

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

Volume 69

Independence, Missouri — February 1992

Number 2

How will the saints rejoice to tell!
And count their sufferings o'er,
When they upon Mount Zion dwell,
And view the landscape o'er.

There they will see upon that land,
Fair Zion from above,
And meet with Enoch's holy band,
And sing redeeming love.

There, no more sickness, pain, or woe,
Shall mar their peaceful rest,
For God shall wipe away their tears,
And comfort the oppressed.

O may I see that glorious day!
And join with all the blest,
To sing aloud the Savior's praise;
And enter into rest.

Saints' Hymnal (1895) #86

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SECRETARY, COUNCIL OF APOSTLES

Apostle William A. Sheldon
1011 S. Cottage
Independence, Missouri 64050

SECRETARY, COUNCIL OF BISHOPS

Elder Leslie P. Case
8312 Lee's Summit Rd.
Kansas City, Missouri 64139

GENERAL CHURCH SECRETARY

Elder Robert W. Oldham
5709 Logan Rd.
Kansas City, Missouri 64136

BUSINESS MANAGER

Elder Alvin L. Harris
Church of Christ
P. O. Box 472
Independence, Missouri 64051-0472

ZION'S ADVOCATE STAFF:

EDITOR

Elder Gary A. Housknecht
11308 E. 78th Street
Raytown, Missouri 64138

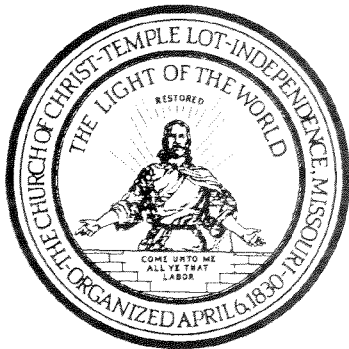
ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Priest Michael McGhee
18907 E. 6th Street
Independence, Missouri 64056

David Rudd
4917 Casey Court
Independence, Missouri 64055

FEATURE EDITOR - "Path Lights"

Melissa McGhee
2533 Glen Lane
Independence, Missouri 64052



Zion's Advocate is ...

To promote Jesus Christ as our only Saviour;
To promote His Teachings & His Church, the Church of Christ;
To be a voice of warning to His people; To be Zion's advocate.

WRITTEN MATERIAL REQUESTED

Priesthood articles and sermons, testimonies for "Path Lights," submissions to other regular monthly Z.A. features, and news items of Church-wide interest are requested, and should be sent to the Editor as listed above. Deadline for material requiring publication in any certain month is the 10th of the previous month.

Format of Submitted Material: Please type all submissions (if possible), on one side of the paper only. Please

avoid overuse of underlining, ALL-CAPS, and *italics*. The most important thing, though, is to send the material — the staff can arrange for typing or otherwise prepare anything you send.

Word Processors/Computers: We can utilize text files on an IBM® or compatible computer floppy disk of any size or format and nearly any word processor. If you have this capability, it is a *big* help to our process.

STATUS OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Articles published in this paper do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the Church nor the opinions of the editorial staff.

Declarations and notices authorized by the General Conference reflect the practices and beliefs of the General Church.

Guest Editorial ...

Publish Peace

To all my beloved Brothers and sisters, friends, and any who read the Advocate, I salute you in love.

It is my fervent hope that there are many, who have received the Holy Ghost, and that the workings of this Spirit have created a hunger for greater knowledge and understanding of all the recorded words of the Scriptures in the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Book of Commandments, and have caused them to inquire of God for answers of their personal choices, and seek only those things, which the Spirit will bear witness, that are pleasing to our Lord, Jesus Christ.

On the front of our Advocate is the quotation from I Nephi 3:187 in the 1908 authorized edition. The complete sentence or thought is in verses 181 through 189 and includes all of that statement given to us by the Angel of God. It is written as one complete sentence in the Palmyra edition of the Book of Mormon.

In the Bible (Matthew 5:8) it says, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

Inasmuch as many have expounded on that which is written in verse 187, I will not touch upon that portion only as a foundation for verses 188, 189.

And if they endure unto the end, they shall be lifted up at the last day, and shall be saved in the everlasting kingdom of the Lamb; And whoso shall publish peace, yea, tidings of great joy, how beautiful upon the mountains shall they be.

We rejoice in this basic part of the true Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and receive with joy the promise of the Angel, that by doing this we will be lifted up at the last day, and saved in the everlasting

kingdom of the Lamb.

We have witnessed the fulfillment of this indescribable gift of our Lord in the lives and hopes of our loved ones, who have gone on to their rewards. We have our own personal assurance through the Holy Ghost that we will be lifted up to stand before our Lord and receive mercy, as we are merciful, the peace of God as we have sought peace, and as we have become a child of God, we shall see Him.

All these things are ours through the grace and mercy of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Let all of us realize, we can be beautiful in the sight of God by publishing peace. This peace, is realized ("published") only by becoming reconciled to God through obedience unto repentance, baptisms, hungering and thirsting after righteousness (His righteousness), and being filled with the Holy Ghost and charity to the last of our days on earth.

