

# 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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**H**usbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them. Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord. Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

—*Colossians 3:19-21, 23-24*

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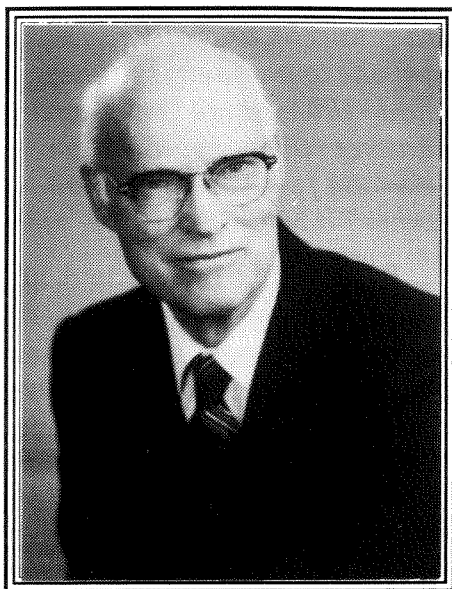
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## ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

# ALL THINGS COMMON



by Apostle Marvin E. Ely

From time to time the subject of all things common has come up both in my missionary travels and in local churches. On one occasion a person asked me if the reason we had so many problems and were not righteous enough was because we did not have all things common. My answer was that all things common was not what brought about greater righteousness, but was the natural result of righteous living. Under all things common there would be greater righteousness because those who are a part of it would have already achieved a high state of righteousness, and with

this would be fewer problems of life.

There is very little in the Bible and Book of Mormon on the topic of All Things Common; however, I desire to address the scriptures that exist. First I will address those that are found in the Bible. Also I want to make some comments on them.

*“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many signs and wonders were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need” Acts 2:41-45.*

In the above quotation we note that those that gladly received His word were baptized and continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship as well as prayer. The apostles’ doctrine was none other

than the doctrine of Jesus Christ. They continued steadfastly in this doctrine as well as fellowship. This is what brought about the condition of all things common among them.

*“And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed were his own; but they had all things common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles’ feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need” Acts 4:32-35.*

An important point in the above quotation is that those who believed were of one heart and one soul. This would cause them to be totally united without division among them, and able to have all things common

among them. All things common should not be legislated or forced upon a people for it must be something that comes from the heart and to be able to deal kindly with one another. Also in the above quotation the apostles gave witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ with great power.

The people in the Book of Mormon who had all things common among them were already a people of tremendous faith before they had all things common. When Jesus first appeared to this people after his resurrection He expounded His commandments unto them. Jesus discerned they were weak and could not understand all His words so He was about to go back to heaven and return on the morrow but they desired that Jesus tarry a little longer with them. Then Jesus said unto them:

*“My bowels are filled with mercy; for I perceive that ye desire that I should shew unto you what I have done unto your brethren at Jerusalem, for I see that your faith is sufficient, that I should heal you. And it came to pass that when he had thus spoken, all the multitude, with one accord, did go forth, with their sick, and their afflicted, and their lame, and with their blind, and with their dumb, and with all they that were afflicted in any manner; and he did heal them every*

*one as they were brought forth unto him” 3 Nephi 8:8-9.*

This was a people who had sufficient faith to be healed. Also they went forth with one

...All things common was not what brought about greater righteousness but was the natural result of righteous living. Under all things common there would be greater righteousness because those who are a part of it would have already achieved a high state of righteousness and with this would be fewer problems of life.

accord which means one of total belief that they would be healed. Jesus appeared a second time unto this people and did loose the tongues of their children that they did utter marvelous things unto their fathers (see: 3 Nephi 12:7-9).

*“And it came to pass that the disciples whom Jesus had chosen began from that*

*time forth to baptize and to teach as many as did come unto them: and as many as were baptized in the name of Jesus were filled with the Holy Ghost. And many of them saw and heard unspeakable things, which are not lawful to be written: and they taught, and did minister one to another; and they had all things common among them, every man dealing justly, one with another” 3 Nephi 12:10-11.*

Before this people had all things common among them they had already shown that they had sufficient faith to be healed. Also they beheld some great and marvelous things among them. This included even their little children speaking marvelous things unto them.

*“And it came to pass in the thirty and sixth year, the people were all converted unto the Lord, upon all the face of the land, both Nephites and Lamanites, and there were no contentions and disputations among them, and every man did deal justly one with another; And they had all things common among them, therefore they were not sick and poor, bond and free, but were all made free, and partakers of the heavenly gift.” 4 Nephi 1:3-4.*

We notice that all the people were converted unto the

Lord and there were no contentions and disputations among them. Also they did deal justly one with another. This would be a wonderful condition in which to live. Then we learn that they had all things common among them. It was the natural result of all the other conditions they had first achieved.

*“And it came to pass that there was no contention in the land, because of the love of God which did dwell in the hearts of the people. And there were no envyings, nor strifes, nor tumults, nor whoredoms, nor lyings, nor murders, nor any manner of lasciviousness; And surely there could not be a happier people among all the people who had been created by the hand of God: There were no robbers, nor murderers, neither were there Lamanites, nor any manner of ites; but they were in one, the children of Christ, and heirs to the kingdom of God” 4 Nephi 1:17-20.*

The love of God, no contention and the fact that there was no iniquity among them was the reason all things common was able to function among them. Also they were in one the children of Christ. This was similar to the people referenced in the book of Acts where those that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Then they had all things common. The people in the fourth book of Nephi had all

things common until the 201st year and then it ceased.

