

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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"Ignorance," says a distinguished writer, "is the mother of superstition, of bigotry, of fanaticism, of disaffection, of cruelty, and of rebellion. These are its legitimate children. It never yet produced any other, and never will to the end of the world. And we may lay this down as an incontestible truth, that a well informed and intelligent people, more particularly a people well acquainted with the sacred writings, will always be more orderly, more decent, more humane, more virtuous, more religious, more obedient to their superiors, than a people totally devoid of all instruction and all education."

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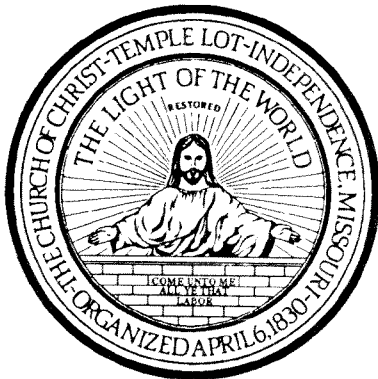
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

ARTICLE

Prophecy and the Word of God

By Elder Arthur G. Smith

The Holy Bible which we believe is the Word of God as the authority and basis for our belief in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father, is based on prophecy fulfilled and yet to be fulfilled.

“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Revelation 19:10.

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” 2 Peter 1:19-21.

Most Bible scholars agree that we are living in the last days of the earth's prophetic

dispensations. The important information for all believers in Christ is bound up in the unfulfilled prophecies of our scriptures. These center on the promised coming of our Lord and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Let us look at one that we might consider as very remarkable because of the clear message.

To get a good setting for the prophecy you must read the whole second chapter of Daniel and what happened at the time is an interesting story in itself.

Take careful note of verses 19 through 23, and especially verse 28 that sets the fulfillment of this matter in the “latter days.” The great image that was shown to the king was the representation of governments as Daniel explained to the king in the following story. In verse 38, Daniel identifies king Nebuchadnezzar as, “Thou art this head of gold,” which places his place in the history of nations.

The “stone” of verse 34 is of interest to us because it was “cut without hands,” or is the work of God. It “became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Mountains in prophecy are generally accepted as meaning governments. This could only refer to the Kingdom of God that Christ refers to in Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the

kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Going back to our prophecy of Daniel we continue to read with amazement of this image of world kingdoms or prominent governments that succeeded the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar. World history unfolds to our view down to our present time, the latter days when God has prophesied that He would “cut without hands” a stone that would become a “great mountain, and filled the whole earth.”

We read in Daniel chapter 2, verse 44 and 45, the following, “And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountains without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.”

If we can identify the time in history when all these gov-

ernments were in power at the same time, standing as the image of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, we will have the time and date when God set up a kingdom that shall fill the earth.

Daniel said that the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure. Can you believe this prophecy?

The history of nations is a matter of record and as essential information to our subject we will give a short resume, starting with the time of the story of Daniel and the king's dream.

Babylon became a world power in 747 B.C. It was still a nation in 1920 A.D., after recovering from the dominance of the Persian Empire in 650 A.D.

Media Persia overthrew Babylon in 539 B.C. and shortly after became part of the Grecian ruled world in 334 B.C. Persia, as it became known, was restored to an independent state after several conquests in 1730 A.D.

Greece became the world power in 334 B.C. with the overthrow of the Persian kingdom. The Roman Empire absorbed Greece in 147-146 B.C. and was subject to the Turks after the breakup of the Roman rule, regaining independence and recognition by the governments of the world in 1829-1830 A.D.

Rome became a world power in 168 B.C. and was divided into two parts in 553 A.D. Eastern Rome was ruled from Constantinople, and in 568-570 A.D. the Lombards from the

north invaded Italy, and Rome became the western part under the pope, and eventually united as Italy under Victor Emmanuel in 1870.

The "ten toes" of the image emerged as independent governments made up of the broken Roman Empire to the north in what we know as Europe, i.e. Austria, Bavaria, England, France, Naples, Netherlands, Portugal, Sardinia, Spain, and Wurttemberg.

The last of the image governments to achieve the status of independence was Greece, in 1829-1830. The image of the dream was complete and the time of the "stone cut without hands" (verse 34) and the "stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth," (verse 35) should now appear to fulfill the prophecy of Daniel.

This could only be the work of God, a work that we could say was accomplished "without hands," that could be identified as a "stone," something that was not of man's design or will.

There is the dimension of time and eternity to Daniel's interpretation of the dream of this long ago king that causes us to pause and consider the matter. The salvation of our souls is assured by the certainty of the promises of God that are brought to us by the Holy Spirit through prophecy.

There is the hope and expectation of all who believe in Jesus Christ and the ultimate victory of the Kingdom of Heaven. In His own words He

promised, "upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail (overcome, AGS) against it." St. Matthew 16:18. This rock is prophecy, or revelation. The word of God through His prophets reveals His will, and His word will prevail and be victorious.

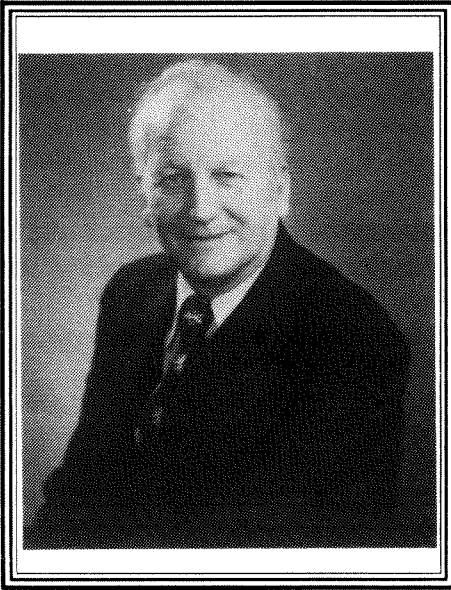
In the time of this prophecy of Daniel's to be fulfilled the Church of Christ (the only name that can be correctly used) was organized on April 6th, 1830, in the state of New York, by Joseph Smith and a number of others, in harmony with the will of God as expressed through prophecy and revelation.