Psalm 128

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

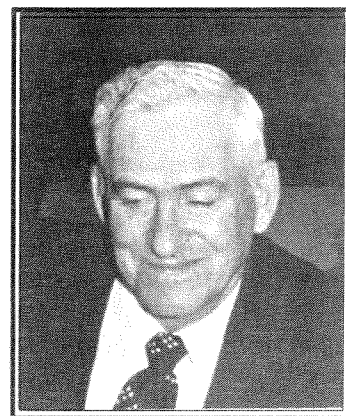
For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days of thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.



Elder Loren Bryant

... we will be lifted up to stand before our Lord and receive mercy, as we are merciful, the peace of God as we have sought peace, and as we have become a child of God, we shall see Him.

ZA

Columbus: A Man of Destiny

And it came to pass that I looked and beheld many waters; and they divided the Gentiles from the seed of my brethren. And it came to pass that the angel saith unto me, Behold, the wrath of God is upon the seed of thy brethren! And I looked and beheld a man among the Gentiles, who was separated from the seed of my brethren by the many waters; and I beheld the spirit of God, that it came down and wrought upon the man; and he went forth upon the many waters, even to the seed of my brethren, which were in the promised land. - 1 Nephi 3: 145-147

This man could be none other than Christopher Columbus who, in 1492, sailed across the seas to the Americas fulfilling this prophecy. Columbus wrote a book, *Libro de la Prophecias*, that now has been translated into English by Kay Brigham and published in

Elder Arthur G. Smith

1990. In part, he wrote of his study of scriptures and other works available to him that gave him the inspiration and the determination to execute the exploration of Lands that lay beyond the horizons of the seas.

Excerpts from his writings are of exceptional interest to us who be-

lieve in the Book of Mormon. He addressed his appeal for assistance for the tremendous task to the royal powers of Spain. Quoting Columbus:

“At this time I have seen and put in study to look into all the Scriptures, cosmography, histories, chronicles, and philosophy and other arts, which our Lord opened to my understanding (I could sense His hand upon me), so that it became clear to me that it was feasible to navigate from here to the Indies; — Neither the sciences which I mentioned above, nor the authoritative citations from them, were of any avail. In only your Highnesses remain faith and constancy.

“Who doubts that this illumination was from the Holy Spirit? I attest that He (the Spirit), with marvelous rays of light, consoled me through the holy and sacred scriptures ... encouraging me to proceed, and, continually, without ceasing for a moment, they inflame me with a sense of great urgency.”

Another author, Simon Wiesenthal, in his, *Sails of Hope*, wrote “That religious elements played a

great part in Columbus’ thoughts and actions is evident from all his writings. It may come somewhat as a surprise to us that his concepts of sailing west to reach the Indies was less the result of geographical theories than of his faith in certain Biblical texts — specifically the Book of

Isaiah.”

What scriptures inspired this zealous and courageous man? Some of the Bible quotations in his writings are significantly prophetic. Read for yourself and judge what he thought to be inspirational: Psalms 97:1, Isaiah 42:10, 49:1, 51:5, 65:1, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8.

This remarkable man didn’t live to see the enormous impact of his explorations on the Old World and also the New World, the promised land. He died poor and relatively unknown but true to his faith in God. It is recorded that he repeated the words of our Lord on the cross, “Unto your hands, Father, I commend my soul.” and died.

How marvelous are the works of our God to bring to pass His will toward mankind. Truly, God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform.

Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure; calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country; yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it. - Isaiah 46:9-10

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A Time of Thanksgiving and Dedication

The dedication service for the new Church of Christ headquarters building at the Temple Lot in Independence, Missouri, will be held the first day of conference, April 5, 1992, from 3:30 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. The service will include a choral presentation, three speeches, special music and the dedication prayer. We invite all who desire, to share with us in this special time of sacred observance.

Open House

The general public is invited to an open house at the new Church of Christ headquarters building at the Temple Lot in Independence, Missouri, Saturday, April 11, 1992, from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Slide presentations and refreshments along with tours of the building are planned activities. Come share with us a glimpse of our past and our hope for the future.

Workers for Jesus

I like to relate our Christianity to everyday terms. We are all familiar with looking for work and reading the employment section. Would we be able to answer the following ad?

"Positions Available: Equal opportunity employer seeks persons who desire to attain their maximum life potential in an optimistic service organization. Requires the ability to understand and follow basic principles. And the desire to be a team player. Previous experience not required. Training assistance provided throughout employment on a weekly basis. Self-study materials are available and we encourage their use. Group study and discussion of work-related experiences are encouraged. This position offers a total living plan for all employees, including a strict ethical code and the expectancy that you will be willing to do more than your share when others aren't able too. Outside employment is okay if it meets the employers approval and is not in conflict with this position. You must be loyal to the Boss and his cause, and you will be encouraged to tell others about your job and ask them to apply.

