyway. We can't take them with us. But the intangible things of the spirit—these are the things we must develop in the minds of the children, that they may know there is a God and that God has power over all things and that through that power we can have mental rest and peace—a spiritual rest and spiritual

peace that the world and man cannot give and never has been able to give all through the periods of time.

I have here a pamphlet that comes through the mail—a pamphlet that teaches self-hypnosis. Now I will not set myself up as a judge over these things, or say that they do not help certain individuals. I'm not going to say that. We have physicians today who help you and me. That's why we go to them, yet we recognize the fact that there is great physician that rules over all things and His wisdom and His knowledge are over and above the comprehension of man. No earthly physician has ever been able to say to a man who has been dead four days, "Lazarus, come forth!" The people said, "O, he stinketh!" Yet that man walked forth, still clad in his death wrappings. No, even with the great scientific knowledge that man has, it doesn't begin to compare with the knowledge and the wisdom and the power of God.

In this pamphlet hypnosis is called an "ancient art" and the following claims are made for it:

"It can change your way of living, help you develop good health habits, help you break bad habits, help you stop smoking, or smoke in moderation, stop drinking or drink in moderation, do everything the relaxed way, help you overcome nervous tension, help you defeat mental depression and unhappy moods, help you find love, accept love, give love and share love, help you enjoy life, help you control your emotions, and relax away sick emotions such as anger, hate, selfishness, jealousy, vanity and fear, help you overcome feelings of inferiority and attain greater self confidence.

"It can give you a new lease on life, help you get along better with people, help you develop a philosophy of life—that life at its worst is a fascinating experience—that it is wonderful to be alive—that people are basically good—that the world is improving—that we have the right to survive and enjoy life—that we have the right to be happy—that we want, can, must, and will achieve better health, greater happiness and more success."

Yes, it is claimed that this so-called "ancient art . . . may be the answer to the world's problem of achieving peace." That may be true, but here in these two books, the Bible and the Book of Mormon, are to be found a method of learning and obtaining every one of the benefits claimed above. And it's an "ancient art!" It's not modern. It's been given to man in ages past by a loving Father and those who apply it will have peace. His way of life is peace. He said: "I come that men might have life and have it more abundantly." The list of benefits claimed for self-hypnosis are all included in that abundant life offered by the Master in the sacred books, the "ancient art" of the gospel itself. These benefits are not alone through man's efforts. They have been promised and given in all periods of time, long before hypnosis was ever developed or known.

The only way that man can receive these promised benefits—and they are all desirable—is to stand on that foundation or that rock, the word of God. Then can

April, 1969

man receive that peace that's promised, with all its accompanying blessings.

As to the claim that the world is getting better, I would say that the man who makes such a claim is definitely not a Christian. Why? Look at the world. Pick up your newspaper. Look at TV. Read the articles in the magazines. Is the world getting better? Do we call the increase in slaughtering one another in the streets being better? The burning, plundering, killing? Mounting suicide?

O, we want peace. Sure we do, and so we go and argue around a table while men and women and children are dying over there in Asia. While our emissaries haggle at the peace table the killing goes on. Mankind is provided with the means of getting better. We have the knowledge of that rock and that foundation in its truthfulness and its beauty. We have the fulness of the gospel, the fulness of knowledge needed to sustain spiritual life here and in the kingdom of heaven. Through that knowledge and putting it into practice man can stand. Beyond that, this world cannot stand.

Let me illustrate. This small stick (about 8 inches long) which I hold in my hand represents **man**. (Here the speaker held up the stick, then easily broke it in two.) See how easily man, standing alone, is broken? (Here the speaker took up a handful of similar sticks together in a bundle. These also he easily broke in two.) This bundle of sticks represents **men** together, but you see that even with their combined strength they still can be broken. O, it's harder to break **men** than a **man**, but still the **men** can be broken, standing in their own strength. They are broken because they had not the word of God, the rod of iron with them. The scriptures tell us that the rod of iron is the doctrine, the teachings of Jesus Christ, the word of God.

