

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;"*

I Nephi 3:187

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Liberty Has a Double Meaning

Concerning liberty, I observe a great mistake in the country about that. There is a two-fold liberty, natural (I mean as our nature is now corrupt) and civil or federal. The first is common to man with beasts and other creatures. By this, man, as he stands in relation to man simply, hath liberty to do what he lists; it is a liberty to evil as well as to good. This liberty is incompatible and inconsistent with authority, and cannot endure the least restraint of the most just authority. The exercise and maintaining of this liberty makes men grow more evil, and in time to be worse than brute beasts. This is that great enemy of truth and peace, that wild beast, which all the ordinances of God are bent against, to restrain and subdue it.

The other kind of liberty I call civil or federal; it may also be termed moral, in reference to the covenant between God and man, in the moral law, and the politic covenants and constitutions, amongst men themselves. This is the proper end and object of authority, and cannot subsist without it; and it is a liberty to that only which is good, just, and honest. This liberty you are to stand for, with the hazard not only of your goods, but of your lives, if need be. Whatsoever crosseth this, is not authority, but a distemper thereof.

John Winthrop

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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.

TESTIMONY

Satan's Chuck Wagon

Testimony by Michael Kelley

For many years after my conversion and baptism into the Church of Christ I have felt I was stuck in a spiritual doldrum, like being stuck in mud with four flat tires and slowly rusting away. I felt that the Lord was not interested with my efforts and had even rejected me to some extent. I was also getting sicker both physically and spiritually and feared that I might someday in the future fall into some forbidden path.

I then heard a sermon where the minister spoke of Abel's sacrifice and how it was acceptable unto the Lord, and how Cain's sacrifice was rejected:

Genesis 4:4-7 "...And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? **If thou doest well, shalt**

thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him."

...With determination and promptitude, we are to strike at the root of unholy inclinations, ridding ourselves of whatever would stimulate them.

When I heard this I felt that I was in Cain's shoes and if I did not correct myself that I would eventually follow the same path that he took.

This led me to start praying more earnestly and with real intent, and I began fasting from or removing worldly things from my life. I began studying in depth about miracles and healings, of which I felt were lacking in our church and in my life. I studied with all of my heart for at least a month with all of my spare time. I thought that I had known the scriptures fairly well since I had

read the Book of Mormon through four times and the Bible once and studied both countless times. Boy was I wrong! The things that I found just amazed me, not only about the miracles, but also the shortcomings in myself and in others of the church were opened up. This caused me to stumble with pride for awhile but I am learning to be patient with the faults of others as well as my own. I was so strengthened about what I had learned about healings that I was able to apply what I had learned and sought a healing of the many ills that I was afflicted with with absolutely no doubt, and I did receive a healing of those ills to a certain degree.

One byproduct of which I found during my studies had caused me to forsake many of my worldly pleasures. What caused me to do this was found in Matthew 5:29:

"...And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be

cast into hell."

I considered this scripture in times past in thinking about the many temptations that I often faced and wondered if God would actually require me to pluck out my eye. I then looked up "pluck" in Vine's and got a much better explanation: Pluck: Exairio...to take out, is translated "pluck out," of the eye as the occasion of sin, in Matt. 5:29; 18:9, **indicating that, with determination and promptitude, we are to strike at the root of unholy inclinations, ridding ourselves of whatever would stimulate them.** As I then checked what the Book of Mormon has to say about the same thing it verifies what the Vine's people said:

3 Nephi 5:78: "...Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart; for it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell."

I have in the past sought deliverance of those temptations through fasting and prayer and administrations and often rather than be delivered they grew worse. I had con-signed myself that this must be some sort of weakness that God has granted as was in Paul's case. Through my studies however, I knew that God does not

tempt man but rather delivers him from the temptations if we obey Him:

The reason why God did not deliver me of my many temptations of mind in times past was because I would just go right back out and fill my head with the same garbage that I was asking God to remove...

James 1:13-14: "...Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

Knowing this I strongly felt that God wanted me, regardless of the examples of others, to dispose of my television sets, (as well as many computer games, spy novels, and other similar things) so I disconnected the TVs and later I safely dismantled them. That very night I had a spiritual dream. In part, I saw in my dream some (no particular person was shown) who were too busy building houses to study God's word sufficiently to where God could give us greater blessings. Then I saw some who were turning up the fires of temptation (I inter-

preted this as not wearing sufficiently modest apparel). Finally, I saw a fast food vending truck driven by a laughing caricature of Satan pull up. Many of our people (again, I don't know who specifically) went up to eat off of Satan's chuck wagon. I thought "Man, I'm not going to eat off of Satan's truck, that will make you sick!" As I passed by behind the truck I saw that it was in actuality a disguised television station truck. Then God's voice said unto me, "There will be no further warn-ings."

That was the end of the dream. I did feel a good spirit after the dream and feel that at least to me it was a warning. One thing to note, I did not receive this witness until after my trial of faith, or rather efforts toward obedience. I sometimes miss the military and science shows and spy novels (and I miss all of the money I wasted on these things, too), but I missed the Lord's Spirit in my life more. The reason why God did not deliver me of my many temptations of mind in times past was because I would just go right back out and fill my head with the same garbage that I was asking God to remove; it just didn't make any sense. It's the same as if I abused my body with junk food, drugs or alcohol and asked God for a healing, yet continued going to bars and visiting with sinful friends—a healing would be in vain. God loves to heal us of our ills, but not to where it encourages us to

continue in sin.

Later I was inspired twice to revisit the revelations of old that were given to our church. These revelations and other scriptures that I have found added witness to what the Lord has given to me. Here are a few *partial* excerpts from these (emphasis and comments are mine M.K.).

Revelation through Apostle Burton through tongues, 1967: "...My Scripture is fast being hid from you by the **craftiness of Satan**, therefore again I say unto you, **give a more earnest heed to my laws and commandments** that thou canst commit them to memory and recall them in thy need in the days yet to come, or they will be lost to you forever, and **when thou hast given evidence of thy faith and sincerity by obedience** then shall I again speak and add to that Word that I have already given."

Revelation given through Apostle D. W. Housknecht, 1971: "...To you My people, saith the Spirit, is this counsel given. My word and counsel to you in many ways in time past has not been received with concern of a contrite heart on occasions when I have seen need to give strong admonition because of your **wandering from the path of righteousness into ways of the world and often on My Holy Day...**

"Many times My servants have winked at and closed their eyes to what, without teaching or speaking of the dangers of involvement in the

worldly life, many of My people consider innocent enjoyments yet are harmful to the soul. When vision is blurred, caused

"I do not find pleasure in seeing my people attending the theatres or engaging in activities such as consume time away from Christian endeavor and consumes his goods to draw pleasure therefrom and often spends his energy upon the things of the world to the end that he may satisfy his own pleasure and heaps upon his family such as brings problems that need not have been known."

by personal desire for pleasure, one cannot foresee what the pleasure may lead to, innocent as it may have been in the beginning.

"But many of My servants have been faithful in delivering the word of counsel that I have given, to which many of My children ask,— "What meaneth these men? And what meaneth God of those things that are declared to be of the world?"

"Will you not trust in mine admonitions and try the Spirit that declareth these things and

wait upon thy Heavenly Father as He alone forseeth what danger lies ahead if continued by habitual desire, that time in your lives is spent in ways that should be rather spent in activities of endeavor that are a blessing to souls and others who seek My ways who may be watching you in your works.

