

Zion's Advocate

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

1 Nephi 3:187

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ADMONITION

Joseph Luff, by inspiration

(Verse 6)

Love ye me and love all people -
Love as I have loved you;
This your calling – this my purpose –
Thus be my disciples true.
Then in this exalted station
Your companion I will be;
Every promise of my Scriptures
Will be verified in thee.

(Verse 7)

Get ye up, then to your mountain!
Zion of this closing day!
For the glory of my coming
Waits to break upon your way!
Forth from thence your testimony
Shall to trembling nations go,
And the world confess that with you
God has residence below.

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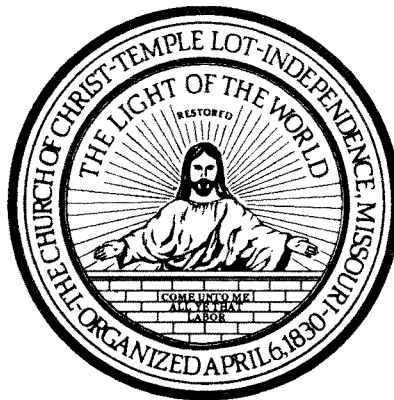
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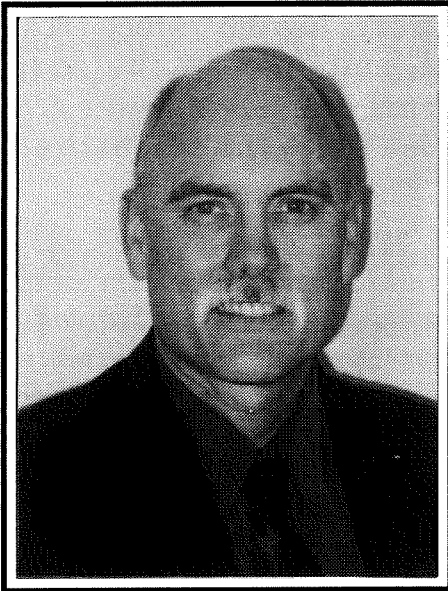
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

The Ten Virgins



By Elder Gordon McCann

I would like for you to consider the developments that have occurred in the last few years within the church and in current events. Within the church: the Spirit of God has opened the work in Africa, the Philippines, and Honduras where the Gospel has been accepted and preached to new converts daily. In current events: the war against the terrorists that killed over 3,000 people in America, the war in Iraq, and the dealings in the Middle East. I have given much thought to these developments and have concluded that given the prevailing theme during our

recent April Conference, our testimony and prayer services, with the sermons that are being preached, that I am not alone. I believe it would be prudent and appropriate for us, as a Church, to proclaim that the Lord's work in these last days has begun. The day when our Savior Jesus Christ will return is fast approaching. With that thought I am reminded of the words of Christ:

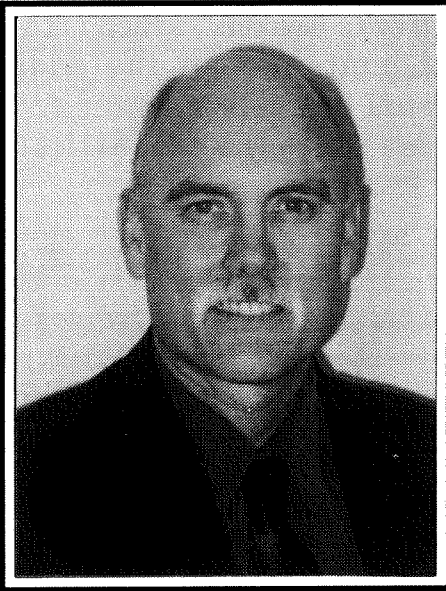
"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near: So ye in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be done. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:28-33).

Recently I was directed by the Holy Ghost to study again the "Parable of the Ten Virgins"

found in the book of Matthew 25:1-13. This parable is directed specifically to the Church, those who are waiting for the "Bridegroom" (Christ) to return to claim His bride (the church of the Lamb of God, 1 Nephi 3:221). All ten virgins had lamps with oil providing light (the truth of the Gospel "the light of the world," Matthew 5:14-16). As the scripture goes, five of them were foolish. They only took their lamps filled with oil. The other five virgins were wise because they took oil "in vessels" or containers **in addition to** the oil in their lamps. If you take time to read the parable you will find that verse 3 says "and took no oil with them" and with my previous statement you might think that I have misspoken. After careful examination of verses 7 and 8 you will find that the five foolish virgins said to the wise, "our lamps are gone out" giving credence that all ten lamps had oil but the wise had just enough oil in their vessels (additional containers) to "trim their lamps" with.