(At this point the speaker produced a small but strong metal rod.) Neither the one man nor the group of men had with them this rod of iron. That's why they were so easily broken. Now see this. (Here the metal rod representing the word of God was placed with the bundle of sticks representing men. The speaker handed the rod-enforced bundle of sticks to a young man on the front row of seats before him.) David, here is that group of men **with** the rod of iron. Break it. (David tried, unsuccessfully.)

You see that David could not break the bundle. See that sustaining power of the word of God? See the foundation that man must build upon? See the foundation that we must teach our children? Do you? Just as this bundle of sticks cannot be broken when combined with the rod of iron, neither can one man or many men be broken when fortified with the rod of iron, the word of God.

By holding fast to that rod of iron with the spirit of God Almighty, even one man can stand above all things and can have that peace of mind, that love and that joy that this generation is missing, and for the lack of it are taking their own lives in staggering numbers.

What's the matter with the Christian people? We've been too neglectful. We haven't taught the way of life, the sure foundation that leads to peace of mind. If we had there would be no self-hypnosis needed or desired.

The Apostle Paul emphasized the spiritual versus the carnal, and as I read it to you I want you to see where you stand, what part you are taking. Is it a spiritual one or is it carnal?

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh;

"That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."—Romans 8:1-6

These things have been brought to our attention down through the generations of time. Which shall we choose, the carnal or the spiritual? Death, or life and peace?

In the Book of Mormon we find that Nephi had been pouring out his heart to the Lord and telling him that he had been a sinful man. Yet he knew that through Him he could have the strength and the power to overcome all things. Here is part of Nephi's prayer:

"O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee for ever.

"I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh.

"Yea, cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, or maketh flesh his arm.

"Yea, I know that God will give liberally to him that asketh.

"Yea, my God will give me, if I ask not amiss: therefore I will lift up my voice unto thee; yea, I will cry unto thee, my God, the rock of my righteousness.

"Behold, my voice shall for ever ascend up unto thee, my rock and mine everlasting God. Amen."—II Nephi 4:61-66

Here Nephi recognized the fact that the carnal minded individual does not stand for we cannot put our trust in the arm of flesh. He recognized the fact that it is only through the power of God and His righteousness and His rock that man can do the things that will give him life eternal.

In our great knowledge today we send rocket ships to the moon. We go all over the world with

power so devastating that we can kill millions of people by the press of a button. Yes, scientific knowledge has increased as time has gone by, and we have developed a little instrument called the compass with which, when we go out upon the sea, whether in beautiful clear weather or in a fog so thick you can hardly see your hand in front of your face, we can navigate so that we can reach the harbor in safety. Many times when I was in the service I have had to rely on that very small pointer to bring me safely home through a storm so foggy I couldn't see the course.

Life is, many times, just exactly that foggy. But man has not yet learned to accept that pointer which points to the safety of righteousness—that pointer—that rock of salvation which was given to us by the Lord Jesus Christ. But by making use of that pointer man can obtain peace of mind and peace of soul that is even beyond his very comprehension. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27

This is that pointer which leads an individual to stand on that rock of salvation that the mental strain of this world today will be as naught. We need to realize that it is only through God, not hypnosis, not through man's ideas or precepts, that we may obtain peace. The scriptures tell us that man's wisdom is foolishness unto God. He says that man cannot even comprehend those things that are in store for him if he but holds fast to the rod of iron, His word, and lives for it.

We find in this ancient record, (the Bible, these life-giving scriptures), what's going to happen tomorrow, and if 40% of our young people are doing away with their lives now, what about the time when they shall pray for the rocks to fall upon them because they had not been obedient to the gospel of Jesus Christ? What about that time? And that's coming! How would you feel if your child went out and prayed for the rocks to fall upon him? You might live to see it, for just as sure as past prophecies have been fulfilled, this one will be fulfilled also.