This set in motion a new appraisal of what was to become the belief in the restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ in all its power and authority in these the latter days.

May God in his wisdom and mercy bless us with a thorough understanding of the Kingdom of God in all its simple beauty and purity, and forgive us our sins that we may be worthy to be its citizens, the children of God.

ARTICLE

How To Receive God's Help In Marriage



By
Apostle William A. Sheldon

The answer to this problem of life may be simply stated, but its ramifications are varied and may be complex, according to the human dispositions of both the husband and wife. If the couple will permit and request the Lord to direct in all matters, to engage in private and united oral prayer, earnestly seeking the divine will, they cannot fail in the solution. True wisdom is from above, whereas a strictly human resolution may be only partially successful at the best.

Satisfaction would probably be limited in time, and be one-sided according to a dominant personality. Thus we see that marital assistance from God is based on the extension of individual desire and willingness to submit ones self into a path of righteousness to be shared by both the husband and wife. They must seek for spiritual unity as well as the physical or temporal.

Self-will is the principal problem of a person's relationship with God, and it is compounded when two personalities come together in an attempt to unite their hearts and lives into a bond to be distinguished by true love. For a marriage to be attempted on any other ground, or if it is based simply on sexual desire or financial security, a hope of real success is likely to be only an illusion, soon to evaporate. To be successful, self-will must be diminished in accordance with the divine principles of genuine love and righteousness, as these attributes may be demonstrated in the unfolding marital course.

True love in marriage is selflessness, with a desire or

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willingness to serve the other, and to solve the problems of its relationship to the mutual benefit of that communion. If physical or mental incapacity develops in either the man or the woman, love will gently assume the added burden occasioned by that disability until it may be healed or unless it has become an impossibility through human limitations.

Before marriage, the couple should have an understanding that the only options in its dissolution, or reasons for divorce are: (1) Fornication - "...Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery" (Matt.

19:9). (2) Cruelty - "Deliver me, O my God, out of the hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the unrighteous and cruel man" (Psalm 71:4). (3) Unwillingness to support the mate (usually required of the man) - "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Tim. 5:8). Compare with Matt. 18:17, where the "heathen man" is cast out of the church.

Any marriage contract is doomed to failure without the development of a righteous submission, each to the other, and of cooperative effort toward the provision for a home and family. Home, as used here, is intended in its superior sense detailed herein, and not with particular reference to living quarters. If either the man or the woman, or both, have no spiritual background or desires, especially toward a faith in Christ, the marriage can only succeed to a very limited extent, and may quickly dissolve through unfaithfulness to the marriage vow, or otherwise through incompatibility in their personalities.

Thus it is easily seen that sexual attraction alone is an insufficient basis for a couple to use in the decision to marry. It is usually a very compelling force, and naturally so, for thus has man been created, male and female, with inherent physical attraction included to draw them to the opposite sex. This is normal and morally sound if the man and woman will control

their sexual drive according, firstly, to God's law, and secondly, to the law of the nation, which is presumably, at least in western culture, based upon the first. Where there is a deviation

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from the accepted male/female union, based upon a homosexual relationship, this is presently unacceptable in the U.S.A.'s moral climate, and is sinful, an abomination before God, and cannot be tolerated in the Church of Christ.

However repulsive this is, and relatively limited at present, the trend is growing at an alarming rate, so as to fulfill the prediction of Christ for the last days, as found in Luke 17:28-30 concerning Sodom (sodomy): "Even thus shall it be when the Son of Man is revealed" (v.30). There are even those of such sexual deviation who do consummate a marriage with one of the opposite sex, unbeknown at first to the companion in marriage, but which almost inevitably is later revealed as a continuing relationship with one or more with a similar sexual urge.

Such a marriage which is marred by a mate in sexual contact with another such man or woman (as the case may be), is most certainly grounds for divorce; but this is not a purpose for this document.

However, in similar token, the greater danger facing a marriage is indiscriminate sexual activity, i.e., adulterous sexual intercourse by the man or woman, or both. If there has been fornication before the marriage by either mate, even with each other, there is grave danger to the union. Repentance is always possible, but the temptation to engage in illicit intercourse is difficult to resist.

What we are really coming to in this discussion of sexual activity is the very real need to be concerned with spiritual values from God before entering into a marriage contract. Is there a compatibility in religious preference and desires? Is there evidence of spirituality in the other party? What are the speech trends which may be danger signs: coarse, or vulgar? Sex-oriented? blasphemous, or using the Lord's name in a careless, vain or contemptuous manner? Lying?

What are his/her special interests in life? Is there evidence of criminal intent or activity? Is there an abnormal compulsion for acquisition of temporalities (clothing, cars, expensive home, etc.)? Excessive desire toward recreational pursuits, pleasures, expensive food and drink, including alcohol? In other words: Is the carnal desire

greater than the spiritual? Or does there appear to be any real spirituality?

The use of alcohol or drugs (other than for medical purpose), has been a major cause of

If there is no desire for children by either the man or the woman, it betrays a spirit of selfishness, or wish to receive the exclusive attention of a mate; or else an unwillingness to assume a greater responsibility than would be involved in meeting the needs of the couple...

marriage break-up, and ought to be a danger signal of warning against a marriage being undertaken.

We are advised by concerned sociologists (and rightly so from a practical standpoint), that the greatest cause for divorce is with money problems. However, much of this may be allayed or overcome if there are truly the spiritual values spoken of here. If the couple can come to an agreement as to an equitable and wise use of available funds, even to the restriction of human appetites (at least for a time), it will go far toward the maintenance of the

home and family.

Before the marriage, it is well to reach agreement as to desire for children. The normal desire is to have children given them. They are, and must be considered as, gifts from God, not simply a result of sexual intercourse. The primary purpose of God for marriage is that there shall be a Godly seed raised up, who will choose to serve and worship Him, and incidentally, to serve others (see Gen. 1:28; 2:24; Mos. 8:38-43; 1:49).

