

Zion's Advocate

"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day, for they shall have the gift of power of the Holy Ghost." — 1 Nephi 3:187.

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No. 4

Consider

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls:

"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation"
(Habakkuk 4:17-18).

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PRAISE YE THE LORD!

Editorial

In the March Editorial we discussed some of the ways in which Satan or his ministers are able to counterfeit the gifts of the gospel. In this section we wish to consider some of the words of God concerning praise. The teachers of Pentecostalism say we should praise God for everything that happens to us, apparently ignoring the fact that some things are Satan caused.

The word of the Lord from the Stick of Judah:

"I will praise the Lord according to his righteousness; and will sing praise to the name of the Lord most high" (Psalm 7:17). Even as the righteousness of the Saints is of God and not of themselves, so should our praise be according to His righteousness. Consider the following:

"I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvelous works. I will be glad and rejoice in thee: I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High" (Psalm 9:1-2).

This scripture shows that our praise is to be to His glory and honor. And if it be to His honor we should be careful what we praise Him for. Nevertheless, how long may we thus praise Him? "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord" (Psalm 104:33-34). Again, "While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being" (Psalm 146:2). "Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever" ("Psalm 145:2). And again, "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34:1).

Who is it that should praise the Lord and how shall it be done? "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright. Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise. For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth" (Psalm 33:1-4). Again, "Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely . . . Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God: . . . Praise the Lord, O Jerusalem; praise thy God, O Zion" (Psalm 147:1, 7, 12). "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the Lord from the heavens: praise him in the heights. Praise ye him, all his angels: praise ye him, all his hosts. Praise ye him, sun and moon: praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens" (Psalm 148:1-4).

Why is praise comely to the upright? Because, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." (Psalm 50:23). Again, "I will praise the name of God with a song,

and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs" (Psalm 69:30-31). To praise God for those things which are not of Him is to attribute those things to Him and thus bring dishonor upon His name.

What then is our acceptable worship to God? "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations" (Psalm 100). "Praise ye the Lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp. For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: **this honour have all his saints. PRAISE YE THE LORD**" (Psalm 149). "Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord" (Psalm 150). "For God is the King of all the earth: Sing ye praises with understanding" (Psalm 47:7).

That there are times when we may not feel in the spirit of praise is indicated by the following: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: **for I shall yet praise him**, who is the health of my countenance, and My God" (Psalm 42:11). The time will come however when all nations shall be brought to praise God. "For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are shown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations" (Isaiah 61:11).

We hear much admonition to prayer and fasting but how often do we hear admonishment to praise? Praise is the result of a joyful heart, one full of thanksgiving to God for His wonderful works. We

should praise God continually in our hearts as well as in our deeds before men. "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing" (Psalm 107:21-22). "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever . . . Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders" (Psalm 107:1 C 32). Again, "Praise ye the Lord. Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise him, O ye servants of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, Praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: Sing praises unto his name; for it is pleasant" (Psalm 135:1-3). Finally, "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord: for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? who can shew forth all his praise?" (Psalm 106:1).

That praise to God is given for blessings we receive is shown from Jeremiah 20:13. "Sing unto the Lord, praise ye the Lord: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers." This praise is elicited because of deliverance from evildoers. The teachers of Pentecostalism reverse this principle to say we praise God for an evil situation before it is removed and that thereby we may find deliverance.

What should be our attitude when we come before the Lord? Consider the following:

"O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. **Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving**, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods" (Psalm 95:1-3).

The Word Of God From The Stick Of Joseph:

"Wherefore, they came unto me and loosed the bands which were upon my wrists, and behold, they had swollen exceedingly; and also mine ankles were much swollen, and great was the soreness thereof. Nevertheless, I did look unto my God, and I did praise him all the day long: and I did not murmur against the Lord because of mine afflictions" (1 Nephi 5:198-199). Nephi praised God, not for his discomforts, but for His goodness to him. The adversity he endured with long suffering. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (1 Peter 2:19-21).

There is an account in the Book of Mormon of Alma and the people which he had baptized in the waters of Mormon being in bondage to the Lamanites. Their burdens were grievous to be borne and in their tribulations they offered many fervent prayers for de-

liverance. Then God heard their prayers and wrought deliverance for them. "And they gave thanks to God, yea, all their men, and all their women, and all their children, that could speak, lifted their voices in the praises of their God" (Alma 11:72). Before their deliverance they were filled with the spirit of prayer; now they were filled with praise and thanksgiving. It is evident from this that they did not feel to praise and sing before their deliverance nor did they praise Him for the bondage they were in when they did begin to offer their praises. It is also apparent that praise and thanksgiving are the result of the mercy and goodness of God to His people. This is illustrated very well in 3 Nephi 4:64. "And their mourning was turned into joy, and their lamentations into the praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord Jesus Christ, their Redeemer." The Jaredites also sang praises for God's goodness to them while they were in the midst of the sea. "And they did sing praises unto the Lord; yea, the Brother of Jared did sing praises unto the Lord, and he did thank and praise the Lord all the day long; and when the night came, they did not cease to praise the Lord" (Ether 3:11).

What did they sing praises unto God for? the evil which had happened to them or the good? for the good surely! "And it came to pass that they did break forth, all as one, in singing and praising their God, for the great thing which he had done for them, in preserving them from falling into the hands of their enemies; Yea, they did cry, Hosanna unto the Most High God; and they did cry, Blessed be the name of the Lord God Almighty, the Most High God. And their hearts were swollen with joy, unto the gushing out of many tears, because of the great goodness of God in delivering them out of the hands of their enemies; And they knew it was because of their repentance and their humility that they had been delivered from an everlasting destruction (3 Nephi 2:78-81).

What of the two following scriptures? "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20). And "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Are we to understand that we are to thank God and rejoice over every thing that happens to us, good and bad? Is this what the Lord intended? Isn't it evident that in offering our praise and thanksgiving to God we do so in the Spirit? What say the scriptures? "And that ye live in thanksgiving daily, FOR THE MANY MERCIES AND BLESSINGS WHICH HE DOTHTH BESTOW UPON YOU" (Alma 16:238).

Now consider James 1:2-4, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Isn't this a strange requirement to lay upon us? Perhaps it may seem so, but 2 Timothy 2:12 tells us, "If

we suffer, we shall also reign with him:" And again, "... if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye:" (1 Peter 3:14). Finally, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:16-18).