*“And now in this two hundred and first year, there began to be among them those who were lifted*

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**All things common should not be legislated or forced upon a people for it must be something that comes from the heart....**

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*up in pride, such as wearing costly apparel, and all manner of fine pearls, and of the fine things of the world. And from that time forth they did have their goods and their substance no more common among them, and they began to be divided into classes...” 4 Nephi 1:27-28.*

When the people were lifted up in pride the condition of all things common among them ceased and they began to be divided into classes. This was far different than when they were dealing justly one with another and having no contentions or disputations among them. Just as surely as when these things existed there was all things common, the entering of pride and division into the classes among them would cause all things common to cease.

In the ninth chapter of Mosiah we can read about a people who imparted of their substance of their own free will. They were a people who were willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light. Also they were willing to mourn with those that mourn and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as a witness of God at all times, in all things and in all places.

Alma commanded this people: *“...that there should be no contention one with another, but that they should look forward with one eye, having one faith and one baptism; having their hearts knit together in unity and in love, one towards another” Mosiah 9:54.*

*“And again, Alma commanded that the people of the church should impart of their substance, everyone according to that which he had; If he have more abundantly, he should impart more abundantly; and he that had but little, but little should be required; and to him that had not should be given. And thus they should impart of their substance, of their own free will and good desires towards God, and to those priests that stood in need, yea, and to every needy, naked soul...And they did walk uprightly before God, imparting to one another, both temporally*

*and spiritually, according to their needs and their wants” Mosiah 9:60-64.*

The above references from Mosiah do not use the term all things common but they still imparted of their substance to the needy. We note that they imparted of their substance of their own free will. Also their hearts were knit together in unity and in love. They were a people who walked closely to God and imparted to one another, both temporally and spiritually.

In the first chapter of Alma we can read of another people who also imparted of their substance to the poor and the needy. This was done by a people who were steadfast in the faith and immovable in keeping the commandments of God, and they bore with patience the persecution which was heaped upon them by former members of the Church (see Alma 1:32-36).

*“And they did impart of their substance every man according to that which he had, to the poor and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; And they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely; And thus they did establish the affairs of the church; and thus they began to have continual peace again, notwithstanding all their persecutions. And now because of the steadiness of the church, they began to be exceeding rich; having*

*abundance of all things whatsoever they stood in need...And thus in their prosperous circumstances they did not send away any*

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*...This was a people who walked closely to God and who were steadfast in the faith, and immovable in keeping the commandments of God. ... In order for there to be all things common there must first be similar conditions.*

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*who were naked, or that were hungry, or that were athirst, or that were sick, or that had not been nourished; And they did not set their hearts upon riches; therefore they were liberal to all, both old and young both bond and free, both male and female whether out of the church or in the church, having no respect of persons as to those who stood in need; And thus they did prosper and become far more wealthy than those who did not belong to their church” Alma 1:40-47.*

Again this was a people who walked closely to God and

who were steadfast in the faith, and immovable in keeping the commandments of God. The people who later had all things common among them were a similar people who dealt justly one with another and there were no contentions or disputations among them. Those recorded in Acts were of one heart and soul. In order for there to be all things common there must first be similar conditions.

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# Stepping to Zion

By Elder Andrew Brantner

After delivering a sermon with this message a dear brother suggested I type it up for our Zion's Advocate. I shall attempt to accomplish this and ask your compassion for my weakness in writing. Please remember that the following items are only a guide and not a complete or concise "blue print." Feel free to adapt and interpolate as the Spirit leads you.

First I would like you to stand up and plant your feet firm. Now, with all your might, step repeatedly with one foot. Round and round you go, making much ado but going nowhere. Change feet and go at it again. By now you had better sit down because you're probably dizzy. This is an example of our attempts to bring Zion. Let me explain:

We must, to get anywhere, take that first step. Then we take another and another, etc. If we maintain our course and do not waiver we will arrive at our destination. Left, right, left, right, always in balance, harmony and order. But so many times we find ourselves getting out of step and our

course is erratic and sporadic. As in our extreme example, we go like mad with one foot and make a great commotion for all to see, but we accomplish little more than to get ourselves dizzy and frustrated.

I would like you to think of your right and left feet as being one, a spiritual foot, and the other a temporal foot—faith and works if you will. If you want to get to Zion you're going to have to walk down the straight and narrow path. And it naturally follows that you're going to have to place your steps with care or you will veer off the path. We must keep all things in balance and in harmony. We must do all things in their proper order and be doing them in the proper way. We must focus our minds and our hearts on the risen Son, stepping in the light of God.

All things of God begin in the spiritual, and so let us begin our journey with a spiritual step. Walk with me now, keeping the glory of Zion ever before you.

## STEP 1—SPIRITUAL • DESIRE

Everything begins with desire. A desire to please God, a de-

sire to be redeemed and to live eternally in a blessed state with God. Out of this desire for things spiritual comes the next step. (Alma 16:151-172; Mos. 9:39-41).

