

# Zion's Advocate

*"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day,  
for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost...."*

1 Nephi 3:187

VOLUME 76

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI—DECEMBER 1999

NUMBER 12

## *The First Christmas*

*A new star cast its silver light  
Upon a field where shepherds lay,  
Watching o're their flocks by night  
To keep them safe, 'til break of day.*

*When suddenly from out the skies  
A brighter light around them fell  
And to their wonder and surprise,  
An angel stood, good news to tell.*

*Who spoke in soft melodious tones  
Yet with great 'stirring' power,  
And told of that which was to be  
At this momentous hour.*

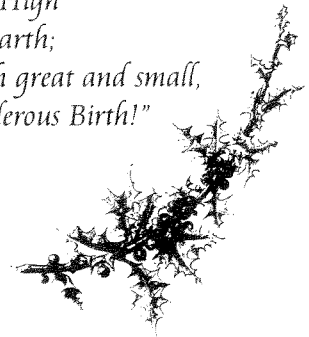
*"Fear not, I bring glad tidings  
Of great joy, which shall be  
Throughout the years and mists of time  
For all humanity.*

*For unto you is born this day  
In David's city, fair;  
A Savior, who is Christ the Lord,  
And you may seek Him there.*

*In swaddling clothes and humble stall  
You'll find the new born King!"  
Then to the shepherds list'ning ears,  
A heavenly host began to sing.*

*"All glory be to God Most High  
And peace, to men on earth;  
Good will to all, both great and small,  
In this most wonderous Birth!"*

—Helen Taubert



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**ZION'S ADVOCATE** is the official publication of the Church of Christ, with headquarters on the Temple Lot, 200 S. River Blvd., P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472. Telephone (816) 833-3995 or (816) 833-3914.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATES:** Church of Christ members' subscriptions are paid from general Church funds, but donations are requested (suggested: \$4.00 each year). In bundles of 12 or more for missionary purposes the rate is \$2.00.

Non-member rates: \$4.00 per year; foreign orders add 50¢.

Send subscription requests with appropriate fees; donations to Church funds (Temple & Storehouse); consecrations; tithes; and all other offerings to the Business Manager at Church headquarters as listed below.

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## THE APOSTLES' MISSIONARY FIELDS

Smith N. Brickhouse, 5713 Logan Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64136; 816-356-9214  
Frank Fann, 3808 Queen Ridge, Independence, Missouri 64055; 816-373-4346  
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Brian McIndoo, 18824 N. 30th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-1900  
Donald E. McIndoo, 18830 N. 30th Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-1240  
Alvin J. Moser, 18829 N. 29th Place, Phoenix, Arizona 85050; 602-569-2414  
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William A. Sheldon, 1011 S. Cottage, Independence, Missouri 64050; 816-461-8956  
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Placido Koyoc Yam, Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

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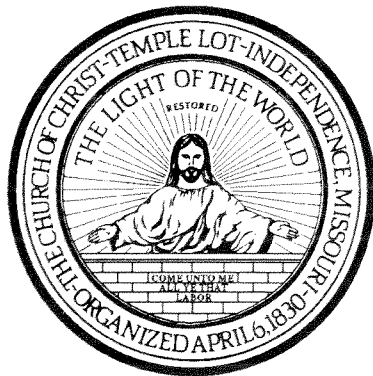
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## GENERAL CHURCH OFFICERS

### SECRETARY, COUNCIL OF APOSTLES

Apostle Smith N. Brickhouse  
5713 Logan Road  
Kansas City, Missouri 64136

### SECRETARY, GENERAL BISHOPRIC

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

### GENERAL CHURCH SECRETARY

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

### BUSINESS MANAGER

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

## ZION'S ADVOCATE STAFF

### EDITOR

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

### ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Ron Temple  
5621 Logan Road  
Kansas City, Missouri 64136

David Rudd  
4917 Casey Court  
Independence, Missouri 64055

### FEATURE EDITOR—"Pathlights"

Melissa McGhee  
2533 Glen Lane  
Independence, Missouri 64052

### PRODUCTION STAFF

Harvey L. Seibel

## WRITTEN MATERIAL REQUESTED

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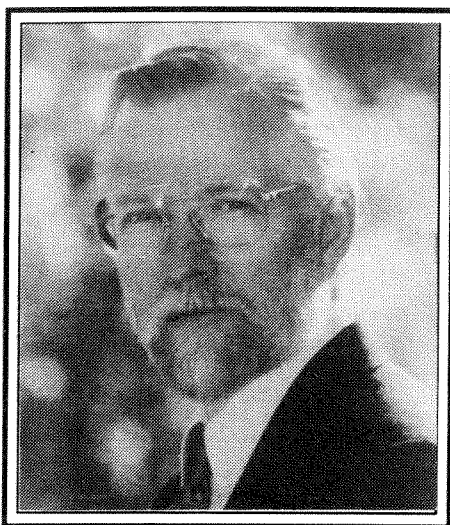
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### ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

# A Holy People



By Harvey E. Seibel

In recent weeks I have pondered the difference between the righteous people in the Book of Mormon (the Bible also) and everyday run-of-the-mill society of today. What is it that sets society, and perhaps many of us, apart from those who served the Lord in ancient times? Perhaps it is our focus. Consider:

*“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor*

*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. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.*

*“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for rai-*

*ment?*

*“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.*

*“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matthew 6:19-34).*

These words make it plain that our primary focus should not be the fulfilling of the needs

of the body, nor the desires of the flesh. Rather, our focus should be single to the glory of God and the things pertaining to the kingdom of heaven.