If there is no desire for children by either the man or the woman, it betrays a spirit of selfishness, or wish to receive the exclusive attention of a mate; or else an unwillingness to assume a greater responsibility than would be involved in meeting the needs of the couple: it is indicative of little love to be shared with other than the mate.

Unfortunately, many couples find themselves unable to conceive and produce a child; but we are reminded of such as Jacob's wife, Rachel, who prayed for a child; and of Samuel, who became a holy prophet, whose mother prayed for his conception. God granted these righteous requests, and can do the same today. Nevertheless, many who are unable to conceive find almost equal satisfaction through an adoption process. The spreading of love beyond the initial marriage bond to include children goes far to increase human happiness and acceptance with God.

Unquestionably, the advent of children into a home increases the problems also, and should cause a greater realization of dependence upon God, of the inadequacy of human wis-

...The advent of children into a home increases the problems also, and should cause a greater realization of dependence upon God, of the inadequacy of human wisdom or ability to meet those needs.

dom or ability to meet those needs. Without attempting to touch upon the myriad of demands connected with the family development: if the parents have developed a consistent effort of daily prayer, of inviting God's Spirit as an unseen guest in the home, not only requesting divine direction, but giving thanks and praise for gifts received, this will naturally continue in an expanded sense with the coming of children. Even though sincere effort in prayer may have been less than the jealousy of God would demand during the early days of a marriage, yet, oft-times when a child has come, the mother, especially, may find a greater need, for the sake of that child,

to increase her prayers and to seek improvement of the child's opportunity for spiritual growth as well as for the physical. This is certainly well, for it has often led to an eventual baptism of the child into the Church of Christ, and even to conversion of an unbelieving parent.

We cannot over-emphasize the importance of spiritual values for the health and well-being, even the financial prosperity, of those who will marry and build a family. There is a simple and forthright maxim of which we may all be aware: "The family that prays together stays together."

In addition to daily family worship, which should include studies of the scripture, there should also be a determination, if at all possible, that the family shall be located where there are those of like faith (yes, a faith toward Christ among those of this Church of Christ), with whom the family may find a spiritual communion, who will assist to build rather than destroy. Isolation from regular church fellowship may be unavoidable because of the breadwinner's employment demand, or because he/she is an unbeliever in Christ or the restored gospel effected through Joseph Smith and others. This circumstance will impose an added burden upon the believing mate to patiently endure through much prayer for the beloved one. "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou

shalt save thy wife?" (1 Cor, 7:16).

Because of present day exigencies, or financial burdens, it seems necessary in many families that both the husband and

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wife should be employed outside the home. If there are children, it poses the problem of their care in the absence of both parents. This is a most unfortunate circumstance, especially for the children, and should be avoided if possible. Perhaps it may be avoided only by a determination to live within the present income level. It may be a matter of choice as to importance for the family welfare: the temporal requirements and/or wants, as opposed to the greater values of love, emotional security, and spiritual growth. This should be addressed through much prayer by both husband and wife, for if children are deprived of that daily supply of parental love and guidance, even though it may be "tough love," it almost surely will cause

them to seek other forms of human companionship which may not be conducive to moral and spiritual development. Thus the lives of the children could be destroyed, both physically and spiritually.

God's help in marriage must include an attitude of discipline for the children, as well as a self-disciplined relationship between husband and wife. The prevailing attitude of the past several decades which has fostered a severe relaxation of parental discipline toward their children has produced a generation of youth who are not only rebellious to parents, but also to civilian norms and laws which are conducive to the best interests of the society. As a result, the prisons are bursting at the seams (so to speak) to retain those criminal persons from the more peaceful and law-abiding segments of human society. It has become an impossibility to adequately care for those who would do violence to others.

Perhaps the best divine counsel recorded in the scriptures as pertaining to the discipline of children is found in Gen. 18:19: "For I know him (Abraham/w.a.s.), that he will command his children...and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment...."

In the wisdom of Solomon (book of Proverbs) is found the following: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (13:24). "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let

not thy soul spare for his crying" (19:18). "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (22:6).

Some of this seems severe,

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and we feel that the administration of corporal punishment by striking the child should not be done in the heat of anger, but in deliberate consideration as to how it is accomplished, its severity, and of the bodily area to receive it. The appropriate area is the buttocks, but this, too, in restraint lest a permanent injury be inflicted. The head is not to be struck, with the possible exception of a moderate slap to the cheeks as a means of securing attention. Please note that the scriptural intent as quoted is for correction, not for vengeance.

There are some children for whom the administration of corporal punishment is inappropriate because of their tender spirits and innate disposition to receive correction by counsel or simply because it hurts them to have incurred parental displeasure. Others seem

to have strong feelings of resentment, either toward the parent or in submission to any physical corrective measure, that such is useless for the desired end of changing the course of life. For any child, the desired correction may be accomplished through denial to them of their childish whims, or by an insistence upon their separation from other children, or other devices by which they may reflect upon their present inability to pursue their own desires.

If one may suppose that he may receive God's help in his marriage, and a blessing upon his children despite his allowance for shameful conduct by them through disobedience, he should read the account of the Lord's priest, Eli, as found in 1 Samuel. None of Eli's sons or his descendants thereafter were permitted to prosper. His two sons were appointed to be slain in one day "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not" (3:13). "And all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age" (1:33).

