

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 the power of the Holy Ghost," 1 Nephi 3:187

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Affinity

By Will H. Mills

Stars for vaulted skies,
Fish for the seas;
Water for the pebbled brook,
Clouds upon the breeze.

Atoms for the molecule,
Law declaring kind;
For a high and noble thought
Seek a noble mind.

Each unto its order kindred,
'Tis by God decreed;
Man from woman cannot thrive
Nor gain a higher need.

Forces pull and forces drag
Upon the load of life,
If mates pull at counterpoints
The way is one of strife.

Like and likeness ere must speed,
Kindred sphere beside,
Down through nature's courses steep
Love and Duty ride.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

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EDITORIAL

WHOSE FAULT IS IT?

Have you ever said to yourself, "If I had my way, we would do it differently?" We can find plenty wrong with the way our government, our employer or our church does things, but could we really do better if we had the opportunity to change things to suit ourselves?

Those who have had the responsibility of decision making, whether it be in government, business, church affairs, etc., can testify that its not as easy as it might have looked. There is more than one way to look at a situation and usually there are advantages and disadvantages on both sides of an issue. The pros and cons aren't always black and white; many times the right and wrong of a situation isn't obvious. We usually find that making the right choice requires more than our normal ability. We need help to discern clearly between right and wrong and that help is available only through the Spirit of God.

Many people reason that if they can find the fault in a thing that the right is obvious and the matter is easily solved. They go marching into the den confident that the lion is their enemy. They are not aware that their salvation is not dependent upon the identification of the source that would destroy them, but rather, they must know and rely upon the source that would save them. Daniel would not have been saved alone by his ability to discern the will of those who would destroy him; his faith in God's power to deliver him was his real strength in the time of trial.

So it is with us. We know nothing if we depend upon our ability to see the faults in others. We are as blind and helpless as they are. We can't help them because we don't know how. Worse still, we are likely to react in distrust and suspicion toward them.

Unfortunately, a common fault in the human family is to take comfort in oneself by laying blame at the feet of others. It becomes our means of hiding our own faults. When the spotlight is focused upon the wrongs of others, our faults appear to be less likely seen in the shadows. We are right because they are wrong.

How wrong we are when we resort to such an attitude! To know how to save ourselves is to know what is right as well as what is wrong. And compassion toward others is always appropriate whether or not we agree with what they have done.

We, of the Church of Christ, have a special challenge in this regard. To our dismay, we have found certain discrepancies in church history. It is obvious to us that those, who had to do with setting up of the church in the early 1800's, made some mistakes. Changing revelations to accommodate certain offices has been a stumbling block for many of us who have inherited this work. Our church fathers were enlightened to the truth and were commissioned to bring forth the fulness of the gospel in these latter days. But we can see that one or two little deviations along the way lead into more deviations which in turn lead many into apostasy.

The position that the Church of Christ has taken is a very unique one. We have tried to hold to the thread of truth that we find in church history that is based upon the standard of the Bible and the Book of Mormon without getting sidetracked by the innovations that came into the early church. However, we find that our own human abilities to reason out the rights and wrongs of what happened after the church was organized in 1830 is not totally adequate to the task. We must have the help of the Holy Spirit to discern the truth of all things.

Some of the errors that our church fathers made may seem quite obvious to us, but we must be cautious lest we become committed to our own errors of judgment. After all, are we any less likely to err than they were? Are we not exposed to numerous influences of the world -- political, social, moral influences -- that sway our way of thinking and reasoning? Can we say that we have totally overcome all such influences in ourselves and in the church, and that we can judge all things perfectly?

The thing that we must realize is that we can err in more than one way. Our initial action can be to accept as truth something that is actually false. Or we can reject something that is true and label it as false. But the end result is the same -- deception.

A more common error is allowing ourselves to become personal in our judgement. We may say that because the Lord spoke through a certain person, that everything that person said or did thereafter was absolutely right. On the other hand, if we recognize that a person was favored by the Lord in a certain work and later that person made an obvious error, we might judge everything that he did from that point on to be wrong. We know that the Lord will forgive us as often as we sincerely repent of our sins, and we also know that this applied to our progenitors in the church as well as to us now.

We can be prejudiced, either favorably or unfavorably, toward individuals. If an individual has

something to do with matters of the church, we might find ourselves judging the right or wrong of a matter by our prejudice toward the individual rather than seeking out the truth of the thing upon its own merit separately.

We, of the Church of Christ, have determined certain absolutes that have to do with doctrine as well as the establishment and structure of the church. (See Articles of Faith and Fractice) At the same time we have sought to maintain a certain liberty whereby we might individually seek the Lord to know the truth of all things and to have our own personal testimony of their truthfulness. Although we find ourselves differing from each other in understanding some of the scriptures from time to time, the principle by which we exercise this liberty is a well-founded truth of the scriptures. (Read James 1:5,6 & Moroni 10:3-7) If we are to retain that liberty, we must retain the favor of God through obedience to His will, otherwise we become exercised in another source of strength in our judgment. We should seek unity in the church, but unity, or oneness, must come about by our honest, individual efforts to know the truth.

As we look to our heritage and seek for the affirmation of the doings of our progenitors in the church, we must realize that their mistakes will be our mistakes if we follow tradition alone. However a hasty and negative judgment of them will lead only to a wholesale rejection of all that came through the angel's message. In either case, we can be lead into deception.

The truth is ours to know, but only as we seek to make correction both in our understanding of the scriptures and in our way of life. Therefore, let us open our minds and our hearts to the Lord that His Spirit might guide us through this maze of uncertainty and bring us to the time of harvest when the tares of falsehood will be separated and burned, leaving the everlasting truth triumphant in the end.

RLS

COLORADO REUNION

On June 8, 9, and 10, 1984, the Colorado Reunion will be held at the Church of Christ, 3233 B½ Road, Grand Junction, Colorado. We would like to invite all who can to meet with us on these three days. We anticipate a time of spiritual feasting and fellowship in the worship of Christ, our Saviour.

Our homes are open to all we can accommodate. Please let one of our committee know your plans, so we can find housing for you and prepare for the meals.

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OUR COMMISSION?

The editorial, in the November 1983 issue of Zion's Advocate, brought to my mind several interesting thoughts, especially since I have been studying along these lines recently. It brought up questions that I had been pondering in my mind for some time. I thought perhaps others might be interested in this subject also, and it might be well to express my opinions for whatever good they might do.

I am well aware that I am not the first person who has taken up the task of trying to unravel the tangle of history that surrounds the Church's past, and perhaps I won't be much more successful than have others. I do have a much better understanding of the Lord's work now, than I did before I began to delve into the workings of the Church during the period from the late 1820's up to 1835.