"The Boss adheres to an open door policy. You may talk with him

any time day or night, about any needs or problems you have or just to thank him for this job and the many benefits included. All of your needs will be taken care of as the Employer sees fit. At times you may be required to endure trials and tests as part of your on-the-job training.

You will learn that you are stronger with the Employer's help. You will be required to

love and forgive others, even when you don't think they deserve it. You may be called to be a special representative for the Boss.

"There is no mandatory retirement age. You will be chosen to retire in the Company facility when the Boss needs you there, possibly with little or no warning. If during your time with the Company you err in your ways, you may be forgiven if you ask sincerely and believe on the Boss. Further information is available at any local office. If you are sincerely interested in this position attend one of our local training seminars, and talk to the Company representative there."

Does this sound to good to be true? Could you apply and meet the requirements? Are you ready to commit to this position for the rest of

your life? It will require your full devotion to do it well, it will require more than just attending the weekly training seminars. You must live your whole life striving to follow the example of the Boss.

By now you know that this job is accepting Jesus Christ to be your

Priest Martin Addie

Saviour and committing your life to him to live by his example which is detailed in the Bible and the Book of Mormon. Read the 5th through the 7th chapters of Matthew the Sermon on the Mount. With these instructions in mind how do you measure up?

Are you a productive worker or have you entered retirement and think you know the job but don't have to work at it any more? The next time you are preparing for Sacrament be honest are you worthy to partake of the emblems. Jesus knows if you are. Let us make our lives right the most important thing we have is our chance for salvation, can you think of anything more important than your salvation. You decide.

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Conference Notice

Following instructions of the 1966 Referendum, the annual conference of the Church of Christ will begin on the Sunday of the week in which the 6th of April occurs, which this year, will be April 5. Business sessions will commence at 9:00 A.M. on Monday. A solemn assembly is scheduled for the Friday and Saturday immediately preceding the opening of Conference. All services and business sessions will be held at the General Church Headquarters adjacent to the Temple Lot.

As per Bill #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 committee chairmen should see that their reports are filed with the General Church Secretary as early as possible. Persons needing a place to stay should contact a Conference Coordinator. Those wishing to donate food or money to the Conference, should contact the Dining Hall Committee. In accordance with action of the 1985 April Conference, all requests for funds should be submitted to the General Bishopric one month prior to the date Conference convenes.

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

Elder Robert W. Oldham, General Church Sec'y

Hope in the Testing Hour

Condensed from a Sermon

All of us live through extremely difficult times and situations: disability, injury, loss of a loved one, a broken heart, financial difficulties, drug dependency, troubled children — troubled parents, or the loss of a job.

Elder Lawrence Beem

When we reach a low point in life, it tests the metal we're made of. When you squeeze an orange, what do you expect to get? Orange juice. When you squeeze a person, what do you expect to get? What's in his heart. Will it be love or hate, joy or sadness, belief in God and that everything will turn out okay, or disbelief, questioning what we believe? We may even question God Himself and His love for us.

Each of us is in a testing hour. Many throw up their hands in despair, give up and quit. I've thought of saying, "I don't know what to do!" Have you ever had that happen? You just don't know whether you can take any more. Many respond adversely. They want to take their lives. That has happened in the church. Testing the metal found it not tempered properly. Maybe ingredients were not in the right order. What if the process were reversed? Would there be the same end result? Maybe that happens in our lives.

When life seems darkest is the time we prove our true worth. When we are squeezed the hardest, what comes out? Does our faith come out?

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

We are to have the peace of Jesus

Christ in our lives, so when troubles hit, when the metal is tested, when we're squeezed the hardest, then faith comes out and shows what we believe. John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Faith will see us through, when the challenges of life hit us right in the face. Our belief in God and Jesus Christ is our strength.

ETHER 5:2-38 (selected):
Ether was a prophet of the Lord; ... he could not be restrained because of the Spirit of the Lord which was in him; he did cry from morning, until the going down of the sun, exhorting the people to believe in God unto repentance, lest they should be destroyed, saying unto them, that by faith all things are fulfilled; ... whoso believeth in God, might with surety hope for a better world, yea, even a place at the right hand of God, which hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast, always abounding in good works, being led to glorify God. (v2-4)

This is about the "metal" of these people - when they were squeezed, would come out? He knew there would be trials, troubles, yet He gave the answer. When we believe in God, we "might, with surety, hope for a better world."

Ether did prophesy great and marvelous things unto the people, which they did not believe, because they saw them not ... I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of

your faith, for it was by faith that Christ showed himself unto our fathers, after he had risen from the dead; and he showed himself not unto them, until after they had faith in him; wherefore it must needs be that some had faith in him, for he showed himself not unto the world.