"Many may not remember, and some there be of your children and youthful ones who have not been taught, My word which declared that **I do not find pleasure in seeing my people attending the theatres or engaging in activities such as consume time away from Christian endeavor and consumes his goods to draw pleasure therefrom and often spends his energy upon the things of the world to the end that he may satisfy his own pleasure, and heaps upon his family such as brings problems that need not have been known.**

"The Spirit saith further that he who engageth in these things or **anything like unto them** (*Televisions, home theater systems, worldly novels, worldly events like rock concerts, etc. M.K.*), let him know that to this extent **he is in the world and the world claimeth him**. And let him know, furthermore, that from this hour, as never before, **he stands in a place of danger because in engaging himself in these things or any of them or goeth into places your Heavenly Master would not go, places himself into an atmosphere where, unless he have extreme care, he**

shall more fully go into the world.

“Let my saints heed this counsel, do not judge to answer too quickly, and the like as you have been counseled from time to time, that the hour has come when **he who would enter into the cause of Zion and into the immediate preparation necessary to be made on the part of the faithful, must of necessity exercise a strong willpower to withdraw from the worldly atmosphere.**

“If there be such among My people who are found in folly and whose families go unrestrained, whose children are outside the counsel of God, and which if the youth and children will not hear My voice nor yield to My persuasions, **let such families know that their own folly hath set their children at naught to My ways and a spiritually more pleasant life** (*Do we offer up our children as sacrifices unto our idol gods of pleasure that they could lose their salvation because of our lust for entertainment? M.K.*).

“Hear ye now saith the Spirit: Ye are charged and it shall require the utmost labor of every man if he will overcome, that he may enter in with his goods and talents and with his unified family unto the building up of my Zion; **that if he be hindered by the things I caution against, I say by my Spirit that he can not enter into or have part in Zion, he can not escape,** but shall become the more entangled and soon find his place where his Savior, the Son of God, will not come, nor have

part in.

I turn now, saith the Spirit, to the men upon whom sacred responsibility hath been placed. I say, that

“O my beloved children, come ye now out of the world; Come unto me, and declare not that this is an hard saying but weigh carefully My word and pray for the light and understanding and accept of this opportunity I set before you to stand with the redeemed in the Zion wherein is offered the security from the wrath that shall be poured out upon this sinful and perverse generation, such wrath as has not been known before My creation.”

among them are those who have **led my children to the theater wherein are evidenced the sins of Sodom and Tyre** (*found in many or most movies and TV shows, even news programs. M.K.*) and likewise **spoken only softly against the witchcrafts and mystics** (*Disney movies and shows like Aladdin, Matilda, Witch Mountain etc., as well as Wizard of Oz, Be-*

witched, I Dream of Jeanie, the Exorcist and the like, *ad infinitum. M.K.*) that some are and have sought after. Too many of my people think these practices are innocent but from the encouragement you have given by example, there are many who go elsewhere as well. By failing also to declare against such, they have wasted their means and substances by helping **fill the pockets of the sinful and greedy agents of Satan.** Some have even thought themselves justified in this being under their own free agency. They have their free agency, but let them know, and may all who hear this admonition and a heart to receive, know what is required of them at the final reckoning, and engage themselves in the more profitable ways of the Lord.

“My Spirit saith further to they whom are willing to yield; ‘O my beloved children, **come ye now out of the world;** Come unto me, and **declare not that this is an hard saying but weigh carefully My word and pray for the light and understanding and accept of this opportunity I set before you to stand with the redeemed in the Zion wherein is offered the security from the wrath that shall be poured out upon this sinful and perverse generation, such wrath as has not been known before My creation.**”

Revelation through John Carver, 1917: “...I said unto thee, must it be necessary for me to speak and to name these things? Yet there are those among thee who make it nec-

essary this morning. The counsel of my Spirit then is this: **He who finds contentment and pleasure, and from time to time waits upon the theater**; he who takes himself to the dance; he who engages himself at the card table (*gambling? M.K.*) ...he who spends his energy upon the things of the world and the goods thereof to the end that he may satisfy his own pleasure and heap upon his family; he who engages in these things, or any of them, let him know that to this extent he is in the world...**and if he be hampered by these things which my Spirit declareth today can have no part in Zion, he shall not escape, but he shall become so entangled that eventually he shall pass out and find his place elsewhere.**...I accept of those whose spirits are contrite, whose devotion is sincere. I rebuke those who are unworthy; and yet I do it that they might have light, that they might have joy, and have their reward in my Kingdom here, and eternal life in the world to come. Thus saith the Spirit."

Revelation through Apostle D. W. Housknecht, 1984: "...Rid yourselves of the overabundance of earthly things and the heavenly things ye seek shall be My pleasure to give...."

3 Nephi 9:79: "...*And then shall a cry go forth, Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch not that which is unclean; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord.*"

Revelations 18:4: "...*And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of*

I'm not advocating that all pleasures are evil, but that we should avoid those pleasures that are contaminated with worldliness and evil, and that those pleasures that are good should be had in moderation, and that we truly love God much more than those pleasures.

her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Ephesians 6:4: "...*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*"

Psalms 11:5: "...*The Lord trieth the righteous: but the wicked and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.* (Surely most TV shows, movies, and video games are filled with violence. M.K.)"

Isaiah 33:14-15: "...*The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*

He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil..."

Matthew 6:19,21-24: "...*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.... For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness... Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (What's the first things thieves go after...jewelry, TVs, VCRs and stereos. M.K.)"*

Romans 1:22, 26, 29-32: "...*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.... For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature.... Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the*

same, but have pleasure in them that do them. (Surely these are common TV and movie themes. M.K.)”

2 Timothy 3:1-2,4-5: “...*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves...lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof....*”

Moroni 7:10,15: “...*Wherefore, all things which are good, cometh of God; and that which is evil, cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually. ...but whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil....*”

Matthew 18:6, 9-10: “...*But whoso shall offend* (cause to stumble. Aramaic version M.K.) *one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee.... Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones... (do we cause our children to stumble? M.K.).*”

Luke 8:14: “...*And that which fell among thorns are they, which,*

when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.”

Are there good things to watch on TV? Yes, perhaps a few things, though often even the “good” shows are usually tainted with worldliness somehow and you are compelled to sample all of the grossly wicked shows and attitudes by the commercials that you are forced to sit through. Do the “good” shows promote belief in God’s Son, Jesus Christ, and His righteousness? Rarely, and if so, then often with false doctrines. Even the devil quoted scriptures to Jesus when he was tempting him. I’m not advocating that all pleasures are evil, but that we should avoid those pleasures that are contaminated with worldliness and evil, and that those pleasures that are good should be had in moderation, and that we truly love God much more than those pleasures. Would we rather feast from God’s table and have His blessings, or would we rather eat of the junk food from Satan’s truck and have his sicknesses and troubles?

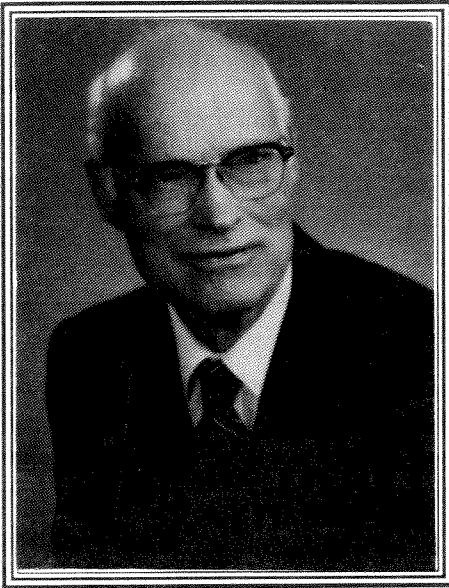
Since I’ve rid myself of the many worldly things I’ve seen many positive changes in my life. Recently, I’ve had several spiritual dreams which have helped guide me through some of the trials that our local has been going through. I’ve already noticed an improvement

in the behavior of our son; there is greater peace in my home. Even my attitudes are changing; I find it easier to love and forgive others, rather than wanting to blow away the guy that cuts me off in traffic. I have now finally found the time to go visit the sick and discouraged. I’ve been making leather paintings of the life of Jesus that people have been touched by. I’ve been writing articles for the Church papers which I haven’t done for years. I’ve asked God to help me replace the things I have removed from my life and He has abundantly supplied and will continue to do so if I remain faithful and diligent. Like Abel, is God first in our life, that He gets the best of our offering? Or are we like Cain, offering only what is left over of our hearts and time after we have filled ourselves with the pleasures of the world? Do I write these things to shame you? I hope not, but rather, I reach out in love to lift you out of the seductive snare that Satan has craftily entrapped us in. Finally:

Hebrews 11:24-26: “...*By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of pharaoh’s daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*”

DEVELOPING A ZIONIC ATTITUDE

Our Reasonable Service To God



By Apostle Marvin E. Ely

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" Romans 12:1. "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" Galations 5:24-25.