It was during this formative period that the most important work was done. This was the era of the building of the foundation, the setting up of the organization, the establishing of the laws and regulations, etc. upon which the whole Church would grow on, and would stand on in later years. When one begins to think about "commandments" and "commissions", we must look to this era for our understanding and study.

As a Church and as individuals, we are not well schooled in the History of the Church, especially the early period, and this is not good. If a carpenter sets out to repair, remodel, or add on, to an old building, the first thing he must know and understand is the foundation. You must know what you are building on, and understand its designed purpose and condition. It is not surprising that we have shied away from a study of our history, as it is filled with stumbling blocks and pitfalls placed there purposely to cause confusion. Many of the sources available to us are, to say the least, opinionated and inconsistent. Because of this and the inability of those before us to work in harmony to search out the truths, we have been content to preach the basics of the gospel of the kingdom, and leave lay idle the works of God's kingdom, which were committed to the early Church, and to which we are also committed by virtue of our baptism into this kingdom, especially those who have accepted of that holy priesthood which was restored to earth by heavenly messengers in 1829.

If one does not wish to be a partaker of this priesthood, or if one does not accept the fact that Joseph Smith and his fellow workers were called not only to translate the Book of Mormon, but to also restore the Church of Christ in these last days according to prophecy, then that person should go his way and trouble himself no more about it. To those who do accept these things, who are partakers of this work and its priesthood, who have taken upon themselves the

name of Christ by way of the authority vested in the true restored Church and its ministry, falls the responsibility of accepting the "commissions" given to that Church. Understanding this "commission" then becomes a primary necessity.

Let us first understand that a commission is, according to definition, "a trust, a charge, appointment, to delegate, to empower." To understand what commission the Church was given in the early years, we must find out what work they were "appointed" to do, what "charge" was given them, and what were they "empowered" to accomplish. In this article, I will not cover all the charges they were given, but will try to touch on some that I feel are of much importance to us today.

Within the great "commission" given to the Church in these last days is a multitude of "charges"; Which when reasoned out one finds that each work or "charge" is hinged and dependent upon the others, so that through the successful workings of each charge the final desired result is accomplished. So it would be well to look first at the final, desired result.

To catch a glimpse of that final result, I want to refer to three revelations found in the Book of Commandments. These do not exhaust the source of information by any means, for there are many others; however these will suffice for our purpose. Chapt. 36, verse 4, Chapt. 29, verses 5, 8, and 9, and Chapt. 1, last part of verse 5. If you have a Book of Commandments, it would be well for you to read the whole of the chapters listed, as I will just quote that portion pertaining to our study here.

Chapt. 36, verse 4: "Wherefore you are my son, and blessed are you because you have believed, and more blessed are you because you are called of me to preach my gospel; to lift up your voice as with the sound of a trump, both long and loud, and cry repentance unto a crooked and perverse generation; PREPARING the way of the Lord of his second coming..."

Chapt. 29, verses 5, 8, and 9: "Verily I say unto you, that you are chosen out of the world to declare my gospel with the sound of rejoicing, as with the voice of a trump... And ye are called to bring to pass the GATHERING of mine elect, for mine elect hear my voice and harden not their hearts: Wherefore the decree hath gone forth from the Father, that they shall be GATHERED in unto one place, upon the face of this land, to PREPARE their hearts, and be prepared in all things, against the day when tribulation and desolation are sent forth upon the wicked."

And finally Chapt. 1, last part of verse 5: "... And also, those to whom these commandments were given, might have power to LAY THE FOUNDATION of this Church, and to bring it forth out of obscurity, and out of darkness, the only true and living church upon the

face of the whole earth. . .” (All emphasis mine JFS)

The several charges listed above, I.E. “cry repentance, declare my gospel, prepare the way of the Lord, gather mine elect. . . to prepare their hearts, lay the foundation of this Church, and bring it forth out of obscurity and out of darkness”, will result in the gathering together of a people who are prepared in all things, for the second coming of Christ. This, I believe is the ultimate goal of all the work that was done in the late 1820's and early 1830's. If this was the purpose, or I should say the “commission” then, it is still valid today for it was not accomplished.

Let us consider the first reference I gave you: Chapt. 36, verse 4, Book of Commandments. This was a revelation calling Orson Pratt into the priesthood, given Nov. 1830. Notice that he was first called to preach “my gospel”, which is a gospel of repentance. Let us understand that repentance is more than just being sorry for committing sin, but involves an actual turning away from a sinful, and unproductive (in the eyes of God) way of life. If one turns away from one way of life, he must turn toward another, and that way must needs be the way of righteousness. Since righteousness means, “That which is according to law”, then the “way of righteousness” is that which is in accord with GOD'S law, and not the law's devised by the imaginations of men's hearts. By preaching this kind of repentance one will be “preparing the way of the Lord for his second coming”, and contributing toward the final desired goal.

If you research the commandments for the calling of various men into the ministry, you will find that they were called with much the same “commission” as was done in the above. However, there is more to this “charge” than merely preaching repentance. It called for a physical response to this gospel, and to His commandments, which are a part of His law. It called for changing one's material AND spiritual way of life; it called for a total commitment to the Lord's work in these last days.

Let us look at another “Charge” that was given to those early saints, which, if carried out, would contribute toward the preparation of a people for the coming of the Lord, and if obeyed would bring about a condition that would be in compliance with the laws or requirements of righteousness.

Chapt. 40: verses 14, 20, 21, and 22. “And for your salvation I GIVE UNTO YOU A COMMANDMENT, (emphasis mine JFS) for I have heard your prayers, and the poor have complained before me, and the rich have I made, and all flesh is mine, and I am no respecter to persons. . . And again I say unto you, let every man esteem his brother as himself: For what man among you, having twelve sons, and is no respecter to them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one, be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other, be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there,

and looketh upon his sons and saith I am just. Behold, this I have given unto you a parable, and it is even as I am, I say unto you, be one; AND IF YE ARE NOT ONE, YE ARE NOT MINE. . .” (emphasis mine JFS)

“I give unto you a commandment.” This is a very plain statement and very clear: The command is for them to be ONE, one in all things, of one mind, purpose, faith, endeavor, etc. In all things, both spiritual and material, He commands them to become unified. Before we continue on this subject, let us look at another commandment: chapt 44 (B of C), verses 26, 27, 28, and 29.

“If thou lovest me, thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments; and behold, thou shalt consecrate all thy properties, that which thou hast unto me, with a covenant and a deed which cannot be broken; and they shall be laid before the bishop of my church, and two of the elders, such as he shall appoint and set apart for that purpose.