If we will ask for the power to overcome the obstacles and the delusions all about us we will receive it. If we will do as the words of the beautiful song the young people sang for us this morning, and truly say, "All to Thee my blessed Savior I surrender all," and if we teach our children by word and by example that we truly surrender all, they won't be committing suicide. They will look upon life with joy. They will have within their hearts, even if there is tribulation and worry, this assurance: "Fear not for I am with you."

In the third book of Nephi are these comforting words:

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

"In righteousness shalt thou be established; thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee.

"Behold, they shall surely gather together against thee, not by me; whosoever shall gather against thee shall fall for thy sake."—III Nephi 19:21-23

If we and our children keep the way of the Lord we will have the sustaining power to stand in any crisis. No matter what confronts us we can boldly say: I know that there is a living God and that He sent His only begotten Son to this earth and that God's word gives me a rock upon which I can stand, and that through obedience to His law and following Christ's example I may achieve peace of mind and can inherit a place which He says He has prepared for me in His kingdom.

GOSPEL DIMENSIONS

By
Evalena Sills

The word "gospel" like many other words has a number of definitions. The basic and simplest definition is "good news" or "good tidings." With this definition in mind, what are the gospel's limitations, if any? What part of man's life and his activities are encompassed by the gospel, and what part, if any, excluded?

As we ponder these questions, let's think of the vast knowledge man has acquired through the use of the telescope. The heavens have been studied and charted; planets and their satellites discovered, and measured. Their distances from the earth and the relationship of one planet to the other are known. The habits of the planets are observed, recorded, and in the case of some of them, their future behavior accurately predicted.

A few years ago it was my privilege to look through the powerful lens of the great telescope at Mt. Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, and to see the planet Saturn in her pale yellow beauty, surrounded by a ring of three concentric circles, a sight puzzling to Galileo back in 1610, and known to ancient astronomers long before that. This magnificent view of Saturn is only one of many revealed to man through his invention and use of the telescope, and, recently, through the use of rockets, space ships, and cameras.

The prophet Amos said: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:6) And so it has been. Through His prophets both in Biblical and Book of Mormon history, God has spread before man, as through the powerful lens of a telescope, a panoramic view of all the important events of history from the creation of the world to the hour of his triumphant return to earth, and beyond. This divine prophecy with its knowledge of eternal truths affecting the salvation of man is no small part of that vast accumulation of "good tidings" we know as the gospel.

It was through such wonderful telescopic prophecy that Christ's advent on earth was known hundreds of years before His birth. They foretold the name of the town in which He would be born; the approximate time

of His coming; that He would be born of a virgin, and that His name should be called Jesus. His mission on earth was foretold, as were His death and resurrection. Having seen all these various parts of that prophecy fulfilled, the promise of His second coming, yet to be, and the establishment of His permanent kingdom with the righteous of all ages as His redeemed subjects, gleam with greater brilliance than any of the heavenly bodies visible through a powerful telescope or photographed from a space ship. What a comforting and glorious part of the "good news" this is!

The rise and fall of nations was prophetically foretold, and written down. Though wicked men sought to destroy them, these records were miraculously preserved for coming generations, that man might know and revere their all-knowing, all-powerful God.

Also foretold in prophecy, like the sights in a powerful telescope, was the rise and fall of the primitive church which Christ established in Palestine; the wickedness which crept into it and increased until its complete rejection; the long night of spiritual darkness, followed by the new day when the "good tidings" would dispel that darkness and His church would again be established, never again to be removed from the earth. These important vistas of telescopic prophecy are only a part of the vast grand total making up the whole of gospel "good tidings."

But life is made of more than world-wide events taking place in the nations of the earth spread out between the expanse of oceans. Life includes the little events of one's personal life. Does the "good news" include them?