## STEP 2—TEMPORAL • DESIRE

Because of our spiritual desires we now desire to be temporally redeemed and to please God in our physical existence. It is hoped that we take these first two essential steps of our own free will, not having to be compelled by hardship and heartache. On these two steps we begin our journey. Here is the foundation laid for all we may build our lives upon. (Hel. 4:52; Alma 2:2-3, 16:124-142; BC 59:56, 29:7-9).

## STEP 3—SPIRITUAL • GATHERING

Our next step is a coming together in a unity of purpose. Our hearts are gathered to God and each other. We have a willingness, even an eagerness, to submit to the divine will of our Master. We now, out of love of all, give our all to all and for all. If we can take this step we are then of one heart. And though our minds may yet vary from

each other sometimes, we hardly notice, for our hearts are filled with overpowering joy. (Acts 2:1; John 17:21; Isa. 52:8; Eph. 4:11-13).

**STEP 4—TEMPORAL • GATHERING**

**H**aving traveled thus far towards a oneness we find the overwhelming desire within us to physically be close to the Lord's people. We anticipate our Lord's soon return and we hasten to meet Him. We recognize the appointed place for His return and the city of Zion and we set about the process of ordering our lives to facilitate our gathering to the center place. The day is near upon us that our very survival is dependent on our taking this step. (BC 29:2, 64:25; Acts 2:44; Psalms 133:1; Matt. 23:37; 3N 2:42-44; Duet. 12:5).

**STEP 5—SPIRITUAL • TRUE CONVERSION**

**T**his step is one of complete and full submission to the will of our Father in Heaven. Here we put aside all of our vain desires and petty desires. Envyings and strifes are no more among us. Pride is cast away. We become a truly "Holy People." (Eph. 1:4; Mos. 11:128-129, 8:38-45).

**STEP 6—TEMPORAL • GET OUT OF DEBT**

**E**asy to say, harder to do. This may require a narrowing of ones lifestyle, an adjustment of our priorities. Having traveled this far though, taking this step

is to become a natural occurrence. We will not think of what we must give up; rather, we are focused on that which we will gain. Because of the change in our hearts we are anxious to forfeit what we cannot keep to gain what we cannot lose. (BC 65:37; Romans 13:8).

**STEP 7—SPIRITUAL • HUMILITY, MEEKNESS, TRUST, ETC.**

**A**ll these attributes and more will bubble up within us and overflow. The Spirit of God works in us for good and it shows in our attitude. We will now find a joy and contentment in our lives that we have never before imagined. (Matt. 5:1-18; Mi. 8:29).

**STEP 8—TEMPORAL • PURCHASE LANDS**

**B**ecause of our zeal and our prosperous circumstances, which result from the steps thus taken, we begin in earnest to purchase all the lands of Zion for our inheritance. We know that God will preserve it for us and us for it. If we do not falter in our obedience to God, obeying His laws and the laws of the land, the world will have no righteous cause against us. We will be protected and blessed of God. (BC 59:64, 48:59).

**STEP 9—SPIRITUAL • PRAYER AND FASTING**

**W**ith this step we gain more wisdom and spiritualness. Now we can begin to understand many more of the aforesaid hidden mysteries of

God. As a result of our taking this step we find the gifts of the Spirit being manifest in greater degree than ever before. (Alma 12: 1-7; BC 60: 18-23).

**STEP 10—TEMPORAL • ALL THINGS COMMON, STOREHOUSE, TEMPLE**

**B**ecause we now have maintained a balance with our spiritual and temporal steps we are able to understand, implement and fulfill the commandments of God to have all things common among us, to have a storehouse and to build His Temple. Everyone benefits and the work of the Kingdom is greatly advanced. (Acts 2:44-47; Alma 1:37-47; 2N 11:109, 8:70; 4N 1:4; Isa. 2:1-3; BC 44:26-30, 59:48,49,70).

**STEP 11—SPIRITUAL • LISTEN AND HEARKEN**

**M**ore important than ever we must now look to Christ for our guidance. Many before us have fallen away at this point of prosperity and blessing because of pride, greed, lust, etc. (Psalms 46:10; Isa. 51:1-3, 55:1-3).

**STEP 12—TEMPORAL • PREPARE**

**W**e must be preparing for a time when we no longer have any of the things from the world that we depend on so much now. We must learn to be self sufficient. (Matt. 25; BC 44:32).



**STEP 13—SPIRITUAL • LOVE FOR ALL**

**O**ur righteousness overpowers the evil one. Finally we will have broken free from his tentacles and can now go forth in a fullness of power and be about our Master's business. (1N 7:60; John 13:34-35).

**STEP 14—TEMPORAL • PRACTICE**

**I**t is time now to sever all ties to the worldly systems. The corruption of the world is rampant. Though we are in the world we need not be of the world. We practice self-sufficiency. God blesses us in our efforts to serve Him. All we set our minds and our hearts to do, we do for the glory of Zion. We are safe and we prosper in Zion. While the world is reeling in travail and tribulation we are protected by the hand of God day and night. (Rev. 18:4).