We should present our bodies to God in a holy manner and do those things that are acceptable unto Him. This would show our willingness to keep God's commandments and apply them to our lives. If we have entered in by the way we should have put off the flesh with its

affections and lusts. We should walk in the Spirit and have the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. If we live in the Spirit we must also walk in the Spirit. By walking in the Spirit we shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

"For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness" Romans 8:5-10.

In I Peter 3:12-17 we can read where the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and His ears are open unto their prayers, but the Lord is against them that do evil. If we suffer for righteousness' sake we

If we have entered in by the way we should have put off the flesh with its affections and lusts. We should walk in the Spirit and have the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

should not be distressed nor afraid of those who would cause us to suffer. Instead, we should sanctify the Lord God in our hearts and be ready always to give an answer to every man of the hope that is contained in us. We should also have a good conscience before God at all times. It is better to suffer for well doing than for evil doing.

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt, to every man the measure of faith" Romans 12:2-3.

Every person is dealt the measure of faith, but we each must work on our faith in order that it may grow, for the hope we have comes because of our faith. Also, we must not conform to the ways of the world. This is one of the great problems of the day in which we are living. Following the ways of the world can only lead to heartache and sorrow. Instead, we must be transformed from the ways and lusts of the world to the ways of God and Christ. We must prove what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God. The will of God is that we repent and follow Jesus.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus, save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father? And the Father saith, Repent ye, repent ye, and be baptized in the name of my beloved Son. And also, the voice of the Son came unto me, saying, He that is baptized in my name, to him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto me; wherefore, follow me, and do the things which ye have seen me do. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I know that if ye shall follow the Son with full purpose of heart, acting no hypocrisy and no deception before God, but with real intent, repenting of your sins, witnessing unto the Father that ye are willing to take upon you the name of Christ, by baptism: yea, by following your Lord and Savior down into the water, according to his word; behold, then shall ye receive the Holy Ghost..." 2 Nephi 13:13-16.

Even though we enter in by the way—which is repentance and baptism—all is not done, for it is the word of Christ which brings us to desire baptism. After this we must press for-

If we suffer for righteousness' sake we should not be distressed nor afraid of those who would cause us to suffer. ... We should also have a good conscience before God at all times. **It is better to suffer for well doing than for evil doing.**

ward with a steadfastness in Christ, having hope and a love of God and of all men. Also, we are commanded to feast upon the word of Christ and endure to the end. If we do this we shall have the promise of eternal life. (See 2 Nephi 13:24-30.) Our reasonable service to God is to feast upon the words of Christ, for the words of Christ will tell us all things what we should do. (See 2 Nephi 14:2.)

In Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said: *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find*

rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The above words of Jesus show what is expected of us. We are commanded to take His yoke upon us and learn of Him. This means to walk in the manner that Jesus walked and to take time to learn about Jesus. He was meek and lowly in heart, and He expects us to also be meek and lowly in heart. If we do this we are promised rest for our souls. In a world that is full of turmoil and unrest, this indeed is a beautiful promise.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" 1 John 2:15-17.

The above scripture supports that we should not conform to the ways of this world. Instead we must prove what is acceptable unto God.

"Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth:)

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” Ephesians 5:6-11.

We must all search the scriptures diligently in the light of Christ that we may know good from evil.

The Ephesian people were once those who believed in idols and worshipped other gods. They were converted unto Jesus Christ and Paul admonished them to prove what was acceptable unto the Lord. Also, they were told to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Jesus Christ is the light of this world and if we follow Him we shall not walk in darkness but shall have the light of life (see John 8:12). By walking in this light we will be able to reject that which is evil.

“For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that they may know good from evil; wherefore I shew unto you the way to judge: for everything which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; Wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge, it is of God; but whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny

him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; For after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no not one; neither doth his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him. ... Wherefore I beseech of you, brethren, that ye should search diligently in the light of Christ, that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ” Moroni 7:14-16, 18.

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” John 5:39. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” 2 Timothy 2:15. Paul said the following to Timothy: “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:14-15.

We must all search the scriptures diligently in the light of Christ that we may know good from evil. The power of the devil must not be underestimated for he is a master of deception. We must hearken unto the spirit that teaches a man to pray. By doing this we can have help from Christ in resisting the power of the devil.

“For if ye would hearken unto the spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray: for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him

The power of the devil must not be underestimated for he is a master of deception.

that he must not pray. But behold I say unto you, that ye must pray always, and not faint: that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that he will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul” 2 Nephi 14:11-12.

“Yea, humble yourselves, and continue in prayer unto him; cry unto him when ye are in your fields; yea, over all your flocks; cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, mid-day, and evening; yea, cry unto him against the power of your enemies; yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness. ... Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in prayer unto him continually for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you” Alma 16:219, 222.

It is important that we become a very humble people be-

fore the Lord. A synonym of humble is *meek*, and also *lowly*. Jesus was meek and lowly in heart and He expects us to also

We are to cast all our care on God for He cares for us and is interested in the welfare of each one of us. **He is a loving Father who loved us enough to give His only begotten Son.**

be meek and lowly in heart. Therefore, it is important that we stress humility in each of our lives.

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" 1 Peter 5:6-9.

We are to cast all our care on God for He cares for us and is interested in the welfare of each one of us. He is a loving Father who loved us enough to give His only begotten Son. Likewise He expects us to have love for one another. This love must be from our hearts.

"Let love be without dissimulation (pretense M.E.E.). Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints: given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" Romans 12:9-15.

The above scripture points to additional items that should be a part of our reasonable service to God. God expects us to be kindly affectioned one to another. Other scriptures also reference the importance of kindness in each of our lives. We should also become a people with patience in our lives. There is also hope through Jesus Christ and the power of His resurrection to be raised unto life eternal.

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" Romans 8:1. "Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls" Jeremiah 6:16.

Walking in the old paths can bring peace and rest to our souls. Our reasonable service is

to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. Our Heavenly Father

Our reasonable service is to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.

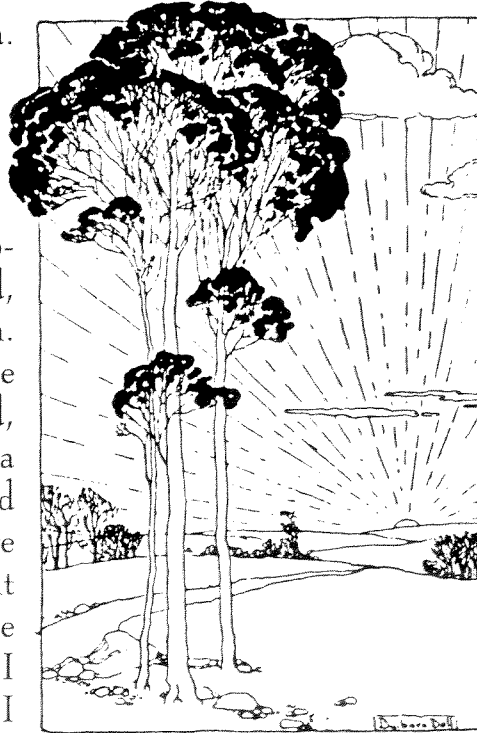
cares for each one of us; therefore, we each should grow in our personal righteousness.