In this world of materialism, the name says it all. It is not just clothes and shoes, but they have to be a particular brand. The same is true of cars and practically every other thing. Some things are in, others are out. Restaurants? They have to be gourmet or among the elite to even qualify. Of course, money is not a consideration in all this. We have to keep abreast of the latest fashions. Our children become pre-occupied with the latest fad, and practicality concerns go by the wayside. There are also exercise parlors where one may spend money to improve one's physical body. In the old days people worked hard on the farm (had plenty of exercise) with little or no leisure time to run the streets as many of our youth do today. The devil makes use of idle hands and boredom becomes the rule. For pleasure one may attend the ball games, go to one of the many amusement parks, or worse, to the casinos, watch television, movies, surf the internet or whatever else takes one's fancy while giving little or no thought to spiritual matters, or, at best, putting those matters on the back burner, while giving some allegiance to them on Sundays, and maybe Wednesday evening if one has a mind to. This appears to be the picture of pleasure-ridden American society. As a

nation we have become lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. But if we love the things of the world more than the things of God, what does that say other than that we have made the world our idol? The Lord speaks bluntly when he says:

*"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). "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" (1 John 2:15-16).*

What is our real purpose here? Is it to gratify our senses, or is there a greater purpose for our existence? The Book of Mormon tells us we have a higher calling.

*"Therefore this life became a probationary state; a time to prepare to meet God; a time to prepare for that endless state, which has been spoken of by us, which is after the resurrection of the dead" (Alma 9:41). From the Bible we read: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is*

*the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).*

What do we think about, or what goals do we have each day when we awaken? Do we think first on the spiritual, or more on the worldly? What do we look forward to on our days off? What about the Sabbath? Do we truly love God more, or does the world win out over the Lord? How do we occupy ourselves on the Lord's day? Do we dedicate that day to the Lord, or do we make up for what we weren't able to do during the week? Do we engage in the Lord's pleasure on His holy day, or our own? There is a promise attached to doing the Lord's pleasure rather than our own on His holy day.

*"If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it" (Isaiah 58:13-14).*

Some people, on entering

the business world, focus on what they can gain materially, or purchase for themselves what they see as their dreams. These include expensive cars, homes, the beaches of the world, etc. Yet few emphasize the furtherance of the gospel of Christ to the nations of the world. Few are concerned with the millions who know not God and for which we are commanded to pray and fast. Few dedicate such wealth for the glory and work of God. Paul Harvey recently mentioned one well known billionaire who, in just the past 12 months, doubled his wealth from \$45 billion to \$90 billion. Broken down, that equals to an increase of approximately \$125 million for every day of the previous year. One wonders how much good is truly being accomplished with such wealth for the benefit of mankind. One popular singer made millions, and among other things provided for himself 35 expensive new cars. These stories can be multiplied many times over. Yet the scriptures say,

*"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the*

*truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain.*

*"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness...*

*"Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (I Timothy 6:3-11, 17-19).*

*"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and*

*shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (1 John 3:17).*

Solomon, who had this world's goods and every possible thing that life could offer, said, vanity of vanities, all is vanity. It is evident, then, that wealth alone does not bring contentment nor happiness. Rather, Christ has instructed us as follows: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth from the mouth of God.

Of Babylon the Lord said: *"And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Revelation 18:4).* Again, *"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul; be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompense (Jeremiah 51:6).*

Do we desire to reside in Zion? This question is asked:

*"LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" (Psalm 15:1).* Then he gives answer by saying: *"He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a re-*

proach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved" (Psalm 15:2-5).

Again: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation" (Psalm 24:3-5).

Finally we have this word: "The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites" (Isaiah 33:14). Then he asks the question: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14). The answer given is: "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"

(Isaiah 33:15). If he does these things, "He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty..." (Isaiah 33:16-17).

One of the criteria is that one stops his ears from hearing of blood, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil. In light of this, what of television, movies, magazines, the internet, computer games, etc.? What about the violence, sex, and all manner of wickedness that we see portrayed everyday in those mediums? Do we watch them? Do we passively acquiesce with the world's entertainment and excuse ourselves for any indulgence in them? How much are we addicted to the world as compared to our seeking the kingdom of heaven, the salvation of those who know not God, and the redemption of Zion? Is all well in Zion? If not, then what is our responsibility? Alma and Ammon could not even bear the thought of one soul perishing in hell. They had a divine mission and dedicated their entire lives to the work of the gospel. They could not rest. Their entire focus was set on the kingdom of heaven, not on the things of the world. They had great zeal for the Lord. As for us, where are our hearts, or on what are our hearts set? What do we dwell on from day to day and from year to year? What do we think about or what do we desire most

or set our priorities on?

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not" (Malachi 3:16-18).

Moses also made the choice between good and evil. We read: "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 recompence of the reward" (Hebrews 11:24-26).

Moses realized that the eternal reward was of far greater value than the pleasures of sin for a season. The true joy comes through serving the Lord. The psalmist expressed it this way:



*"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11).*

These pleasures will be everlasting. But the pleasures of the flesh can only reap for us corruption.

Though there may be pleasures in sin, these are at best transient, and never bring happiness. And so we are told, "Behold, I say unto you, Wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 19:74). Again, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).