But because of the faith of men, he has shown himself unto the world, and glorified the name of the Father, and prepared a way that ... they might hope for those things which they have not seen ... ye may also have hope, and be partakers of the gift, if ye will but have faith ... it was by faith that they of old were called after the holy order of God; wherefore, by faith was the Law of Moses given. But in the gift of his Son, hath God prepared a more excellent way, and it is by faith that it hath been fulfilled: For if there be no faith among the children of men, God can do no miracle among them; wherefore, he showed not himself until after their faith. (v5-13)

If we don't have faith, when troubles and trials hit us, how can God possibly correct them? Without faith that God will see us through, we are lost and hopeless. 14: "It was the faith of Alma and Amulek that caused the prison to tumble to the earth."

Alma and Amulek could have gotten down on themselves, down on the church, down on the gospel of Christ, and down on God. How would it be if you were thrown into prison? Would you doubt your belief? Would you have trouble keeping yourself up?

... it was the faith of Nephi and Lehi, that wrought the change upon the Lamanites, that they were baptized with fire and with

the Holy Ghost. It was the faith of Ammon and his brethren, which wrought so great a miracle among the Lamanites; yea, and even all they which wrought them by faith, even those which were before Christ, and also them which were after. It was by faith that the three disciples obtained a promise that they should not taste of death; and they obtained not the promise until after their faith. Neither at any time hath any wrought miracles until after their faith; wherefore they first believed in the Son of God.

And there were many whose faith was so exceeding strong, even before Christ came, which could not be kept from within the veil, but truly say with their eyes the things which they had beheld with an eye of faith, and they were glad ... we have seen in this record, that one of these was the Brother of Jared; for so great was his faith in God, that when God put forth his finger, he could not hide it from the sight of the Brother of Jared, because of his word, which he had spoken unto him, which word he had obtained by faith. (v15-20)

Do you see the importance of being grounded in faith?

After the Brother of Jared had beheld the finger of the Lord, because of the promise which the Brother of Jared had obtained by faith, the Lord could not withhold anything from his sight; wherefore he showed him all things, for he could no longer be kept without the veil. And it is by faith that my fathers have obtained the promise that these things should come unto their brethren through the Gentiles; therefore the Lord hath commanded me, yea, even Jesus Christ. And I said unto him, Lord, the Gentiles will mock at these things because of our weakness in writing; for Lord thou hast made us mighty in word by faith, whereunto thou has not made us mighty

in writing; (v21-23)

Have we thought there would be those that would mock? This has been in my heart and mind lately — this thought of criticism by others, causing people to doubt their self-worth.

For thou hast made all this people that they could speak much, because of the Holy Ghost, which thou hast given them; and thou hast made us that we could write but little, because of the awkwardness of our hands. Behold, thou hast not made us mighty in writing, like unto the Brother of Jared, for thou madest him that the things which he wrote, were mighty even as thou art. unto the overpowering of man to read them. Thou hast also made our words powerful and great, even that we can not write them; wherefore, when we write, we behold our weakness and stumble, because of the placing of our words; and I fear lest the Gentiles shall mock at our words. (v24-26)

Does this show the metal of this writer? Do we stumble because of the placing of our words?

... Fools mock, but they shall mourn; and my grace is sufficient for the meek, that they shall take no advantage of your weakness; and if men come unto me, I will show them their weakness. I give unto men weakness, that they may be humble; and my grace is sufficient for all men that humble themselves before me; for if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them. Behold, I will shew unto the Gentiles their weakness and I will shew unto them that faith, hope, and charity, bringeth unto me the fountain of all righteousness. (v27-29)

The Church of Christ has an abundance of charity and a great deal of faith. We fall short in hope. If we had the hope we should, we would

see more manifestations of the Spirit.

And I, Moroni, ... was comforted, and said, O Lord, thy righteous will be done, for I know that thou workest unto the children of men according to their faith; for the Brother of Jared said unto the mountain Zerin, Remove, and it was removed. And if he had not faith, it would not have moved; ... thou workest after men have faith; for thus did thou manifest thyself unto thy disciples. For after that they had faith and did speak in thy name, thou didst show thyself unto them in great power; and . . . thou hast said that thou hast prepared a house for man; yea, even among the mansions of thy Father, in the which man might have a more excellent hope; wherefore man must hope, or he can not receive an inheritance in the place which thou hast prepared. (v30-32)

How important is hope? So important that, if you don't have hope, you cannot receive an inheritance in the place He has prepared for you.

... thou hast said that thou hast loved the world, even unto the laying down of thy life for the world, that thou mightest take it again to prepare a place for the children of men. . . this love, which thou hast had for the children of men, is charity; wherefore, except men shall have charity, they can not inherit that place which thou hast prepared in the mansions of thy Father. (v33-34)

How important is charity? Important enough that, if we didn't have it, it would keep us out of our inheritance.