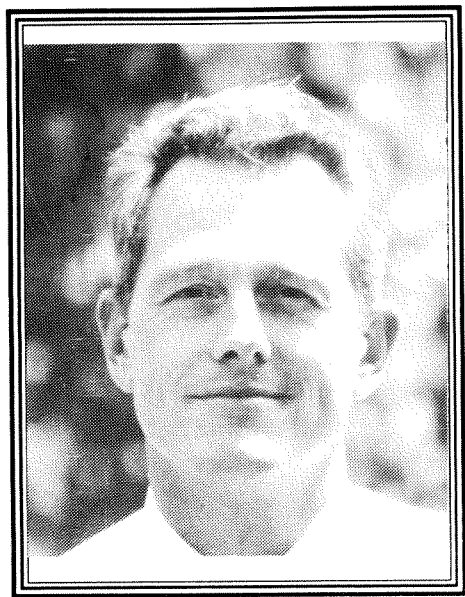
In brief summary: God will only grant His favor to a marriage which has been engaged through common desires which are good, or based upon righteousness. This includes a love for the mate even as for self, and which will include a spirit of sacrifice for the common good. The favor of God will be for those who worship Him and do love His Son Jesus Christ; who will yield their own will when a dis-

passionate personal conference may reveal a better course of wisdom; who will keep themselves wholly for each other; who will control their temporal desires to the limits of their

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family income and in accord with a mutual agreement; who will desire the gift of children and with the intent to rear them in the fear of God; whose basic marital concept is one of sacrifice, and of love for the family exceeded only by that devotion required to God.

Pride, Self-Esteem, Self-Love versus God's Love



By
Apostle Alvin Moser (Jay)

VI. LOVE

Contrary to popular opinion in our world there is no commandment to love yourself. The scripture misapplied to show that self love is a commandment is found in Matthew 22:37-40. Here we read that "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This is one single commandment that is coupled with the first commandment "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." There are not three commandments here. There

Part 2 Love and Self-Love

are only two. Jesus said upon these "two commandments" hang all of the law of God. It does not say love yourself. It does, however, show that there is a kind of love of self that already exists within us.

The word "as" is used when referring to "thyself." This simply means that there is a kind of care that you give to yourself that God demands that we give to every person. It really says that it already exists. You are required to do unto others as you would have them do to you. You want happiness for yourself, it requires no commandment to want it. It is naturally resident within your spirit. It requires no action on your part to cultivate it. The desire for self preservation is a part of this natural want or need. The little word "as" implies or actually states that you do have this kind of love. It is nowhere implied that you need to acquire it. Those who desire to commit suicide do not lack this love of self. They don't like the way they feel about themselves, and for whatever reason (physical or spiritual) do not deal with this feeling properly. We are created in God's spiritual image and can

God gives good feelings when we are obedient, and a satisfaction of doing what is right. He gives contentment with life and work. This is not self-love or pride, but the receiving of a gift

with His help change things. So often these people are not thinking of others because they are lacking love for God and for others. If we love God and love our neighbor "as" ourselves, we will preserve our lives to serve them. Thoughts of suicide are thoughts of self interest alone. Matthew 16:24-25 tells us to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus. Verse 25 has been used by selfish people to justify the idea of suicide. The world will be better off without me, they say! I will kill myself for God and my family. This loss of life referred to in Matthew is self denial as stated in verse 24. It means to give your life for someone else. In this case for Christ. It means surrender to Him and obedience

to His will. Freedom comes by knowing the truth, not by death. Freedom comes from the hope that we shall live and live eternally with Christ. The act of suicide is purely self-centered and an act of separation, not an act representing our eternal relationship with God. I want to live because I love God, my brothers and sisters, and my family. I want to be here to improve my relationship with them all, and some day it may require that I give my physical life for them, but the decision is God's alone. I can only obey my Lord.

A word needs to be added here about the physical side of our make up. In our world, food is processed excessively, to the point that now we are adding the nutrients back that have been removed. We consume refined sugar that has had all the nutrients removed, such as coffee, cola, doughnuts, processed cereals, fast foods, highly processed flours, fertilized crops for size and appearance only, preservatives, ad infinitum, until today we have so many illnesses, diseases, and allergies (pestilence), that we are a sickly people. We consume ibuprofen, acetaminophen, aspirin, allergy pills, and cold remedies like we were eating cherries. Diabetes, headache, backache, and high blood pressure are epidemic. We crave sweets and have no energy. We are nervous, have trouble sleeping, and are cramping and phobic. Now we are consuming another modern invention, fat-less food, appar-

ently not realizing that we will die without fats in the diet. This is not homeopathic, naturalistic, or esoteric nonsense—it is a fact. We are afraid to live without thousands of dol-

In our world food is processed excessively, to the point that now we are adding the nutrients back that have been removed.

...Our diet of Babylonian food and Babylonian spirituality is killing us.

lars of medical insurance for physical and psychological help. I do not believe this is the way God intended us to live. No, this life will not last forever and is not supposed to.

To top off this mess we are bombarded by the world. We diet to look like "Barbie" and go on strange diets that exclude needed nutrition. We sit. We sit. We sit. God intended our bodies for motion, walking, working, and doing. He balanced the time with night fall, that marvelous invention made for rest. Often we have a better idea! We have a more perfect plan. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20: *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye*

have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." We have bought into this modern world and are now partaking of some of the pestilence of Babylon (Revelations 18:4). We desire the same idols that the world desires and are not content with what God has given, nor do we seek what He has provided. God is permitting the taking away what is needed because we are not content with Him and His provision. Someone is saying to himself, he's meddlin', and wants me to be an earth worshipper. Nothing could be further from the truth. Worship God who created the earth as man's habitation and gave man all that is needed for life here. God said, "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat (food) for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things." The problem is that we have changed what He made for food.

The thought here is that our diet of Babylonian food and Babylonian spirituality is killing us. It is no wonder then that we have so called mental problems. We need to change the way we live by eliminating some things and searching for what God has provided in the way of spiritual and temporal relief. Our world is suffering from the plagues that God is pouring out upon it. The wisdom of wise men has perished in spiritual matters as well as temporal matters, but now let us return to our subject about love.

Jesus gave another commandment that is similar, and is obviously speaking of the same type of love that He requires. 3 Nephi 6:24 *"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets."* Notice that this also ends exactly the same. The law (of Moses) and the writings of the prophets are founded upon this commandment. It is not implied that you need to seek for self-worth or a good self-image. Your image is God's property and creation. Your worth is found in obeying this law. If you feel bad and useless, repent and obey, and you will find worth through the blood of Christ who is eternally worthy.