My father once told me of a man who inherited a great fortune. On his father's death, he said to himself, "Now here's to pleasure." And so he spent his life in riotous living, partaking of every worldly pleasure. Yet he soon learned, as Solomon also learned, that all was vanity. His was a most unhappy lot, so much so that he found life not worth living, and so he committed suicide, for he had discovered too late that money could not and does not bring happiness. The one thing that could bring happiness he had not sought, his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

This brings us to priorities. *"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Timothy 6:9).*

But if we seek first the kingdom of heaven, all these things will be added unto us. This is what is meant by the scripture in Jacob:

*"Think of your brethren, like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all, and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you. But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ, ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them, for the intent to do good; to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick, and the afflicted" (Jacob 2:22-24).*

This is the sole reason for seeking for riches. It is not to consume them upon our own lusts or desires for possessions, more than is needful. Otherwise the admonition is:

*"...Seek not after riches, nor the vain things of this world; for behold, you can not carry them with you" (Alma 19:20).*

This was Alma's admonition to his youngest son, whose charge was the ministry. Yet the Lord does bless his people with riches but those who are so blessed must be careful.

*"And the hand of providence hath smiled upon you most pleasingly, that you have obtained many riches; And because some of you*

*have obtained more abundantly than that of your brethren, ye are lifted up in the pride of your hearts, and wear stiff necks, and high heads, because of the costliness of your apparel, and persecute your brethren, because ye suppose that ye are better than they" (Jacob 2:15-16).* And again, *"...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 to persons as to those who stood in need" (Alma 1:46).* But the danger is always there if one is not careful. *"But they grew proud, being lifted up in their hearts, because of their exceeding great riches; therefore they grew rich in their own eyes, and would not give heed to their words, to walk uprightly before God" (Alma 21:28).*

The thing that characterized the saints of old were that they were of one heart and one mind and their eyes were single to the glory of God. On the other hand the scripture says, *"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8).* But these ran a strait course and persevered until the end of their lives.

# Keep the Commandments of God, And Stay Out of Trouble.

By Elder Don Hitt

**W**e all know that the commandments Jesus spoke on the sermon on the mount are the ones we need to be concerned about keeping. Most of the evil organizations in the world cannot exist if people keep the sayings of Jesus. Keeping the commandments will keep you out of most trouble and deliver you out of all trouble. Many of the rules and laws in the world need not be of a concern to you, because you are an honorable person. However, if the laws of a nation are against the teachings of Christ you may be in a heap of trouble.

There are so many commandments in the Bible that I used to get discouraged because I couldn't remember them all and didn't know which ones were still in effect. But Jesus said in 3 Ne. 5:68: "*For verily I say unto you, that except ye shall keep my commandments, which I have commanded you at this time ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" So for right now I think you need to

concentrate on the "red letters;" they are for your life. Romans 8:2 says, "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*" The Law of Sin and Death is kind of like if you do something wrong you pay the price. The Law of the Spirit of Life is like you take care of it in your heart before you do it, and there is no price to pay. If you speed and get caught, you pay the judge. If you never exceed the limit you never pay anything. When my boys were small they would always say "Dad! There's a cop." I would always say "I don't care. I'm not doing anything wrong."

The Law of Christ is a "heart thing."

Jer. 31:33: "*But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.*"

Matt. 5:21: "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou*

*shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment...."*

It goes on to say that we shouldn't get angry with them, or even call them a fool. There are times when we get mad at people, so what's the deal? This new covenant, this Law of the Spirit of Life we have, gives us the power to not let our anger have control of our emotions, if we choose to control our anger. Romans 5:5: "*...The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*" It says the same thing as the reason for the two hundred years of prosperity, love and peace for everyone in the Book of Mormon.

4 Ne. 1:17: "*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.*" 1 Ne. 1:13: "*And they did not walk any more after the performances and ordinances of the Law of Moses, but they did walk after the commandments which they had received from their Lord*



and their God, continuing in fasting and prayer, and in meeting together oft, both to pray and to hear the word of the Lord.”

You may be having a little trouble with the love of God, or charity, in your life, but it says in I John 2:5: “*But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.*” In this case “His word” will include His commandments.

Here is another example of how keeping the commandments will keep you out of trouble:

3 Nephi 5:76: “*Behold, it is written by them of old time, that thou shalt not commit adultery; But I say unto you, that whosoever*


*looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart. Behold, I give 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.*”

How many of you that when Jesus says “It is better” believe that it is better? If you don’t commit adultery it keeps you out of a lot of trouble. There are big organizations able to reap huge profits because of pornography. If you, I and every one kept the commandments of God by not even looking at it the profits would not be reaped and the temptation of adultery would not enter

into our hearts.

At work I never have to be concerned about the rules on absenteeism. I never played the game of trying to be off work as much as I could and not getting into trouble. So those rules did not effect me. I never had to learn the rules about the use of tobacco, because I did not use it. I don’t have to be concerned about where the police are because I watch to see that I don’t break the laws. That is the way it should be with you.

Great evils are in the world, but you don’t need to be concerned about most of them, because if you keep the commandments most of them will not effect you. The choice is up to you.



## YOUR VOCATION

A TRUE VOCATION IS DIFFERENT FROM WORK, WHICH IS JUST AN EXCHANGE OF LABOR FOR MONEY. A VOCATION IS SOMETHING YOU FEEL COMPELLED TO DO, OR AT LEAST SOMETHING THAT FILLS YOU WITH A SENSE OF MEANING. IT IS, ABOVE ALL ELSE, SOMETHING THAT LETS YOU LOVE.