Does this mean we rejoice in the temptation or the thing which causes our suffering? or does it mean we are to praise God that we are able to suffer along with Christ unto victory? The latter appears to be the case as we read, "And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name" (Acts 5:41). It is no wonder that we read of such accounts of praise as given to us in Acts 16:19-25, "And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

What were they praising God for? that they had been cast into prison? No, that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ. Since they were in the service of their Lord they followed in the Spirit the command to do all things unto their Lord. "Yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest, let it be in the Lord; yea, let thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord for ever; counsel the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good: Yea, when thou liest down at night, lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the morning, let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day" (Alma 17:69-70). Their joy in the Lord was complete even in adversity. This is true conversion. "Therefore they gave thanks unto the Lord their God: yea, and they did fast much and pray much, and they did worship God with exceeding great joy" (Alma 21:2).

To rejoice in the Lord is enjoined upon the righteous and particularly of the priesthood. "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness" (Psalm 97:12). "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation,

a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Why is this so? "For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods" (Psalm 96:4).

Thus is our joy to be in the Lord. "... let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because defendest thou them; let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee" (Psalm 5:11). We must use care, however, lest we become so carried away in our rejoicing that we begin to boast in our own strength. This is why Aaron was fearful of Ammon's exceeding joy in the marvelous works which the Lord had wrought through them. "Ammon, I fear that thy joy doth carry thee away unto boasting" (Alma 14:90). Therefore "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Psalm 2:11).

Nevertheless praise is greatly encouraged of the Lord. And even as we should pray unceasingly even so should praise be continually in our mouths and hearts. If we do not learn to praise in this life how shall we bring forth praises in the life to come? Wherefore "... he that is found guiltless before him at the judgment day, hath it given unto him to dwell in the presence of God in his kingdom, to sing ceaseless praises with the choirs above, unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost, which are one God, in a state of happiness which hath no end" (Mormon 3:29). What a glorious time it will be.

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

Harvey E. Seibel

BLESSINGS

Brian Travis Argentine, the son of Lawrence Lee Argentine and Elizabeth Jane Argentine, was blessed by Elder Tony Grzincic December 29, 1973 at Toronto, Ohio.

John Vartan Kondroujian, the son of Hmayak Kondroujian and Karen Elaine (Hawley) Kondroujian, and Heather Ann Hawley, the daughter of Harold and Paula Jo Hawley, were blessed by Elder Harold Hawley December 29, 1973 at Mountain View, California.

Jade Esther Johnson, the daughter of Wendell Johnson, Jr. and Judith Ann (Stavlo) Johnson, was blessed by Elder Isaac Brockman at Sparta, Wisconsin February 3, 1974.

John Martin Ice, the son of Charles Everett Ice and Alice (Reed) Ice, was blessed by Elder Arlo Gould December 11, 1973 at Bemidji, Minnesota.

BAPTISM

Debbie Gail Hill, the daughter of Edwin and Vida Hill of Hibbing, Minnesota, was baptized and received the laying on of hands by Apostle Robert H. Jensen February 25, 1974 at Chisholm, Minnesota.

BAPTISM

Miss Debbie Hill of Hibbing, Minnesota was baptized at Chisholm, Minnesota on February 25, 1974, by Apostle Robert H. Jensen. She received the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Spirit at the same time by Apostle Jensen. Miss Hill is a student at the college in Hibbing. She lives with her parents, Mr. Edwin and Sister Vida Hill.

THE REINS

O ! the healing Comfort —
O ! the healing Joy —
as we feel God taking the reins
into His Hands,

His Blest Hands!
"Peace" beyond understanding,
steals by unknown ways
into our troubled hearts!

The reins of shattering grief —
The reins of broken plans —
The reins, scattered ends,
due to our human weaknesses —
Our mess we make when we try
to guide our lives

by ourselves —
Either in "hard" stubborn pride —
or from a sense of
deep responsibility!

The easing Comfort as He gathers
those scattered, broken ends
into His all-knowing Hands!
"Rest" unto our weary spirits!
"Rest" in the "everlasting arms!"

Strengthened and renewed
for each coming day —
knowing His all-watchful Eye
is over all our loved-ones —
That It is over His Work
His Reins, firmly in His Hands!

Darleen Smith

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

NOTE: We solicit articles for this department written in an affirmative manner. An affirmative article is one in which a belief, or an opinion, is expressed, and evidences presented to support that belief.

CONTRIBUTIONS ARE THE OPINION OF THE AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THE TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH OR THE OPINIONS OF THE EDITORIAL STAFF.

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

(All references are from King James)

In our everyday walk of life we often hear statements such as these: that person is a good Christian; that isn't a Christian attitude; that person is not a good Christian; that isn't any way for a Christian to act; and many others pertaining to the word or title "Christian." Each of us can remember hearing statements relating to the word Christian.

So, before going any further, let us analyze the word "Christian." The first five letters signify that it has something to do with Christ. And, from some of my learned friends, I undersand that the "ian" can be defined as "follower of." Also, in the Webster dictionary it refers us to the word "an." Among its several definitions we will choose a few and then take each one separately and define each, to see if we can better understand the word "Christian." And in what way we have to direct our lives so that each of us might become one.

As we go along we will delve into the Scriptures to let them further explain the meaning of the word "Christian" and find out what some of the requisites are to become a Christian.

So, getting back to the word "Christian" and using some of the definitions of the "ian" we have, we will continue our search. First, we'll take the meaning "follower of." Using this definition, to be Christian we would have to be a follower of Christ. Here let us note that we believe there is a difference between a follower and a believer. To clarify this thought we will go to the Scripture, James 2:19, "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." But now our question to you is, do the devils follow Christ? So this is where we get our reasoning that there is a difference between a follower and a believer. To follow after someone, such as Christ, we would try to be like Him, make an effort to accumulate some of His attributes. Now let us use the Scripture again, John 13:15; "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Now let us turn to 1 Peter 2:21-24 and continue to find out what kind an example Christ set for us. "For even hereunto were ye called because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

"Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

"Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose

stripes ye were healed." One more example Christ gave: after all the persecutions He was put through, finally going to the cross with the two thieves at His side, He still showed His love for His enemies. Luke 23:34, "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Now, for our next definition of the "ian" in Christian, "one that is of," we are of the family of Christ if we have followed His ordinances. He has specified what we must do. In Galatians 3:27 we are told, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Verse 28 goes on to say, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." We think this should be self-explanatory, so we will go on to the next part of our definition of a Christian.