**STEP 15—SPIRITUAL • CONTINUE STEADFAST AND ENDURE**

**W**e now must be strong and patient till all these things (tribulations) come to pass. We mourn in Zion for those not with us, yet our joy is full and in the Lord. (Mark 13:13; 2N 13:20-30; Mos. 1:90; Zech. 13:8-9).

**STEP 16—TEMPORAL • HELPING OTHERS TO COME**

**B**ecause we have a pure love for all we assist all to come to Zion who will come to Zion. God's angels guard the door.

Only those who are truly repentant are allowed within Her walls. The borders of Zion are enlarged as more and more come to the Lord out of the great tribulations. (Isa. 2:3; Jer. 16:14-15; Ezek. 20:33-44; Mos. 8:66-69).

**STEP 17—SPIRITUAL • PREACH TO THE WORLD**

**H**aving matured to the fullness of our creation we now go out in the fullness of authority and power to preach the saving grace of the gospel of Jesus Christ to all the world. We are become God's example to the world that He is! As the perfected body of Christ on this earth we are now fit to go forth doing all manner of miracles, and all that we do is our Father's will and not our own. We gather the remainder of His sheep and will have built His Temple in Zion, which work began in the generation of the gathering. Zion shines forth her light for all to see. She is a city set on a hill. The Savior returns to His own and, well that's another story. One that will be told, but another time. It only gets better from here, as we walk with our Savior.

Now, I remind you, this is not a complete listing—refer to our scriptures for that. Nor is everything in a precise order—refer to the Holy Spirit for that. The answers are found by those who seek them. Many of these steps sort of run together at times, as maybe they should.

For some it may be that a different order is best. Most, if not all of us, have jumped around a bit and obeyed in some things and overlooked some others. But there must always be a balance between our Spiritual and our Temporal lives. When we are at an imbalance Satan can easily cause us to fall. He will not pass by this opportunity.

We have possibly, as a people, completed steps 1 and 2. Some fruit is seen here and there of the other steps. We have a ways to go, don't you agree? A most beautiful account of a Zionic condition is found in 4 Nephi 1: 1-21. Please read it. Let these things sink down into you heart for they are delicious to the soul, and always remember: If it were any less of a job, our Lord would have a lesser people doing it.

*May God bless us all.*

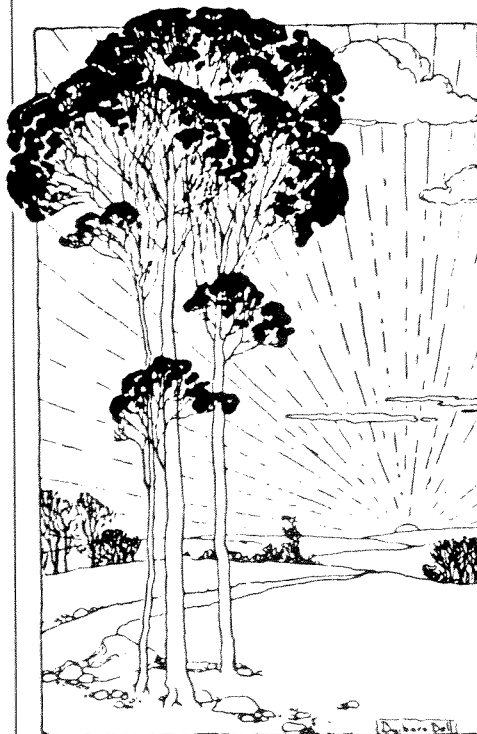
# Will God's Miracles Ever Cease?

## Part III

September 21, 1996—  
Another miracle baby of ours left his private dwelling, in the womb, on the thirteenth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and ninety-six, and entered "our world" in a "normal" position at 41 weeks gestation.

Enoch Caleb Gould is a testimony to each of us of the wondrous power of God. Caleb is proof of how God heard the faithful and diligent prayers of several people, which were an answer to Enoch's and my concerns that our baby not be born premature (as Enoch viewed in a dream he received from God, during the nine months). Therefore, it is quite a miracle that Caleb was born a strong, ten pound, twelve ounce infant which set a record for our midwife for the largest baby she has delivered.

Not only were Enoch and I concerned about Caleb



being born premature, but also from the start of this pregnancy Caleb's position in the womb was difficult to determine, and it was not until his thirty-eighth week that our midwife was certain she felt our baby in a breech position.

Understanding the complications that present them-

selves in a baby being born breech, especially if the umbilical cord is wrapped around the baby's neck—which we discovered it was at birth—Enoch and I tried various methods to turn our baby. Yet, Enoch trusted that somehow God would turn our baby since God showed Enoch a strong baby boy would be born with his head in a downward position in the dream mentioned previously. Then since these methods appeared unsuccessful, it led me to ask a doctor to do an external version with ultrasound.

The doctor exclaimed that our baby was too large to turn around and there was only a fair amount of amniotic fluid. A nurse practitioner informed us that it was too late in the pregnancy for our baby to turn around. However, whereas the doctor's hands failed to turn our baby, what follows is evidence that the Lord's hand is stronger than a doctor's hand.