There are three aspects about the parable that I want you to think about. The first aspect is that half were wise because they were able to enter into the marriage with the

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There are three aspects about the parable that I want you to think about. The first aspect is that half were wise because they were able to enter into the marriage with the

bridegroom. The other half were foolish because they found themselves standing outside the shut door unable to enter the marriage. At first I thought that the ratio of one out of every two members of the Church of Christ would not be able to enter into the marriage was high, but I was reminded of the heavenly host that were with God. A third part followed after Satan (Revelation 12:4, 7-9, Jude 1:6) and were cast out of heaven.

The second aspect has to do with the fact that all ten virgins slumbered and slept. While at the April Conference this year I had a spiritual experience when the following verse of scripture was read by one of the speakers:

"Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean. Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion (Isaiah 52:1-2).

A clarion call from God to His people in the last days to wake up and to put on their beautiful garments! (Trim their lamps?)

My last statement leads me to the third and last aspect that has to do with the oil and what it represents. Remember the call was to "Awake, awake," then to "put on thy beautiful garments." Those garments are a

representation of our personal righteousness in this life. Remember the parable in which the five foolish virgins came to the wise and wanted oil from them but the wise refused them and told them to go buy for themselves. Our personal righteousness cannot save our fellow brother or sister; they must buy from the Lord for themselves (Isaiah 55:1-3; 2 Nephi 6:97-103, 11:97-99).

Today is the day that we must awake our spiritual faculties and ask ourselves the following question:

"Could ye say, if ye were called to die at this time, within yourselves, that ye have been sufficiently humble? That your garments have been cleansed and made white, through the blood of Christ, who will come to redeem his people from their sins?" (Alma 3:48-49).

The Lord is pleading with the body of Christ today and we need to be listening to what His Spirit is trying to tell us concerning our personal righteousness. Jesus spoke the same warning to those in Jerusalem when he said:

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:20).

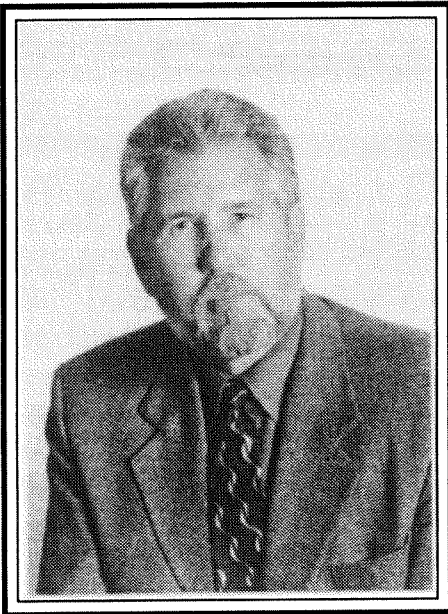
We are told in several places in the scripture that

Jesus Christ came to save us "from our sins" and not "in our sins." It is time to "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found" (Isaiah 55:6) and call upon our God through our Savior Jesus Christ, forsaking our unrighteous ways so that we may "lay up treasures in heaven" which is the oil contained in the additional containers by the five wise virgins (Matthew 6:20-21).

"Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in no wise deny the power of God. And again, if ye, by the grace of God, are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father, unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy without spot" (Moroni 10:29-30).

MISSIONARY MOMENTS

KENYA, AFRICA



We had scheduled reunions for each of the three districts here in Kisii. Today, Friday, May 2nd, 2003, would be the reunion for the Gucha District and would be held at the Kineni Local. This reunion was to be for ten locals that are a part of the Gucha District. The Kineni local is where Elder Moses Ohuru is pastor, and it sits on the top of a high hill. Our plan was to feed them a simple but suitable lunch consisting of a loaf of bread and a bottle of soda.

We arrived in Kineni and found a group waiting on the road for us to haul the soda and bread up the mountain. There were a few men and about ten young

women, many weighing in at no more than 120 lbs. They lined up behind the Land Rover. It took three men to pick up a case of soda and set it on the girl's head, and then they headed up the mountain. Half of them got to come back for a second case.

We opened the service with some songs, prayers and introductions, as is common in Kenya. After caring for those things, I began to teach a class on the Book of Mormon. The class came first, because not everyone had arrived there yet, and we wanted everyone to be at the Sacrament Service.

About an hour into the class it began raining so hard, beating on the metal roof, that no one could hear what was being said, so we broke bread, literally in this case. By the time we were done eating, the rains had subsided, and I continued my class for a few hours. Some songs and some words by Moses Ohuru followed the class.