PATHLIGHTS

Testimony

This is my testimony of how God has told me I am to be baptized. For the last couple of months, I have been singing songs from memory before my evening prayer. A couple of weeks ago, I was singing *In the Garden*, and all of a sudden I was overcome with an understanding that I was to be baptized and I started crying. So that Sunday I told Mom that I would like to be baptized when we went to Arizona. Well, Wednesday, April 2nd, I asked Mom if it would be all right if I got baptized during Conference, and at the same time Dad was thinking about me being baptized. Then Thursday, April 3rd, Mom and I were in the kitchen. She was braiding my hair and she told me that she had not told Dad, and we were deciding to keep it a secret and surprise him, when Dad came into the house and we were quiet. He said that when we went to Arizona it would be a good time to be baptized. And Mom and I started laughing and Dad asked if I had already been thinking about it and I said that I was getting baptized on Sunday and he said "Really?" Then this morning my Aunt Barb said that she had been wondering who was getting baptized and thought it might be one of us kids.

Mandy Grim



A Smile

A smile costs nothing, but gives much. It enriches those who receive, without making poorer those who give. It takes a moment, but the memory of it sometimes lasts forever. None is so rich or mighty that he can get along without it, and none is so poor but that he can be made rich by it. A smile creates happiness in the home, fosters good will in business, and is the countersign of friendship. It brings rest to the weary, cheer to the discouraged, sunshine to the sad, and it is nature's best antidote for trouble. Yet it cannot be bought, begged, borrowed, or stolen, for it is something that is of no value to anyone until it is given away. Some people are too tired to give you a smile. Give them one of yours, as none needs a smile so much as he who has no more to give.

—Author Unknown

Lessons in a Dream

I would like to share with you a dream I had and some lessons that were brought to mind.

■ The Dream

I was backing a pickup down a narrow dirt road. The back of the pickup was full of something so that I could not see out of the back window. The only way I could see to back up was through the side view mirror. I was backing fine until I came upon another pickup that had stopped in the middle of the road. The stopped truck was facing the same way my truck was so that I was backing up to the front of it. From what I could see nobody was in the other pickup. As I got closer to the stopped truck, I started looking for a way to get around it. I don't know why, but it seemed important for me to get wherever I was going. There was a deep ditch on my side of the road, but the terrain looked somewhat flat from what I could see out the passenger side window. Backing up slowly, I started to go around the stopped truck on its passenger side. When the back of my truck got even with the front of the stopped truck, the motor stalled. I tried starting it, but it would not start. I remember praying that my truck would start. The motor turned over, but just would not start. Frustrated, I got out of the pickup and walked around in back of it. There, directly behind my truck was one of my brothers in Christ. He was working under the

hood of a riding lawn mower and did not hear or see me coming. My heart went up to my throat as I thought about what might have happened if my truck would have started. When I told my brother what happened, he thanked the Lord for keeping him safe. I also thanked the Lord for not allowing my truck to start. We worked on the mower together and fixed it. He drove it up a ramp into the back of his pickup. I jumped back into my truck and it started right up.

■ The Lesson

Place your trust in the Lord. Sometimes it may seem as though our prayers are not being answered. When my truck would not start, I felt like my prayers were not being answered. The fact is, I could not see where I was going. I had a limited view. God knows and sees everything. He wants what is best for us. That is why it is important for us in our prayers to ask that God's will be done. Sometimes we receive an instant answer, but other times the answer may be a long time in coming. There are times when our prayers get answered in ways that we do not expect. My prayer was answered, but not when I thought it should be. My pickup started, but not until I was able to avoid tragedy and was able to help my brother. It's about having faith, patience, and trust in the Lord.

"Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created all things, both in heaven and in earth;

"Believe that he hath all wisdom, and all power, both in heaven and in earth;

"Believe that man doth not comprehend all things which the Lord can comprehend" Mosiah 2:13-15.

"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

"But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

"Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

"And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose" Romans 8:24-28.

Elder Merlin Eddy

FREEDOM

LIBERTY AND UNION NOW AND FOREVER

I profess, sir, in my career hitherto, to have kept steadily in view the prosperity and honor of the whole country, and the preservation of our federal union. It is to that union we owe our safety at home, and our consideration and dignity abroad. It is to that union that we are chiefly indebted for whatever makes us most proud of our country. That union we reached only by the discipline of our virtues in the severe school of adversity. It had its origin in the necessities of disordered finance, prostrate commerce, and ruined credit. Under its benign influences these great interests immediately awoke, as from the dead, and sprang forth with newness of life. Every year of its duration has teemed with fresh proofs of its utility and its blessings; and although our territory has stretched out wider and wider, and our population spread farther and farther, they have not outrun its protection or its benefits. It has been to us all a copious fountain of national, social, and personal happiness.

I have not allowed myself, sir, to look beyond the union, to see what might lie hidden in the dark recesses behind. I have not coolly weighed the chances of preserving liberty, when the bonds that unite us together

shall be broken asunder. I have not accustomed myself to hang over the precipice of disunion, to see whether, with my short sight, I can fathom the depth of the abyss below; nor could I regard him as a safe counselor in the affairs of this government, whose thoughts should be mainly bent on considering, not how the union should be preserved, but how tolerable might be the condition of the people, when it shall be broken up and destroyed.

While the union lasts, we have high, exciting, gratifying prospects spread out before us, for us and our children. Beyond that, I seek not to penetrate the veil. God grant that in my day, at least, that curtain may not rise. God grant that on my vision never may be opened what lies behind. When my eyes shall be turned to behold for the last time the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious union; on states dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fraternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance, rather, behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming

in their original lustre; not a stripe erased or polluted, not a single star obscured,—bearing for its motto, no such miserable interrogatory as, What is all this worth? nor those other words of delusion and folly: Liberty first, and union afterwards; but everywhere, spread all over in charters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart,—Liberty *and* union, now and forever, one and inseparable!

—Daniel Webster

Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death.

—Speech in the Virginia Convention 1775, Patrick Henry

God grants liberty only to those who love it, and are always ready to guard and defend it.

—Daniel Webster

PURPOSE OF THE 1997 SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

Purpose of the 1997 Solemn Assembly and This Conference Year

In past years the importance of humbling ourselves before the Lord has been stressed. We feel that again the importance of humility should be emphasized. In Helaman 2:31 we can read where members of the church were persecuted by their own brethren: *"Nevertheless, they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ..."* We are also reminded that our forefathers humbled themselves before the Lord, and the power of the Lord was with them. In like manner the Lord can be with us in greater power if we humble ourselves sufficiently.

We should have mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering in each of our lives. It is important that we forbear, or bear with one another, as well as forgive one another (see Colossians 3:12-13). *"And above all these things put on charity which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts..."* Colossians 3:14-15. *"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"* Ephesians 4:32.

In every aspect of the Lord's work there is the need for the presence of the Holy Ghost. We must pray that the Lord will

call laborers into His harvest and that the promise of the Lord will be with them: *"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following"* Mark 16:20. *"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will"* Hebrews 2:4.

The following is a list of some specific needs for which we should pray:

- 1. Pray for the continuing conference year, that the Lord's will might be accomplished and that unity might prevail in our midst.**
- 2. Pray for a greater outpouring of the love of God in our hearts. (Moroni 7:52-53)**
- 3. Pray for greater humility in our lives. (Mosiah 1:119-120)**
- 4. Pray to God for forgiveness of our sins, and that the Lord would purify and sanctify our hearts so that we can accomplish His will.**
- 5. Pray for the ministry that they might be faithful in their responsibilities.**
- 6. Pray for the young fami-**

lies and the whole family structure that we might have strong families who can endure the stress of the world and the problems of life.