*“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” Ephesians 4:1-4.*

# There Is Something In A Name



**Apostle Roland L. Sarratt**  
*General Church Historian*  
*for the Church of Christ*

On April 6, 1830, in Fayette Township, Seneca County, New York, six men met and organized a church according to the laws of the state of New York. A brief account of that event was written in June, 1830, in an item titled, "THE ARTICLES AND COVENANTS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST." The first paragraph was written thus:

"The rise of the Church of Christ in these last days, being one thousand eight hundred and thirty years since the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, in the flesh; it being regularly organized and established agreeable to the laws of our country, by the will and commandments of God in the fourth month and on the sixth day of the month, which is called April: Which commandments were given to Joseph, who was called of God and ordained an Apostle of Jesus Christ, an Elder of this church; and also to Oliver, who was also called of God an Apostle of Jesus Christ, an Elder of this church, and ordained under his hand; and this according to the grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be all glory both now and forever. Amen."

The Church of Christ grew and began to migrate west. On

As heirs of this sacred land, we, the Church of Christ of 1999, testify that the providence of God has been in our favor, not because we are especially worthy, but because it was the design and will of God that this property be retained by this people.

August 3rd, 1831, the place for the temple of the Lord was dedicated and marked just west of the town of Independence, Missouri, according to instructions given by revelation. A printing press was purchased, and in June of 1832 the first issue of "The Evening and Morning Star" was printed by the Church of Christ, its first official paper. It made public its

name and certain particulars of the church on the front page by printing "The Articles and Covenants of the Church of Christ." In 1833 a compilation of revelations were printed with this title: "A Book of Commandments for the government of the Church of Christ organized according to law, on the 6th of April, 1830."

In 1833 the members of the Church of Christ were driven out of Independence by mob action. They established a community north of Independence, which they called Far West. Here they resided until 1839, when they had to flee for their lives into Illinois. During that time the name of the church was changed twice. On May 3, 1834, an action was made that the church be known hereafter by the name of "The Church of the Latter Day Saints." A second compilation of revelations was printed in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1835, with this title: "Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of the Latter Day Saints." On April 26, 1838, a revelation was given referencing the church by the name of "The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints," indicating another change in the name.

For the next five years the church continued with its headquarters in Nauvoo, Illinois. At the hands of a mob Joseph Smith, Jr. and his brother, Hyrum, were martyred on June 27, 1844, at the Carthage, Illinois, jail where they were being held. As a result of this violent act the church began to split up

into various factions, with the majority of the members leaving Nauvoo within a few years.

A number of church members had taken refuge in Woodford County, Illinois, and Vermillion, Indiana, when they were driven from Missouri and had established several local churches. They remained faithful to the church after Joseph Smith's death, but found reason to remain separate from the other factions. Although they did not make a formal action to change the name back to the original name, they discontinued to use the name, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, and began to use the name, Church of Christ, as it was given in 1830. This is in accord with the words of Christ in the Book of Mormon:

*"Therefore, whatsoever ye shall do, ye shall do it in my name; therefore ye shall call the church in my name; ...if it be called in the name of a man, then it be the church of a man; but if it be called in my name, then it is my church, if it so be that they are built upon my gospel."*

In response to a revelation given in 1864, the group in Illinois and Indiana traveled by caravan to Independence, Missouri, in the winter of 1866/67, and arrived in February, being the first church members to return en masse since the expulsion in 1833. Their purpose was to purchase the land which was dedicated as the "spot" for the

temple of the Lord, and this they did within the next several years after they arrived. Although an action was made by another church to obtain that property by lawsuit in 1891, the Church of Christ, through great sacrifice, was able to retain ownership of the temple lots.

As heirs of this sacred land, we, the Church of Christ of 1999, testify that the providence of God has been in our favor, not because we are especially worthy, but because it was the design and will of God that this property be retained by this people. We do believe that there is something in a name, for the name of the church when this land was dedicated was the Church of Christ. When the temple lots were purchased in the late 1860s and 1870s they were purchased in the name of the Church of Christ. We believe that the people who will build the temple of the Lord on that land will be known as the Church of Christ.

## ARTICLE

# Why We Pray Out Loud

**Elder Sam Gould**

That there would be joy in our hearts, in the hearts of listeners, and in the heart of God. There are a number of excellent reasons for praying out loud as given in the scriptures of which I would personally testify as being worthy of our consideration. First of all, we are to follow the example of Jesus, *"Wherefore, do the things which I have told you I have seen, that your Lord and your Redeemer should do"* (2 Nephi 13:22).

Christ therefore set the example for us, *"And as I have prayed among you, even so shall ye pray in my church, among my people who do repent and are baptized in my name. Behold I am the light; I have set an example for you"* (3 Nephi 8:48-49).

Now this practice might not be seen as having value if it weren't for the example given of those who heard Jesus praying for them, *"And no one can conceive of the joy which filled our souls at the time we heard him pray for us unto the Father"* (3 Nephi 8:10). Do you want to have your heart filled with this same joy?

Christ is the one who makes this same intercession

for us with the Father today, *"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"* (Hebrews 7:24). How wonderful it is to know that Jesus continues to pray to the Father for us and also the Holy Ghost. *"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"* (Romans 8:26).

We take joy in hearing others pray for us is a cardinal rule or key to our understanding. We pray from out of the great desire in our hearts put there by God, and are even given the words to speak when uttering mighty prayer vocally within the Church of Christ for all to take joy in as given in this example.