"One skilled in," in 2 Timothy 2:15-16, "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness." These two passages of scripture show us that we must study to achieve some of the requirements for becoming a Christian.

Now, we go to our next definition, "specializing in." Christ came to this world to save mankind. Matthew 18:11, "For the son of man is come to save that which was lost." 1 Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." So, using these two scriptures for a basis, if we want to specialize in being a Christian one thing we can do is make every effort we can to save our fellowman.

Another definition of "ian" is "characteristics of." Let us use some of the characteristics of Christ in this definition. He was: meek, kind, long suffering, compassionate, humble, obedient to His Father in heaven, loving. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?" (Matthew 5:44-46). An example of the love of Christ is in John 15:12-14, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

Another characteristic of Christ is forgiving; the best example of this is His statement as they were

about to crucify Him in Luke 23:34, "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them: for they know not what they do." Another time He tells us how many times we must forgive. "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). Here we read how many times we are required to be forgiving.

Our next and last definition of the "ian" in Christian is "resembling." First we will use the verse of one of our hymn's #322. "Take Time To Be Holy." The words we have in mind are the ones in the last lines of the second verse, "By looking to Jesus, like Him thou shalt be. Thy friends in thy conduct His likeness shall see." A scripture reference that gives us an idea of what we should do is 1 Timothy 4:12. "Let no man despise thy youth: but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Another reference, Romans 15:5-7, "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus. That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." A final scripture reference, James 5:10-12, "Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."

I believe I have given you some scripture that describes what a Christian should be like. So, when we use the word "Christian" in describing someone we should pause a minute and ask ourselves, "What is a Christian?"

Maybe we have learned that we should use the word Christian with caution. We might consider someone a good Christian who has no desire whatever to come close to Christ. Then again we might think someone is not a Christian; that person might be trying hard to follow in the footsteps of Christ. When we are rendering judgment as to whether a person is a Christian or not there is a scripture to remind us us about judging others. "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again" (Matthew 7:1-2).

I believe that a good definition of a Christian would be "to be like Christ in our thoughts, actions and deeds." To further describe our thoughts we use this scripture, "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 word, this man shall be blessed in his deed. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:22-27).

In our dealings with our fellowman, when we have to make decisions concerning them, I believe we should stop and ask ourselves, "How would Christ react under the same circumstances?"

In conclusion, we hope that in this short treatise we have given each of you a better insight into the meaning of the word "CHRISTIAN" and some of the attributes of a Christian. And, finally, our earnest prayer is that God might bless and aid us each one in our efforts to become better Christians.

Your brother in Christ
Elder Isaac Brockman

An Open Letter:

"THIS IS WHAT WE NEED"
by Hans H. Hansen

It is not victory of the Restoration's religious views over those of all other organized religions, we, as members of the Church of God, must give recognition of the noble and good in all religions. It is this and not our claim of being God's chosen that will draw the world together and bring mankind towards its needed unity.

In the first book of Corinthians, v. 1 of chapter 13, we are given some very good food for thought:

"Though I speak with the tongue of man and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal."

Also, in Ephesians, chapter 4, the 11th through the 13th verses, we are given the active foundation of the gospel:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers: for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

Let us not be lifted up so high on our claim of

uniqueness or supernatural origin and our claim that there are no miracles and not much uniqueness in most other religions. However, because we of the Restoration are unique, we must be the first to take up our cross — not the cross of victory over other religions — but the cross of unity that is stated in Ephesians 4:11-13 and the cross of charity (love) as stated in 1 Corinthians 13:1. Let us offer the hand of fellowship to all who will partake of it freely, but let us not forget that we are God's anointed. We must acknowledge others as being christian also. Let us not judge the christian world harshly, for Christ is coming as an agent for God, at the ending of the days, to judge the world and bring about His Kingdom. I must reemphasize this matter. We must not judge for that is for Christ to do, as the true and lawful agent of God.

Christ commanded that man should "Love his enemies." If we then are to love our enemies, are we not also commanded to love those who profess to be christians as well? It is not by my authority that I say his, but by the authority and teachings of the gospel as taught by Christ Himself.

We need to have boldness in our teachings; we need to have personality in our teachings, and indeed, we must have a spirit of love, and malice toward none, in our teachings. For Christ said, my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. And we must not forget this. We are also taught by the master that the kingdom of God is within us. Let us not throw off his teaching by rejecting others. We cannot refuse the restored gospel to others because their teachings are different from ours.

Let us keep in mind that, while we are busy telling other christian people what is wrong with them, we must pause occasionally and take a good long look at ourselves. We know there are false prophets in the world, but we cannot reject all other christians because of this fact. However, we will know the true, honest-seeking christian by his fruits. It is not merely knowledge that God restored His church, nor merely a belief or a confirming creed, nor merely saying, "Lord, Lord," that will define us as christians, rather it is our actions, our speech and our daily lives that will identify us as saints of the most high. This is also the code by which we must identify others as christians, or we are vain in our purposes.

Let us offer the hand of fellowship and not be particularly harsh on those outside of our faith. Surely the same God, the same indwelling Spirit, is at work in all. If we would accept more of the living truth and less of the creeds that divide us, perhaps then God could work better within us. Perhaps, then, God would have more room to carry on his purposes with us. Yes, God is truth and truth is God, and this is what we need:

BEWARE THE MIRAGE OF DISCOURAGEMENT

Discouragement is another mind-habit which you

must avoid as you would a poison. Discouragement is a poison — a mental poison. It is the entering wedge of failure.

Maybe you have read or heard the old folk-tale that the Devil once held a sale of all the tools of his trade. There were his daggers of jealousy, his sledge-hammer of anger, his bow of greed, his arrows of lust, and his weapons of vanity, fear, envy and pride — everything was nicely displayed and its price marked upon each tool.

But in the place of honor, framed and set apart from all the rest was a small wedge, dented and marred by use. The name of this wedge was "discouragement," and the price marked on it was higher than the prices of all the other tools put together!

When he was asked the reason for this amazing difference in price, the Devil explained:

"Because this is the one tool that I can use when all others fail. Let me get this little wedge into a man's mind and it opens the way for everything else. That little wedge has opened more doors to me than all my other tools combined!"

Of course, it is sometimes hard to be hopeful in an atmosphere of poverty, ill health and discouragement. But there is not a single advantage in discouragement. There is hope; if we cease to hope we are just about ready to be buried. Hope and Faith, together with a joyous outlook upon the world around us, are leading countless students today to realize personal security and ultimate achievement of their heart's desires. Discouragement is mental suicide. Avoid even its entering wedge.