It is the Lord Jesus Christ who has quoted this commandment. Was His understanding incomplete? Was Jesus imperfect in His knowledge of the human spirit? I do not believe He was. In today's *Arizona Republic* newspaper (5/5/96) there is an article that is revealing the shift that is occurring in the field of psychiatry and psychotherapy. The last paragraph of the article states, "managed care is putting an end to endless, open-ended therapy." Endless open-ended therapy! That is the problem with so many of man's solutions to spiritual problems. With Christ, problems are not endless nor open-ended. In the Gospel, we are told that by drinking from the water supplied by the Lord we shall never thirst (John 4:13-14). In

Mosiah 2:43 the members of the church are commissioned to administer relief to those who stand in need, "both spiritually and temporally." There is no third class of problems men-

If you feel bad and useless, repent and obey, and you will find worth through the blood of Christ who is eternally worthy.

tioned. The problems of the mind are either spiritual or physical (1 Nephi 4:51). The Book of Mormon is filled with numerous scripture that points to the fact that we are both physical and spiritual. It is these two elements that give substance to a multi-dimensional person. That is why Jesus said that we are to love God with heart, mind, might, and the whole soul. This is why Nephi said that his soul delighted and his heart pondered (2 Nephi 3:29-30). God created the body and the spirit. This is a fruitful combination which in turn brings forth other things: i.e. feelings, emotions, thoughts, gifts, and actions (2 Nephi 11:56; 12:9). This combination He intends to keep for eternity, because we read that the spirit will be reunited with the body in the resurrection (2 Nephi 6:32; 1:37; Alma 16:232; 8:100; Job 19:26-27).

Our self-worth comes from the fact that God first loved us (1 John 4:10). He sent His only begotten son into the world because of that love (John 3:16). In 1 John, a small letter which speaks from beginning to end about the dwelling of the Spirit within us and speaks of love, we can plainly see that love is from God. It originates from Him. We carry this love by obedience to His commandments. It does not originate from self. As a matter of fact, this little book (letter) tells us that sin originates from us.

We are all sinners (1 John 1:8) and have nothing to boast about. Our boasting can only be of God and through the Holy Ghost. We are told that Jesus is our advocate and that He is the propitiation for our sins (2:1-2). We are saved and forgiven by Him, if we obey and confess our sins. We must admit that we are unrighteous and that He is perfect. We need to be distressed about ourselves if we are unrepentant sinners. Jesus taught us to pray "forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors." This is a daily prayer, for as long as we are in this world we are subject to temptation. He said "watch and pray always" or you will enter into temptation. This is a spiritual fact that has no escape except through Christ. Remorse must remain when we are unrepentant. Remorse is a poor self-image given by God to bring repentance and dependence. We are dependent children. We are supposed to be dependent and not independent.

The answer then is that we should live for someone else. Galatians 5:13-14 "ye have been called unto liberty...but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The Apostle Paul understood this great commandment to be "one" commandment: "love thy neighbor". All action is going in one direction, toward your neighbor. Have you ever thought that by truly learning to love one person (unselfishly, impartially) that you would have learned how to love all mankind? This is exactly the case. When we learn to love another we learn to love in spite of imperfections. We learn to deal with disappointment with others as God deals with disappointment with us. God the father said, "Behold, my beloved Son." God is love because He loves His Son perfectly. He loved Him impartially by requiring Him to do the same things that He requires of us: i.e. baptism, obedience, prayer, self sacrifice, the making of correct choices when tempted, and enduring. His love of His Son is perfect, impartial, and without fear.

We are also required to possess this perfect love of Christ (Moroni 7:50; 8:18-19). One of the attributes of this perfect love is that it "seeketh not her own" (Moroni 7:51). God does not seek His own. Everything that He does is for others. His plan is for others. In this perfect state He also receives what

is His due, the obedience of His Son and mankind. God does not boast, He simply states the truth. He is what He is, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. We can not spend our time

Remorse is a poor self-image given by God to bring repentance and dependence.

seeking for self-realization, self-worth, and self-love. We are what we eat. If we eat garbage our bodies will take their nourishment from garbage. God is what He does (Mosiah 11:16). He loves, therefore He is love. If you spend your energy loving others, God's Spirit will be resident within you. That is what 1 John tells us. This is the circle of life. God loved His Son, loved the world and gave His Son, Jesus loves the Father and obeys Him, and we love God with all that we are and all men as ourselves. To seek self-love is to reverse the process and do as Satan, who thought only of himself and sought his own will.

If you are possessed of this great gift you will give in to others often. You will let some wrongs pass by, but will not let every wrong thing slide by because you are impartial and without fear. You will love enough to correct another in humility as a fellow sinner, because your love is first toward

God. If you are afraid to gently correct, then you are partial in your love and possibly love yourself more. God's love is an accurate love. It loves good and hates evil. Romans 12:9 "*Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*" When we acquire this love we shall be like Christ and see Him as He is, because we will be as He is (Moroni 7:53).

The Lord commanded us to be perfect as our father in heaven is perfect (Matthew 5:48). This commandment has caused great difficulty in the minds of most. With careful examination it does not need to cause difficulty. He tells us what it is that we must do. Being human, we first think in terms of human love or emotional love, like the kind we have for family, friends, and puppies. Warm and fuzzy love. As a matter of fact this kind of love when over stated is not love at all, but simply God's gift to all mankind that enables us to enjoy numerous moments in life. God's perfection is not based on emotions or feelings. It is based on being completely (perfect) impartial. We must hold to the same standard at all times. Mercy must be applied at the proper time and justice at its proper time. If we simply go backwards from verse 48 and notice the commandments that are given, a pattern forms. The last commandment that precedes this statement begins at verse 43 through 47. We see that we are to love all men, our

friends and our enemies. The question is, How? We are to love by blessing all (perfect), doing good to all (perfect), and praying for all (perfect). Have you not wondered why it is that some good people are not able to have children and so many bad parents have many children? It is because God is perfect by letting His sunshine and rain settle on everyone (perfect). When we stand at the judgment day, God will be justified in everything that He has done. He has given gifts to all (perfect) and given trial to all (perfect). His life giving sources, sun and rain, have been given to all; only man has placed the stumbling blocks in the way so that everyone could not receive them. Fellowship and personal intimate companionship with another are different. Alma 5:36 "And he doth not dwell in unholy temples; neither can filthiness, nor anything which is unclean be received into the kingdom of God." God can not have communion with unholiness (those not justified through Christ). God can speak to and give good gifts to all, but can only have a relationship (know and be known) with those who are purified in Christ. That is why Jesus bids all to come unto Him through repentance and forbids none from approaching Him with humility.