I lost much sleep worrying about our baby coming breech, especially since it was predicted our baby could easily weigh ten pounds. Therefore, a cesarean birth/section was scheduled for September fourth (which was the day that our surgeon was available and which was also two days before our baby was due). The thought of a cesarean birth/section also frightened me, and Enoch and I requested Elder Peter Gould to administer to me. Peter prayed that although this matter was a small part in the Lord's handiwork to mankind, yet it would be a great miracle in our eyes, and we would be ever so thankful for this miracle. These words were comforting, and Enoch and I knew that the Lord would see us through this trial of our faith.

On September first, after Peter offered sacrament, the Holy Spirit met with us, and we knew something marvelous was about to occur.

One issue still remained unresolved, which was the interpretation to a dream I had that focused on the day September third. September third later became the day that a doctor and nurse practitioner scheduled me for another ultrasound. The purpose of the ul-

trasound was to determine the position of the fetus one final time before the inevitable cesarean birth/section was performed.


As Enoch and I visited a hospital on September third we soon understood why this day was a day of great significance when a radiologist informed us that our baby was, "Head down." The radiologist's voice was innocent of all our family's concern (since all she had been told was to do a limited fetal screening without being given any of our baby's history) when she, in a nonchalant and unsuspecting voice let us know that all our prayers had been answered in such a miraculous fashion. Enoch and I responded in voices of wonderment, "Head down?" which then surprised the radiologist and assistant for a moment as to why we would question this, and we quickly answered the questioning looks with brief answers. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the True and Living God, had turned our baby!

The weight of 10,000 pounds was lifted from our hearts and shoulders when Enoch and I left the hospital, and we declared, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful

works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:8). The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the True and Living God, had turned our baby!

Now I felt that the most difficult part of this pregnancy was finalized, and indeed it was as God performed still another miracle in this pregnancy with a three hour and forty-five minute labor, leaving Enoch and I with a tiny miracle in our arms.

*Your sister in Christ,  
Patricia Gould*



# A Law For Our Hearts

The new testament is a law for our hearts. This is a story of how I had my heart changed, and it will work for you in any situation if you want it to.

That the teachings of Christ have to deal with the heart is easy to see. Matt. 5:28: "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." In the Book of Mormon it says to "suffer none of these things to enter into your hearts." Jeremiah 31 tells us that God is going to put his law in our inward parts, and write it on our hearts.

Well, there I was (I always start my stories with "there I was") trying to get my wife to change her life. She was leaving the light on in the closet when she was through in there. I might add in here that she was trying to get me to close the door to my closet because it was unsightly from the other part of the house, but never mind that for now. Her problem was costing me money, and it was a big issue with me. Of course, her

problem with me was a big thing with her but it was not that big to me. (I have to be careful how I word this because she reads all this to help me with corrections.)

While we were having one of our quiet times she expressed that she didn't leave the light burning on purpose, she just forgets. I told her the same about the door, and I thought we would both change, but we didn't. We both keep forgetting, and in my heart I still had bad feelings about that light.

Then I got this good idea. "I will install a sensor in there and when she goes in the light will go on and when she goes out it will turn off." I said to myself. I had no good idea for my closet door, but let's not speak of that now. Let's get my wife straightened out first. I was so proud of my good idea about the sensor that I told my son Michael. I knew the Bible said, "let not thine own lips praise thee, but another mans." But I'll get my life better after I get Barbara fixed up. Michael said, "Dad, that light isn't your trouble and that sensor isn't going to solve the problem.

Your problem is in your heart." (Don't you just hate it when your kids step on your toes like that?) The Spirit of God made it very clear that what he said was true. Almost immediately my heart got changed because I made the decision to do it right there and then. I chose to never let it bother me. It is not a problem for me any more. I could care less. It even amazes me. My heart is changed, and it has given me peace. Does she still leave it on? Yes, but not so often. I am glad to help remember to turn it off and I don't care. It is my pleasure! I don't say little hurtful things like "Never mind, I'll get the light," or "Do we have the extra money to pay on the bill this month?" I help keep it off and I fell good about it.

Well, what about things in your house that you are nit-picking about and you need your heart changed? The Lord has called us to peace. We are asked to let it rule in our hearts. Let the "Good message of Christ's teachings" have its way in your marriage.

*Don Hitt*

# My Personal Religion

## Including Forgiveness

Over twenty years ago someone did several things against me and my family. I felt so wronged that I felt hatred for the person. During the ensuing years I had to be around the one who had said and done such horrible things to my loved ones. For the sake of those around me, I was always civil, but no more. This lasted for a long time and I felt that I could never feel differently.

One day, as I was in a sacrament service in Phoenix,

I prayed for many things and people. As we arose from our knees, my glance fell on the one who had "wronged" me. All of a sudden my being was flooded with forgiveness and love for her. I felt all warm and mellow and found I had absolutely no hard feelings in my heart. My gratitude was beyond description.

Several months later, also during a sacrament service, I was feeling insignificant and felt the need to *know* of God's love and forgiveness of me. As

I prayed, I felt someone very firmly tap me on the shoulder. I looked around. It wasn't my very dear Louise McIndoo right behind me...it wasn't my sister Donna, beside me. Yet *someone* had unexpectedly gotten my attention. Then I knew: I was forgiven and had no doubt of God's love for *me!*

He will guide, bless and direct us if we only be still and know that *He is*.