WE HAVE A CELEBRATION

Yes, we have cause for celebration! At the season of the year just past we can look back across the years to the land of Palestine, to a short span of thirty three years: from the time a little baby was born and laid in a manger bed, through a ministry such as has never been known, to a night in a garden, a cross on a bare and lonely hill, an empty tomb! We can look back to these things, stand in awe and reverence of what we can scarcely comprehend, and eulogize in song and prayer the things He taught and the promises He made. Yes, we can celebrate the wonderful fact of all of this.

Or, we may look ahead to a future day of fulfillment, a day which we dare hope may be very soon, when He will come again to put an end to pain, grief, and suffering, reconciling all things to Himself (and I do emphasize the word all). We can look ahead in anticipation and expectation to the establishment of His Kingdom here upon the earth. A Kingdom where He will reign as King and His government will be peace and joy and love, where there will be no hurting, no

destruction, no death. There will be a great restoration of all things to their perfect order, as it was purposed in the heart of God in the beginning. We will know and love with a perfect love all that we now hold dear. There will be no cause for mourning; all tears, those that wet the face and those that bleed from the heart will be tenderly wiped away. Yes, we can celebrate with a certainty the hope of all this.

Or, at this season we can celebrate, not what happened some nineteen hundred years ago nor what yet lies in the future, but our risen Lord, who, though the Son of the Almighty God, because of love came down and became one of us. A Savior who though ascended into heaven is yet here, present each day with each of us. This is a great miracle, the fact that He is here. That so often we are unaware of Him, that we fail to acknowledge Him, that too many do not know or feel that they need Him, that we do not seek Him with all the heart and thus do not find Him — that is the tragedy.

He is present when the winds of life blow as soft as summer breezes, when the rains are gentle showers, the sun is still shining and the rainbow is clearly visible. He is here when our labors are fruitful, life is good and seems filled with blessing. He is surely here then, for all good things come from Him. Yet, too often when all is well in our affairs we are most prone to forget Him, to fail to celebrate His presence with us.

However, the sun doesn't always shine; storms arise and clouds shroud the shining. Winds blow cold or hot; rains beat down; ice and snow lash with stinging force into our little personal worlds. Darkness gathers and engulfs us; our castles of dreams, our plans and hopes all lie shattered upon the rocks and sands. The threat of tragedy hovers over us, bringing its companion of fear. Death ever stalks the horizon and invariably, eventually strikes. Yet wheresoever we find ourselves He stays by us; He is in the fiery furnace as surely as He is on the sunlit hillside. His love knows no limitations or boundary; we sometimes do not seek and so do not find Him, in our pain any more than we do in our pleasure.

Therefore, let us learn to count our blessings, give thanks, rejoice and praise Him for His great love and faithfulness, greater than the human mind can measure; He will rejoice in our praising.

Yet, if the cross borne upon our hearts be a heavy one we may know with a certainty that He is in it too. He never promised to remove the crosses; we enter the kingdom through tribulation. But He will help carry them, making them lighter and bearable, if we will let Him. Some things He can change, if in His wisdom and knowledge it is desirable and needful to do so; other things, like death, are irrevocable, until that day when He reconciles all things to Himself. In the meantime He is with us; every pain He lets us feel passes first through Him; every pang of grief breaks

His heart before it reaches ours; every time we weep He draws closer and weeps with us. We can't surpass Him, but we can fail to recognize His nearness and so lose the miracle of the peace that passeth understanding."

There are afflictions that refine, fires that purge the dross - let us not ask that He take us from them, or them from us until we have found our Lord real and sharing in them with us. As our mountain-peak experiences are hallowed because of His presence, so are the descents into the depths of anguish when we find that we have not fallen onto the cold stone floor of the chasm, but into the embrace of the loving everlasting arms.

In this we surely have something to celebrate. Jesus lives, He is real. He is as close to each one of us as we will let Him be, for He can only reveal His presence to the soul of one who is open toward Him, seeking, searching to behold Him.

Thus, if you are on some mountaintop of spiritual experience, let the worship, adoration and praise which floods your being be heard. Or, if you are now in the depths of the valley your own personal midnight of Gethsemane, no less treasured by Him will be whatever trembling note of praise you can raise for Him who accompanies you there.

In joy or in anguish, we do have a celebration of praise; Jesus came, He became one of us, He is with us. Praise Him!

LOOKING FORWARD AND BACKWARD

Many years ago, at a time when I did not belong to the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot, I had two dreams not far apart that are still vivid in my mind. I would like to retell them for young people of the church, as they represent my hopes for the future.

1. A dear friend of mine, in whose home I seemed to be visiting said, "Let's go to the Church of Christ." So we did, and found ourselves standing at the front of the church, near the street curb. The church doors were wide open. We could see that inside much activity was going on. Carpenters were busy, sawing, hammering, building up and tearing out woodwork. Wood was being carried in; someone was sweeping out scraps and sawdust.

As we watched I noticed that people were beginning to gather, not far from the church entrance. Others were standing in small groups on the lawn. From farther away other people were beginning to converge from every direction upon the Temple Lot, in large numbers. Just then a Voice spoke, "All these are waiting to come into the church when it is made ready."

Since that time I believe much has been done to prepare a place of comfort and welcome to those discouraged and confused in this time of trouble.

2. Sometime later, I dreamed I was upstairs at the Church of Christ on the Temple Lot. The room was crowded, with many people standing wherever there was room, others coming up the stairs, in the halls and waiting outside. Over all was a most wonderful spirit of peace and great happiness. As old friends found themselves together they smiled and waved. I knew somehow that this was a group composed of people from many parts of the Restored Gospel. They had come from large organizations and small groups, or were individuals who felt themselves in their hearts a part of Christ's Church. A feeling of joy and exultation seemed to lift us above this earth.

Then a Voice filled the room: "The gathering in has begun." A tall, rather young man arose at the pulpit. He had a very sweet smile that seemed to encompass all of us. All eyes were on him as he held out a long sheet of paper and began to read from it. It was a list of all the contributions toward the growth of the church, made by individuals and groups of the Restored Gospel. From this time on, in large numbers, they would work together in unity for the Church of Christ.

I do not remember the words read from the paper, but I have not forgotten the Light and Love in the room at that assembly.

So we like to look forward to the time when the Church of Christ will indeed be a beacon on a hill, beckoning to all who seek the hope of a church home where Christ is the head. We see within the church a great love among the members, a growing unity, and a deep desire to be led by God's will.