“And it shall come to pass, that the bishop of my church after that he has received the properties of my church, that it cannot be taken from the church, he shall appoint every man a steward over his own property, or that which he has received, inasmuch as is sufficient for himself and family: and the residue shall be kept to administer to him who has not, that every man may receive according as he stands in need:

“And the residue shall be kept in my storehouse to administer to the poor and needy, as shall be appointed by the elders of the church and the bishop; and for the purpose of purchasing lands, and the building up of the New Jerusalem, which is hereafter to be revealed; that my covenant people may be gathered in one, in the day that I shall come to my temple.”

It seems whenever these commandments are brought forward in a discussion among several Church members, immediately the theory of “all things common” pops into their minds. In the past here has been some fear expressed concerning this theory: “It won't work,” some reply, “Those willing to work will support the lazy,” others say, etc. There are a multitude of objections to the “all things common” theory, but we are not discussing that theory. What is given in the above commandment is the law of consecration, and it is a bit different than the present understanding of the theory of “all things common.”

A careful study of this law of consecration, will dispel many of the misunderstandings that have turned some hearts aside. In the first place, it does not establish an “all things common” condition, that is where all things are commonly owned. While the Church is to hold the title to the properties, the stewardship or the manipulation of the properties is to be retained by the giver so long as he remains a member in the Church. This leaves the individual free to produce whatever is necessary for his own family, in whatever manner he chooses to manage the property, and only requires the

surplus to be given to the storehouse.

This surplus, held in the storehouse of the Church, is to be used to provide for the poor, and those who cannot supply all the needs for their family, and for the Elders expenses, and for the needs of the Church in the purchase of lands needed to further the work of the Kingdom. This law established a means whereby all would be materially equal, and being so would contribute toward a spiritual equality. The poor and less fortunate were to have enough, and no less, while those who were more fortunate were to have enough and no more: equal. The end result of this law, was to have an organization where all the members were working toward the building up of God's Kingdom materially and spiritually: not each individual building up his own material kingdom, and yet each would retain their own personal freedom.

Compliance to the Law of Consecration, would require a great sacrifice. One would have to give up his personal goals as pertains to material gain: the hope of great wealth accumulation, in moneys, properties, etc.; the hope of an above average home, car, clothes, life style, etc. One would have to lay aside the desire for affluence, the desire to be counted with the "upper crust" of our society. A completely different set of values would have to be acquired.

A person would have to become humble, they would really have to love his brother and sister, they would really have to love God, to serve Him with all their heart, might, mind, and soul. They would not strive for personal treasures in this world, but would strive for treasures in heaven. They would have to be totally committed to God and His Kingdom.

Impossible, you say? Difficult perhaps in our condition today, but not impossible. In fact it is necessary for us, as a Church and as individuals, to attain just exactly this condition, for it is a prerequisite to Zion. Compliance to the law of consecration and the conditions above noted, must be accomplished prior to the establishment of Zion, and Zion will be established.

Leaving these thoughts, let us go on to another "charge" which was given to those early saints. Chapt. 5, verse 3, Book of Commandments: "Now as you have asked, behold I say unto you, keep my commandments, and seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion: . . ." (see also Chapt. 10, verse 3, Chapt. 11, verse 3 and Chapt. 12, verse 3)

The concept of modern day "Zion" was a new idea that those early saints sprang upon the religious world. Little was known about a Zion in the last days in the early 1830's, and here we find that those saints were "charged" with the chore of seeking "to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion." What do WE KNOW about Zion? How well are we schooled on the subject of Zion? If asked about this concept of Zion, how many of you could explain it?

For years Zion was a mysterious subject to me.

Everyone talked about it, but never said much, and many times I've heard "Zion" mentioned in sermons, but with very little explanation. I'm not now able to say I know all about "Zion", but I do have a much better understanding of it, than I had a few years ago. What is this Zion? Let us give a quick look at this idea which those early saints were "charged to bring forth and establish the cause of. I want to go now to the Book of Mormon, page 750, Book of Ether, Chapt. 6, verses 1-8.

"And now I Moroni, proceed to finish my record concerning the destruction of the people of whom I have been writing. For behold, they rejected all the words of Ether; for he truly told them of all things, from the beginning of man; and that after the waters had receded from off the face of this land, it became a choice land above all other lands, a chosen land of the Lord; Wherefore the Lord would have that all men should serve him, who dwell upon the face thereof; and that it was the place of the New Jerusalem, which should come down out of heaven, and the holy sanctuary of the Lord. Behold, Ether saw the days of Christ, and he spake concerning a New Jerusalem upon this land; and he spake also concerning the house of Israel, and the Jerusalem from whence Lehi should come; after it should be destroyed, it should be built up again a holy city unto the Lord; Wherefore it could not be a New Jerusalem, for it had been in a time of old, but it should be built up again, and become a holy city of the Lord: and it should be built up unto the house of Israel; and that a New Jerusalem should be built up upon this land, unto the remnant of the seed of Joseph, for which things there has been a type; for as Joseph brought his father down into the land of Egypt, even so he died there; Wherefore the Lord brought a remnant of the seed of Joseph out of the land of Jerusalem, that he might be merciful unto the seed of Joseph, that they should perish not, even as he was merciful unto the father of Joseph, that he should perish not; Wherefore the remnant of the house of Joseph shall be built up upon this land; and it shall be a land of their inheritance; and they shall build up a holy city unto the Lord, like unto the Jerusalem of old; and they shall no more be confounded, until the end come, when the earth shall pass away."

I realize the above is a lengthy extract to be put in an article, but there is a lot of information there for the studious mind; study if carefully. As you consider this reference, remember that the seed of Joseph are the descendants of Ephriam AND Manasseh. But back to our subject of Zion. What does this New Jerusalem have to do with Zion? Let us again look to the 1830's for an answer.

Chapt. 48, verses 58 through 61. Book of commandments: "Wherefore I the Lord have said, gather ye out from the eastern lands, assemble ye yourselves together ye elders of my Church; go ye forth into the western counties, call upon the inhabitants to

repent, and inasmuch as they do repent, build up churches unto me; and with ONE HEART AND WITH ONE MIND, (emphasis mine JFS) gather up your riches that ye may purchase an inheritance which shall hereafter be appointed unto you, and it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the most high God; (compare this to Isa. 4:5 and 6) and the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it: and it shall be called ZION." (emphasis mine JS)

From the above we can see that this New Jerusalem was to be built up here in this land and was to be called Zion: and those early saints were "charged" to bring forth and establish the "cause" of that Zion.

What does the phrase, "cause of Zion" mean? First let us understand the word cause: "The power or efficient agent producing any thing or event; Any occasion or condition upon the occurrence of which an event takes place." (Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary) Now Zion, we've noted just previously, means a city, a place of refuge for the righteous, wherein will be the "glory of the Lord", and the wicked will not be there. In effect it will be a gathering of the Saints of God, (the righteous) into one place, who have not hardened their hearts, and who have complied with the laws of righteousness. Compare this thought with Chapt. 2: verses 1, 2, and 3, of the Book of Zephaniah: "Gather yourselves together, yea gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you, before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you. Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger."