*"And it came to pass that he spake unto the multitude, and commanded them that they should kneel down again upon the earth, and also that his disciples should kneel down upon the earth. And it came to pass that when they had all knelt down upon the earth, he commanded his disciples*

*that they should pray. And behold they began to pray; and they did pray unto Jesus, calling him their Lord and their God. ... And it came to pass, that when Jesus had thus prayed unto the Father, he came unto his disciples, and behold, they did still continue, without ceasing, to pray unto him; and they did not multiply many words, for it was given unto them what they should pray, and they were filled with desire. ... And it came to pass that he commanded the multitude that they should cease to pray, and also his disciples. And he commanded them that they should not cease to pray in their hearts. And he commanded them that they should arise and stand upon their feet"* 3 Nephi 9:17-19, 24-27, 37-39.

This honoring of the commands of God caused great joy in the heart of Jesus as given:

*"And it came to pass that Jesus beheld them, as they did pray unto him, and his countenance did smile upon them, and the light of his countenance did shine upon them, and behold they were as white as the counte-*

nance, and also the garments of Jesus; And behold the whiteness thereof did exceed all the whiteness, yea, even there could be nothing upon the earth so white as the whiteness thereof. And Jesus said unto them, Pray on; nevertheless they did not cease to pray" (3 Nephi 9:25-27).

Doesn't this account just make you yearn in your heart and soul to be a part of God's will in this way? He also commanded them to pray in their families so that their family and church members could take hold of this joy:

*"Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name, that your wives and your children may be blessed. And behold, ye shall meet together oft, and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together, but suffer them that they may come unto you, and forbid them not; But ye shall pray for them, and shall not cast them out; and if it so be that they come unto you oft, ye shall pray for them unto the Father, in my name; therefore hold up your light that it may shine unto the world. Behold I am the light which ye shall hold up — that which ye have seen me do"* (3 Nephi 8:52-55).

The seventeenth chapter of John is a wonderful prayer recorded of Jesus in His ministry. What a choice gem just to read.

How I wish I could have been there to hear it in person, don't you? Nephi prayed aloud in the market place that the light of Christ might be held in the prominence it is truly due with just amazing results.

*"Therefore Nephi had bowed himself upon the tower which was in his garden, which tower was also near unto the garden gate which led by the highway. And it came to pass that there were certain men passing by, and saw Nephi as he was pouring out his soul unto God upon the tower, and they ran and told the people what they had seen, and the people came together in multitudes that they might know the cause of so great mourning for the wickedness of the people"* (Helaman 3:11-12).

What a blessing Nephi received at the conclusion of that episode:

*"And now because thou has done this with such unwearyingness, behold, I will bless thee for ever; and I will make thee mighty in word and in deed, in faith and in works; yea, even that all things shall be done unto thee according to thy word, for thou shalt not ask that which is contrary to my will"* (Helaman 3:117).

In this latter day work, Jesus has also given commands that carry exceeding great joy and blessing if harkened unto.

"And this shall be the duty of the Priest. He shall kneel down and the members of the church shall kneel down also; which church shall be called the Church of Christ, and he shall pray to the Father in my name for the church and if it so be that it be built upon my rock, I will bless it" (*Revelation given to Oliver Cowdry in May 1829*). "And again; I command you, that thou shalt pray vocally as well as to thyself, yea, before the world as well as in secret; in public as well as in private" (*Book of Commandments 16:28-29*). "Behold I manifest unto you by these words, that you must take up your cross, in the which ye must pray vocally before the world as well as in secret, and in your family, and among your friends and in all places" (*Book of Commandments 21:1*).

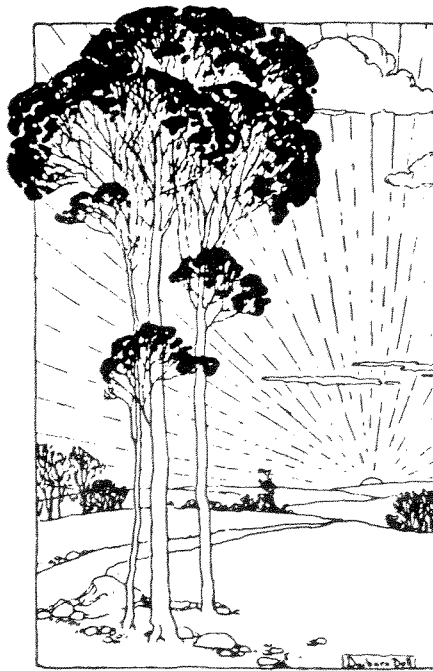
I believe that there are so many wonderful reasons to pray aloud that Jesus has delivered to us in the past that I, for one, am willing to pray aloud and to myself because it is commanded. It is attached to joy and consolation and it brings blessing to me to be heard, if offered to God out of the great desires of a humble spirit, broken and contrite, directed by God. What a wonderfully precious gift the avenue of prayer is to us.