- 7. Pray for the responsibility of parents to God and to their children. (Ephesians 6:4 and Mosiah 2:25-27)**
- 8. Pray for our little children and our young people that they might have the strength to resist the temptations of the world.**
- 9. Pray for the duties of our youth toward God and their parents. (Ephesians 6:1-2)**
- 10. Pray for the endurance of faith and Christian unity in service to our God. (Matthew 24:13; Colossians 3:12-15; 1 Corinthians 15:58)**



CONFERENCE REPORT

"Good morning, brothers and sisters. It's time to start our Solemn Assembly." Apostle Alvin Moser welcomed us in the name of Jesus Christ to the 1997 Solemn Assembly on Friday morning, April 5; and in the name of Christ we continued to meet in prayer, fasting and song for two days.

At each service, the purpose of the 1997 Solemn Assembly was read. Ten specific needs were: for the conference, that the Lord's will would be accomplished and unity prevail; for a greater outpouring of the love of God in our hearts; for greater humility in our lives; for forgiveness of our sins, that our hearts would be purified; for the ministry that they would be faithful in their responsibilities; for the families to be strong enough to endure the stress of the world; for the responsibility of parents to God and their children; for our little children and young people to have strength to resist the temptations of the world; for the duties of our youth toward God and their parents; and for the endurance of faith and Christian unity in service to God.

At Friday's 9:00 a.m. service, Apostle Jay Moser reminded us that the brother of Jared was chastised by the Lord for three hours because he'd forgotten to call upon the name of the Lord. He read Isaiah 55, where we were reminded that though the Lord will not always strive with man, he will "abundantly pardon." "Something is required of us," Brother Moser admonished. "We must desire, hunger, thirst after him. He has shown us His desires. We must show Him ours, through prayer and action. Come to the Lord with an urgency." During the meeting, we were informed that our Sister Edna Smith had fallen and had been taken to the hospital. We knelt in prayer for her immediate needs.

At the 2:00 meeting, Apostle Marvin Ely asked us if "the love of God was ruling in our

hearts." He admonished us that we should yield our hearts to God and pray for charity to be in our lives. Brother Ely also read Helaman 2:31, where the people fasted and prayed often, and became "stronger in their humility," and firmer in the faith of Christ.

Apostle Don McIndoo was in charge of the Solemn Assembly service that evening. He reminded us that at Gethsemane, Jesus warned Peter, James and John to "Watch and pray; that ye enter not into temptation." Brother McIndoo then read from 3 Nephi 9 about Jesus directing his disciples in this land to pray. Jesus went to pray alone and when He returned to them, they were still praying, "not multiplying many words, for it was given unto them what they should pray, and they were filled with desire." "Pray on," He told them.

The second day of Solemn Assembly was ushered in by Apostle Roland Sarratt. In the middle of the service Apostle Sarratt chastised us: "I have a concern in my heart. So few have prayed. Did we come here to pray today? We have a purpose here. I fear He will not be pleased with this." Following these words, God's spirit moved throughout the people.

Apostle Smith Brickhouse presided over the closing service of Solemn Assembly. He encouraged the youth to participate. "He invites us this day to come to Him in prayer and supplication, to humble ourselves." After several seasons of prayer and song the 1997 Solemn Assembly ended. For those who had attended with intent of humbling themselves and drawing closer to God in preparation for conference the days were spiritually rewarding.

That evening, the church filled to overflowing as a musical presentation, *The Holy Bible*, was given. For fourteen months, nine men and one young lady had practiced under the direction of Sister Martha Bruner to pre-

sent the hour-long program to the conference and visitors. The twenty-three songs told stories from the Old and New Testaments, along with the invitation to believe in Christ. The CARE Group provided a soup supper afterwards.

Sunday morning, April 6, the church met to partake of the sacrament and to share in prayer, song and testimony. Apostles Smith Brickhouse and Alvin Moser presided over the service.

Following the serving of sacrament, Apostle Brickhouse requested names of people who were in need of prayers. There were so many needs, physical and spiritual, that our hearts were moved in compassion and drawn out in prayer.

Following the season of prayer, baby Jonathan Thomas Geier, son of Cory and Kayla Geier, was blessed by Elder Bill Zabriski and Apostle Smith Brickhouse.

Testimonies followed. This is the hardest part of a conference report to write, because there were many that I wish I had space to repeat. You would be strengthened by them. They provoked our thoughts, strengthened our faith, encouraged us to endure to the end. There were confessions, requests, admonitions, and testimonies of miracles.

After several testimonies, Apostle Brickhouse called for another season of prayer so that we might humble ourselves further and pray that there would be no divisions among us. More testimonies followed.

Apostle Don McIndoo preached during the 3:30 p.m. service. Before he spoke, though, a choir made up of East Local/Temple Lot members sang a medley of songs. *Tell me the story of Jesus* was followed by a song about the Beatitudes and then charity. This beautiful ministry of music drew our minds to the message which followed. This was April 6, the

167th anniversary of the restoration of the Church of Christ. Apostle McIndoo took us from the establishment of the church by Jesus in Palestine and America, through the apostasy and Restoration, up to the present day mission of the church.

In Palestine, Christ left the church in order. The ministry was set and had received a commission to teach and baptize. They'd received the Holy Ghost, and the gifts of the Spirit were placed in the church. Then, Brother McIndoo said, when Jesus visited America "the glorious, resurrected Christ... established among them that same kingdom. He established that same church. He placed among them that same ministry, and He taught them the same beautiful gospel. What else would we expect from an unchangeable God?"

Christ told the people in America that he had "other sheep" that were not of their fold or the fold in Palestine. Apostle McIndoo believes that someday scientists will uncover records of an Israelite civilization far removed from their homeland or America. In those records, he believes will be found that same unchangeable gospel that we have recorded in the Bible and Book of Mormon.

Concerning the apostasy of the church, Brother McIndoo read not only prophecies warning of the "falling away" (Acts 20:29-31, II Thessalonians 2), but also those that gave promise of the restoration of the kingdom of God. (Daniel 2, Revelations 14).

The church was restored at the peak of a "knowledge explosion" in 1830. Apostle McIndoo then asked and answered three questions: 1. What pattern was the restored church to follow? The answer was revealed through the Urim and Thummim. "I will establish my church which was like unto the church that was taught by my disciples in the days of old." 2. Where can this pattern be found? Brother McIndoo said, "Again the Lord revealed the answer. 'Rely upon the things which are written. In them are all things written concerning my church, my gospel and my rock.'" 3. In which things that are written? In June 1829, the Lord revealed, "Teach the scriptures that are in the Bible and in the Book of Mormon in the which is the fullness of my gospel."

He pointed out that after a short period of time the infant church began to stray from this simple plan in organization and points of doctrine. After Joseph Smith's death, the church was thrown into confusion. "A few simple congregations in Illinois and Indiana remained faithful to their commitment to the church as they knew it." They began a difficult, lengthy odyssey, steadily retracing their steps back to the original foundation of 1830. "We find ourselves somewhere on the road back." He reminded us that we should keep in our minds the church restored in 1830, recommitting ourselves to that pattern.

Brother McIndoo concluded his sermon in a challenge to us. "God has made us responsible for the house of Israel. That is to be the great work of the latter day. Zion is linked together with these people. Begin with the remnant of Israel in this land, where the Lord has placed us. Are you laboring with your might, with all the energy of your heart, mind and soul, willing to dedicate time and resources to the Lord? The work is tremendous."