Just as man's knowledge has been increased by the use of the telescope, so also has the microscope revealed form of life he could never have seen the with the naked eye. Through the use of the microscope, worlds of living, moving, reproducing, minute forms of life hitherto unknown to man have been discovered, some of them favorable to human life and some of them equally deadly. Through this knowledge, limited though it still is, man has developed methods of fighting his microscopic enemies and thereby saving countless human lives. Also he has learned to cultivate and to make use of the beneficial forms of microscopic life.

Where do the little things in man's life fit into the "good news" story? Nothing is really small, except by comparison to something larger and the daily events of our personal lives may be called small only in comparison to world events. And just as the knowledge obtained via the microscope has been used to save human life and to assure man of better living conditions, so also is the divinely-given knowledge pertaining to the behavior of men and women able to save the soul and to enrich and extend their earthly lives as well as to assure life everlasting.

The personal problems of our daily existence are of tremendous importance to us and to our Creator, and the "good tidings" encompass them all.

The principles of the gospel—faith, repentance, baptism, etc., each to be accepted and incorporated into each individual life, are provisions established for us by our Heavenly Father who numbers the very hairs of one's head, and sees the sparrow's fall. He promises and sends His Spirit to see us through the little problems of daily living. He invites us to "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." (Matthew 7:7) Each individual is heir to His wonderful promise: ". . . and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." (Matthew 6:18)

The omnipotent creator and sender of the "good news" sees and knows the minutest concern of the humblest individual, knows the unspoken thoughts of his mind or the expressed desire of his heart. He records them and sets into motion inexplicable forces to reward and bless all who come to him in humility, faith, and worthiness.

Just as God, we are told, has no beginning nor end, even so the gospel, the "good tidings" has no limits. It is all inclusive, all encompassing. By prayerfully studying the great prophecies of the scriptures, and noting the clear fulfillment of many of them, our mental vision will see and understand the numerous prophecies yet to be fulfilled. We will see that the time of the end is near. We will see the place that His little "remnant" is to fill in the closing days. It will increase our faith and enable us to reach the limitless heights of the gospel and to sharpen our awareness of the immortality of the soul.

Gospel dimensions? The gospel is wider than the world is wide, higher than the expanse of vision through the most powerful telescope ever built, deeper than the usual concept of man's mind, yet near enough that each child of God can reach out and touch it. Through individual prayer and righteous living each one, young or old, can establish divine contact and thereby solve in the very best way possible life's simplest problem or its greatest. Each one can explore its vast spectrum of gifts and duties, and thereby claim in this life that "peace that surpasseth all understanding" and finally qualify for the priceless heritage of eternal life, through the Divine Giver of that limitless array of telescopic and microscopic "good tidings"—the gospel of the kingdom.*

*If any reader is unfamiliar with the gospel and perhaps puzzled about some of the generalization or terms used in this article, I am sure that any minister of the Church of Christ, either local, or at headquarters, Independence, Missouri, will be glad to help you.—E.S.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me him will my Father honour" (John 12:26).

"COME, LET US REASON TOGETHER"

By Apostle William Anderson

Reprinted from the Zion's Advocate

February 1932 Issue.

A little over a hundred years ago, a young lad became interested in religion during a revival that was being carried on in his locality. Confusion arose which resulted in the young man turning to the Bible for direction, and while reading therein he came across the statement of James as found in the 1st chapter and 5th verse, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." The language of the Apostle of old carried conviction to the soul of the lad, and he took the man of God at his word and repaired to a quiet place and betook himself to prayer.

There were in the world at that time various religious beliefs, each claiming to be the right way. The lad wished to know which of these churches he should unite with, as he was desirous of knowing the right way. Imagine his surprise when he was informed by a heavenly messenger that he should join none of them, as their creeds were wrong, but that if he would be faithful God would use him as an instrument to bring forth to mankind the gospel as it was taught in the days of Christ. He was warned to be careful, as Satanic forces would try to destroy him.