# TESTIMONY *of the* POEM

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

I thought I should add my testimony about the poem I was able to give at the Phoenix Reunion. The last evening I was trying to finish the poem it just wasn't coming all together. So the next morning on my way to work I was still working on it. I was trying to end it with everything pointing to Christ with the verse 'Can you imagine the joy on His face?' when the words came to me, 'And your joy, it is Amazing Grace.' At the same time His Spirit filled me with great joy, and I knew the grace the saints would receive. I was filled with something so special, that joy, the world outside was unaware; these things are hid from the wise and unbelieving. My testimony is this, if you want to know ecstasy, get to know Christ; you know how: communi-

cate with Him, be His friend, let Him be yours. Ecstasy is what came to my mind at reunion. If you



## PATHLIGHTS

look it up in the dictionary it says, 'a sense of uplifting and joyfulness and increased well being, to be in a state of rapture, overjoyed.' How fitting. Also as I was reading the poem at reunion, when I read the

verse 'The country beloved is under attack,' I was overcome by the spirit with a sense of great grief. The Lord is letting us know His sorrow for the condition of our great country. I am in awe of God who gives such words and knowledge unto men. This poem has given me hope for all the children of Israel, and all the brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ who is omnipotent. As we await the day to see the joy on His face, brothers be brave. May your holidays be well spent as the millennium draws near; may the peace of Christ be ours!

*Love to all,  
Kathy Cloyd*



# HOOFBEAT OF AMERICA

Listen! Can't you hear it? Quickly, put your ear to the ground.

It is alive, rumbling, getting louder, rolling closer;

It is a frightful sound.

The country beloved is under attack,

Greed and arrogance have broken her back.

Oh, what a pitiful sight as the Master looks down,

On the Chosen land that will bear His crown.

Plead your cause now, will ye deny it?

Lying, whoremongers, killing, lust, selfish desires,

Come now, gather the filth that belongs in the pit.

Man thought he created his own devices,

Connected the world, now here comes trouble.

The enemy's plan is nearly complete,

He works undercover, his name is renowned,

In circles of darkness where evil abounds.

Trouble has a name, it is Devil.

So here we are facing the wave,

Of sin and corruption, Brothers be Brave.

He draws our hearts by the sights and sounds

Of his grand delusion,

Trapping men's souls till the world's conclusion.

Knowing the scripture, the time is so short,

He tempts us with pleasures of every sort.

Anything to take up our time,

Keep us busy, and keep God out of our mind.

To come to battle is heavy to the heart,

But with the end thereof, comes a new start.

The Master has said, we'll stand together,

At the end of this war, in peace forever.

My ear was drawn again to the sound,

Of loud and many, coming over the rise.

A heavenly host, America bound,

To strengthen the righteous, before their demise.

He is their Savior, and always has been,

He's had enough, away with sin.

His Heavenly gifts will open to view,

Who will see them, only the few.

So here we are, in this time, this place,

Chosen to stand for the truth, and the Christ.

What an honor to stand with the Savior of men,

You know He helped us endure to the end.

Can you imagine, the joy on His face?

And your joy, it is, Amazing Grace.

~Kathy Cloyd~

# Will the Christ Child Come?

One Christmas we had an interesting experience that I would like to share. Halfway through December we were doing the regular evening things when there was a knock at the door. We opened it to find a small package with a beautiful ceramic lamb inside. We looked at the calendar and realized that the 12 days of Christmas were beginning!! We waited excitedly for the next night's surprise and only then, with the gift of a matching shepherd, did we realize that the lamb was part of a nativity set.

Each night we grew more excited to see what piece we would receive. Each was exquisitely beautiful. The kids kept trying to catch the givers as we slowly built the scene at the manger and began to focus on Christ's birth.

On Christmas Eve, all the pieces were in place but

the baby Jesus. My 12-year-old son really wanted to catch our benefactors and began to devise all kinds of ways to trap them. He ate his dinner in the mini-van watching and waiting, but no one came.

Finally we called him in to go through our family's Christmas Eve traditions. But before the kids went to bed we checked the front step—No Baby Jesus!

We began to worry that my son had scared them off. My husband suggested that maybe they dropped the Jesus and there wouldn't be anything coming. Somehow something was missing that Christmas Eve. There was a feeling that things weren't complete. The kids went to bed and I put out Christmas, but before I went to bed I again checked to see if the Jesus had come—no, the doorstep was empty.

In our family the kids can

open their stockings when they want to, but they have to wait to open any presents until Dad wakes up. So one by one they woke up very early and I also woke up to watch them. Even before they opened their stockings, each child checked to see if perhaps during the night the baby Jesus had come. Missing that piece of the set seemed to have an odd effect. At least it changed my focus. I knew there were presents under the tree for me and I was excited to watch the children open their gifts, but first on my mind was the feeling of waiting for the ceramic Christ Child.

We had opened just about all of the presents when one of the children found one more for me buried deep beneath the limbs of the tree. He handed me a small package from my former visiting teaching companion. This sister was somewhat less ac-

tive in the church. I had been her visiting teacher for a couple of years and then, when she was asked to be a visiting teacher, she requested to go with me. I had learned over time they didn't have much for Christmas, so that their focus was the children. It sounded like she didn't get many gifts to open, so I had always given her a small package—new dish towels, the next year's Relief Society lesson manual—not much, but something for her to open. I was touched when at Church on the day before Christmas, she had given me this small package, saying it was just a token of her love and appreciation.

As I took off the bow, I remembered my friendship

with her and was filled with gratitude for knowing her and for her kindness and sacrifice in this year giving me a gift. But as the paper fell away, I began to tremble and cry. There in the small brown box was the baby Jesus. He had come!

I realized on that Christmas Day that Christ will come into our lives in ways that we don't expect. The spirit of Christ comes into our hearts as we serve one another. We had waited and watched for him to come, expecting the dramatic "knock at the door and scurrying of feet" but he came in a small, simple package that represented service, friendship, gratitude, and love.