What then is the "agent" that will produce this

event? What is the "condition" that will bring about this event? Is not the Kingdom of God that "agent" or motivating force that will bring people into a "Condition" wherein Zion might be established? Is not this Church of Christ that kingdom, and does it not have the authority and power to bring about this condition? Can this Church accomplish this work except by way of obedience to the laws and commandments He has given? Might we disregard these tools He has given us to work with, and choose our own blueprints? Isn't it a truth, that the work must be accomplished upon the merits and provisions He has made?

There were many other "works" those early saints were "charged" to do, and many were individual charges. There are too many to be covered in so small a space as this. To some degree they were successful, yet in many ways they failed. The foundation is there, the "commission" is valid, the authority and power is still available. Why do we wait? If we would just begin to try to comply with HIS commandments, He would lift us up on wings of joy; if we would but strive to see, He would clear our vision. Why do we wait?

"Thus speaketh the Lord of host, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Then came the word of the Lord by Haggai and prophet, saying, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; consider your ways." Haggai 1:2 through 5.

Your Brother in the Family of God

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THE NEED FOR SINCERE FASTING AND PRAYER

Sermon by Apostle Marvin Ely

Part 2

Let us go on in Isaiah, verses 7 and 8, this is part of the fast. "Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" More responsibilities, "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning." And we've all watched the sunrise, and your light, when you do these things in the proper order, will break forth as the morning. "And thine health shall spring forth speedily: and they righteousness shall go before thee; and the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward." We had a statement made this morning by he who was in charge, and he said, "I felt impressed this

day to tell this people that we are to completely turn to him, (God) for he has promised to take away all sickness."

Well let's proceed, "Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer;" Isaiah outlined it pretty good, didn't he, "Thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;" That's a yoke, the putting forth of the finger. And as I say, if you point the finger, three are at yourself and one is at God, so be careful. And you know what King Benjamin had to say about that, and I'm going to read it in the book of Mosiah, 2:49, "But this much I can tell you,"

and I want to tell each of you the same thing, "that if you do not watch yourselves." Watch who? "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." There it is. Oh yes, we must start watching ourselves, and our words, we must be so careful what we say. There hasn't been a one of us that hasn't hurt somebody with our words. Sometimes it is not intentional, but sometimes it's just plain out and out intended to do so. In the language of the young today, cool it. Just don't do it. Watch your deeds, and look at this, watch your thoughts. God knows tonight what you're thinking, every one of you. He knows what you're thinking about me; he knows what I'm thinking about you. I've had cause to say, and I'm going to say it again, if the thought of every one here, in a time of a little problem or something, could all be put up here on a nice screen, so that individually, we could just take one individual's thoughts and let everyone look at them; then go on to the next one, and so on, letting us all look at what every other person was thinking, I'll tell you, it would be one of the most sobering experiences that could ever happen to you. Just think upon that for a moment. I'll guarantee if that ever happened there'd be some working on thoughts.

Another verse on pointing the finger, in Romans 2:1-3, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." And I'd like to add, even similiar things. We must be careful of our judging, we have a right to judge wrong acts, sin and all that, but we have no right to judge and condemn our fellow beings, because that judgment is God's business. "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgeth them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" Don't kid yourselves about that.

Back in Isaiah, what did it say here, that ye take away from the midst of thee the yoke. There is one yoke that we should have. Matthew 11:28-30: Jesus Christ said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you," that's the yoke we should have, "And learn of me," so let's go forth from this reunion determined to learn of Jesus Christ, and to take the yoke of Christ upon us. He went on to say, "and ye shall find rest to your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

We have a great God and a wonderful Savior and we can praise God from the depths of our hearts for their goodness to us. Isaiah, verse 10, "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry," that's another part of the fast, "and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day." How

much darkness is there at noon day when there are no clouds? None. And so, the darkness that has come about because of sin, and because of bondage to sin, will be totally erased. And it will be as noon day, all light with the light of the Lord. "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought," he can take care of you. As the Psalmist of old said, "I have been young, and now I am old, but I have never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." "And make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." And we all know how a garden taken care of properly, fertilized, weeded and watered, how beautiful it grows. But if it's left to itself, the weeds and other things take over and it does not accomplish it's beautiful end.

"And they that shall be of thee," yes, and of God and Christ, "shall build the old waste places:" If we let the garden go it becomes waste. Now, we are of God and Christ, if we are determined to keep his commandments, fully and completely. Jesus Christ said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments, then listen, "Thou shalt build up the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations;" a foundation for future generations shall be built by such who so dedicate their lives to God. "And thou shalt be called, the repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in."

From this afternoon here's another scripture that I want to use again, Jeremiah 6:16, this beautiful scripture gives more responsibility. "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls." Stand in the ways and seek for the old path, that which was laid down to Adam. It needn't be changed because we're living in a different time. Some may say that because of present day trials that we need a different set of rules, a different set of moral rules. But He said, seek the old paths, the way is the same throughout eternity. God is the same yesterday, today and forever and so is his Son, Jesus Christ. If they were not the same yesterday, today, and forever, but were changing, we'd be in trouble. They expect no more nor no less from you than they expected from Adam and Noah and all the rest that ever went before us.

So seek for the old paths, where is the good way, and it says, walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. As Paul said, The peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. That peace can be ours even though there is turmoil about us; even though there are those who walk the streets at night to do us damage, or during the day. We can take courage; when we lie down at night, lie down unto the Lord; and when we rise up thank him for watching over us.

But this people had said, by their actions and deeds,

"we will not walk therein." Do you suppose there has been times in our lives when you and I have said, We will not walk therein? Think upon it; I'll let you each judge yourself. I've already read where I have no business judging you so I'm not going to do it.

I have two more verses, 13 and 14, "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day;" Think on that! And let it sink deeply in your heart, the sabbath has been defiled (by pleasure seeking.) "And call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:" It is not

impossible, "Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father:" All these wonderful things will be unfolded in their complete fullness among such a people as do these things; the gifts of the Spirit will be in their complete fullness as God intended them to be, and all the rest of the blessings. He will bless you in basket and in store, in your going out and in your coming in. "For the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." And I don't know of any better authority than the mouth of the Lord speaking it.

THE BOOK OF COMMANDMENTS

We the Church of Christ, have in our possession a book of revelations given through Joseph Smith; he through whom the Lord had the Book of Mormon translated; he through whom, along with Oliver Cowdrey, the priesthood was restored; he through whom, along with five others the Church was organized; the foundation laid, on April 6, 1830. The statement of the fly-leaf says, A Book of COMMANDMENTS for the government of the CHURCH OF CHRIST Organized according to law on the 6th of April, 1830. Capitalization is of the book.