*Meredyth Malone  
Phoenix, Arizona*

### Open Your Heart

Ask, and it shall be given  
seek, and ye shall find,  
truly search for Jesus  
and leave your doubts behind.

Knock, it shall be opened unto  
you  
ask and ye shall receive,  
you must have faith deep  
and you must forever believe.

Search all with a pure heart  
read and study well,  
pray for your clear path  
and of the past...do not dwell.

For there is light for the day  
and joy in the morning to come,  
give your heart in truth  
to the only begotten Son.

Acquire knowledge to learn  
develop patience as time goes by,  
accept Jesus in your heart  
remember, for you...He was  
willing to die.

—*Dianne Welsh*  
*Submitted by Sr. Louise  
Grzincic*

# To My Brothers and Sisters of the Church of Christ

I wanted to write you about the many blessings I have received from the Lord throughout my life to let you know of the many miracles still happening in our day, not to brag, but to give God the glory.

First of all, let me introduce myself to you. I am the second daughter of Oren and Esther Caviness. My mother was the youngest daughter of Apostle James E. Yates and his wife Lillie, and the sister of Apostle Leon E. Yates. All four of my mother's brothers were elders in the Church of Christ. My father was an elder and one of the general bishops of the Church of Christ before his death, and the eldest son of an old-time RLDS family of Colorado. My husband is Elder Richard A. Wheaton, the youngest son of Apostle Clarence L. Wheaton and the brother of Elder C. LeRoy Wheaton, one of the general bishops of the Church of Christ. My husband and I have both grown up in the church and have raised our seven chil-

dren in the church.

The miraculous blessings first begin in my life with my entrance into it. I was born at home, and the doctor in attendance did not believe I would be able to be born outside of a surgical room in a hospital, nor could he guarantee that my mother would be able to survive either. But as there was no choice (we lived out in the Arizona desert miles away from the nearest town of Mesa) he did the best that he could, and with the Lord's help I came into this world on the evening of December 31, 1927.

While I was yet a baby my mother was doctoring my eyes for an infection. She had been putting Argeroil (a dark brown liquid) in them as medication. But as new mothers often are, she was tired and grabbed the first bottle that looked like what she wanted and put the drops in my eyes. When I began to scream she looked again at the bottle and discovered she had put iodine in my eyes instead. She was all alone while my fa-

ther was working and did the only thing she knew how to do. She prayed to the Lord and asked for His help and put consecrated olive oil in my eyes. When she was finally able to get to a telephone and call the doctor she told him what she had done and how she had treated it, and asked him what should she do. The doctor told her she had done the best possible thing, and that he would check my eyes the next time she could come into town. When he did there was no injury, no burns to my eyes; they were well and healthy.

I did not need to wear glasses for my eyes until I was 25 years old. This was a wonderful blessing bestowed upon me, and my mother has always given God the glory for it.

There have been many more blessings in my life and I will try to write to you about once a month and tell you about them.

*Yours in Christian love,  
Velma J. Wheaton*



# IN THE NEWS

The following prayer was given before the Kansas State Legislature on January 23, 1996, and was found in the *Farmington Independent*, Farmington, Minnesota, dated February 29, 1997:

“Heavenly Father, we come before you today to ask your forgiveness and to seek your direction and guidance. We know your Word says woe to those who call evil good but that’s exactly what we have done. We have lost our spiritual equilibrium and inverted our values. We confess that we have ridiculed the absolute truth of your Word in the name of moral pluralism. We have worshipped other gods and called it multiculturalism. We have endorsed perversion and called it an alternative lifestyle. We have exploited the poor and

called it a lottery. We have neglected the needy and called it self-preservation. We have rewarded laziness and called it welfare. In the name of choice we have killed our unborn. In the name of right to life we have killed abortionists. We have neglected to discipline our children and called it building esteem. We have abused power and called it political savvy. We have coveted our neighbors’ possessions and called it taxes. We have polluted the air with profanity and pornography and called it freedom of expression. We have ridiculed the time-honored values of our forefathers and called it enlightenment. Search us, O God, and know our hearts today. Try us

and show us any wicked way in us. Cleanse us from every sin and set us free. Guide and bless these men and women who have been sent here by the people of Kansas and who have been ordained by You to govern this great state. Grant them Your wisdom to rule and may their decisions direct us to the center of Your will. I ask in the name of Your Son, the living Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

When I read this it brought to my mind just how corrupt our society has become. By accepting these ideas and philosophies into our lifestyles and calling them good we have gone against that which the Lord desires. May God bless us that we do not fall into the forbidden paths that have been embraced by our society.