He went to the ministers of his time, and told them of his heavenly messenger and the advice received, and was immediately made aware of the truth of the heavenly message; for, from that time efforts were made to destroy this lad. His message was unpopular, and persecution was heaped upon him. It was one boy against a world.

He was told by the messenger that he must not listen to the persuasions of men. Time passed and finally there were delivered into the hands of the boy by an angel some gold plates on which was recorded not only the history of a people who one time flourished on this land, and God's dealings with them, but the fullness of the gospel; and a description of the Church of Christ was contained therein.

None of the creeds of that day measured up to that which was outlined on the plates, or in the New Testament.

The young man was told that he was to establish the church according to the things which were written on the plates of gold and in the New Testament. Reading from one of the early admonitions to the young man and two others who had associated themselves with him, we find: "Wherefore you know that they are true (words of Book of Mormon); and if you know that they are true, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written concerning the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock; wherefore, if you shall

build up my church upon the foundation of my gospel, and my Rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you."—Doctrine and Covenants 16:1; Book of Commandments 15:3.

There was a need of a return to the ancient pattern. Man had "perverted" the gospel and changed it to his own way of thinking, and the Church of Christ was not in evidence. The pure gospel was not being taught.

Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer were instructed how to proceed to organize the church, and that their instructions would be in the record translated, and if they would build according to that "which was written the gates of hell would not prevail against them.

Dear reader, will you allow us to lift the curtain on those days and view the work done in the light of history? Let us lay aside all preconceived ideas, and face this matter honestly.

If those men followed the instructions as outlined and lived true to the principles of right, then we should find the promise fulfilled. Let me first call your attention to that which was written. I will cite you to certain Scripture and thus conserve space: Mark 3:13, 14; Luke 6:12, 13; Matthew 10:12; I Corinthians 12:27, 28; Ephesians 4:11. Turning to the Book of Mormon: 3 Nephi 5:22, 43, 45; 7:13; 4 Nephi 1:15, 16. These Scriptures will at least give us a meager outline as to how the Church of Christ was established under his direction on two continents.

The instruction given to the three above named men was to build according to that which was written. Did they so build? Turn to Book of Commandments 14:10, 11, Doctrine and Covenants 16:3. Oliver and David were called to be apostles and in Book of Commandments 42:44; and Doctrine and Covenants 5:6 we find that others were to be selected as apostles. Read also the 7th and 35th verses of Book of Commandments. Thus we see that the instruction given were in accord with that "which was written" in the records they already had, not what they were to receive.

They were instructed to choose twelve, but time passed and that instruction went unheeded, and man again began to inject his ideas, setting aside the ways of the Lord. The Twelve were not chosen.

Several months passed and on the 6th day of April, 1830, a few men met in a private home and proceeded to organize the church in their way, and a certain time Joseph Smith allowed himself to be designated as a Prophet, Revelator, and Seer to the church, thus limiting God to a one man mouthpiece, a thing that there is no precedent for in scripture; and from that time changes and departures were made from that outlined in "that which was written." Joseph Smith eventually, in 1834 was made president of the high priesthood, which later developed into presidency of three, (See Times and Seasons vol. 5, pp. 611, 624; Church History, vol. 1, pp. 247 and 429). The church at that time numbered into the thousands, yet 62 people brought into existence the highest judicial tribunal in the church.

A presidency was established in 1834, and as yet the instruction to select Apostles had not been heeded, "God set in the church, first apostles." Joseph Smith changed the order and set first a Presidency, himself being the president, not "according to that which was written" surely. The persuasions of men entered in, and they strayed from the path outlined, and nothing but disaster could be expected.

The Lord appealed to them from time to time and asked them to return to the pattern outlined, but no heed was paid to those appeals; and not until 1835 were apostles chosen and set in the church, they being sub-ordinant to the Presidency. Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer had been called to be apostles in 1829, yet they never occupied in the quorum, nor did they have anything to do with the selecting of the Twelve.