Just what is the status of the revelations of the Book of Commandments in the minds of the peoples of the Church of Christ? For some it is ignorance; by choice. I personally have heard one member of many years say regarding the book, "I've never read it." How many others have not? And why? Here is a book purporting to be commandments directly from God to us of this latter day, who call ourselves his church and yet it is not even read? Amazing! We who have prided ourselves on the distinction that we believe in the principle of continuing revelation, do not believe either to investigate or to obey those revelations which are our only evidence that the position we proclaim is true?

There was a time, some thirty to forty years ago, that there were a few who both taught and preached from the Book of Commandments. They have gone to their reward, and since then how infrequently we are ever taught concerning the commandments therein. We are often admonished to keep the Lord's commandments, yet rarely are those commandments in the Book of commandments included or referred to.

Are we justified? Of what does this evasion come? fear? unbelief? ignorance? Let us take a brief look into history, the history of our own beginnings as a Church; the beginnings relative to these things. It was at a conference in Hiram, Ohio in November of 1831, that the proposition to have the revelations printed in a book was considered. There were some even then afflicted with unbelief. They questioned the appropriateness of

publishing that which had been given them, to the world; and a revelation was given, which was to become the preface of the book, in which it is stated, "Behold, this is mine authority, and the authority of my servants, and my Preface unto the Book of my Commandments, which I have given them to publish unto you, O inhabitants of the earth. . . And verily I say unto you, that they who go forth, bearing these tidings unto the inhabitants of the earth, to them is power given, to seal both on earth and in heaven, the unbelieving and rebellious; . . . Wherefore the voice of the Lord is unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear: . . ." from paragraphs 2 and 3 of chapter 1 of the Book of Commandments.

Some also picked at the language in which the revelations were written and another revelation was given, section 67 of the Doctrine and Covenants, in which they were given a challenge, "And now, I, the Lord, give unto you a testimony of the truth of these commandments which are lying before you; your eyes have been upon my servant Joseph Smith, Jr., and his language you have known; and his imperfections you have known; and you have sought in your hearts knowledge, that you might express beyond his language: this you also know: now seek ye out of the Book of Commandments, even the least that is among them, and appoint him that is most wise among you; or if there be any among you, that shall make one like unto it, then ye are justified in saying that ye do not know that they are true; but if ye cannot make one like unto it, ye are under condemnation if ye do not bear record that they are true; for ye know that there is no unrighteousness in them; and that which is righteous cometh down from above, from the Father of lights." (paragraph 2.)

The injunction of that revelation is just as valid and applicable today as it was then. Before any justify themselves in either further ignoring or rejecting this book of revelations and commandments, let them pick the one they least believe and try to write one like it. Or

seek out the most educated, language fluent person they know and ask them to write one to equal any that is in the book. They couldn't do it in 1831; William McLellin tried and failed. In consequence of the forgoing events in the minutes of the conference held on the 12th of November, 1831, we find this statement, "After deliberate consideration in consequence of the Book of Revelation now to be printed being the foundation of the church and the salvation of the world and the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom, and the riches of Eternity to the Church-voted that they be prized by this conference to be worth to the Church the riches of the whole earth, speaking temporarily." Following is-

"Testimony of the witnesses to the book of the Lord's commandments, which he gave to His church through Joseph Smith, Jr., who was appointed by the voice of the Church for this purpose; we therefore feel willing to bear testimony to all the world of mankind, to every creature upon the face of all the earth and upon the islands of the sea, that the Lord has borne record to our souls, through the Holy Ghost, shed forth upon us, that these commandments were given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for all men, and are verily true. We give this testimony unto the world, the Lord being our helper; and it is through the grace of God, the Father, and his Son, Jesus Christ, that we are permitted to have

this privilege of bearing this testimony unto the world, that the children of men may be profited thereby." Utah church history, vol. 1, page 226. The Elders present and witnessing as above were,

Joseph Smith, Jr.	Sidney Rigdon
Oliver Cowdery	William E. McLellin
David Whitmer	Orson Hyde
John Whitmer	Luke Johnson
Peter Whitmer, Jr.	Lyman Johnson

Four of these men were also witnesses to the Book of Mormon. If their testimony is good in the one instance should it not be taken on equal value in the other?

The Lord had given them the means to prove the validity of his word, and by his Spirit assured them of the validity of these things. If we cannot accept the record of those meetings, taken from the Far West Record at Salt Lake City, Utah, pages 16-23; most readily found, reprinted in "The Book of Commandments Controversy Reviewed," we are at liberty to repeat the test of proof the Lord required of them, to receive the same witness, or, the same condemnation. Some few, this author included, have received their witness; and even as these have said, the wealth of the whole world cannot compare to the worth of these things to the soul who believes and obeys them; nor to the Church that will so do.

Amy Schrader

GREETINGS FROM GRAND JUNCTION

This will be the last report from us for 1983. We certainly have had an eventful year, full of many happy memories and blessings from above.

The United Workers met at Shirley's Ely's for the October meeting. We continued our study in Genesis and discovered that Ishmael attended the burial of his father, Abraham. Ishmael had gone to the east country earlier, and had twelve sons like Jacob did. One never knows what information will surface in the studies—good reason to attend!

The Charity Bazaar in October was successful enough to raise over \$300 for the local building fund. We learned enough in this first encounter with the public to make it even more rewarding, should we decide to try this again. Our selection of baked goods and handcrafted items was as fine and varied as any there, in our opinion.

The Bruners and Kauffmans from Missouri were here shortly before Thanksgiving and honored us with their music. Martha's mother, Lois Harris, accompanied them to Phoenix, after spending most of November here with her sister, Enid Bell.

Thoughts from sermons: Sinners do not want to be reminded of their wrong-doing. Are we tuned in to

God, or are we like a radio that is off the station, picking up static? We will not simply fall into God's salvation. We would like to see the advance of the church by leaps and bounds, but the tide of evil has not been turned back.

December brought on colder weather and more visitors. The Gordon McCann and Duane Ely families came from Phoenix to share Christmas with Bob and Shirley Ely. Gordon brought us the origins of our celebration of Christmas, defining the spiritual traditions which have come to mean so much to Christians. Here to enjoy our comparatively balmy weather, were Forest and Irene Maley from Minneapolis, sharing Christmas with the Allen Downs family. Forest reminded us in his sermon of how exciting the gospel can and should be, if we become more familiar with its people and origins. Visiting with Alice Larsen and daughters, was the Tom Larsen family from Nebraska. Our little church was full on Christmas evening when we presented our annual program. Done entirely by volunteers this year, things went so smoothly that the program appeared to be choreographed from above!