*Elder Merlin Eddy*

# The Feathered Serpent

Called Quetzalcoatl in Mexico by the Aztecs, Kukulcan in Central America by the Mayans and Viracocha in Peru by the Incas, today we see him represented as a Feathered Serpent. It's hard for most of us to see the resemblance to Jesus even though the evidence is overwhelming. As Don McIndoo has pointed out in his book *A Book of Mormon Companion* Quetzalcoatl was once known by the Indians of these cultures, as well as many North American Indians, as a bearded white man, born of a virgin from across the ocean, healing the sick and the dead, a law giver, religious teacher, Creator, a divine Son who died and promised that He would return. Who else qualifies? So why represent Him as a Feathered Serpent? Botur-

ini, an eighteenth century writer says that the feathers indicated "intimating by the bird the swiftness with which he had passed from a distant country to theirs." Author José Diaz Bolio in his most recent publication *The Faith of the Mayans*, says that he's found the answer to the other piece of the puzzle of why the Feathered 'Serpent'? The serpent's importance is shown in that it is the very fiber of the Mayan Life, i.e. the art, religious symbol worn around the neck, the basis of their calendar, etc. Why? Because the Mayans viewed the rattlesnake as the perfect creature. When the snake would shed his kin, he would come out *caput zihil* (Mayan language), or *born again*, resurrected, lively serpent, with a NEW RAT-

TLE IN ITS TAIL. "The Mayans believed the rattle had the power to give life, to realize the miracle of resurrection."

What better creature to represent Christ? And who are we to argue with this thinking when Jesus represented himself 3000 years ago the same way when Moses held up the serpent on the pole for the house of Israel to look upon to be healed?

Dennis Trudgen

NEWS

ANDALUSIA/GANTT, ALABAMA

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Church of Christ, We, your brothers and sisters of the Church of Christ in Andalusia/Gantt, Alabama, have formed a mission in Gantt, Alabama, and wish to invite all who are, or might be in the area to fellowship with us whenever possible. Currently we are meeting in our church building in Gantt, Alabama, each Sunday at 10:00 a.m. for Sunday School and for preaching at 11:00 a.m., when ministry is available. Currently the ministry is coming from Independence once or twice a month.

Gantt is located in southern Alabama, six miles north of Andalusia, Alabama, on highway 29. The church is located on 3rd Ave. We look forward to fellowshipping with you and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We would appreciate your prayers for the work of the gospel in our area including Mississippi, Georgia and Florida, and invite our brothers and sisters and friends from throughout this region to come and worship with us.

For additional information please call Brother Archie DuBose at (334) 222-8605 or Brother Don Worely at (334) 222-7775.

*Yours in Gospel Bonds,  
Your brothers and sisters in Christ.*

BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA

Hello from Bemidji, Minnesota local, The Lord has blessed our small local in recent years with the growth afforded by young families moving here.

To our small attendance, Arlo and Lillian Gould, Annie Spargo, Vivian Freeberg and Mike Gould has been added the Doug and Leah Ferrier family, Peter and Elaine Gould, the Nick and Pat Gould family, and Bill Gould. We have grown to fill our church trailer.

Doug Ferrier is our local pastor with Bill Gould, Amy Ferrier, and Elaine Gould as Sunday School teachers.

Summer vacation brings family visitors into our group, as well as taking some of us away for a time.

Peter Gould's work takes him away for periods of time; when he is home, he leads and directs our church group in a song service.

Our adult study has been in the Book of Alma. We have learned of Alma's low esteem after the people of Ammonihah rejected him and the word, how he returned readily after an angel encouraged and comforted him. He was met by Amulek who was prepared to meet him by an angel of God. Alma stated his belief and his mission and stayed with Amulek for some time before God told him to "Go." Then, filled with the Holy Spirit he and Amulek began to preach to the city again.

We have heard through the Book of Mosiah, chapter 1, verse 51, that we are unable to repay our debt to God for our very breath. "O how had you ought to thank your heavenly King."

That when "ye are in service to your fellow beings, ye are in service of your God" Mosiah 1:49.

Our community has opened its arms and taken in the flood victims from Grand Forks, North Dakota. The whole community responded to our "fellow beings" and thus to our God.

*God Bless All,  
Vivian Freeberg, secretary  
Bemidji, Minnesota*



▶ ANDALUSIA/GANTT MISSION

## NEWS

## EAST INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

The preachers for the month of April were Brethren Peter Gould, Buzz Brickhouse, James Case, Charles Brantner, Steven McGhee and Frank Fann. In listening to these sermons one thought became paramount: do our lives reflect these things we profess to believe? Let each measure themselves. 2 Nephi 12: what a chapter to use as a mirror of ourselves. Do we want to be among those who will be blessed according to the prophesies of this chapter, or among those who will fall? Do we want that marvelous work to be done among us? We are among those called Gentile (Israel by adoption). We need to be converted to a life of righteousness. If so, He will establish His church among us. 3 Nephi 10:1-3. Has He? This land was given to the seed of Joseph, Ephriam and Mannasseh; this church then is to assist the remnant of these people plus all of the house of Israel that will come to build the city New Jerusalem. Isaiah 2:3: And the law shall go forth from Zion. Zion will be the seat of the government of the kingdom on earth.

2 Nephi 14:16: the words of Christ tell us that which we must do. Matthew 6:19: we are to lay up treasure in heaven, we are to seek the kingdom of Heaven and His righteousness. Do our choices, therefore, our lives, glorify God? 2 Nephi 6:73-74: we need to feel the awfulness of transgressing the will and desire of God. Have we set our full purpose of heart on His will instead of our own? In all this we are dealing with our own soul's salvation. We are to love God with all, and our neighbor as ourselves, and our enemy (3 Nephi 5:89-90). The Lord know if we are earnestly seeking to follow Him and to obey His commandments. He knows us better than we know ourselves.