... if the Gentiles have not charity, because of our weakness, thou wilt prove them, and take away their talent. . . that which they have received, and give unto them, which shall have more abundantly. ...I prayed unto the Lord that he would give unto the Gentiles grace, that they might have

charity. And it came to pass that the Lord said unto me, If they have not charity, it altereth not unto thee; thou hast been faithful, wherefore thy garments shall be made clean. And because thou hast seen thy weakness, thou shalt be made strong, even unto the sitting down in the place which I have prepared in the mansions of my Father. (v35-38)

I think of church as a hospital, where any person wounded in body, mind, or soul, may come for healing and renewal. What a wonderful place church is. It's unfortunate many do not avail themselves of the opportunity to come and be healed, even our own members. People come to church with all kinds of feelings: discouragement, bitterness, feelings of failure, defeated, and hostile; others come with love, joy, peace, comfort, and God's blessings.

You can't control what life hands you, but you can control how you react. When you're squeezed hard, what comes out?

I Cor. 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempt-

ed above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Could we substitute "trial" for "temptation?"

Romans 8:35: "Who can separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"

Romans 5:1-6: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ... we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

When we are squeezed, what will come out?

I will close with a poem, by Helen Steiner Rice:

WHAT MORE CAN YOU ASK?

God's love endureth forever,
What a wonderful thing to know
When the tides of life run against you,
And your spirit is downcast and low.

God's kindness is ever around you,
Always ready to freely impart
Strength to your faltering spirit
And cheer to your lonely heart.

God's presence is ever beside you,
As near as the reach of your hand.
You have but to tell him your troubles,
There is nothing he won't understand.

And knowing God's love is unfailing
And His mercy unending and great,
You have but to trust in His promise.
God comes not too soon or too late.

So wait with a heart that is patient,
For the goodness of God to prevail,
For never do prayers go unanswered,
And His mercy and love never fail.

ZA

COLLINS LOCAL NEWS

Greetings to you in this brand new year of uncertainty. True enough, there are many things, nations, and boundary lines changing in our world today and I feel very unsure of what is to come. However, there is one steadying factor on which we can all rely and that is our Father in Heaven and His wonderful promises to all those who will call on His name in faith believing. Consider the words to the song, "Where Could I Go (But To The Lord)".

A nice crowd gathered for the Collins Rally. Prayer service began quite early (8:30 A.M.), followed by four 30-minute sermons, and a closing sermon after lunch. Our speakers for the Rally were Brothers Rodger Bruner, Bic Brockman, Don Hiitt, Jack Martin, and Roland Sarratt. We enjoyed our time together to hear the gospel taught and shared through sermon and testimony. Thank you all so much for coming. We have had many visitors, including those at the Rally, that I can not list each one, but I would like to mention our brothers who have come to speak to us. From Independence came our Brother and Apostles, Smith

"Buzz" Brickhouse, as well as our Brother Leslie Case. And from the Kansas area came Brother Glen Gill. Always we will be grateful for the efforts made to come share the gospel with us. Many thanks!

We shared services with our friends in the community at the Baptist Church for Thanksgiving and again for the Christmas celebration at our church. This is the second year in a row that we have had a "front-row crowd!" Several of our guests THANKED us for inviting them. My reply was to thank THEM for coming. We had a lovely celebration of Christ's birth in song and verse, and even a short skit, put on by the Baptist kids.

Our sister, Gussie Martin, has recently undergone surgery. She had a fast growing tumor removed from her thyroid. The tumor was not malignant, as had been feared, and Gussie has healed remarkably fast. In fact, she was home in three days and though she has other health problems, she was quick to give credit to God for the blessing she received through administration for this problem. When it comes to giving praise, I want to tell you about our visit with Sister Irene Shaw. You probably (continued →)

High Aspirations

Throughout history, many interpretations of the scriptures have come forth. Some of these interpretations have been correct, while others have not. When the scriptures are not interpreted correctly, much harm can be done to people as individuals, and to the Church as a whole. The Priesthood, specifically, needs to be cautious in their interpretation of scriptural matters, as a misstatement by one of them can affect many.

Without question, it can be difficult at best to know whether or not a proper interpretation has been reached. Some of the obvious tools at hand are all of the various scriptures at our disposal. Also, a genuine petition before our Lord and Master that we receive wisdom and guidance to reach the understanding that we desire.

Indeed, the scriptures are an extremely unique and powerful device. For the harder one truly strives to understand a given subject, the more information is unlocked for our

consideration. We are given knowledge in the quantity and quality of which we are deserving. I can think of no mortally authored manual, or text that can make the same claim. Perhaps this situation exists because of the divine nature of the scriptures. The very nature of the scriptures requires keen inquisitiveness on the part of the student.

Over the years differing interpretations have surfaced. This fact is most evident at some of our conferences. Fortunately, we have this wonderful solid base of scriptures from which to model our beliefs and standards. Through the use of multiple scriptures which dictate the Church's beliefs, a superb system of checks and balances has evolved. Organizations outside the Restoration cannot lay claim to this, or any similar resource. Only intense, prayerful meditation can make certain these checks and balances are discovered and understood. If one

doesn't sincerely pray for understanding before commencing to study, an incorrect conclusion very likely will arise. Thus, it is simple to see where disunity and strife are born.