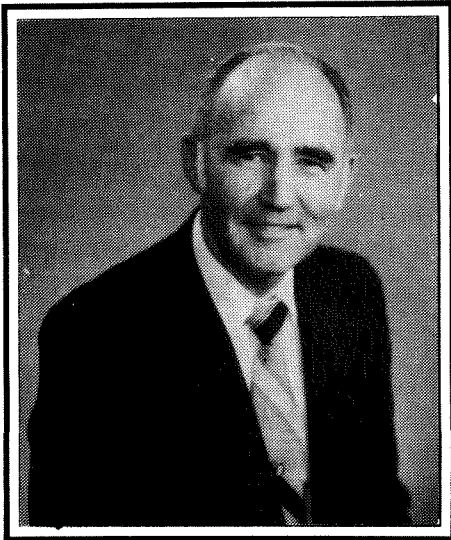
In the late afternoon, we held our Sacrament Service. Smith was in charge and I assisted. Elders Michael Otero and Moses Ohuru passed the emblems and interpreted for us. After taking the emblems, we had a season of prayer followed by testimonies. There were about four people trying to

get to the floor at a time for over an hour, wanting to give a testimony. There were many touching testimonies and a couple of administrations. Elder Moses Ohuru Chuma then took the floor and delivered a calling for Moses Nyabuto Mokweri to occupy in the office of a Priest. Michael, Charles and I all had a witness to the calling, as well as Moses Mokweri, who told that he had seen that he would be called into the ministry by Elder Moses and that he would be ordained by Brothers Brian and Smith. He said he was waiting to see God fulfill that, which he did this day. Moses accepted the calling and was ordained during the meeting by myself, assisted by Smith Brickhouse. Moses is a thirty-six-year-old man that was among those baptized on our first trip to Kenya. He has been acting as the leader in the village of Kiagware for several years and will be a real asset to the work in this district.

Apostle Brian McIndoo



THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST TO THE APOSTLE JOHN



By Apostle Don McIndoo

CHAPTER SIXTEEN (CONTINUED)

At this point in Chapter Sixteen, the understanding of peoples of the Restoration would probably deviate considerably from that of the 18th and 19th century *historicists* in many respects. From their perspective, the first five of these vials were poured out upon the

SECTION NINETEEN: THE FIFTH VIAL

earth within the ten years of the French Revolution (1789–1799) and the Napoleonic Wars that followed it. It is their point of view that the 1260-year reign of the Papacy had come to an end with the French Revolution. They now look for the culmination of secular history.

So popular was their viewpoint that members of many Protestant groups joined together into a movement that was expecting the “advent” of Christ by the year 1843. So they naturally looked for the fulfillment of all the prophecies in the book of Revelation by that time. When nothing happened at that time, many were discouraged and returned to their previous congregations. However, this movement gave rise to the Adventist Church. Within her ranks were to be found many of the *historicist* commentators.

I believe we can see clearly written on the pages of history the events describing the vial of the fifth angel.

“And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds” Revelation 16:10, 11.

Njeim, the RLDS commentator, writes that this vial is to be poured out upon the seat of the beast, which he identifies as being “symbolic of governments of this civilization whether they be civil or ecclesiastical.”

“The people of this world are restless, and, naturally, they are looking to the different governments for help. They are staggering under the punitive measures inflicted by the vials of the preceding four angels. How can our economic problems be solved in a world resisting the message of Christ?”

“Again, no one religion has found a solution to the problem. Like civil governments, all are hoping for relief, but the darkness continues to persist. In the descriptive language of John, the intensity of the darkness becomes so great that the governing powers ‘gnawed their tongues with pain’, but refused to listen to God who has the solution.”¹

I believe we can see clearly written on the pages of history the events describing the vial of the fifth angel. This vial is to be poured out upon the **“seat of the beast.”** Whether we are speaking of the old, pagan Roman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, or the Papacy, the seat of her power was always found in the center of Europe. During the 19th century the population of Europe would more than double, bringing to light a multitude of social, economic and political problems. In 1818 a child was born to a Jewish

couple who had recently converted to Christianity. This boy was born on the very eve of a great social revolution.

He was born just a few miles from the French border, in the old German city of Trier, ancient Roman capital of the north. Here the Emperor Constantine made his headquarters. Here was the very center of Roman Catholicism, the very **“seat of the beast.”** That boy’s name was Karl Marx. He was born in the center of the Holy Roman Empire. The society of Europe in that day consisted of three classes – the clergy, the nobility and everyone else. In his famous *Communist Manifesto*, Marx wrote, **“Let the ruling classes tremble at a communistic revolution.”²** Indeed, the entire Catholic world began to tremble.

Marx, whose education was influenced by the philosophers of the Enlightenment, was an avowed atheist. He, and most other Communist leaders **“...discouraged religious worship because they considered religion a threat to Communism.”³**

In his *Manifesto*, Marx taught the necessity for the capitalist class to be **“...overthrown and it would be eliminated by a worldwide working-class revolution and replaced by a classless society.”** In his

theories, he postulated **“...the necessity for workers to seize political power by armed insurrection....”⁴** This is exactly what took place in Russia in 1917 and in countless countries around the world since that time – armed insurrection, revolution, terrorism and bloodshed.