God is all sufficient to those who believe in Him (2 Corinthians 3:5; 9:8; 12:9-10). The followers of Christ will find all that they need in their God and not in themselves (Ether 5:27-

28; Moroni 10:29). Happiness and fulfillment are found through obedience to Christ (Mosiah 1:88-90). More importantly, God is happiness (1 Nephi 3:63-66). Ps 18:2 "The

When we learn to love another we learn to love in spite of imperfections. We learn to deal with disappointment with others as God deals with disappointment with us.

Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." We do not need to seek for happiness within, this is a pagan concept. God is the source of joy and you were created to have joy. When we obey God, He immediately blesses us (Mosiah 1:58). This blessing comes in many forms. Often it is just a good feeling. God gives good feelings when we are obedient, and a satisfaction of doing what is right. He gives contentment with life and work. This is not self-love or pride, but the receiving of a gift from our creator. As soon as we think we have done well by ourselves we are fallen again. That is the key: we must remain thankful at all

times and continue in thankful prayer to Him. We have not done well except through the plan of God, His Son, His grace, and His commandments.

These thoughts about God's love for us would be incomplete if we did not mention again by itself the fact that God loves us. This is one of those realities that must become a constant thought in our minds. Our duty here is to recognize this fact. God will provide the proof of it in His own way and time for each individual. Jesus died for me! God's Son came down and died for me. What is better yet, He arose! All that we believe is based on these principles of love. He had no need to die for Himself. For others He came, suffered, and died. He was not thinking of Himself, He was taking responsibility for His creation. It is not all up to us. God has shown that He is faithful. His grace is sufficient. To be sufficient is to be enough. Indeed it is more than enough. Let us serve this most worthy king and forsake our own agendas. What would you have us to do Lord?

In Mosiah 1:58-60 we see plainly that after receiving our good feelings we are paid in full and must continue on. Tomorrow is a new day, with new challenges to face. We will be forced to choose again the way of God. However, now we know that He will pay us for the day's labor and keep us as His children by power. God is faithful! We must simply be faithful to Him!

PATHLIGHTS

My Personal Religion On Loneliness

I'm a widow. My children are all married and I live alone. I have every excuse to be lonely—but I'm not.

I work at having friends and being a friend. My children and grandchildren are very loving and helpful, but they all have their own interests and lives. There are many times when I'm very alone, but fortunately I don't have to be lonely. I've always felt the presence of a Comforter.

I recently discovered a song in the *Saints Hymnal* which has become a favorite. It expresses my feelings so beautifully:

How Can I Be Lonely

One is walking with me over life's uneven way,
 Constantly supporting me each moment of the day;
 How can I be lonely when such fellowship is mine,
 With my blessed Lord divine!
 Days may bring their burdens and their trials as I go,
 But my Lord is near and helps to make them lighter grow.
 Life may have its crosses, or its losses, or increase,
 Jesus meets them all with peace.
 In the hour of sad bereavement or of bitter loss,
 I can find support and consolation

at the cross;
 Want or woe or suffering all seem glorified when He
 Daily walks and talks with me.
 In life's rosy morning when the skies are clear,
 In its noontide hours with many cares and problems near,
 Or when evening shadows fall at closing of my day
 Jesus will be there alway.
Chorus: How can I be lonely when I've Jesus only to be my companion and unfailing guide: Why should I be weary, or my path seem dreary, when He's walking by my side.

Meredyth Malone

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1996 Tri-State Reunion

This year's Tri-State Reunion will start Friday evening, August 30th and end Monday morning, September 2nd. The reunion will be held at the indoor group camp of the Whitewater State Park. The Park is located North of St. Charles, Minnesota. The secluded group camp, is nestled between the rock cliffs of the beautiful Whitewater River Valley. The cabins at the Camp offer plenty of room for a good nights rest. Meals and services in a spacious lodge building. You are invited to join us in fellowship and worship. If you plan to join us or need more information, please contact:

Elder Merlin L. Eddy
 3370 West 203rd Street
 Farmington, MN 55024
 (612) 463-2218

Thank you for your prayers.

Phoenix Reunion

Join with us for a weekend of spiritual refreshment. Come and enjoy the fellowship of the many loved ones in Christ and feast upon the word of God with us.

Reunion dates are Friday, November 29th through Sunday, December 1st, 1996.

For more information, or if you plan to attend, please contact:

Pastor Elder Joel Yates
 2924 E Rockwood Dr

Phoenix, AZ 85024-3436
 (602) 569-9296

Asst. Pastor Elder Gordon McCann
 18808 N 30th St
 Phoenix, AZ 85024-3436
 (602) 569-2341

Asst. Pastor Priest Glenn Orsted
 1327 E Wescott Dr
 Phoenix, AZ 85024-2393
 (602) 780-8764

If you cannot attend, please remember the reunion in your prayers.

REUNION REPORT

1996 MICHIGAN STATE REUNION

After a miserable, mostly cold, rainy spring, the Lord gave us two beautiful days for the first Michigan State Reunion to be held at the Bradley Local's new church. The Bradley folks were most gracious and hospitable hosts, housing many out-of-towners in their homes, while some of us enjoyed the excellent camping facilities at the home of Bernie and Laura Ritsema.