Unquestionably, all of us want to see the church thrive and progress

Elder Robert Dewaele

spiritually. I am equally sure that there are none who would wish to see anything to the contrary develop. Therefore, it is incumbent for one and all to consider these thoughts, then apply them to the greatest extent possible. This applies to individuals, and to the collective effort church wide. If we would always engage ourselves in prayerful thought before undertaking a study, or even toward more mundane pursuits, we would see ourselves and the Church being spiritually propelled to unthought-of heights. (Continued→)

know she is in a nursing home and has been for a long time. Allen, Shawna, little Aaron and I went to visit her about Christmas time. She was awake and recognized Allen first and said, "Oh, thank God! I've been praying you would come." She laughed and cried at the same time. She told us how happy she was to see us and how she thanks God for all her blessings. Allen brought her the sacrament and she was also administered to. She was so happy. We had brought a book to sing Irene a song. So after we had visited awhile, Allen said, "Irene, how about a song?" Before you could blink, Irene burst into a verse of "How Great Thou Art," start to finish. We commented on how well she did and remembered all the words. She said, "That's all I have to do is lay here and sing those old songs and thank God for my blessings." She simply sparkled! Please continue to remember Irene in your prayers—she remembers you.

Our brother Roma Harrison has had a short stay in the hospital with pneumonia, but it is complicated by his problem with asthma. He is home, but his progress has been fairly slow. The coughing just doesn't allow him to rest. I know he also would appreciate an interest in your prayers,

though hopefully, by the time you read this he will be fine and Nancy can get some rest too!

In closing, I have a few quotes from recent sermons for you to think on:

✠ It's not important WHEN we lived, but HOW we lived. ✠ You are a servant of our Heavenly Master—stay humble. ✠ Believe all the scriptures are true; not just the parts that make you feel good. ✠ To be happy we need to be doing things that are right with our Heavenly Father. ✠ There is a way to direct our energy to accomplish good. ✠ The pure love of Christ doesn't just come to you, you must work toward it. ✠ Are we the same person at work as at church? ✠ We don't have to be wrong, but just fail to do something that is right. ✠ We are the masters of our own ship. ✠ The promises of God are to the individual who is willing to give up himself; to do God's will.

May God bless you in 1992

Czerna Kauffman

For this lofty goal to be achieved, we need to begin by examining our Church's stated beliefs, known as the "Articles of Faith and Practice." We should then proceed by substantiating these beliefs with the appropriate scriptures. Obviously, beliefs constitute an important part of what the Church is all about. If there weren't beliefs, or something to believe in, there would be little reason to belong to a church. We should find this concept a beginning toward the formation of a unifying force within our lives and on a larger plain, the Church.

We can take great comfort in the fact that we do indeed have something around which to shape ourselves. We need to cling to these scriptures with all of our might, for without these, we would surely be impoverished. The true beauty of the scriptures is that they are so simply, yet eloquently stated. It is only the misinterpretations of man, and the power of deception through the evil one himself, which can cast a shroud over the beauty and eloquence of the scriptures.

Time is much too short for us to pursue individual agendas at the expense of the Lord's agenda. Now is the time for us to comply with the commands set forth by him. If we don't do this promptly, the Lord will find others who will comply. Therefore, a singleness of purpose toward the Lord only will suffice in reaching the required higher goal of improving one's spiritual stature.

As an amplification of what has been presented in this article, we need to consider the following quotations:

For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention, is not of me, but is of the devil, which is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger one with another: behold this is not my doctrine, to stir up the hearts of men with anger one against another; but this is my doctrine that such things should be done away. - III Nephi 5:30-31

Brethren, my hearts desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they may be saved. For I bear

them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness for everyone that believeth. - Romans 10:1-4

While it was the Israelites who were being addressed in these verses, it wouldn't be stretching matters to say that those observations could apply equally well to us today. These verses say more than I could in 200 pages of writing. We must take these admonitions to heart, for if we don't, it will not be possible to feast upon the many promises that have been made to those who obey the Lord's commands.

In future issues of *Zion's Advocate*, I hope to present the 25 beliefs enumerated in the "Articles of Faith and Practice," along with appropriate scriptural references and commentary.

ZA

The Value of the Kingdom

Presented by the General Sunday School Association
THE PARABLES OF JESUS

by Marlene Cobb
Lesson Three

In Lesson Two we learned that the Kingdom starts to work within us and causes changes in spiritual growth and commitments. How should we value this good news, this gospel of love, this Kingdom of Heaven? Read: Matt 13:44-46, Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price. Have class first compare and contrast these two parables.