John 15: He is the vine, the Father is the husbandman, we are the branches. If we want to abide in the vine we must bear fruit, or be cast off. Without Him we can do nothing. The scriptures tell us there is no other name by which we can be saved (Acts 4:9-12, 2 Nephi

11:39, 2 Nephi 13:31). We must come unto Christ and be perfected in Him (Moroni 10:29). We cannot inherit His kingdom without that pure love of Christ which is charity (Ether 5:34). We deceive ourselves if we think we can please God without that total commitment. What manner of men ought we to be? "...Even as I am" 3 Nephi 13:5.

Alma 19:71-80: the decrees of God are unalterable. Whosoever will can walk therein. The nature of man is carnal and contrary to the nature and happiness of God. We must choose. Restoration means to bring back that which has been heretofore. Do we portray to our fellowmen that happiness promised to obedience to the Lord's commandments? Ephesians 2:10: God has foreordained that we walk in the same good works as those of Christ. We must seek the Holy Spirit to create in us that desire to reflect all that He has taught and commanded, to be the motivator of all that we do. If we plant a good seed in our hearts (Alma 16) and it does not grow, does not mean that the seed was not good, only that we did not nurture it.

Matthew 25:14-31: we have been given talents according to our abilities. We must make use of those talents for the Lord's kingdom and purposes. As with the seed, unless we exercise those talents given, there is no increase and we cannot harvest the promised fruit. Jesus was led into the wilderness to commune with God. We all need to take time for such communion. We forget so soon (3 Nephi 1:38-) which enables the adversary to deceive us, causing us to doubt even that which has been witnessed to us of the Holy Spirit, creating confusion. God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

We must be stripped of pride, if not, we are not prepared to meet God (Alma 3:50-51). Pride can destroy the soul of a person, of a people, of a church. Church history tells us the result of pride entering in in the early days of the church. James 5:1-5 tells us that the love of riches corrupts. It deceives us. Galatians 5:19-21 lists the works of the flesh, the human nature. Read them. Can they be found among us? Which one cannot be found?

Those who do these things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Alma 3:47-59: are we sufficiently humble, stripped of all pride, stripped of envy? If not, we are not prepared to meet God, nor to be saved in His kingdom. None of us knows if we will even live out this day, or night. We must prepare ourselves quickly. None other can do that for us.

Consider our conduct here in the house of the Lord during His services. Take care not to disrupt in any way. Be here, and be prompt at the appointed time. How will we feel if He should make a visitation and we miss it?

Ephesians 4:11-13: He set offices in the church for the purpose of edifying, unto perfection, to that measure of the fullness of the stature of Christ. This is the purpose. To fulfill that purpose we must press forward with a love of God and all men, feasting upon the words of Christ. There is no other way nor name whereby we can be saved in the kingdom of God, this is the doctrine of Christ, the only and true doctrine of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy st (2 Nephi 13:29-32. Ephesians 4:22-32 tells us that we must become that new man, and list the many things that we must put away from us that we grieve not the Holy Spirit. We need to measure ourselves by these things lest we fail of our opportunity and privilege as a true disciple of the Christ.

The East Local annual business meeting was held April 28, 1997

The main officers are Pastor: Larry Beem, Assistant Pastor: Steven McGhee, Sunday School Superintendent: Issac Brockman, Jr., Assistant Sunday School Superintendent: Jeff Oldham.

*Reporter,  
Amy Schrader*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

## 1997 New York Reunion

~July 11-13~

*Hogansburg, New York*

**Y**our brothers and sisters of the Akwesasne, New York, local of the Church of Christ welcome all of our brothers and sisters in Canada and the United States to come fellowship and worship with them starting on Friday evening at 7:00 pm, July 11, thru Sunday afternoon, July 13, 1997.

In order that the proper preparation may be made we would appreciate it if you would call or write the following:

*In Canada:*

**Wayne and Susan Miller**  
868 Tollgate Rd.  
Cornwall, Ontario

Canada K6H5R6  
Phone (613) 953-5469

*In the United States:*

**Paul and Debbie Grant**  
Box 2 A. B.  
Fort Covington, NY 12937  
Phone (518) 358-9409

**Dale and Terri Waldruff**  
187 State Hwy. 37C  
Massena, NY 13622  
Phone (315) 764-9571

**Eli and Gretchen Tarbell**  
Box 21, Rt. 37  
Hogansburg, NY 13655  
Phone (518) 358-2911

We are looking forward to worshipping with you.

## Missouri Reunion

~August 8-10~

**T**he Missouri Reunion Committee would like to invite all to attend the 1997 Missouri Reunion, which will be held August 8th, 9th and 10th, 1997. All meetings will be held at the Church of Christ headquarters building located on the Temple Lot in Independence, Missouri.

*For information please contact:*

**Roland Sarratt**  
15910 E. 36th Terr.  
Independence, MO 64055  
(816) 373-6605

**Smith "Buzz" Brickhouse**  
5713 Logan Rd.  
Kansas City, MO 64136  
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## CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1998 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, on April 3 & 4. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1997 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 11, 12 and 13, at Independence, Missouri.

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