Certain basic features have been shared by all these Communist countries, whether they be found in Europe, Asia, Africa or Latin America. **“One of these features was totalitarianism. In totalitarian countries, the government controls almost all aspects of people’s lives.”⁵** Consider what happened in Russia when Stalin took control of the nation and in 1928 implemented his 5 Year Plan for the economy:

To remove resisting farmers from their parcels of land, he **“...sent about a million families into exile”** where millions starved to death. In the 1930’s Stalin set up his special police system. **“Millions of persons were executed or sent to labor camps. Fear spread through the U.S.S.R. as neighbors were ordered to spy on one another. The Soviet government broke up families, and it urged**

children to inform on their parents to the police.”⁶

“The Roman Catholic Church ...had been a special target of violence...” of the Paris Commune which **“...proclaimed death to all tyrants, priests and Prussians.”**⁷ Have you ever wondered why the Catholic Church was so silent during those years when Hitler was building his Nazi system? It is because Catholic Europe looked to Hitler and Mussolini as allies in their struggle against Communism and modernism. **“...the Church remained committed to monarchy, the authority that comes from above, not below.”** And the **“Communists had evolved into what they would remain for most of the twentieth century – the Catholic Church’s arch enemy.”**⁸

The growing Communist movement has, indeed, brought about a great weakening of the Roman Catholic Church around the world. This is not as much the result of a direct assault upon the church, as from the fact that so many impoverished people in Catholic nations have been caught up in the deception of Socialist and Communist doctrine.

Hanson writes, **“Both Communist and Fascist states battered the church between the First and Second World Wars. The European urban workers, especially in Catholic countries, had generally been won**

over to Socialism or Communism before the First World War.”⁹

Much of the pain and darkness in the Catholic nations of Latin America is the direct result of a new theology that has been espoused by Catholic priests. It is termed Liberation Theology and one of its founders was Gustavo Gutiérrez, who points out **“...any consideration of this topic must start from two facts: class struggles exist, and neutrality in the struggle is impossible. The task of today’s Christian is the liberation of humanity.”**¹⁰ It is no coincidence that his edicts sound like the philosophy of Marx. **“Liberation theologians at first strongly advocated socialism and were unashamedly influenced by Marxism.”**¹¹

Interestingly, in January of 1973, when Liberation Theology was beginning to raise its head in Latin America, the late Apostle Marvin Ely, of the Church of Christ, received a spiritual dream. In that dream he saw the crescent moon revolving rapidly around the earth about halfway between the horizon and the zenith. The leading edge was the color of the moon at night, but the remaining part was a blend of red and purple. Streaming behind the moon was a band of light the same color.

He remembered that this apparition rotated around the earth about four times. Each time its color was dimmer. After the final revolution, it fell to-

ward the earth and changed into the form of a star. It fell in front of a cloud that was gray in color, and then it dissipated. From that spot ashes began to fall upon the earth.

Apostle Ely wrote, **“The color was a cross between red and purple. The meaning of these colors were (sic) also plain to my understanding: The Red represented Communism; the Purple represented the Catholic Church.”** Brother Ely wrote of his experience and gave it to the Council of Apostles, as well as others.

The late Apostle Archie Bell wrote, **“When I first read the account of this dream, the Spirit rested upon me, bearing witness that this was a Divinely inspired dream. The object looked like a new moon. This would be the shape of a crescent. The crescent was the emblem of Turkey, and became the emblem of Mohammedanism (sic), or the Moslem of today. This would indicate that Communism, and Catholicism will use the Arabs to their advantage. ...They will fall and eventually their influence will be destroyed.”**

In Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Brazil, Peru, Columbia and other Catholic nations in the Americas the depredations of both left-wing revolutionaries and right-wing death squads have brought decades of darkness, terror and gnawing pain to countless millions of

people. Suffering the most have been the impoverished Native American. And who is to blame for this misery? In 1980 Archbishop Lefebvre gives answer: **"In Central America, the Bishops have yielded to Communism. In South America only countries like Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and Uruguay can join forces for the Catholic fight against Communism."**¹²

In a sense, the United States contributed to that rise of Liberation Theology and its commitment to armed insurrection in that, in our fear of the growing Communist threat, we have supported repressive, right-wing dictators such as Somoza in Nicaragua, Batista of Cuba and Romero of El Salvador. These leaders kept their people in poverty and political subjection, making them receptive to the teachings of the Liberation Theologists.

Just as Apostle Ely's dream of the eventual dissipation of the Communist/Catholic coalition, that threat *seems* to have largely come to a conclusion in the Americas. Only in Cuba and Columbia does the gnawing pain still assault the populace. Communist and/or Socialist Parties are still a strong voice in the politics of European nations, and in Africa the Communist/Muslim dictatorships of several nations causes great distress to the well-being of the common man.

The terrible darkness and pain brought upon the world by the growth of Communism,

identified as the **"abomination of desolation"** by the late Apostle Archie Bell of the Church of Christ, has not been restricted to the Catholic Church: The entire world has been thrown into turmoil, revolution, and bloodshed. There is no doubt that worldwide Communism, with all its evils and abuses, has caused individuals and the nations of the world to gnaw their tongues with pain as they lived out their lives in the darkness of this system.