As we look forward in hope, so sometimes it seems a good idea to look back, perhaps a long way back, to the beginning of the gospel. We need to review the pattern Christ gave us, in establishing His church and in His teachings for living a righteous life. We can find this in the Bible, the Book of Mormon, and in the earliest commandments given through the seer stone.

We need often to go back to the beginning of the straight and narrow path in which we are to walk. If all church groups stemming from the Restoration Gospel had stayed exactly in the paths of the original teachings of Christ, we might all be walking together today, in unity and great strength. As changes were introduced to the gospel as first given, additions, subtractions, and varied interpretations, it is like a line that seems very close to the narrow path but is not really parallel. And, as time goes on and more innovations are made, such a line inevitably veers off farther and farther from the true path. In some cases it might be hard to recognize its origin.

We all like to sing "The Old, Old Path" written by Vida Smith. In it we learn that we do not walk alone on this sometimes - shadowed way. With us are our loved ones, our dearest friends and Christ Himself, with the angels near.

Some of you may not have heard the origin of this beautiful song. A long time ago at a cottage prayer meeting I attended Vida Smith told this story:

In the night she awoke and the entire words to "The Old, Old Path" came to her. In the morning she talked with her cousin, Audentia Anderson, who had written lovely music before to go with her poems. To her surprise, her cousin said that a melody had come to her in the night. Put together, words and music fit perfectly - a truly inspired song that has been an inspiration and comfort to so many for so long.

An old friend, Catherine Nitz, also wrote inspirational poetry. Here is one that she says she found herself singing as she went about her work one day, to the tune of "Lord Plant My Feet On Higher Ground."

BACK THE NARROW WAY

We're going back the narrow way,
To find the path from which we strayed.
We know that man has led astray
And taught his precepts, day by day.
So Lord, we pray Thou be our guide
And keep us safely by Thy side.
Teach us Thy way and Thine alone.
Give us Thy Spirit which has flown.

It gently whispers, "Come to me,
Come to the light and plainer see.
And we do know when we're astray
By what it whispers, day by day.
Oh, lead us back the narrow way.
Teach us to heed and humbly pray.
Help us to heed when Thou art near.
Help us to live without a fear.

When we are earnest, kind and true,
Show us the things that we should do.
Rebuke us, Lord, as day by day
We tread along the narrow way.
We heard Thy call, "Come close to Me!"
The way is dark. We cannot see.
We know Thy path is filled with light.
To walk therein will seem aright.

No more shall we be led astray
By what man teaches us today.
For God shall teach us, scriptures say,
Will mould our lives to His own way.
His law will burn into our heart,
And no one take away that part
That we shall have, for proving true.
For God says only deeds shall do.

What loving comfort we have found
Contained within Thy law so sound.
The Comforter has come to stay
When we but walk the narrow way.

So lead us, Lord, on surer ground
That in the past we never found.
Teach us the way that leads to home
And help us nevermore to roam.

—Catherine Nitz
September 1933

THE CROWN

At the portal of my heart
I heard a knocking, knocking,
So soft it should not have been hard
to drown it out.
Yet, however much I sought distraction-
come each moment of pause
there was that gentle rapping,

With persistence, it bore
like a sharp cutting edge
into my consciousness.
What infinite patience, to stand there
through sun and rain, through heat and cold,
continually tapping, seeking an entrance
that I was so slow to give.

At last, at long last, my resistance weakened.
I reached out my hand to take the latch,
tempted to simply fling the latch string out,
letting Him who stood there
enter of His own will,
neither hindered, nor yet invited by me.

But caution stayed my prompting.
Should I so carelessly shun
One Who so desired my hospitality?
Yet, did I offer, what, may-hap,
would be requested?

And, as in the stillness I pondered,
I heard the calling, a gentle voice,
as sweet melody calling,
"Open that I might come in and sup with thee."

And trembling I opened
to Him that stood on the threshold-
but fearfully - such a little crack
that He could barely squeeze Himself in.

And He emptied His basket of bounties
at my feet, there were fruits
of exquisite sweetness; there were
drinks of unequalled refreshing,
and delicate provision of every
description- and among them
lay a cross.
a heavy cross, of spikes, and thorns,
and wormwood.

When we had supped
His eyes implored me to take it,
to pick up the cross and follow Him-
and my soul cried out, "Where,
Oh, where, do you ask me to follow?"
And He opened my eyes and pointed-

And away in the distance,
high and exalted above all the earth,
I saw a celestial city;
I saw the tree whose fruit is eternal life,
the crystal fountain from whence flows
the living water;
I saw a temple, filled with the hosts
of men and angels, worshiping and praising.
And I saw Him who stood at my side
sitting on a great white throne.

And my soul strained in yearning toward Him,
but between me and the glorious vision
lay a pathway- narrow and strait-
marked simply by His footprints.
Some of it lay across sunny hillsides,
some lay through valleys,
the depths of which were hidden
by mists and angry storm clouds.

And I stood, both yearning and fearing-
and He picked up the cross
and held it out to me.

And looking at it,
my shaking hands would not obey
my will to take it.

So, looking only up into His eyes
of tenderness and love and compassion,
I was able to receive it.

But my courage failed me,
my strength drained from me;
I staggered under the weight of it.

And through my throes of trepidation
I heard His whisper,
"Let not your heart be troubled,
neither let it be afraid."

I will be with you each moment,
every step of the way;
arise and let us go hence."

And I stumbled forward
with painful steps and slow.

Guided by a hand I no longer saw,
supported by arms I could barely feel,
I groped my way,
for I could not see the path through my tears.

But the persistent circle of His arm
urged me ever onward and upward
When the climb steepened

And His loving eyes beckoned me on

when my soul cried in weariness
and I faltered and would have sunk down
in the way.

And I hung my head in shame,
for how should one so unworthy
be recipient of such divine choosing?
How should this weak creature
the nothing that is me
unworthy to be named in the same breath
with Him
be an object of His caring?

And my heart quaked and trembled
within me,
for I had naught to offer in return-
naught at all, save the little, flickering
candle of love,
which He Himself had lit
and placed in my bosom,
and the cross which He had
given me.

And I looked up
to the eyes filled with love
and I smiled through the
anguish of my tears,
And I held up my cross
as an offering.

And lo-
it was no longer
spikes and thorns and wormwood;
it became silver and gold,
encrusted with diamonds
and all precious jewels.