This experience taught

me that the beginning of the true spirit of Christmas comes as we open our hearts and actively focus on the Savior. But we will most likely find him in the small and simple acts of love, friendship and service that we give to each other. This Christmas I want to feel again the joy of knowing that Christ is in our home. I want to focus on loving and serving. More than that I want to open my heart to Him all year that I may see him again.

Received via e-mail by Janice Welch; submitted by the CCEA.



## NEWS

## AVA, MISSOURI

The Ava bunch has been moving and re-moving in August. The Jason Smith family moved to Columbia. Shana and Jeremy Kelly and family moved to Phoenix. Cathy and Vince Latona moved to Springfield.

It's been a month of the big trucks as well. Bobby and Cindy Riley moved household goods for their daughter and her family to Phoenix.

Danny and Dorothy Brech, with Dallas, traveled to Dolly's graduation from basic training. When Danny asked for time off to go to South Carolina for the graduation, his boss suggested they could find a load for him to take there and another for him to bring back. So they made the trip, high and mighty, in the live-in cab of an 18-wheeler.

Wesley Burgin was involved in a two-vehicle accident. A pickup crossed the center line and struck the Peterbilt he was driving nearly head-on. Wes was not injured but the other driver and his little boy were airlifted to Springfield.

A group of us met at Les and Barbara Burgin's, but there weren't as many as usual because of end-of-summer activities. A bigger bunch met for breakfast in Ava. A few of us attended the Missouri Reunion earlier in the month, and even had our own little Ava reunion at the end of

one of the dining room tables.

Jared Burgin was by to visit his grandparents before school started.

With more than our share of teachers, school is one of the main interests, especially in September. This year, though, that was rivaled by a milestone event. Jim and Sharon Smith's son, Danny, and his bride, Stacey, were married on September 18th. Bro. Joe Smith performed the ceremony in the community center at Ava. Welcoming a chance to visit, several of the Ava bunch met for lunch in town before the wedding. Sue Smith was unable to attend because her brother and sisters and she were having a family reunion that week.

Bro. Mike McGhee was down to meet with members and serve the Sacrament early in September. Bro. Roland Sarratt came down in October. The visiting ministry also bring an opportunity for discussion of whatever questions and concerns are brought before them.

The Darlington family was hit hard during the first part of October. Earl was taken to the hospital emergency room for blood-clots. The medicine he was given required close supervision, so he was released to a nursing home. A day or so later he had to return to the emergency room. He was treated and

released. About a week later he was again taken to the hospital, this time with pneumonia and kidney failure. If Earl hadn't been an old Montana cowboy, tough as whang leather, he wouldn't have made it. Even then it was a close call. Brothers Joe Smith and Roland Sarratt administered to him. Later, Bro. Earl Darlington died on November 4, 1999, at the age of 86.

Dorothy Brech went in for surgery. She is at home again now, thankful that there was no cancer. Dorothy teaches "at risk" kids and needs all the strength she can gain.

Lorraine Welton and Amy Schrader were down from Independence one weekend in November, and part of the group met with them in town for breakfast. A group met on another Saturday for breakfast, and then there was a dinner meeting as well. The breakfasts are handy because those who work during the day can sometimes meet early. The dinners are nice because we can put our elbows on the table and visit and laugh and talk serious business for three or four hours.

*Reported by Ella Engle*  
AVA

## NEWS

## COWGILL, MISSOURI

Count your many blessings, name them one by one. Count your many blessings see what God hath done. At this Thanksgiving time we certainly should count our many blessings.

We have had a bountiful crop this year on the farm. Most of us at the Cowgill local are in reasonably good health, which we are very thankful for.

This has been the most beautiful October and November I can remember—wonderful for the fall harvest!

We have enjoyed several visitors this summer and fall and appreciate every one of them. Yesterday, November 28, Irene and Leslie Case were here for preaching and Thanksgiving dinner. As usual, Leslie preached a wonderful sermon on the thanks we give to God every day.

Sr. Lois Harris attended the Colorado Reunion June 11, 12 and 13. After the reunion she went to the home of her sister Mildred Hooker and visited for two months. When she came home she decided to move from her Cowgill home to Independence to be closer to her family. She has been coming back to her home in Cowgill every weekend to teach her junior class. We miss her being at Cowgill, but wish her well in

her new home; she is a pillar at our church.

Later in June, Lisa Wratt and her sons Ian and David flew to Oregon for a visit with her family; Trevor Wratt and the boys flew to New Zealand for a visit with his family. They all made it back safe and sound, something else to be thankful for, flying being what it is now days.

Gerald and Wilma Bryant celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in June. Their daughters Nancy Swofford, Karen Claypole, and Donna Sprouse and families held open house for them at the Linn's building at Cowgill. Several from Independence enjoyed this wonderful day, as well as a host of friends and relatives from the community. All expressed best wishes for them. Bro. Gerald especially enjoyed the day; he loves to visit with people!

At the Sacrament Service November 7, Bro. Trevor Wratt was ordained an elder in the church by Bro. Loren Bryant, assisted by Bro. Gerald. Now we have a new speaker. Trevor is a wonderful Sunday School teacher; we are happy for him and wish him well.

We are happy to have Patricia and Marvin Fleming and boys visiting once in awhile.

Loren and John Bryant Joshua and Joey are flying this weekend to

Tennessee to visit his sister Marcia and Dick Christian and family. We pray for them a safe and trouble-free trip.

It doesn't seem like Christmas time, with all this nice warm weather, but we wish every one a Blessed Christmas season.