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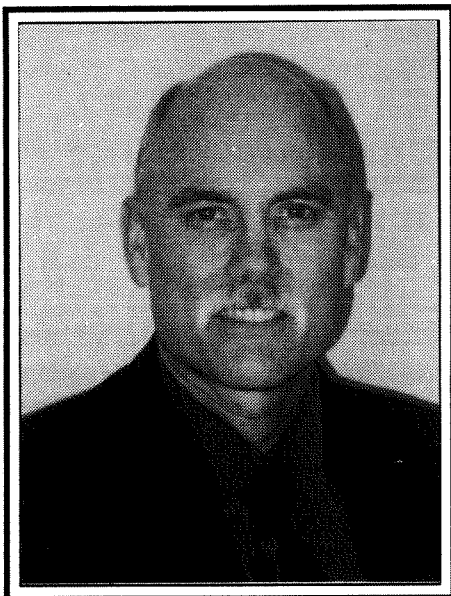
Politics, 1987, p. 57.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 108.

11. *Encyclopedia Americana*, "Liberation Theology", Vol. 17, p. 297.

12. *Op Cit*, Hanson, p. 104.

Articles of Faith & Practice



***(A continuation study by
Elder Gordon McCann)***

The purpose of the first advent of our Lord, when He came into the world as a man to live and to die in the flesh, was not to condemn the world (John 3:17) but to bring about the redemption of mankind and to deliver in person the plan of salvation.

Redemption was to bring mankind back into the pres-

Article #6

We believe in the literal second coming and millennial reign of Jesus Christ; in the resurrection of the Dead, and in Eternal Judgment; that men will be rewarded or punished according to the good or evil they may have done.

ence of God by way of the resurrection of the dead. Jesus makes the statement "I am the resurrection" (John 11:25; Mosiah 8:54-91). Jesus, being the first to rise (Acts 26:23; 2 Ne 1:75), was given power of His Father: "No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18; Mosiah 8:35).

With the plan of salvation

came the promise of eternal life with our Father in heaven to all who would keep His commandments while in the flesh.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3).

The second advent of

Christ will be a day of judgment that will come upon the inhabitants of the earth.

"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works" (Matthew 16:27).

The Father gave His Son Jesus Christ all power and authority to judge the world.

"For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:" (John 5:22).

The return of Christ will be during a time when mankind will least expect it.

"Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (Revelation 16:15).

This second coming of Christ will bring about the resurrection of the dead in Christ, as well as issue in a thousand year reign of Christ's kingdom on earth.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto

them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection" (Revelation 20:4-5).

Eternal judgment will come upon all mankind as they stand before God to give account of their lives. Our lives will be judged according to the word of God that has been recorded throughout the history of mankind that was "written in the books" (Rev 20:12; 2 Ne 12:66; Alma 14:38; 3 Ne 13:2-3).

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened,

which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Revelation 20:11-15).

The scripture is plain concerning the return of Christ, bringing with Him the promise of eternal salvation or the second death.

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:12-14).

TO GOD BE THE GLORY

"To God Be The Glory" ... that's one of my favorite songs, and lately it has meant even more to me. I want to tell you about it.

Dick, my husband, had worked for this one consulting engineering company, beginning in 1981, for 6 1/2 years, and we were confident he would be with them until retirement. This company sent us to Utah to live while Dick helped build a power plant, then on to more work within the company. But as his company had no new job to send him to he was laid off. At 60 1/2 years old, that's a pretty scary thing to have happen when a family has two houses to care and pay for, plus a daughter in college and one seriously thinking of marriage!

Of course, we took our problem to the Lord in fasting and prayer. Then, before November ended, Dick was asked to come to work for a contractor he had been supervising. So his last day of work for one company was November 30th and his first day of work for the new company was December 1st!

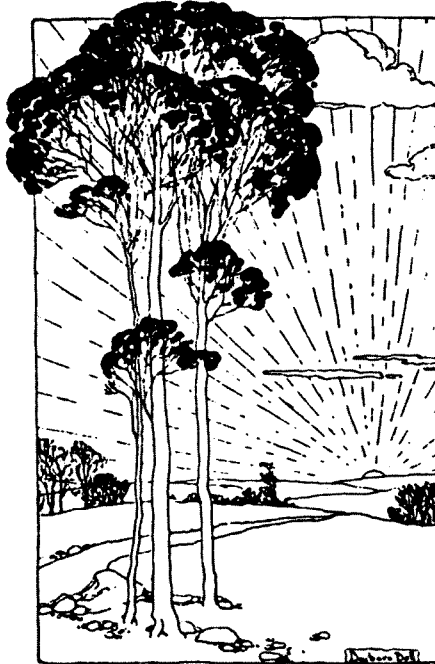
Then I discovered I needed a major operation in March. Two weeks after the surgery I started back to work and received a telephone call from Dick that April 22nd would be his last day with this new company! Dick and I again took our problems to the Lord in fasting and prayer. We had a daughter graduating from college May 14 and a daughter getting married May 21 in Independence. We wanted to be there with all our hearts! Besides, Dick was scheduled to perform the wedding ceremony!