Absent from our midsts and very much missed, were

Dave and Charlotte Hinkle. At the time of this writing, they are in Phoenix. Dave is in bad physical condition in the hospital there. We ask your prayers in their behalf.

More thoughts from sermons: When in perfect order, as outlined in Corinthians, the church functions properly. When man begins to tinker with things along the way, the church falters, like an engine with a spark plug wire pulled off. Is this church running properly, like the well-tuned engine it was set up to be?

Our blessings are many, our problems so few; may the new year bring all of God's sunshine to you.

Our best to all of you,
Becky Downs, 1983 reporter

NEWS FROM MARION, MICHIGAN

The weather has hit us in Michigan hard, as it has the rest of the country. We have tried to maintain Sunday services as usual, but the weather has at times affected our attendance.

The first Sunday in January, normally our sacrament service, found our pastor, Elder Conley Addington, and his wife Marion snowed in at Maple City and unable to make it to Marion for services. What a great sacrifice this wonderful couple makes to drive a distance of approximately 100 miles one way to bring the gospel to our little group at least twice a month. We are so grateful to them for their dedication to the work of the Master. We were delighted, however, to have Randy and Mary Lee, from Grand Rapids, join us for Sunday School, along with their little ones, Alicia and Christina. We are using the Book of Mormon in our studies; it seems to become more precious every time we read it.

Sunday, the 8th, was, if possible, worse than the 1st. In spite of 8 inches of freshly-fallen snow, the Addingtons "mushed" their way down to Marion to bring us the sacrament and join with us in a truly wonderful prayer and testimony service.

January 15. Following our regular Sunday School class, Elder Addington gave a very uplifting sermon from the 3rd Book of Nephi, Chapter 5, Verses 36-78, in which we are reminded that unless we repent and be baptized in His name and become as little children we cannot inherit the kingdom of God. We are also told that we must build upon the rock of His doctrine. This scripture points out the rewards we have to look forward to if we serve God. Reference was also made to 3rd Nephi, Chapter 7, Verses 13-14 and 24-26, in which they were told of other sheep which were not of this fold. They must also be brought in so that there will be one fold and one shepherd. In closing, Brother Addington reminded us that we must serve Him every day of our lives, not just on Sunday, and that we should

love and pray for one another. As long as we do, God is going to bless that person and we will receive a blessing also.

Following our service, in addition to our regular potluck dinner, we enjoyed birthday cake with two of our members—Sister Marion Addington and Brother Earl Bergey (his 89th year-70 in the service of The Lord.)

In spite of lots of fresh snow and bad roads, the Addingtons were able to make it for the last Sunday of the month. For his sermon, Brother Addington spoke from the 4th and 5th chapters of Romans, which dealt with God's promise to Abraham (that he would be a father of many nations), which was given on his faith and not on the law of circumcision. In Chapter 5, Paul explains the doctrine of Christ's atonement for our sin—how one man's (Adam) sin brought death to our race and one man's (Christ) death is sufficient to bring life to those who will accept it.

Brother and Sister Addington have been ministering to a 93-year-old lady, presently living in a rest home, who has never been exposed to the gospel. They have been visiting her regularly, talking to her about Christ, and praying with her. She has asked for a Bible with large print so she can see to read and red print so she will know which are the words of Christ. It's such a thrill to see the change in her since the Addingtons first started their visits. Please join with us in prayer that she (her name is Mrs. Mosher) will accept Christ soon.

Remember our little group here in Northern Michigan that we might remain faithful and not become discouraged. Most of us drive anywhere from 70 to 200 miles round trip every Sunday to have services in the little town of Marion. Our prayers and love go out to all of you of like faith everywhere.

June Haines, Reporter

OKLAHOMA NEWS

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (psalm 133:1) United we are, as we gather together in someone's home to worship together.

Once each month we are blessed with a visit from the visiting ministry. In November and January, it was Brother Tony Grzincic. In December it was Brother Marvin Case. Thank you, Brothers Tony and Marvin, for your inspirational sermons.

Our pastor, Brother Larry Beem, continues to speak to us the other Sundays. His counseling is good. We listen and appreciate. Can we apply his counseling to our lives? It is hard to do, but, precept by precept, perhaps we can. I hasten to add--not without the Lord's help can we do these things. One Sunday, Brother Larry reminded us of how easy it is to drift

away. As a nation, we have drifted away from the Christian teachings. People would rather worship other things than God. We are losing some of our freedoms because we don't care enough to worship God. This is a land of promise, a land of freedom, and a land of opportunity given to us by God. We have a responsibility to preserve these things. The people of this land shall serve God or "they shall be swept off when the fullness of his wrath shall come upon them." (Ether 1:31)

We met in the Elwell home on January 8 and Brother Tony and Sister Louise Grzincic were with us. During our Sunday School lesson, we somehow evolved into "good manners/consideration for others" discussion. (Being considerate and polite to one another is showing our love and concern for each other. We are denying self. We are expressing unselfishness.) All of us could recall many times when our concentration had been disturbed by whispering, talking, or walking at our church services. As a church, we MUST watch these small things. We MUST be a people who are considerate of others. I, as your reporter, feel that if we would work HARD at this small task, we would be AMAZED with greater blessings received in our church services. This discussion led into Brother Tony's sermon, which so often happens when we worship together. "We can be what we want to be. Hear His words! Believe His words! Harden not your hearts! Follow Him," counseled Brother Tony. Brother Larry closed our service with a beautiful prayer when he said, "Our Father, we come before Thee this day and ask Your blessing upon us. We pray that You continue to bring these things to our minds as we go from here. Father, we pray that we have faith sufficient to follow Thee. We ask You to dismiss us with a parting blessing. Help us in our walk of life and that not one of us be lost. We pray this in the name of Christ, Amen."

The month of January also included our sacrament service as well as Brother Larry speaking to us. Brother

Frank and Sister Carol Fann joined us in some of our worship services. We continue to have Elder John Farris and his wife, Mandy, from El Reno meet with us now and then. The Kimball, Martin, and Beem homes, as well as the Elwell home, continue to be places of our worship services. We continue to study church history in Sunday School and have dinner together once or twice a month. We tease each other, enjoy the kids, and we seldom let our awful weather stop us.

In closing, I want to share with you another one of Brother Larry's sermons. He began by reminding us of our belief that we know that Christ will come. With this belief, we do not want to walk in paths that are not of the Lord. How many times do we work for unity? This concept includes the home as well as the church. If we have the spirit of unity, God's direction will be done and not ours. If we could meet together in a church service, or if as a church, we could have complete unity, just think what a POWER this would be! When we try to force our will on others, that's not right. Do you feel there are things in your life that are shielding you from God? Let us press toward our mark. Keep your eye on Christ. Keep our minds and hearts steadfast. Let's make up our minds this day to grow in faith, hope, and love toward Christ and our fellowman.