SATURDAY, JUNE 15

Saturday morning got off to a good start with a sermon by Elder Leslie Case, who first quoted from John 8:28-38, which basically states "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Further, "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." Christ's sermon on the mount in Matthew 5, 6, and 7 set up the outline of the gospel that we are asked to continue in. Matthew 22:36-40 tells us "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

It was pointed out that the House of Israel was commanded from the beginning to keep his sayings and be blessed in all their needs or be cursed if they serve other gods. Further, upon the land of promise, all nations and peoples dwelling here must serve Jesus Christ or be swept off when they become ripe in iniquity. This is a

warning also to the Gentiles, and those who repent may be numbered with the House of Israel in their promise.

The preacher for the 11 a.m. service was Apostle Smith Brickhouse. Brother Brickhouse quoted from John 17:11 and 21-23, which stresses union, that we should be one even as the Son and Father are one, and that is really the purpose of our reunions, a means for gathering together after separation "to be as one." Quoting from Hebrews 6:1-3, he pointed out that the plain and simple gospel really consists of the six principles that are the keys to the Kingdom or to eternal life. Hebrews 13:8 insures that we have an unchangeable God, one that does not vary. Turning to the 5th Chapter of Ephesians, we are told that we, as the body and/or family of Christ, need to love one another and submit to one another as the Lord's instructions to husbands and wives.

11 Timothy 3:16-17 says that "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

Brother Brickhouse further read from Matthew 5:23-24 and 6:14-15, which scripture instructs us in relationships with each other. He stressed the need to remember each other in our prayers, quoting from the 6th Chapter of Moroni.

In closing, he quoted Alma Chapter 5, v. 38-42, which speaks of our duty to God in that we be humble, submissive, and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long suffering; being temperate in all things; being diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times. Also, that we have faith, hope, and charity so that we will always abound in good works.

Following a delicious lunch served by the ladies of the Bradley Local, we enjoyed a delightful song service with participation by youngsters and oldsters alike—vocal and instrumental selections, as well as special favorite hymns by the entire congregation.

Elder Rodger Bruner was the preacher for the 3 p.m. service. The topic of his sermon was how a broken heart and a contrite spirit will enable us to solve problems that can't be solved using the world's way, and that loving people and putting their feelings first is the basis for living the fullness of the gospel.

Following the 3 p.m. service, the local ministry met to take care of routine reunion business, and the "kids" took part in the various activities planned for them, including a wiener roast provided for their supper meal. After supper, also provided by the Bradley folks, we enjoyed a short song service before the evening sermon.

The preacher for the evening service was Priest Emery Pinder. Quoting from the Gettysburg Ad-

dress, it was pointed out that "all men are created equal" and that what we do with our lives after that is up to us. Between birth and death we are on the sea of life. Are we going to take the path of least resistance? We were reminded that "strait is the gate, and narrow the way, which leadeth unto life," and there comes a time when we are going to have to answer for the course we set. He asked, "Where are you on the sea of life?" and quoted "It's not the gale but the set of the sail that determines the course we will take." We were warned on the sea of life not to depend too much on our own navigation.

In closing, Brother Pinder reminded us to "fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Help ourselves, try to help our children, teach them, and have concern for our fellowman.

SUNDAY, JUNE 16

Opening the Sunday sacrament service was a special dedicated to the fathers and presented by Sisters Martha Bruner, Joyce Lussenden, Evelyn Lee, and June Haines. Following the special, Apostle Brickhouse spoke briefly, pointing out that this day is a day set aside to honor our fathers. He reminded us that the Bible says "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise." We were reminded that we also need to honor our heavenly father; we need to keep His commandments. We sing praises and testify of His goodness. He desires us to approach Him with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. We must remember that our Lord gave

His life for us, that He suffered and died for us that we might have eternal life. He gives us the very breath that we breathe. He desires that each and every one of us has eternal life.

Turning to Alma, chapter 9, we see that death came upon man, and this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God. God gave them commandments, after having made known unto them the plan of redemption which was laid from the foundation of the world, indicating the penalty should they fail to keep those commandments. In closing, we were instructed to put on the whole armor of God, and one of those ways is by partaking of the sacrament.

Serving of the emblems was followed by a wonderful service with many powerful prayers and testimonies being offered. Many bore testimonies about their baptisms and the memories they have regarding them. It was most interesting to hear the different circumstances surrounding how and when decisions were made in each individual case. After reluctantly closing the service, I'm sure each and every one felt spiritually fed by the Spirit that prevailed during the service.

Following lunch, we enjoyed another short song service, after which Apostle Brickhouse gave a brief report on his travels and about the work in North and South Carolina among the Indians. He did considerable traveling with Elder Gale Brantner, talking to them about the Book of Mormon. He has been very encouraged by being able to visit a lot of people and spend his time in their homes. He found that there are a lot of people beginning to study and look for something better. He asked for our prayers and help in opening up

areas for them to go into. He also asked for our continued prayer for our youth and reported the success of their youth camp. He also asked for prayers for the people in Manchester, Tennessee. They have about 15 members, but no ministry.

Elder Darren Crull was the preacher for the 2:30 p.m. service. He began by commenting on how wonderful it is to serve a God that can do everything. He stated that he came from a very sinful life, and it was one person, Jesus Christ, who brought him back. Brother Crull related his experiences on their trip to Honduras, about how the power of prayer saved their lives during their encounter with robbers, which reinforces his faith that our God can do anything.

Brother Crull read the 11th Chapter of Hebrews, dealing with the subject of faith, and the 12th Chapter, having to do with God's discipline. He also read from the 8th Chapter of Mosiah, 19-37 "Surely, he hath borne our griefs...."

It was with hearts full of gratitude for the wonderful spirit that prevailed throughout the reunion and with renewed faith and great love that we bid our brothers and sisters in the gospel "God speed" for another reunion year.

The 1997 Michigan State Reunion will also be held at the Bradley Local on June 14 and 15.