A baptismal service followed the preaching. Evangelist Hubert Yates challenged the three candidates to remember that baptism was the starting block of the race, and that they would need to run the race of righteousness all the way to the end of their lives. He admonished them to walk in the standard that Jesus Christ had put before them. First, Mandy Grim was baptized by Evangelist Yates. Justin Zabriski and his grandfather, Johnny Harris, were then baptized by Elder Bill Zabriski. Mandy received the Holy Ghost through laying on of hands by Evangelist Yates and Apostle Alvin Moser. Justin was confirmed by Brother Yates and his grandfather, Elder Bill Zabriski, and Brother Harris received the laying on of hands from Elders Bill Zabriski and Hubert Yates. The Hand of Fellowship was extended to all three members. It was a beautiful ending to a full and rich day.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of conference began with prayer services. Each service seemed to go quickly, being filled with prayers, songs and testimonies.

On Monday, April 7, Evangelist Marvin

Case preached, opening with the scriptures in II Nephi 9: 125-127 which declare that "there shall be a root of Jesse, which stands as an ensign" to which the Gentiles shall seek. Brother Case then gave scriptural references showing Jesus Christ as that ensign and example. He is "our banner, our standard of excellence. There is no life without him."

Brother Case pointed out that when we read about the gospel being taken from the Gentiles if they reject it, some assume that God is going to take it by force. "But that's not what we're seeing happen today," he suggested. "We're seeing it taken from them by their own choice. They're turning aside and seeking another way, rejecting the very word of God that would lead them to Jesus Christ who would save their souls."

He reminded us that though we consider Christ's ultimate sacrifice to have been His dying on the cross, that "that was only the climax of His sacrifice. He spent thirty-three years making that sacrifice, suffering every temptation."

Speaking of temptation, Brother Case warned us that all of us are passing through trials which force us to decide, like Joshua "whom we will serve this day." "You can lean on others all you want," he said, "but there will come a day when all by yourselves you'll have to decide. Sometimes in the face of antagonism, you'll have to decide." He told us that when he first became excited about the gospel, he became judgmental. He had to learn to have compassion towards others when he saw their weaknesses, and he began to look at his own life more carefully. He admonished us to do the same. "When you look in the glass, the mirror of life, to see yourselves... if you see a righteous person, you're seeing through clouded eyes. If you see a frail human being, struggling to keep God's commandments, having to beg for forgiveness from sins, large or small, then you're probably seeing it like it is." Then he read from Ether 5, that the Lord will show men their weaknesses, and that he has given men weaknesses so that they may be humble and "if they humble themselves before me, and have faith in me, then will I make weak things become strong unto them."

Brother Case concluded his message admonishing us to put on charity. He read about the peaceful civilization in this land after Christ's visit. "Why was that able to happen? They must have passed a bunch of rules, right? Must of had policemen, right? No, that wasn't what did it. We are told to bring to Christ that offering of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Because the law of Christ is no longer a thing that you see by the offering of sacrifices on an alter or how much time you spend in church. It is now a thing of honor of the heart. . . our attitudes, motivations." He reminded us that the love of God dwelt in the hearts of the people at that time, and that if we love Christ, we will keep His commandments.

Following Elder Case's sermon, there was a special season of prayer for Sister Nanette Smith of Independence. Test results that day had revealed that she had scoliosis and that surgery might be necessary.

Apostle Smith Brickhouse preached on Tuesday, April 8. He used a series of hymns to emphasize his message. *We've a Story to Tell to the Nations*, Hymn 105, was first. "We've got a miraculous Heavenly Father who loves us," Brother Brickhouse said, "who lived and died that we might have eternal life." He challenged us to be prepared, steadfast, and to be alert to the opportunities that will be placed before us to share our testimony or to answer questions. "We've got to have answers to explain the hope that is within us."

Hymn 133, *Send Me forth, O Blessed Master*, "I will take the blessed light of the gospel there," brought our minds to the mission before us. Brother Brickhouse reminded us that "We're sent forth, each one of us, to the world as an example of Jesus Christ. That's our responsibility because we're members of the body of Jesus Christ." He pointed out that we don't always have to travel far to share our testimony. We can witness at school, in homes, and to neighbors. We should pray for the opportunity to share the hope we have.

Rise up, O Men of God, "...give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of Kings," Hymn 119, Brother Brickhouse pointed out, reminds us to overcome our trials and temptations through the strength and

nourishment of the Lord. He reminded us to rely on the Holy Spirit for discernment, direction, recall, and teaching.

After asking us if we believed the gospel had been restored, he explained that restored meant "to make something look like it did originally." He told us that we are given the pattern of the original church in the scriptures. Brother Brickhouse went on to explain that some believe in the restoration, but haven't followed the pattern. He encouraged us to take the church to them in love, ready and able to explain the differences. "We need to set aside personal agendas and ideas and yield to what the scriptures tell us we should be doing and what we should be presenting.

He concluded by telling us to encourage isolated members and pray that God will send pastors to the isolated missions meeting in homes. He appealed to the youth of the church to take advantage of the camps and reunions, and to be strong in their testimonies.

Though conference business was finished on Tuesday, Wednesday was a full day with morning prayer service and afternoon and evening preaching. Apostle William Sheldon preached in the afternoon about the second coming of Jesus Christ. In Revelations 19, John prophesied of the marriage of the lamb or the coming of Christ, that his bride (the church) made herself ready, "arrayed in fine linen, clean and white, for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints."

Brother Sheldon explained that prior to Christ's coming in great power and glory, he will come as a thief in the night. "For those who are not looking for his coming, for those who are wasting the days of their probation and are not given to serious consideration in their life style and conversations. . . they shall be brought into account at the last days. If a person is careless concerning his spiritual conduct and attitude, the coming of the Lord is as a thief that takes away from him that which he might otherwise receive if he'd turned his heart, his life unto God. . . eternal life."

He proposed that the scriptures refer to four times Christ will make himself manifest on the earth. Brother Sheldon referred to Mark 13:35-37, where Jesus says to watch "for

ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning. . ." He preceded through scripture to show that it was not one or the other of those times, but each.

Brother Sheldon said the "marriage of the lamb" would be a happy time for the saints of God, a spiritual union between the church and Jesus. He referred to 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. "That's when the 'marriage' takes place. We're privileged to be part of the body referenced as the body of Christ. . . and we have the prospect ahead of us, if we will live for it, that we'll be caught up together with the righteous dead to meet the Christ . . . and to have part in the great marriage with the lamb, to later come down here upon this earth to dwell in the New Jerusalem, Zion, where the Lord will spare his people while His judgments are upon the nations of the earth."

In speaking of the temple the Lord shall come to, Brother Sheldon said, "I believe it with all my heart. . . There's to be a literal temple built to which the Lord shall come, shall reveal Himself in the latter days, and I am persuaded that that coming of Jesus Christ to this temple will be in fulfillment of the event, of a great wedding feast. . . after the wedding."

Brother Sheldon concluded with an admonition: "We have things that people are involved in today that are far from Godliness. We have the acceptance of things within the temples of our bodies that are not pleasing to God: tobacco, alcohol of any sort, the abiding in the spirit of adultery or fornication. . . We must look into the teachings of Jesus, and see what is offensive to God and make our eye single to God through Jesus Christ."

Bishop Alvin Harris preached the last sermon of conference on Wednesday night. He summarized the four sermons that had preceded his, emphasizing some key truths. After reading Joshua's words "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve," Brother Harris said, "I think that's very basic to our service to Jesus Christ, that we all get the opportunity to choose". He continued by reading II Nephi 1:120 pointing out that all men are free to choose liberty and eternal life or to choose captivity and death.

In the past, people have fought for the freedom to choose. "But with all those freedoms and that philosophy and our God-given right, there is a caution," Brother Harris said. "The idea is a basic principle of our democracy. It's called "freedom with restraint," and you have to have it. You cannot have absolute freedom. You cannot do whatever you want to do anytime your want to do it, because you'll tread on other people's rights and become overbearing. Under God's law we also have freedom with restraint, and we should not use our freedom as an occasion to persecute someone else or to do them harm. We have to love our neighbor as ourselves."