Our worship service is over. We say our good-bye, perhaps we give a big hug. We each go to our cars and each of them bearing a different county car license. We go our separate ways--to Norman, to Weatherford, to Edmond, or Shawnee. We have happy hearts for we are spiritually uplifted. We know we'll worship together again soon.

"And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:32)

Reporter,
Alzada Massey

THE LAST CYCLE

I am the calendar stone of the Toltecs.
My home is in a museum in Old Me-She-Co.
Long ago I sat in ancient Tula, Tula the Beautiful.
I was carved under the direction of Kate Zahl the Prophet.
As the time of warning neared, panic struck
And the wayward sons and daughters of Tenoc-Titlan
Buried me deep under the mud of Mexico.
As I lay silent but not forgotten
The cycles continued and the conquerors came.
Well do I remember the conquest, the screams
Of the women and the cry of the children

As Cortez and his bloody band, in the year of Te Tee Patl,
Ravaged the city leaving a trail of wounded and dead.
The Prophet warned of the calamities,
The people would not listen.
The sacred records are hid deep in the jungles.
The cities of Empires now lay desolate.
Give heed to Quetzal Coatl
For He looked down the cycles of the Dawn Star,
His countenance saddened as he saw the time of the end.
Earthquakes, destruction, carnage, fear,
And man reaching for the ultimate weapon.
This is the last cycle.

Mary Hunter.

THE WORDS OF CHRIST, A ROAD-MAP

Thoughts presented or derived from sermons and study lessons

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.” Isaiah 11:1-5

The forgoing describes Christ! Oh these blest qualities of his character, the same which is bestowed upon his true followers; and upon his ministry to be used to prepare a people for his coming. Oh that we may become worthy by this his indwelling.

In 2 Nephi 14:4, we are told to feast on the words of Christ. His words are our life's directions, they are our road-map. We cannot travel toward God by way of these directions and at the same time attempt to continue to follow our own wills and desires which go in the opposite direction.

The promise of being raised up at the last day is to those who remember his sayings and 'doeth' them. How shall we remember unless we do indeed feast our hearts and minds upon them, checking ourselves at every crossroad and turning point ever so much more carefully than we check a road-map when on a journey across the country? (3 Nephi 7:2)

We must learn to feast on the words of Jesus if we would learn the way he would have us live, the kind of people he would have us to be, the steps he would have us to follow. To feast does not mean simply to cram them into our minds as a memory exercise, but to learn to savor and delight in them. We must learn to feast, praying for the Holy Ghost, that Spirit of Truth to give us full understanding of their meaning and their application in and to our lives.

Peter speaking in accord with these thoughts says, Jesus, “According to his divine power hath given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, . . . And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” And he goes on to say that as long as he remained in the flesh he would put them in remembrance of these things. 2 Peter 1:3-10

And how shall we follow Peter's counsel except we by feasting on the teachings of Jesus avail ourselves of these things? We've been given a road-map to the kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ; but a map is of no use if one doesn't read it and reading, follow it.

POEM FOR RYAN

By Linda Dewaele

*(Submitted by Ray Dewaele,
"Written shortly after the birth of our son Ryan.")*

My heart is full to bursting
As I watch what you will be
Though part of you goes far beyond
A part grows up in me
You know not what you give in love
And I'll tell you something true
In all this world nothing exceeds
The miracle of you.

And when these years grow timeless
A memory lingers on
Of a babe so small that once his hand
Was lost inside my palm
Our love grows deep and boundless
Even though your life is new
There is a bond between us
Though I can never follow you.

Oh Ryan--Ryan--
Here's a dream to share
Someday we'll dwell in Zion
And our Lord will be there
The lamb shall lay with the lion
On a crystal dawn so fair
And a little child shall lead them
On the power of a prayer.

SPECIAL NOTICE

In accordance with instructions of the 1983 Ministers' Conference, a larger facility has been rented for the first Sunday of the 1984 Conference that all may be able to meet in one room. All Activities for Sunday, April 1, 1984, will be held at the Mid-America 4-H/University of Missouri Extension Center Building, located at 2828 South M-291, Independence, Missouri. Please note that access to this building is only possible via the M-291 frontage road. This is the same building that was rented last year.

For further information please contact either Smith Brickhouse, 5713 Logan Rd., Kansas City, MO 64136, 816-356-9214 or Marvin Case, 409 N.W. Woods Chapel Rd., Lee's Summit, MO 64063, 816-373-1116.

CONFERENCE TO CONVENE

April 1, 1984

Following instructions of the 1966 Referdum, the annual conference of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot), will begin on the Sunday of the week in which the 6th of April occurs, which, this year, will be April 1st.

Business Sessions, however, will start at 9:00 a.m., Monday, April 2nd.

As per Bill No. 1, 1972 Referendum, "all committees and boards etc. of the Church empowered to expend general Church funds or collect the same shall be required to submit an annual report of their activities to include a financial statement of funds received and disbursed and submit to a joint meeting of the Council of Twelve and Bishopric at least one week prior to the opening of Conference a proposed budget for the ensuing year."

Officers and committees, as noted in the directory, should see that their reports are filed with the conference secretary as early as possible. Persons needing a place to stay should contact the Conference Coordinator. Those wishing to donate food or money to the conference should contact the Dining Hall Committee.

We are looking forward with eager anticipation to greeting each one of you and pray that the Lord's Will will be done in all things.

R.W. Oldham
General Church Secretary

THE KING'S LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

It's the oldest company in the world, having been in successful operation for thousands of years.

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President..... Jesus Christ, the King of Kings.

Capital..... The unsearchable Riches of Christ.

Surplus..... Exceeding Abundantly Above
All We ask or Think.

Cost of Policy..... Without Money and Without Price.

The President has already paid your premium
with His own precious blood.

Benefit..... Those who take out policies in this
company receive abundance of grace and gifts
of righteousness; salvation from all sin and the
fullness of the Holy Ghost as they receive Him
on the Judgement Day.

Home Office..... Heaven.

Applicants can apply directly at all times.

Seek the President of the Company **NOW** while He may
be found.

PRAISE

Know thou carriest within thee

thy secret closet?

That closet where thou meetest Him?

Wherever thou art,

whatever thou doest

Thou hast access to thy

secret closet

To meet Him there in every need,

instantly.

And when there is no pressing need

Meet Him there oft, in praise

and gratitude;

Ever raise a paeon of praise to Him

This, the highest service thou

canst render!