Turn and read the 8th paragraph of the 83rd section of Doctrine and Covenants. This revelation was given in 1832, and the Lord told them that even then their minds had become darkened because of unbelief, and the treating lightly of the things they had received, and the whole church was under condemnation as a result, and would continue under it until they would repent and believe the new covenant the Book of Mormon and the former commandment not only to say but to do; otherwise a scourge would be poured out upon them and they would be scattered. But read it.

Their minds were darkened, in 1832. A darkened mind is a condition that would give the Satanic forces their opportunity, and if after events prove anything at all, it proves that the Lord did not direct all their ways, for in twelve years from that time the church was broken up into factions, each claiming to be the only and true custodians of the priesthood, and the gospel, thus a number of creeds grew out of that which was to have been the means of pointing mankind to God and demonstrating that Christ was sent of God. Each of these factions have through the years denounced the other as apostates, and loud in their proclamation of successorship, and bolstering up their individual creeds, I wonder if there is not about as much or a little more confusion among so-called believers of the Restoration as there was when the boy, Joseph, went into the woods to pray for light as to which of the sects he should join? Can it not be said of latter-day Israel, as was said of Israel of old? "Even from the days of your fathers ye have gone away from mine ordinances and have not kept them." Malachi 3:7. Read Doctrine and Covenants 63:4, 98:5, 102:2.

The early church (1830 to 1844) had gone away from the ordinances of the Lord. In other words they failed to follow the instructions given, and in accordance with the warning in Doctrine and Covenants 83:8, disaster followed.

So the various factions that sprang up out of the wreckage, built their various churches on the pattern laid down by Joseph Smith, and not according to that "which was written" before 1830.

Surely in the confusion of conditions as they exist in that which is known as the restoration, there is need for God to speak some place. "But to whom shall I speak?" is the question raised by the Master through Joseph Luff. The two major factions of the Restoration claim they have the God-appointed mouthpiece. Yet surely the Lord would not use either of them seeing that they are not only at variance with that which is written, but also at variance with each other, each group standing out for their own prophet, and refusing to take that which might come through the other. There is only one way out of it for the Lord, and that is to go outside of either of those factions and use material he may choose, and in doing so he will hardly be unlike himself. In 1820, he made choice of an obscure lad through whom to carry to the world the message of a Restoration; so in bringing about his purposes today he no doubt would turn to the obscure, as he has done in all ages. Therefore he makes choice of the obscure people on the Temple Lot to bring about the uniting of His people. In a revelation given to the Church of Christ in 1919 we find the Lord tells them that their work is to gather together in one, all of his sheep scattered on the face of the earth, and like little Joseph who was carried off into Egypt they would be the means of saving their brethren. Dear reader, you may scoff at that, and make light of it, but in so doing you are only following in the footsteps of those who persecuted the boy of 1820 and subsequent years.

In 1863 the Lord spoke to the people of the then Bloomington, Illinois, branch of the Church and told them that he would make known to them their duty toward their brethren, and they were to live humble and keep the commandments. In 1864, they were again spoken to, and told that they were to make ready to move to Missouri in 1867 and that the way would be opened up for them to return. History stands out as to the outcome of that revelation. They did return in 1867. The way was opened up for them, and they purchased the Temple Lot, and have held it through the years, though efforts have been made to wrestle it from them. They have been true to the trust through the years. True, they have remained in obscurity up till the last few years, but God has ever chosen the humble and despised. So he chose the Hedrickites, so-called, and the Temple Lot, as a place of refuge. You, my reader, may scorn the appeal that comes from that people, but be careful, for God has not cast off those who earnestly seek to do his will.

The Church of Christ is the only part of the restoration which does not claim to be the only custodians of the gospel, but rather accepts the council to them, that in all the factions God has a people, and that the task of gathering together in one those who are indeed the people of the Lord, has been given them. It is a super-human task, and one that we realize can not be done without the help and direction of the Lord, and, we ask believers in the Restoration everywhere to join with us in an appeal to God for light and direction in this our

time of confusion, laying aside all man-made ideas, repudiating every error, and with an open mind approach the great God to help us to "return to the old path."