Concerning our mission, Brother Harris read Matthew 28:19, where the disciples were

told to teach all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to follow the commandments. "It's ours and the church's (commission)." Also, Brother Harris added, the second part of that commission is the "pure religion" James spoke of: "to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

He warned us that Satan has lures intended for each of us to lead us away. "Not everyone has the same Achilles heal. Not all our kids have the same problems. It will take a different thing to lure each one of them. We have to be watchmen. We have to be vigilant. We have to be alert."

Brother Harris went on to say that he advocated "our children marrying only church

kids. If you go to the outside world, let that person be converted before you unite."

He concluded by going through the verses in Romans 12, encouraging us to take stands. God's promises are faithful and true. "The job is for *our* promise to be faithful and true. That's our commission. We know our mission. We know how to do it. Let us move forward in the name of Jesus Christ." With that challenge, the 1997 Conference ended.

Debbie Vogel

For a taped copy of a Conference sermon contact Ron Temple, 5621 Logan Road, Kansas City, MO 64136.

NEWS

COLLINS, MISSOURI

Our garden is planted, the weeds are up and looking menacing, the rocks are holding their own and aggravating the tiller—whenever it's dry enough to rumble between the rows, but I think the vegetables will make it if we can send enough man-power out to rescue them. My garden makes me think of my life—with its rocks and weeds and poor weather from time to time. I'm grateful that I am able to attend church every week to help me gain strength to fight against those things. How are your gardens growing??

Apostles Don McIndoo and Jay Moser visited here at Collins after Conference was over, along with Tamara Grim and her four children. It was such a pleasure to have them come and also get a little extra time to visit.

Eight year old Justen Cook fell from a slide, while at a tractor pull, and broke his right elbow about two weeks before school was out. He had to have two pins put in it to secure the bones back in place. He's doing very well and will be back to normal in no time. We're all grateful that he only broke his arm and that it will mend.

Jack and Betty Martin have been to Okla-

homa to attend their grandson's, Greg Elwell, high school graduation. Greg is the son of Laura Mae and M.G. Elwell. While there, they also enjoyed visiting with their oldest son, Mike and wife, Sherry, their children and grandchildren as well. Betty shared her pictures of their mini-reunion with me. Oh, and congratulations Greg, we're proud of you!

Wesley Harrison met the ground rather abruptly when he was mounting his green-broke horse the other day. He didn't let that stop him from a good ride, though. Later on he discovered a good sized knot where, evidently, he had hit the saddle horn. His dad, Roma, took him to Springfield to the hospital, but they never went inside, but decided that prayer would be the most beneficial at the time. I understand Wes is fine now and I appreciate his faith.

We enjoyed another family night pot-luck supper last Saturday evening. Good food, good friends, good conversation, good fun! We appreciate the opportunity to get together and enjoy one another. Come again!

I guess that's all in the way of news. I'll leave you with some sermon quotes to think on.

- ◆ *Never lose sight of why we're here.*
- ◆ *Man, with all the wisdom and ability he has,*

can not create the heavens and the earth.

- ◆ *If we don't offend God, we won't offend one another.*
- ◆ *Who does "bale" hurt?*
- ◆ *We have a duty to teach our children—then give them the freedom to live what they've learned.*
- ◆ *We can't always reprimand someone for their actions, but we can reward them for the good that they do.*

I thank God for all these little things I can't explain,—but I sure do appreciate them.

*Your reporter,
Czerna Kauffman*

NEWS

EAST INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

The speakers of the month were Brothers Larry Beem, William Sheldon, Samuel Gould, Michael McGhee and Ron Temple. I can only report briefly, so of course the highlights of the sermons as they were to me is what you get.

Jesus said, when asked what the greatest commandment is (Matthew 22:37), "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." What does loving our neighbor mean? Luke 10:30-37, gives Christ's example. We are to do likewise to all who need in our pathway of life. We don't need to wait for a specific commandment; Christ gave His commands to be obeyed by our own free will. We need to understand, according to Matthew 25:34-46, that what we do or do not do in service to the least among our fellowmen, it is as to Christ himself. In Mosiah 1:48-49, King Benjamin affirms this truth; this service to others involves charity, that pure love of Christ for all (Moroni 7:49-53).

There is no real hope for the children of men except it be on the basis of righteousness, through faith in Jesus Christ and the Father. Men are that they might have joy. This was God's intent, but it can only be in being moved upon by the Spirit of God, in obeying His commandments, and continuing on to become like Him.

In honor of Mother's Day, a few thoughts from Proverbs 12: A virtuous woman is far above rubies, her husband safely trusts in her, she will do him good. She stretches out her hands to the poor and needy. From her mouth comes wisdom and kindness. Her children call her blessed, her husband also. A woman that feareth the Lord shall be praised.

Matthew 22:37-40: This scripture says

all rests on how we love God and our neighbor. In order to love God we must love our neighbor too. 2 Nephi 13:21-32 tells us that except one endure to the end in following the example of the Son of God, he cannot be saved. Therefore, we must press forward with a love for God and all men. This is the way, and there is no other way. This is the doctrine of Christ.

Jacob 2:21-28: Listen to the words of His commands, let not pride destroy your souls, think of your brethren like unto yourselves, be free with your substance, before you seek for riches seek the Kingdom of God. Verse 20: Oh that He would rid you of this iniquity, of thinking oneself better than others (Verse 16). Inequality is iniquity and comes of self love. We cannot love God as commanded unless or until we love our neighbor as ourselves.

Hebrews 6:1-2: There are six principles in the Spiritual law; faith, repentance, baptism, the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, resurrection and eternal judgment. There are six principles in the Temporal law also; consecration, stewardship, tithing, surplus, restoration, and inheritance in the Kingdom of God. We need to review our lives, what are we spending our time on that does nothing toward the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Luke 16:10-13: He that is faithful in the least is also faithful in much. Likewise in unfaithfulness. No one can serve two masters, we cannot serve both God and mammon. 3 Nephi 11:11-15: Christ repeating the words of Malachi; they, as the Israelites, had robbed God in tithes and offerings. Book of Commandments 65:28-34 brings it down to our day. The Lord requires the hearts of the children of men. It's a day of sacrifice and of tithing of His people. He that is faithful and endureth shall overcome the world, shall have an inheritance in Zion and a reward in the world to come (Book of Commandments 64:51-52).

Ether 5:34: The love which God has for the children of men is charity, and except men shall have charity they cannot inherit in the mansions of the Father.

1 Corinthians 12:12-29: We are called by Christ to come out of the world. There should be no schism; if one suffers all suffer; we

should have the same care one for another. John 8:31-32: We must continue in living His word to be a true disciple, knowing and living the truth will make us free. 2 Nephi 13:12-15: He said, Follow thou me. How shall we follow except in obedience to His commandments? Doing what we see He did? Verse 29-32: We must press forward, feasting on the words of Christ, loving God and all men, enduring to the end. Not every one who calls Him Lord will enter His kingdom, but they that do the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21). Luke 6:46: Why should we claim Him Lord if we don't obey His commandments?

John 3:1-10: Except a man is born of the water and the Spirit he cannot enter God's kingdom. The Spirit of Christ reaches out to all in love. Do we reach out in love to others as He does to us? Why don't we have Zion? Are we yet only born of flesh and not yet born of the Spirit to the extent that we can abide the requirements of Zion? John 6:27: Labour not for that which will perish on the using. Do not put those things first. Verses 63-67: It is the Spirit that quickens, the flesh profits us nothing. His words are spirit and truth. Some turned away, and Jesus asked the Twelve, "Will ye also turn away?" We each have that question to answer for ourselves.