And He reached out and took it
and fashioned it into a crown-
and handed it back to me.
And I placed it upon His head-
crowning Him my Sovereign,
my Redeemer- and my Lord.

PROMISES OF DELIVERANCE

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars:
SEE THAT YE BE NOT TROUBLED" (Matthew 24:6).

"Watch ye therefore, and pray always, THAT YE
MAY BE ACCOUNTED WORTHY TO ESCAPE ALL
THESE THINGS THAT SHALL COME TO PASS, AND
TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN" (Luke
21:36).

"And it shall come to pass, THAT WHOSOEVER
SHALL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL
BE DELIVERED: For in mount Zion and in Jerusalem
shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the
remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 2:32).

Again, "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the

earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek right-
eousness, seek meekness: IT MAY BE YE SHALL BE
HID IN THE DAY OF THE LORD'S ANGER" (Zep-
haniah 2:3).

"Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like
it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall
be saved out of it" (Jeremiah 30:7).

Or, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers,
and shut thy doors, about thee: hide thyself as it
were for a little moment, UNTIL THE INDIGNATION
BE OVERPAST" (Isaiah 26:20).

"Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O
my people, that dwelleth in Zion, be not afraid of the
Assyrian; he shall smite thee with a rod, and shall
lift up his staff against thee, after the manner of
Egypt. For yet a very little while, and the indignation
shall cease, and mine anger in their destruction" (2
Nephi 9:105-106).

"Say ye not, a confederacy, to all to whom this
people shall say, a confederacy; NEITHER FEAR YE
THEIR FEAR, NOR BE AFRAID. SANCTIFY THE
LORD OF HOSTS HIMSELF, AND LET HIM BE YOUR
FEAR, AND LET HIM BE YOUR DREAD. AND HE
SHALL BE FOR A SANCTUARY" (2 Nephi 9:50-52).

"And all that fight against Zion, shall be destroyed"
(1 Nephi 7:30). "For the time soon cometh, that the
fullness of the wrath of God shall be poured out upon
all the children of men: FOR HE WILL NOT SUFFER
THAT THE WICKED SHALL DESTROY THE RIGHT-
EOUS . . . WHEREFORE, THE RIGHTEOUS NEED
NOT FEAR; FOR THUS SAITH THE PROPHET, THEY
SHALL BE SAVED, EVEN IF IT SO BE AS BY FIRE
. . . FOR BEHOLD, THE RIGHTEOUS SHALL NOT
PERISH . . . AND THE TIME COMETH SPEEDILY,
THAT THE RIGHTEOUS MUST BE LED UP AS
CALVES OF THE STALL, AND THE HOLY ONE OF
ISRAEL MUST REIGN IN DOMINION, AND MIGHT,
AND POWER, AND GREAT GLORY. AND HE
GATHERETH HIS CHILDREN FROM THE FOUR
QUARTERS OF THE EARTH (1 Nephi 7:34-35, 37, 41,
55-56).

There is a double blessing promised to those right-
eous ones who happen to live in this land; a blessing
in addition to those enumerated above.

"Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom
he shall bring. AND IF IT SO BE THAT THEY SHALL
SERVE HIM ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDMENTS
WHICH HE HATH GIVEN, IT SHALL BE A LAND OF
LIBERTY UNTO THEM; WHEREFORE, THEY SHALL
NEVER BE BROUGHT DOWN INTO CAPTIVITY: if
so, it shall be because of iniquity . . . BUT UNTO THE
RIGHTEOUS, IT SHALL BE BLESSED FOR EVER"
(2 Nephi 1:11-13 & 15).

LESSON GUIDE

(continued from February Issue)

Section 4

Lesson Text, Luke 15:

The better we know the Lord the clearer we can visualize what it will mean to inherit a place in His kingdom. His kingdom will reflect all that He is in love and mercy and justice. Perhaps when we falter in our agreement to "rise up and follow Him" it is because we are prone to measure His judgments by our own; some innate sense warns that we have reason to fear being judged by the faulty measures with which we judge others. And quite probably we should have more fear of this than we do, for true it is that as we measure to others He will measure to us again (Matthew 7:1-2). If we judge others harshly, without mercy and love, He cannot let love and mercy rob the justice with which He judges us, but He will never judge us without love for He is love. It is the reaches of this love that we will examine in this lesson consideration. It is my firm belief and contention that His love has no boundaries but those limitations we place before Him by our response or lack of it.

There is no greater love than that one lay down His life for another (John 15:13); we might paraphrase that to substitute himself in another's place," this being in whatever circumstances of suffering that might occur. Nowhere is this more true than in the matter of forgiveness of sin. Surely this is love at its height, to pay another's debt that he be freed from the result of his own wrong doing. In this way God and Christ loved humanity, for if it requires great love to suffer for another, it requires no less to let someone you love most dearly suffer in that other's place. And something whispers in my soul that every time we forgive another a trespass we are in effect offering to stand in their stead; to be counted the one at fault and pay the penalty, or it is not true pardon we proffer.

Such is love, such is charity that seeks not her own; through this kind of love Christ reconciles all things to Himself, not our worthiness but His substitution of Himself in the place of all our lack. Such is the love that will not rest while there is even one lone sheep still out of the fold, that will not be content with the ninety and nine who have heard and hearkened to His voice and followed Him in from the pastures, but seeing them safely sheltered goes out and searches and will not return, no matter how far, nor how dark the night, nor how painful the search, until he has brought that last one home. Then what rejoicing, for it was saved at such cost! Have you never loved one enough that if it were possible you would even storm the very gates of hell to rescue them? And yet how little we put ourselves out to get the great plan of salvation before the people immediately around us. How little we have done in the whole of our lifetime to obey the commandments by which the Kingdom of

God would be established here upon the earth and His salvation be exemplified to all who would behold.

The second parable of our lesson text also depicts the great love of the Lord: love that allowed His sons their free choice even when that choice took them away and into squandering all that which He had labored to provide for them, love that waited and yearned for a beloved son's return but would not force it, love so great that it did not set a time limit after which the wanderer would not be welcome home, love that received the prodigal with great compassion and rejoicing, bringing forth the best for a celebration, even putting a ring, the symbol of sonship, upon his finger. He could not restore to the son what had been carelessly squandered; He could not divide the elder son's inheritance with him, but He forgave him and owned him as His son, even though he would occupy as a servant. How marvelous are the implications of the truths concerning God's love that are buried deep within this parable.