Just right away a job possibility opened at the Bureau of Reclamation in Duchensne. But, of course, the government requires so much paper work and it never moves fast. It looked like maybe Dick would have a job sometime around the first of June! Thank the Lord!

Then as we were wondering how we would be able to survive that long on my salary and his unemployment income, the state and federal income tax refund arrived and we were able to keep paying our bills.

I would like to add right here that we continued to pay our tithing right along, putting our faith in the Lord's promise to bless. It works!

We felt the job with the Bureau was imminent, but we never stopped fasting and praying. Things were not settled, but we felt the Lord was at the controls and it would be okay for us to go to the



PATHLIGHTS

graduation and wedding, that the job was being delayed so we COULD go.

After we returned, things were still taking a long time. I am ashamed to tell you this... then I began to be discouraged. I was not well and I could see an end to the finances and then what were we to do? Dick was to get the answer the next day. He learned another man had edged him out!

Once more that feeling of panic! But I was ashamed of myself and prayed for forgiveness and we continued to pray and fast. That same day Dick learned of a different position in the same office he could apply for.

More paperwork for the government, more delays... but this time I was determined to not be discouraged and to have faith that the Lord was taking care of us and preparing something wonderful for us and that there MUST be a reason He brought us to Utah... a work for Dick to do, for me to help him... and that it was Satan who was causing the delays.

Then the big test for me came. The Denver office said he would have to be re-certified by another office to be considered a disabled veteran (this was to receive the 10 point preference). They

were not willing to pick up the phone and get verifications! Dick and I said a prayer and he called the Salt Lake City VA office and they said they would write the letter of verification that day and send it to Dick. We received it the next day and Dick put it over night to Denver and things were once more progressing.

I have always wanted to have more patience... I have known this was one of my major faults. So I have been praying for the Lord to help me to learn patience. You'd better be careful what you pray for and that it is really what you want! Because patience is exactly what the Lord was teaching me!

Dick was called to report for work July 11th. His job is not a temporary appointment, but permanent. He has been reinstated for the years he was with the government in the past, which adds up to 6 1/2 years towards his retirement with them. (The exact amount of time he lost with the engineering company of Kansas City, Missouri!)

And now Dick has made telephone contact with a man in Ogden, Utah, who wants to know more about our church. He has made contact with an isolated member of the church in Ogden who is also looking forward to our visit. He has made contact with an Indian nearby who is trying hard to help his people and is happy for Dick's interest and willingness to help too. So it certainly looks as if there is work for Dick to do for the Lord in this area.

I made a promise that when the Lord had blessed us, as we were asking Him to do, that I would write the testimony for others so they would know the Lord's promises are true and that He does care about each one of His "sheep."

This was the second, but hardest unemployment events of three very similar unemployment periods in our married life together, that only "much fasting and prayer" enabled us, by God's blessing, to overcome.

Whatever do people DO, who have trials and problems and don't know they can turn to the Lord?!? Again and again I keep thinking, "To God Be The Glory!"

*In Christian love,
Velma J. Wheaton
Vernal, Utah Spring, 1984*

REPORT

2003 SOLEMN ASSEMBLY & CONFERENCE

AREAS REPRESENTED: Arizona, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Canada, Honduras, Yucatan.

TOTAL ATTENDANCE: 321

DATES: Solemn Assembly, Friday and Saturday, April 2-3; Conference: Sunday, April 4 through Wednesday, April 7.

If there were to be a theme ascribed to this year's conference it would be **WARNING**, as well as **HOPE**, looking forward to the salvation of God's people from Babylon and the setting up of His kingdom in these last days. There were many testimonies of dreams and visions given for our benefit.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SOLEMN ASSEMBLY

The elders in charge presented these important things to think about and pray about:

We are possibly closer to Christ's return for the second time than they were when we read in the Book of Mormon just prior to His first coming.

We all have some memorable experience that returns again and again of the Lord's working. I hope we will experience something to keep in remembrance at this time. (We did!)

When praise and thanksgiving is the theme of a service, we are blessed. "Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise" Psalms 100:4.

Mosiah 12:5-6: Alma and the four sons of Mosiah "...were desirous that salvation should be declared to every creature, for they could not bear that any human soul should perish; Yea, even the very thoughts that any soul should endure endless torment, did cause them to quake and tremble." Their success came by mighty fasting and prayer.

The church members in foreign lands almost outnumber the United States members. What a blessing! This little Church of Christ has been used to bring it about because God has made promises and they are real.

Matthew 6:33, Luke 12:31, Jacob 2:23, III Nephi 6:11: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Ether 3:92-102: There were secret combi-

nations in Moroni's time. They are also in our time. Gentiles should be shown these things that they might repent and not let them get above them or "the sword of the justice of the eternal God should fall upon you, to your overthrow and destruction."