The Book of Esther is as a parable for our time. The land was full of deception and intrigue. There was a plot against the Jews, but God prepared a way of escape. He has also prepared a way for us to escape what is coming upon the earth at this end time. Esther had to chance that the King would not hold out His scepter to her. There is always a risk involved. Her response was to fast and pray. Esther found favor in the King's eyes. We must find favor in God's eyes by the way we live our lives. We must ask for what is right or He cannot grant our requests. God's people joined in one can be a mighty force for good. Amos 5:4, 14-15: thus saith the Lord, seek ye me, and ye shall live, seek good and not evil, hate the evil and love the good; it may be that the Lord will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

A Memorial Day is designed for remembering a person or event, to recall those things

that have given us pleasure. Memories can also give us guidance.

2 Nephi 2:35-39: Woe to those who say that we have enough of the word of God and need no more. Blessed are those that learn and hearken to His precepts, who heed His counsel for they shall learn wisdom. 2 Nephi 14: We are to feast on the words of Christ. They tell us all things that we should do. If we enter in by the way and receive the Holy Ghost, it shall show us all things that we should do. Nephi

grieved because of the unbelief of those of his day, for they would not seek knowledge. The evil spirit does not teach a man to pray. But we must pray always to the Father in the name of Christ that that which we do will be for the welfare of our souls.

John 14:12-26: Here Christ tells us that to love Him we must keep His commandments, and if we do, they will make their abode with us, and the Holy Ghost will teach us and bring all things which He has said to our re-

membrance. As a part of our memorial observances we need to remember our Lord Jesus Christ, all that He has done for us, to remember always the sacrifice He made for us, even as is asked in the prayer upon the emblems of the sacrament service. If we remember Him and keep the commandments he has given us, we will always have His spirit to be with us.

Amy Schrader

NEWS

TEMPLE LOT, MISSOURI

Missouri gave a cool, blustery welcome to our visiting brothers and sisters at conference time. It is hard to remember our cold winter now, though, when the temperatures are pleasant and the countryside arrayed with blooming trees and plants.

We have two new members in our local. Brother Tim Eddy was transferred from the Collins Local at the March business meeting. He attends the Temple Lot with his wife Danielle and family: Rachele, Jared, Shane, Ethan, and Jacob. Mandy Grim, daughter of Don and Tamara Grim, was baptized during conference on Sunday, April 6, by Evangelist Hubert Yates. She received the laying on of hands for the Holy Ghost by Brother Yates and Apostle Jay Moser.

Three Saturdays in March were set aside for workdays at the Temple Lot. A crew of workers tackled needed repairs and painting. The entrances, foyer, dining room and stairway were patched and painted, as well as parts of the outside of the building. High places and low, plus windows received a thorough cleaning. The children and teenagers worked beside parents and grandparents, and the results and fellowship were rewarding.

Easter morning, Manon Lawrence directed the Junior and Senior Choirs through several songs of worship about the resurrection of Christ. Then Gary and Janice Welch and their children, Jennifer, Meghan, David and

Seth, sang a variety of songs, all drawing our minds and hearts to the sacrifice and promises of God's son. Pastor Alvin Harris preached the Easter message.

This year, we have enjoyed family music specials during our 11:00 preaching services. Twice a month, our local chorister, Sister Janice Welch, schedules families to sing during the services, and it has been a blessing to us.

Two annual events brought the members from both locals together for fun and fellowship. On March 15, around 100 people of all ages gathered in Higginsville, Missouri, for a roller skating party, followed by potluck and recreation at the local high school gymnasium. Some were busy visiting, but a majority of the stronghearted followed up their skating with volleyball and basketball. During a quiet moment, Brother Don Case had the gymnasium lights turned off, and out of the huge darkness, several children held up lit candles that reflected on the group. "Let your light so shine..." The message was easily understood and was followed by prayer.

On February 28, the YPCL sponsored their Annual Chili Cookoff. There were plenty of pots of chili to taste and test, and all the extras that go along with the meal. One pot even carried a label warning of extreme "heat." We picked our favorites and voted by donating to the cup beside the chili of our choice. Prizes were awarded to the winners, first place going to Sister Michelle Oldham.

For a second year, members of the local

have raised money for the Yucatan Fund a penny at a time. Sister Neva Housknecht organized the "Pennies for Yucatan" project, encouraging members to have a jar to throw pennies in throughout the year. In January, Neva was given the jars and bags of pennies and sent the donation on its way to help God's work in Yucatan.

In March, the United Workers went to the Nelson-Atkins Art Museum and had lunch on the Plaza. April was too hectic for the scheduled event, but elections were held in May. Sister Caroline Hedrick is the new chairman. The ladies plan a variety of interesting activities for the monthly meetings, and there is a usually a devotional given. The United Workers also sponsor several annual family activities and serve when they know of a need. It is a rich fellowship for those that are able to attend.

The YPCL continued weekly meetings. Some of the activities were: a study with Elder Jim Case, volleyball and wiener roast at the Leslie Case home, trip to the art museum, study with Elder Marvin Case, game night; and on one cold afternoon, an impromptu football game in the mud. As a money making project, they sold "singing (and playing) valentines" in February. Several of the young people traveled to homes and work places to sing and play for surprised recipients. The vocalists were: Meghan and Jennifer Welch, Laura Gill, Tabitha Sheldon, and Neva, Oliver and Milo Housknecht. Milo also joined Jesse Lawrence in playing cello/violin duets.

The Jr. Young People's met in windy March to make kites with leader Tamara Grim. The next day after dinner, Tamara and Don were still at the job helping other interested children make and fly kites.

On May 1, the National Day of Prayer, the CARE Group sponsored a special service of prayer at the Temple Lot. The public was invited, and about 35 people joined together in prayer. Teacher Dan Lawrence spoke before the season of prayer, challenging us to humble ourselves, repent, pray for the country, our leaders at all levels and to be aware and involved.

Elder Nicholas Denham preached not long ago and asked some direct questions, "Are we ready for the end? Are you ready to meet the Savior? Are you satisfied with the conditions of your life? The Lord is holding out great promises to us. He's kept his promises. Have we kept ours to him?"

He reminded us that we must be aware of our condition from day to day, always ready for the end of our lives, so that we will be able to rest in paradise with God. "We have an enemy who is out to destroy our souls," Brother Nicholas warned us. He read from Matthew 5, "Be ye therefore perfect." It is one of his favorite scriptures, and it is an admonition that he believes is possible to keep. "God doesn't give any of us something we can't do."

Then he shared some outstanding testimonies with us, strengthening our faith. Years ago, during a business trip, he stopped in Noel, Missouri, at the home of a Sister Pogue to administer to her. She lay in a bed, her leg black from hip to toe. She was going to go to

the hospital to have it amputated. "My heart went sick. There was no one to assist me in that administration." After it was over, Brother Nicholas tried to resume his business trip, but was so weak that he stopped overnight at a motel. "I spent most of the night in prayer." Six weeks later, he met a sister from the area and inquired about Sister Pogue, asking how things had gone for her in the hospital. "Haven't you heard?" the lady exclaimed. "She didn't go to the hospital. She's up and going." God had healed the sister's leg. "God loves his children," Brother Nicholas told us. "He loves you. He gave himself for you and me. Have you given yourself to him?"

*God bless you,
Debbie Vogel*



YOUR GARDEN

Bloom where you are planted
Blossom where you grow
Let your life reflect God's love
That others round might know.

Plant His word within your heart
Nurture it with prayer
Tend the soil near you
And with others daily share

For the way you tend your garden
Is the path that we can show
So others too may see the way
To let God's flowers grow

For if you work it every day
Touching hearts by doing right
Then when the "Gardener's" ready
The harvest will be light

It will not be a struggle
To rid your life of worldly weeds
So when the season's over
We have flowers of good deeds.

~Melissa McGhee

Missouri Reunion

~August 8-10~

The 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.
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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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