We leave the reader to decide if there is need of unity, not only of the factions, but within any one faction.

All that is claimed by the Church of Christ is that they are an instrument in the hands of the Lord to bring about a unity of all true believers in the Restoration.

"Come unto me and I will give you rest," is still the appeal of the Master.

Do you need rest from the confused conditions as we find them? How many souls are crying out in the hour of distress as it is today, for light and direction? yet they are not willing to let God use whom he pleases through whom to speak. Let God speak through whom he will, and do not limit him to one particular man, and then ask in all humility and earnestness for evidence of the word given.

We say to all believers of the Restoration, if you can trace your baptism back to valid original sources, which have not been made invalid because of errors accepted, we will accept you on that baptism. Others we will accept through baptism.

"Come and let us reason together," has always been the call of the Lord to his people.

Let us search out the errors and cast them aside, for after all it is only truth that counts.

We are living in the time of the end. Perilous times are upon us. We need to unite and establish that place of safety. Come and let us pray together.

SPRINGTIME OF LIFE

By
Alice M. Larsen

On this March day, it has been snowing all day with a cold east wind, but the sun shines through the light clouds enough to cast shadows and to melt the snow in sheltered spots. The day seems somehow symbolic of late winter showing promise of spring, that time of the year when we look forward to warmth and new life and growth, and hope of a good harvest.

While I note these natural, earthly things, my mind today is more occupied with thoughts of new life of a different kind—spiritual life. My oldest son, Timothy, has asked and obtained my husband's permission to be baptized into the Church of Christ. Ten years ago he and his sister, June, asked to be baptized. At that time their father thought they were too young to know what they were doing. Now in the springtime of his manhood, Tim has more than the sweet and simple faith of a child; he feels a real need in his life that can only be filled by entering into the covenant of baptism.

This covenant, so plain and simple, that in return for obedience to His laws God will give eternal life and happiness, is so strong and so beautiful! As I contem-

plate this sacred ordinance that symbolizes birth into a new and better life, I think of the words of our Heavenly Father when His Son was baptized, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." I think every parent who loves his or her child must feel that joy when a son or daughter is baptized.

I think most of them realize, too, that this is only a beginning. Temptations and trials do not cease when we have obeyed these first principles of the gospel of Christ, but we have the comfort and added strength which the Holy Spirit imparts to help us resist evil. In Acts 2:38 we read, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

We do not know what trials and pitfalls lie ahead in this life. We do know that no one will be tried beyond his strength to resist. (Read I Corinthians 10:13)

Parents often wish there was some way their children could be spared all pain and trouble, but wisdom shows us this would prevent them from growing. Babies need nourishing food for their bodies, but to grow strong they must also reach, crawl, walk, climb. We must nourish young minds with the teachings of Christ, then they will gain spiritual strength and assurance by overcoming temptations. Each temptation conquered, each difficulty prayerfully surmounted, each decision rightly made, each trial faced and won makes a stronger, happier person.

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (James 1:12)

My prayers go with all of our young people that they may always hold fast to their faith in God, and always know that He will uphold them in doing what is right in any adversity. May the promise of their springtime be realized in their golden harvest.

WAKE UP CAMP

July 11, 12, 13, 1969

For the Young and Young at Heart

REED'S RETREAT

Route 1

Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

(8 Miles North an Irvine Avenue)

Phone 218-586-3661

Bring Camping Equipment

BLESSING

Matthew David Biggs, son of Harvey and Betty Biggs of Okemah, Oklahoma, was blessed under the hands of Apostles Don W. Housknecht and William A. Sheldon December 13, 1968.

BAPTISM

David Foster Ray of Toppenish, Washington was baptized and received the laying on of hands by Apostle Archie F. Bell December 8, 1968.