God Bless,

*Sr. June Haines
Reunion Reporter*

LOCAL NEWS

COLLINS, MISSOURI

We've already passed the longest day of daylight hours. Hot summer is in full swing and yet the days are beginning to grow shorter. And so it is with our lives—our days are growing shorter. Soon our Redeemer is coming back and our time to produce fruit will come to a close. Oh that we will meet with His approval and that our work has produced good fruit that His all-seeing eye will find appropriate to bring into His great storehouse.

Our sister, Wanda Jo Eddy, has been returned to us! As most of you know, she has had a liver transplant and is at her home in Clinton now, but what a joy and a prayer answered when she and Bob came slipping in the back door at church—(as if no one would notice them!) There was such a joy—both given and received. Our hearts were filled to overflowing for the blessing God has given our sister—and all of us. Now, don't misunderstand me—Jo is home, but is not yet well. She recently has had some sort of flu virus that has set her back some, and now there is the possibility of enduring another transplant. She has been administered to and puts her trust fully in God for His continued blessing. Our sister Jo has set for us a wonderful example of faith and probably doesn't even

know she's done it.

Today (July 1, 1996) I, along with Jack and Betty Martin, attended the funeral of a young man, only 44 years old, Aarond Isabell of Windsor, Missouri. Aarond fell asleep at the wheel while coming home from work. Life is very short and "tomorrow" is not necessarily an option, as I'm sure his wife, Julie (Adams) would tell you. Their five-year-old daughter, Haley, was very brave today. Julie told me they had written a letter to her daddy and had slipped it in his pocket before visitation time. The service was very sentimental and sweet. Burial was at Calhoun Cemetery. Please remember little Haley in your prayers because this adjustment is going to be difficult to make.

Brother Alma Camp is having a circulation problem with his good leg. The doctor is advising caution at this point and will check him again in two weeks. Brother Camp called for administration and Brother Jack Martin met with him at Springfield. Please add Brother Camp's name to your prayer list, as he stands in need of God's blessing.

We have held our annual business meeting (late). Brother Allen Kauffman will be serving as our pastor and Brother Jack Martin will be the assistant pastor. Brother Roma Harrison will continue as Sunday School superintendent with

Brother Terry Cook as assistant.

In closing, I will leave you with a few sermon "thoughts" to consider:

- ◆ *It's good for us to be here (church)—we help each other.*
- ◆ *There is a need for us to reflect on imagining ourselves standing before God—'cause it's gonna happen—and we'll know His judgment is just.*
- ◆ *What a fearful thought, to stand before God and find our name not written in the Book of Life!*
- ◆ *Call on the Lord—don't put it off.*
- ◆ *We have to see "us" (me) for what we are, because the LORD sees us for what we are!*
- ◆ *He (God) has given a law—have you taught it to your children??*
- ◆ *We're not striving to agree with one another, but to measure up to the fullness of the stature of Christ.*
- ◆ *To be forgiven we must be willing to forgive.*
- ◆ *We can't turn people by our words alone—but by our actions—we might.*

Your reporter,
Czerna Kauffman

LOCAL NEWS

INDEPENDENCE,
MISSOURI

The month of June saw some tragedy and even greater blessing. On June fifth the Stephen Gould family were involved in an accident. Stephen was driving Sam Gould's truck borrowed for moving purposes, Judy following with the children in their van. A truck turning onto the highway in the opposite lane lost brakes, nicked the back fender of the truck and then hit the van head on. We thank the Lord that all of the children but Charity were belted into car seats and received only bruises. Charity and Judy in the front seat, seatbelts notwithstanding, were thrown against the steering wheel and dash. Charity received a facial cut, a puncture under one eye and extensive facial bruising. Judy received

damage to jaws and teeth, besides cuts and bruising, which required two surgeries. She will require more dental work. We thank the Lord for preserving their lives, it could so easily have been different, and continue to pray for complete healing of the physical injuries, and the emotional trauma as well.

On Wednesday June 26th, the prayer meeting was turned over to a baptismal service for Charity. Her testimony will follow at a later date.

The speakers of the month have been Robert Oldham, Andy Brantner, Steve McGhee, Mike McGhee, Larry Beem, Ron Temple, Sam Gould and Charles Brantner. Some of the subjects presented: Christ, the Invisible gift of the Father, He went to the cross willingly for us; A warning about the danger of the spirit of complacency on our part—about being lukewarm. None of us knows if we will be here tomorrow, the time to shape up is

now; the incomprehensible Sovereignty of God, His power and His great condescension to faith wherever He finds it; the need of the perfecting of the saints in unity; Men are that they might have joy, that joy being in that which is in harmony with God's will; the suffering of hell being that knowledge that it is by one's own choice that they are separated from God, the only power and influence the adversary has is what we allow.

There was an analogy of our commitment to a life in God's service as to climbing into a row-boat. To move effectively a row-boat must have oars or you drift at the mercy of the elements. If one has only one oar one goes in circles about one's self. The two oars were likened to the first two great commandments, to go forward in Christ's wake one must possess both.

Sr. Amy Schrader

FARMINGTON,
MINNESOTA

NEWS FROM THE NORTH

The Church of Christ (Farmington Local) had it's annual business meeting on June 16, 1996. Votes were taken on local business and officers were elected for the following year. It was decided that there will be a

church reunion on Labor Day weekend and a booth and the Dakota County Fair in Farmington, Minnesota in August. After the meeting, the church had chili for lunch and celebrated Jennifer Eddy's birthday.

Submitted by: Jennifer Eddy, Reporter

Sister Nellie Raleigh recently celebrated her 100th birthday on July 8th. Sister Raleigh was baptized on July 9, 1931. She is still enjoying good health and resides in a nursing home. Please write to her:

Sister Nellie Raleigh
c/o Lawrence E. Raleigh
163 Keller Street
Ashdown, Arkansas 71822

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CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1997 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 6. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 7. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, on April 4 & 5. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1996 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 21 through 23, at Independence, Missouri.

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