*Until next time, God Bless~  
Elizabeth Crist  
Reporter*

## EAST INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

**S**eason's Greetings from the East Independence Local!

We have enjoyed such beautiful weather this year! Our only possible regret is that we didn't have a white Christmas.

We had two Christmas programs this year. The first, held the Sunday before Christmas, helped put us in a good spirit for the holidays. This was our Sunday School Christmas Program, and it included many wonderful offerings, including a Nativity play performed by the teen class, and directed by their teacher, Elder Steve McGhee.

The second Christmas program was held the Sunday following Christmas, which allowed us to continue to enjoy the spirit of the season. This program told the story of the birth of Christ in scripture and song. The songs were provided by the new East Local Choir, numbering 13, directed by Gerald Cox. Two members of the choir, Sr. June Sarratt and Bro. Jim Gordon, sang solos. Kim Yates from Phoenix, Arizona, also sang a solo, with accompaniment from Sr. June Sarratt and the choir. She graciously filled in at a moment's notice for a choir member who's voice gave out the week of the performance.

The Christmas programs were a blessing to all. It is so good to see

such willing participation from all ages.

We are pleased to welcome Gary Adams as a member of our local. He was baptized November 14th, 1999, by Elder Robert Oldham, with the confirmation given by Apostle Michael McGhee. We are saddened by the fact that Gary is battling cancer. Our prayers are that he might have a complete healing.

Our sister Elizabeth Smith was married on December 20, 1999, to Matt Gahner on the island of St. Thomas, where she is working as a registered nurse. We wish them well, and would ask an interest in your prayers for them as they begin their life together.

Our local has been very blessed these past few months by some exceptional sermons, by our own ministry, as well as by visiting ministry. I have quite a few thoughts gleaned from some of these sermons which I would like to share with you:

- *The purpose of life is probation and preparation for life eternal.*
- *You are in the right place if you are determined to be a prisoner of the Lord.*
- *Following the commandments helps build the attitude of loving and giving.*
- *In any task that comes before us*

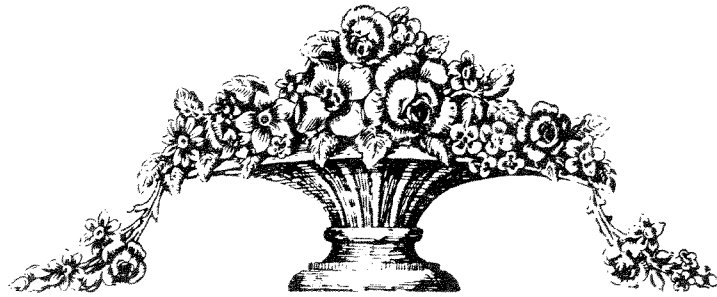
*we must not be unduly discouraged.*

- *The easy time to get evil out of your life is when it is first introduced.*
- *The scriptures should guide you through your bad times, give you strength.*
- *If we follow the words and works of Jesus Christ to the end we will be saved.*



# Earl S. Darlington

June 18, 1913 ~ November 4, 1999



**S**on of Harold and Dorothy Melton Darlington, Earl Darlington was born June 18, 1913, in Butte, Montana, and departed this life November 4, 1999, at the age of 86 years, 4 months and 16 days.

Earl was a resident of the Ava, Missouri, area for the last 41 years, moving here from Montana. He was a farmer before retirement. Earl was a member of the Church of Christ, Temple Lot.

On September 14, 1948, Earl and Myrle Lee Smith were united in marriage in Polson, Montana. To this union five children were born.

Earl was preceded in death by his wife, his parents, three brothers and one sister.

Survivors include: two sons: Clyde Darlington and Joey Darlington of Ava, Missouri; three daughters: Cindy Riley of Ava, Missouri, Catherine Emery of Vanzant, Missouri, and Dorothy Brech of Ava, Missouri; ten grandchildren; three great-grandsons; two sisters: Lorene Johnson of Pableo, Montana and Lois

Gregg of Chicago, Illinois; and a host of relatives and friends.

**B**ro. Earl Darlington died on the morning of November 4th. In his 86 years (6/18/13 to 11/4/99), life wasn't always easy, but as Bro. Marvin Case said at his funeral, "He hung on. He did what was needed." All of his children and grandchildren and great-grandchildren were in town, though one baby and one grandson couldn't come to the funeral. His sister, Lois, and her husband were in from Chicago, and there were a couple dozen other relatives. The chapel was well filled with friends of all ages. Two brothers-in-law and six grandsons walked the last little way with him as escorts of his casket.

A collection of snapshots had been arranged on a stand at the head of his casket. There was Earl, standing tall and proud with Myrle on their wedding day, another of him clowning around with kids on the creek

bank, working on horseback, eating and visiting with friends, and almost always wearing a hat only a cowboy could love. Bro. Marvin reminded us of the wild horse Earl had tamed, and then after 10 or 12 years had let it go free again. We remembered, in Sacrament service, Earl chose songs as a form of testimony, by the words alone. Many times none of the congregation knew the tune, but the words added to the service even if we only read them.

At the cemetery each of the family: sister, children, and grandchildren, were given one of the roses from a flower arrangement. Later, when they divided up the plants to be taken home, they gave the remaining roses and some plants to aunts and uncles and cousins and close friends. People stood around visiting, holding their flowers. They moved from one group to another, to talk and cry, and even to laugh a bit, and carried the flowers with them. Earl's family and friends, and Earl's flowers, a moving bouquet.

*Ella Engle*

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