AUDIO-VISUAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE TO YOU

As has been announced on the last page of the Zion's Advocate for several years, your Audio, Video, Visual-Aid and Archeological Committee has prepared, and made ready for your use, four programs with color slides and accompanying narration with musical background on cassette tape. Many long hours of hard work, quite enjoyable hard work, have gone into the producing of these programs. As a member of the Church of Christ, all you have to be able to do is operate a simple slide projector and turn on your cassette player. The program's narration is designed to do the "story telling" for you. In fact, if you are in the Independence, Missouri, area, we can provide you with the equipment and even a Minister to show the program for you and help introduce and explain it to you and your friends that may be interested in the Church. To the Ministry, I say you need to especially be aware that these programs are just waiting on a shelf for you to ask to use them. I, and many other members of the Priesthood, can testify as to the value of their use in trying to acquaint an individual or group with The Book of Mormon and the Church of Christ. I don't need to apologize for the lack of the finer touches a professional production studio could offer, nor for the fact that some of our critics find fault with the quality of a photograph here or there. If I had the time and this paper had the space I could relate to you a number of real miracles that occurred at some point or other in the "home-made" production of each one of these programs. Just ask Sister Betty McIndoo about her broken sewing machine that suddenly started working at a critical time-and stayed working just long enough to finish making the costumes needed to make parts of "Out of the Dust." It quit again after she was finished! There are many other similar stories. But regardless of what someone might think with regard to quality or the lack of it, the fact is that these programs do an excellent job of telling what can be difficult for the average person to tell - be it an isolated sister to a neighbor or a fifty-year veteran of the Ministry to a large assembled group.

Please read the "Audio Visual Materials" announcement on the back of this Zion's Advocate for other information. Here follows a more detailed description of the programs available.

"Mexico, Land of Contrast" is a fairly detailed and eye-opening account of numerous archeological finds in Central America, Northern South America, and North America all of which clearly point to facts that believers in the Book of Mormon have known long before they were discovered by the archeologists. That is that the peoples that inhabited the Western Hemisphere many hundreds of years before Columbus did not just exist and multiply and become civilized fully independent of

the rest of the world, but that they were directly related to and migrated from the peoples and areas around Jerusalem on the opposite side of the world. This is dramatically portrayed by showing the numerous cultural similarities of the two peoples as discovered by the archeologists - mostly well over seventy years after the Book of Mormon was miraculously brought forth revealing all these same truths.

"Out of the Dust" is the story the Book of Mormon tells of the continent's former inhabitants as mentioned in the program, "Mexico, Land of Contrast." It makes a good follow-up to that program. It is excellent for dispelling all the rumors and falsehoods and vast misconceptions that are abroad in the world about just what the Book of Mormon is. It starts with Lehi and his family in Jerusalem and proceeds to condense nearly three thousand years of history down to 45 minutes of narration and 135 pictures before ending with Moroni burying the precious metal plates as instructed by God. So, it not only is good for showing that the Book is not just a book full of doctrines and rules of the "Mormon" church, but also makes an excellent prelude or conclusion to a series of Book of Mormon study classes.

"Light at Evening" is about the "light" that broke forth in the latter days (evening) which revealed to a young man where Moroni buried the precious plates mentioned in "Out of the Dust." It tells how this same young man, Joseph Smith, was able to translate the language on the plates to English. It also shows how the Priesthood authority was restored to the earth after over two millennia of absence, and the Church of Christ, in its original form, restored to mankind.

"The Return" is a short but inspiring and informative account of the courageous return to the Independence area in 1867 by the few remaining members of the original restored Church of Christ. After the whole Church membership had been expelled from Missouri and settled in Nauvoo, Illinois, Joseph Smith was assassinated. This created an instant internal struggle for power and resulted in the majority of the members going west to what is now Utah. A small group, however, remained in Illinois while trying to cling to the original tenets God intended for His Church. It is significant, as this program points out, that in 1864 a revelation from God was given to the people to return to Independence, the land of Zion, and that this small group was the first to return, and the only group to return under direct command of God.

It is my hope that in the coming months and years you will remember that these programs are here and awaiting your use as God would have it that opportunities present themselves.

In Behalf of the AVVAA Committee,
Elder Gary Housknecht, Chairman

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1984 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will commence Sunday, April 1, 1984. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 2. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, March 30 and 31, 1984.

The 1984 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ (Temple Lot) will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 15th, 16th and 17th at Independence, Missouri.

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS

Speed delivery of your "ADVOCATE" by sending us your new address immediately. Mail to:

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WRITTEN MATERIAL FOR "ZION'S ADVOCATE"

Articles, sermons, poems, news items, letters, notices, etc. which are appropriate to be printed in this paper are requested by the editorial staff. If possible they should be typewritten on one side of a sheet only, double spaced and grammatically corrected.

CHURCH OF CHRIST PUBLICATIONS

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ZION'S ADVOCATE SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

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Table listing various publications with prices: Book of Mormon (\$5.00), Outline History of Church of Christ (4.00), Book of Commandments (2.80), etc.

AUDIO VISUAL MATERIALS

The following materials are available on loan to members of the Church of Christ from the Audio, Video, Visual-Aid and Archeological Committee:

SLIDE PROGRAMS WITH TAPED NARRATION

"Mexico, Land of Contrast" (39 minutes) - Illustrates how modern archeological finds in North and Central America lend credence to the Book of Mormon and the story it tells of the continent's former inhabitants.

"Out of the Dust" (45 minutes) - Tells the story found within the Book of Mormon. Also available is a 35 minute version directed toward Indian viewers and entitled "A Lamp Unto My Feet."

"Light at Evening" (27 minutes) - Story of the bringing forth of the Book of Mormon and the restoration of the Church of Christ in the 1820's and 1830.

"The Return" (12 minutes) - Reveals the significance of the return to the "land of Zion" in 1867 by the members of the Church of Christ especially as holders of Title to the dedicated Temple Lot.

Send all orders to the Office Secretary, Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, MO 64051. Specify program(s) wanted, anticipated dates of use, and the make of your projector. Slide projectors and tape players are not provided except Independence area.

We also provide sermons on cassette tape. Write to the AVVAA Committee, Church of Christ, 2929 E. Siesta Lane, Phoenix, AZ 85024.

SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES

Send all orders to: General Sunday School Association Treasurer, Church of Christ (Temple Lot), P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472.

Table listing Sunday School supplies with prices: Primary, Volume 1, No. 1 Childhood of Jesus (Out of Print) N/C, Primary, Volume 1, No. 2, Jesus' Ministry (Out of Print), etc.

NOTE: Donations accepted to cover postage and printing costs. Lot prices of tracts exclusive of postage are in packs of 6 - 50c, 100 - \$5.85.