Keep ourselves unspotted from the world, Psalms 103.

BAPTISM: Cynthia Greenwood, granddaughter of Sister Marlene Cobb of Springfield, Missouri, told of her commitment to follow the Lord for the rest of her life in the presence of witnesses at the service. She then followed her Lord into the waters of baptism. She was baptized by her Uncle Elder Randy Sheldon, and confirmed by her cousin Elder Matthew Case.

TESTIMONIES

A dream related by a brother, given to his wife one and a half years ago: She was standing in a large, spacious field. A child of about two or three years of age took her hand. The child pointed up in the sky and said, "Look!" There was a map of the U.S. Missiles came across the ocean and struck in multiple areas. Again, the child pointed in another direction and said, "Look!" Missiles struck Honduras and other places.

He prayed about the dream and was led to read III Nephi 9, the last several verses. Destruction is coming. Then his mother called and told him to turn on the news. It was showing the World Trade Center attack. This is a type of what is to come. Two weeks before he came to Conference, these words came to him: "You have an opportunity, 'therefore be ye perfect.'" He was reasoning with God. He studied Matthew 19:21, 29: "Sell that thou hast and give to the poor." Forsake all for His name's sake.

Vision given to a sister several years ago: She and her husband were in Missouri in the winter in the mid 1960's. They took a drive in the countryside on a Sunday afternoon. She marveled at the beautiful hills all around the city. The thought came to her that one day, "Zion will flourish on these hills." Then she saw a scene of Zion. She can't describe it. It was heaven on earth. We have this to look forward to, provided by the Lord for us weak little humans. **IT IS GOING TO BE!**

Yucatan: Thinking about the accident that

happened. Why do these things happen?

Brother Sergio, who passed away in the accident, had told a girl in the church that there were things that were about to happen. Many things will change. He gave counsel to each of his children to be prepared. The coming of Christ is near. There is no time to lose. We have a short time. We don't know when our lives will finish.

An old brother in the church had a dream. He was discouraged because of his problems. Christ told him he needed to prepare. "My coming is near." Tell your family and friends. Because of this dream he is coming to church. He asked for a special meeting and invited people to hear his testimony.

A sister in the church asked, "Why did the accident happen? She had a dream. She saw a beautiful tree. Birds came and ate all of the tree. She saw a small part of it. She heard a voice say, "Don't be sad because it will grow again." Something else is going to grow from that experience (the accident). Other people are coming to church—six more young people. The families who were discouraged are now attending.

HIGHLIGHTS OF SACRAMENT SERVICE, SUNDAY MORNING

Several elders sat in front to participate in the serving of the emblems. One took charge and gave us some encouraging thoughts:

Today we are remembering Christ's sacrifice. We need to remember it every day. If we love someone, we remember him or her every day. In trials it is difficult to remember the love of Christ. God loves us, and He has a plan for each of us—a special mission to complete. This is a very important event. In the Spanish Bible, we are announcing the event. We need to examine ourselves, not just participate. What have I done? And what am I going to do? What have I done with the blessings in my life? Be a good example. Are you every day? Christ said, "We are to be the light of the world."

"I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my

words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" John 15:5-7. Are you a good branch? We are nothing without Christ. Make an effort every day. Everything worthwhile needs effort. Participate with a broken heart and contrite spirit. Ask forgiveness every day.

If I ask you, "What are the three words that describe your life, what would they be? In III Nephi 8:28, 30, 32: Christ ordained the Sacrament. The people there were filled, or satisfied. We need humility to feel filled. Verses 34-36: It is simple to understand. The promise is that if we take the sacrament of the Lord, we will have the spirit of God to be with us. Our enemy is trying to destroy us.

TESTIMONIES

Several testimonies centered on appreciation of the prayers of the saints. Some said they could feel the prayers for them.

A great grandson of James E. Yates told a testimony of his grandparents from many years ago. The Yates family was traveling by covered wagon through the desert. There was no water. Their mouths felt like cotton. The team was flagging. By James' faith he pulled the canvas off his wagon and spread it in a low place and gathered his family together for a season of prayer over the problem. A cloud came over and turned black. It rained over them and filled the canvas so they could fill their jugs and water the team.

A visitor from Tanzania, Africa, who works at the rest home where one of our sisters reside, stood and humbly told that he wants to make friends and learn the meaning of things in the Bible.

A brother stood and repeated a question asked of him by a non-member—What wouldn't you do for me, not a member of the church? The answer came to our brother later—give the broken body and spilt blood of Christ. Then he gave us good counsel. This is Christ's church. We believe without question. God has a plan that we must share. The "body of Christ" is the church. It's a refuge to mankind. His way is the only way. There are save two churches. If we do not belong to the Church of the Lamb of God, we will belong to Satan's Church. "The greatest gift to me was forgiveness."