Other implications of the parable are not quite so marvelous. How many of us can see ourselves in the prodigal son? You know we all are or have been at one time or another to some extent. Only God really knows how much of our inheritance is intact and how much we have wasted. In a recent time of great tribulation, when the desired answer to many prayers was not forthcoming, a brief explanation was offered, "underperformance." I do fear that as individuals and as a people we are underperforming for the Lord's purposes. Though we may not be accused justly of spending our living in riotous pursuits, we may easily be guilty of carelessly wasting it in superficial ones. If so may we awaken in time, come to ourselves, arise and go to our Father with our confession, offering ourselves to His service, relying on His mercy and forgiveness.

And then there is the matter of the elder son. I find it hard to admire this man, or the counterparts of him that are found so often among the protagonists of Christianity throughout the centuries. That any who enjoy the love of the Lord should resent whatever can possibly be offered those who have failed in a corresponding faithfulness is completely baffling. That those who have been faithful and thus inherit all that is the Father's, equal with Christ their Lord, should be angry if He forgives and reclaims the prodigals as His own, even though they can no longer inherit equally with the sons, is beyond comprehension. It would almost seem that their sin of bigotry would be as bad or worse than the sins they cannot forgive the prodigal. Even though justice might demand that he receive the reward of steady obedient labor for his father, his lack of love and forgiving compassion would forever shut him out of the spirit of rejoicing in his Father's house.

Let us consider, is the inheritance that we desire in the kingdom that of physical safety and material abundance? Or is it not rather the fellowship of the

love of the Father and the Son? If it is the latter, in order to enjoy it ourselves we must be willing and able to let it flow through us to, as well as from, Them to every son whom They are willing to make welcome and rejoice in, however unworthy he may appear in our estimation. The judgment, the purposes, the means of achieving those purposes are all His. We, through total surrender to His will, allowing charity, the pure love of Christ, to take possession in us, can share in His triumph and rejoice over and with all who are brought home, or we can refuse to accept the erring as our Father's son and remain sulking outside the celebration.

But who are we? the prodigal or the elder son? If we are the elder we are in danger of shutting ourselves out, or if we are a prodigal thinking like the elder it is still ourselves we are willing to have shut out.

MY TESTIMONY

My story begins many years ago when I was just a young girl. I went to Sunday School and studied about Jesus and believed in Him and His teachings.

I was born and reared in a rural community near Houston, Missouri. My parents were dutiful, faithful and sincere in their religion. I remember talks my mother gave my older sister. She said, "Kneel each night by your bed and ask God to keep you from the evil of the world." She wrote in our large family Bible, "Anna, read this book and be a good girl." This has had a great influence throughout my life, as I'm sure God intended, especially in my youth. At the age of eleven I lost my mother. Only those who have suffered likewise can understand how hard it was to go on without her. We were very close and I was always by her side. Mine was a very close family.

During the period of my youth while attending high school, I was not ashamed to tell my young friends that I did not want to dance, play cards, drink or any of the things I thought would not be becoming to a Christian, or which I could not invite Christ to share. It did not matter to me that because I did not attend many of the popular social get-togethers some did not like me. There were those who liked me for what I was and I felt no need to worry. Living for Christ was more important to me than total social acceptance. The admonition of my mother still lingered.

I attended a Union Sunday School in our community. There were many wonderful people in this congregation. At the age of fourteen I was saved, as they taught, and was baptized and joined the church of my family. Later on, as I became an adult I taught classes, served many ways and studied the Bible. The power of the gospel, as recorded in the scriptures and made manifest in the lives of early Christians,

did not seem to be a part of the gatherings or the lives of my associates as I thought it should be.

After two years of marriage our first child came; four years later another arrived; two more years brought our third and two more, our fourth. Only God knows how I loved those little ones He had loaned and placed in my care. How helpless I felt in my young years. I had no mother to turn to. I realized more and more my responsibility to rear my children to be God-loving and God-fearing children. I turned to God for help, prayed diligently and continued to search the scriptures. I marvelled at the love of God for His people down through the stream of time. I was impressed that Christ thought it necessary to say, "I will build my church." I liked the officers Christ placed in His church, the ordinances, spiritual gifts and all the other blessings offered by the gospel as Christ taught it.

I recognized the fact that the church of which I was a member could not offer me all of this. I began praying that if Christ's church was on earth today that was what I wanted, and I not only prayed, I wept and pleaded. I had never heard of the Restored Gospel and knew nothing of the Book of Mormon.

In answer to my prayers God sent Elder S. P. Cox from Puyallup, Washington to our community. I thought he could preach the best sermons I had ever heard and I agreed with all he taught. He mentioned the Book of Mormon as the Nephite Record. He baptized several and later, when the church sent an elder to look after members here, I invited him to our home. He taught the Book of Mormon and everything began to open up. The important thing which was lacking was the fullness of the gospel of Christ. Furthermore, my very being thrilled at the ministry of the Holy Spirit as I continued to search the scriptures. Under this influence I was made to know that His church was here on earth and I should become a part of it. On July 9, 1933 I made my decision to be baptized in a stream near our home. A goodly number attended. The minister made a short talk at the edge of the stream; I felt he was inspired by God. There I was baptized into Christ and became a member of the Church of Christ. With His help I have walked the pathway of life from day to day with assurance that, regardless of what happens in this life, all that really matters is how I have lived up to His teachings.

In a world of changing values it is indeed comforting and reassuring to know that God is unchangeable and that He reveals Himself today in different ways. I believe that His kingdom on earth is a reality. I can say with all assurance that Jesus lives and that He established His church, which was restored in the latter days, as was foretold by prophecy by men with divine inspiration. Our ultimate purpose is to live so that we may return to His presence. The only way we can accomplish this is through obedience to the gospel as Christ taught and lived it. I'm truly glad

of the decision I made. I feel there are many more who are as I was. Some haven't heard the gospel in its fullness and some have not allowed themselves to listen.

My life has been blessed by the many testimonies of the Saints and their company has richly blessed my life. I do not have the ability or the words to express the love I feel for those with whom I have been privileged to associate. I have found no other organization which has the warmth of fellowship that is found among the people of the Church of Christ. Their love and concern has brought me much joy and happiness and has been a powerful force in helping me walk in the ways of the Lord. Our Heavenly Father has blessed me many times during several major operations I have had to undergo.