DISCUSSION: One person accidentally finds the treasure while the other man has been actively seeking a treasure. When the treasure is found each man values their find

above all else and even make sacrifices to obtain the treasure. Are there any sacrifices one must make when obtaining the Kingdom of Heaven, or this Pearl of Great Price? Are there personal adjustments to be made? Is this new commitment to the Kingdom costly to us in anyway? READ: Luke 14:15-24, the Parable of the Great Supper.

DISCUSSION: Christ tells us that this great treasure, the Kingdom, is offered to all but many will not value the Kingdom enough. What are the excuses given for not attending and partaking of this great feast? All three excuses have holes in them. What are they? Do we ever rationalize with these same types of excuses? Are these our main obligations in life? Do we use the excuse of our livelihood, our possessions and our family to put aside the Kingdom of Heaven? READ: Luke

14:25-35, Parables of Counting the Cost of Discipleship.

DISCUSSION: We should give high priority to all that can bring us into a right relationship with God the Father and Christ his son. According to these scriptures who will qualify as a disciples? Does this cost indicate value? Why or why not? God never takes away our agency. The invitation is given..."I stand at the door and knock.", but we have to accept the invitation. Once the invitation is accepted we must be committed to this gospel and not fiddle away our heavenly lives by earthly excuses.

SUMMARY: The value of the Kingdom is compared to a treasure. Whether we accidentally find the Kingdom of Heaven or seek it—once we hear the gospel it is worth any sacrifices we must make to obtain it and become a disciple of Christ. We must be careful and not

let our daily physical lives obscure our inner life. Our spiritual life is of greater worth and requires our total commitment. We have to each examine our own lives and determine if we have truly relinquish them to God. Have we given Him ownership of our wills? Do we truly value this "fullness of the gospel?" Do we have an "eye single to the glory to God?"

QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

1. In this lesson I quite often use the Kingdom of Heaven and the Gospel as interchangeable concepts. Do you feel they are the same or different? How and Why? 2. What is the difference between a reason and an

excuse? 3. Do you think the first three people invited to the supper had already accepted and then begged off or just excused themselves at the time of the invitation? What difference would that make in our interpretation of the parable's meaning? 4. Who do you think were the first rejectors of Christ's invitation to the supper? (Judah) 5. Who do you think were the poor, maimed, halt, blind, etc.? (Gentile?) 6. What do you think are some of the sacrifices one must make when becoming a disciple for Christ? 7. What is your interpretation of the verse, "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not

all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple." 8. What does it mean to have an eye single to the glory of God? 9. In coming in contact with the gospel, which are you - blessed by accident or blessed by seeking? Explain.

Wedding Bells!

Scot Phillips Bush and Sherri Lynne Walker exchanged wedding vows on December 7, 1991, in a church ceremony in Manchester, Tennessee. The beautiful ceremony was performed by Apostle Wm. Sheldon.

Scot is the son of Mr. & Mrs. Roy Lee Bush and the grandson of Mr. & Mrs. Ray Phillips, all of Manchester.

Path Lights

A Testimony by Sister Ruth Randall

I would like to give my testimony of the love of God in my life. He has been so good to me, I cannot thank Him enough for my many blessings. Especially, for His love when he gave His Son, Jesus Christ, that through Him we might have eternal life and have it more abundantly.

As long as I can remember I've had a desire to serve the Lord. I was sixteen when I first heard of the "Restored Gospel". The man that I later married told me about the Restoration and the Book of Mormon which was very interesting and enlightening to me. I had always wondered where the American Indian came from. This book told me what I wanted to know.

I still love to read the Book of Mormon. It has so much to teach us if we are willing to learn. There is much information about the latter days and we are truly living in those days. I'm glad to live to see the fulfillment of some of those prophecies given in the Scriptures. In 1921 I became a member of the R.L.D.S. Church and was baptized at South Boardman, Michigan. In 1961, my husband and I became members of the Church of Christ, East Local, Independence, Missouri. Before this we had moved from Ludington,

Michigan, to Independence, Missouri. Since being baptized, I've had several spiritual experiences. One I would like to share with you. It includes my husband and me. I want to tell my part in this experience, before I relate my husbands.

Sometime after the experience my husband had on Sunday morning, we were getting ready to go to church as usual. I didn't feel very well and I decided I'd better stay home. The rest of the family went on. I sat in my chair resting when the thought came to me to write my husbands experience into a poem. The words came as I wrote. I do not have a talent for writing poems, but when there was a need God supplied that need. It's nothing I have done to merit it, but it has helped to strengthen my faith in God for which I am grateful.

The following is my husband's Spiritual experience that took place after he had been sick for several days and was confined to his bed. I went into his room to take his temperature, then left the room and again returned about five minutes later. He awoke and said he had a wonderful experience, that his spirit had left his body and was taken to heaven. The following is what he saw and heard.