As I look back over a full and fairly long life, I am filled with gratitude to my Heavenly Father. His Spirit has guided me all along the way from early youth to this present day. He has blessed me with a wonderful family. When I have failed to measure up to my responsibility, He has been merciful to forgive and has continued to sustain me. I have often asked myself, "What does He see in me to call me to bear His name before the world?" I feel so inadequate.

Although there are many problems in the world, I feel grateful that I am privileged to live in this day and age. It is a wonderful joy to me to know that by the hand of an angel the gospel of Jesus Christ has been given to men once again in this last dispensation of time. Those who will hear and respond will be blessed by the beauty, peace and joy of the gospel. My heart yearns that all people might have the opportunity to know, especially loved ones and dear friends. It is my continued prayer that I may be effective in helping many persons respond to the fullness of the gospel and share this priceless treasure.

Yours in gospel bonds,
Anna Keeney

OBITUARY

Glenn Raymond Rudd

Glenn Raymond Rudd, age 72, died Tuesday, January 29, 1974 at Flint Osteopathic Hospital.

Funeral services were held from the Mt. Vernon Chapel at Brown Funeral Home on Friday, February 1, 1974, with Reverend John Z. Andrie and Elder Harold Polack officiating. Burial was in Evergreen Cemetery. Surviving are: Wife, Irene P.; two daughters, Mrs. Charles (June) Pittman of Taylor, Michigan and Mrs. James (Dolores) McMahan of Burleson, Texas; Son, Glenn W. of Flint; nine grandchildren, two sisters and four brothers; nieces and nephews.

COLLINS LOCAL NEWS

On February 18th at the annual business meeting these people were elected to serve for the coming year:

- Pastor Elder Ed McIndoo
- Ass't. Pastor Elder Joe Yates
- Recorder Louise McIndoo
- Treasurer Blanche Martin
- Pianist Marjorie Routh
- Chorister Janice Cook
- Program committee ... Norma Cook, Janice Cook, Louise McIndoo, Oreta Yates and Larry Shaw.
- Library committee ... Sherri Cook, Jeff Cook and Michael Burkhart.
- Don Martin was re-elected to the Board of Trustees, to serve with present members Everett Martin and Rhondal Shaw.
- Reporter Ruth Willard

The vote to invite the Missouri reunion to be held in Collins was unanimous.

For our Sunday School this year: Marvin Cook is Superintendent, Rhondal Shaw Assistant, Blanche Martin Secretary, Leora Martin Pianist, and Rhonda Shaw Assistant Pianist.

Recently we have had some good sermons from guest speakers: Elder Curtis Yates on February 10, and Apostle C. L. Wheaton on February 24. Our local speakers have been Elder Joe Yates, Elder Ed McIndoo, Apostle Leon Yates, and Priest Larry Shaw. Each has given us spiritual food, without which we would be hungry indeed.

Oren and Esther Caviness have been staying in Independence recently, where Oren helped at the Church office during the illness of Brother LeRoy Wheaton. Our prayers continue for Brother LeRoy.

Oren and Esther made a trip to Arizona the last of February to attend the funeral of a brother-in-law, Wm. Mortensen, of Mesa, Arizona.

The Cook family attended a family reunion in Raytown recently. When they are away over Sunday we surely do miss them for they are so active in our Sunday School here.

Special music has been furnished by our local talent and also by some visitors. Among those helping have been Marvin Cook, Janice Cook, Zerna Coberly, Ed and Louise McIndoo, and Mr. and Mrs. Darrell Yates. The Shaws sometimes sing as a family: grandparents Rhondal and Irene, and children Rhonda, Charles, and Michael with father Larry at the piano. Sweet music is worship too.

We continue to have prayer meetings once a month in the homes. Women's meetings are sometimes in the homes and often in the church.

May we acknowledge God "in all thy ways," so that we can claim the promise, "and He shall DIRECT THY PATHS."

TEMPLE LOT LOCAL NEWS

The last of '73 and the first of '74 have seen much activity here — some sadness, some gladness.

One of our projects has been a Benefit Shop (for the long-hoped-for Home for the Aged.) This began as a 5-day rummage sale way back in October. We rented a small store on Lexington Ave., within a block of the little white church on the Temple Lot. The crusading zeal of Angela Wheaton and Sally Brantner (who came up from Warrensburg for the five days) drew other enthusiasts: Menda Stotis, Margaret Wheaton, Marie Weaver, Donna Moser and others. Rummage and handiwork, antiques and "white elephants" poured in from every side: our own group, the East Local, Collins and Houston Locals, R. L. D. S., well-wishers and just nice people. The five days came to a profitable end; we had more "stock" on hand than when we started! The United Workers of both Independence churches agreed to co-sponsor the venture for one day weekly till the first of the year. The landlord (R. L. D. S.) got a permanent tenant and rented us the building next door. We have filed for tax-exempt status as a charitable organization and are acquiring some regular customers as well as donors. We have dedicated the project to our Father and His glory; we earnestly solicit your good wishes and prayers. For information, contact Angela Wheaton or Donna Moser.

The men and boys of our church spent several Saturdays replacing windows and re-surfacing and painting the upstairs meeting room (the latter under the expert professional eye of Rex Weaver). The United Workers and other ladies kept them fed. Then late in March the United Workers met at the church with rolled-up sleeves, willing hearts and capable hands. By midday all had worked up wonderful appetites; Aunt Arro Gentry's home-made stew and cheesecake took care of that problem. By mid-afternoon the place was quiet again, the kitchen clean and sweet-smelling for Conference.

Marvin Case has been away for several months attending an educational course given by his employer. He will be finished and at home again in June; we will be very happy to have him back.

Sister Melvina Ritcheson has been hospitalized and needs our prayers.

Seventy Maynard Case has made several missionary trips; Apostle Clarence Wheaton has taken a few, after recovering from his recent heart attack. Our prayers continue to go with them. "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring good tidings."

THE SECOND MILE

Be an oasis in a dry and desertland!
A spiritual oasis!

"And whosoever shall compel thee
to go a mile, go with him twain"

Matthew 5:41

Go all the way
Go the second "mile!"
Gladly, rejoicingly
when sharing another's joy.

ZION'S ADVOCATE

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Gently, compassionately
when sharing another's grief.

Quietly and steadfastly
when walking with another through trials.

Answering the deep compelling need
of another's troubled spirit.

The second "mile"
of a Caring Heart!

The second "mile"
that stems from the "fullness" of
an overflowing of the "water"
from the "well" of "living water"
of "everlasting life!"

(John 4:10 & 14)

Darleen Smith