Your Vision of Heaven

To My Loving Husband John L. Randall
Sunday, February 23, 1969

One day God gave me an affliction
That I might suffer for Him.
That I might see His Glory.
His Heavenly home, within.
I saw my Heavenly Father
Sitting on His Royal Throne
With Christ, His Son beside Him
But they were not alone
The Hosts of Heaven were seated
In front and round about
With joy upon their faces
With happiness they did shout
I heard a sweet voice singing
The sweetest I ever heard
It was the voice of an Angel
A voice so sweet to the Lord
The Heavenly Hosts applauded
And gave the credit to God
For God gave him the talent
And the Angels gave Him the applaud.
I asked, who it was that was singing
With that soft sweet voice from above
They told me that it was my talent
If I would be faithful and love...
All those of His earthly creation
Around about me should cheer
That love for a time I experienced
His Spirit was ever so near.
But the time came this Spirit departed
All to my sorrow and woe
For I needed that Spirit to guide me
In these paths we trod here below
Return to me Spirit of Heaven
I want to be faithful and true
Oh God give me my talent
That I may sing only for You.

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1992 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 5. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M., Monday, April 6. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, April 3 and 4. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1992 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 19 through 21, at Independence, Missouri.

CHURCH OF CHRIST PUBLICATIONS

Send all orders to the Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472

	<u>Price Each</u>
Zion's Advocate Subscription Rate:	
Members (optional)	\$ 4.00
Non-Members	4.00
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Book of Mormon (1908 Authorized Edition - Leather)	20.00
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What the Restoration Teaches Concerning God	2.50
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Temple Lot Deed	.30
Changing of the Revelations	.50
Comprehensive Comparison of Changes to the Revelations	1.30

The balance of these General Church Publications are free of charge.*

- A Brief History of the Church of Christ
- The Principles of the Gospel - Faith & Repentance
- The Principles of the Gospel - Laying on of Hands
- The Principles of the Gospel - Baptism
- The Latter Day Restoration
- The Book of Mormon (tract)
- Articles of Faith & Practice of the Church of Christ
- Articles of Faith & Practice (Spanish)
- Sermonettes on the Teachings of Jesus
- What the Church teaches about Matrimony (Spanish)
- Mighty Acts of the Ages (Spanish)
- Priesthood - Divine Authority
- Why? (Amplifies absence of a "First Presidency" in Scripture)
- A Synopsis (Compares beliefs of 3 Restoration churches)
- First Presidency or First Apostles?
- Marriage for Time and Eternity? - A Fallacy
- Baptism for the Dead? - A Fallacy
- Zion and the Temple of the Lord
- Does it Make a Difference to Which Church You Belong?
- God's Purpose in America
- The Great Plan of Redemption
- The Cost of Salvation

*NOTE: Donations accepted to cover postage & printing costs.
(Multiple copies available: 6-50¢ / 100-\$5.85 plus postage)

Sunday School Materials

Send orders for SS Materials to Becky Sheldon, 31607 E. Major Rd, Grain Valley, Mo 64029. All materials are free of charge to members of the Church of Christ except as noted. Donations will be accepted to cover postage.

Church History for Juniors - Includes a Teachers Guide

The Book in the Stone Box - About the Book of Mormon

Bible Stories to Grow By - 52 lessons about God and Jesus for ages 5-7;
Free to local Sunday Schools only.

Jesus' Life and Teachings - 4 quarterlies for ages 8-10

We sing and We Talk about Jesus -14 Primary lessons with pictures and songs on cassette; For "loan" only.

Who Am I? - Bible game on cards with many uses; Free to Local Sunday Schools - \$1.30 for individuals.

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AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

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

Slide Programs with Taped Narration

Specify program(s) wanted, anticipated dates of use, and the make of your projector. Slide projectors and tape players are not provided except in the Independence, Missouri, or Phoenix, Arizona, areas.

Allow adequate advance time for handling and shipping, and for your own review of the programs. Write to Gary Housknecht, 11308 E. 78th St, Raytown, Mo 64138.

Mexico, Land of Contrast (39 minutes) — Illustrates how modern archeological finds in the Americas lend credence to the Book of Mormon and the story it tells of the continents' former inhabitants.

Out of the Dust (45 minutes) — Tells the story found within the Book of Mormon.

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.

A Lamp Unto My Feet (32 minutes) — Directed specifically toward American Indian viewers, compiled from the three programs listed above.

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 previously dedicated Temple Lot.

Holy Scriptures on Audio Cassette Tapes

Complete sets narrating the King James Version of the Bible New Testament and the entire Book of Mormon. Write to Dan Lawrence, 8420 Lee's Summit Rd., Kansas City, MO 64139.

Sermons on Audio Cassette Tapes

For a sermon on cassette tape write to Mike Kelley, 1949 E. Libby St., Phoenix, AZ 85022, or Ron Temple, 5621 Logan Rd., K.C., MO 64136.

PRIESTHOOD VISITATION

If you or someone you know (member or non-member) would like to be visited by a member of the Priesthood of the Church of Christ, please call or write to the Council of Apostles at Church Headquarters in Independence, Missouri. The phone number and address are listed on the inside front cover.