A young woman stood and told of the horrifying experience of her father having a tractor roll onto him. Her grandfather administered to him. She was so distraught that she walked away. Her grandfather came and put his arm around her. He said, "Do you believe in God?"

Have you prayed about anything that God answered? Haven't you prayed for your father? Believe. When we pray that His will be done, your prayer will be answered. Her father suffered no broken bones or internal bleeding. In fact, his eyesight was even better. The Lord placed everything in order.

One stood and expressed thankfulness for a new church building. Our hands are full of labor. There is no time for small and insignificant things. Let's get the work done. If the church is called by My name and is My church, the works of the Father will be shown forth in it. There was a girl who had an illness for three months. She was administered to and was healed. We will have that assurance and bear testimony that this is the Bride of Christ.

Counsel was given us that God is perfect and He will not let us fall. Lie back in His arms. Go where He sends you. Do what He wants you to do.

Another who came out of the Catholic church into the Church of Christ told her experience. One evening she was planning on going to a friend's church, but changed her plans when another friend, of the Church of Christ, invited her to go to one of our services. A brother in the church asked if she prayed to God. She couldn't answer other questions that were posed to her. She was told in the Catholic church that if she left the church she would go to hell. It scared her. She was asked if she believed that the Catholic church is the true church. She answered, "No. There are many things I don't understand." "Then, what is your problem?" She became interested, but her family was very much opposed to the Book of Mormon. Later a personage appeared to her and twice said, "Let others go their way. You're all right." She also had a dream in which she saw a tornado of different colors. The interpretation was that the doctrines of other churches were going around and around. She was baptized into the Church of Christ. Her Mother wouldn't talk to her for three months. Under the hands of the elders she was spoken to and told she would be a light to her family. "I know this is the true gospel. If you make your problems a matter of prayer, He will answer."

An elder testified of administration to his daughter. She suffered illnesses. One night she had a high fever. The Mother didn't know what to do. The elder said, "We're going to pray and I will administer to her." He felt she would receive a blessing. He went into another room and then checked on his daughter ten minutes later. The fever was gone. It was the first time his wife had seen such a miracle.

In Yucatan when the hurricane struck they saw blessings every moment. Neighbors gathered in a home talking about the gospel, opening up opportunities to reach other people. Nothing happened to that home. The roof over two of the rooms is cement. The roofs of the other homes were completely destroyed. His father's home was also undisturbed. The people helped each other. The church roof was partly destroyed and the floor was flooded. There were two guitars there. One was destroyed but not the other. "We are still using it to praise our Father. God is giving us more spiritual experiences. I am always thinking, 'How can I encourage the young?'"

He told a dream in which he was walking on a narrow path. It was difficult in parts. Some parts he had to walk slowly. Other parts he could walk fast. He reached the ultimate goal. He was very happy. "Our efforts are not in vain. We are praying for you."

His father, in a sacrament service, had a vision. He was kneeling in front, in charge of the meeting. There was an angel behind the table. He put a plate on the table. "God has set a table for us. There are many blessings available for us."

God can reveal to anyone. A sister had the same vision twice. She was sitting in a sacrament service when she saw in front at the table a beautiful ocean. On the ocean there was a piece of paper with a Bible passage, Acts 2:16-21. The next sacrament service she saw the same thing. "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS IN THE LAST DAYS, SAITH GOD, I WILL POUR OUT OF MY SPIRIT UPON ALL FLESH: AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR YOUNG MEN SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS: AND ON MY SERVANTS AND ON MY HANDMAIDENS I WILL POUR OUT IN THOSE DAYS OF MY SPIRIT; AND THEY SHALL PROPHECY: AND I WILL SHEW WONDERS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, AND SIGNS IN THE EARTH BENEATH; BLOOD, AND FIRE, AND VAPOUR OF SMOKE: THE SUN SHALL BE TURNED INTO DARKNESS, AND THE MOON INTO BLOOD, BEFORE THAT GREAT AND NOTABLE DAY OF THE LORD COME: AND IT SHALL COME TO PASS THAT WHOSOEVER SHALL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD SHALL BE SAVED."

In the last days He will give us this Spirit. Are we prepared for that?

OTHER CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS
SETTING APART OF ELDER RICK OLSON TO

THE GENERAL BISHOPRIC by Apostles Brian McIndoo and Smith Brickhouse.

APRIL 6 SPECIAL SERVICE—A historical celebration for the 173rd anniversary of the restored Church of Christ. It was presented in two parts by two of our apostles.

First Part: Included Bible prophecies of the inception of the apostasy (falling away from the faith revealed by Christ), and the restoration of Christ's church here upon the earth.

Revelations 12—1260 years of apostasy, ending 1830.

Protestant Reformation, in other words protests.

Daniel 2, describing the Restoration of the kingdom of God, correlated with Isaiah 29, Ezekiel 37, John 10:16 and quoting from the *Marvelous Work and A Wonder*, by Daniel MacGregor.

Now, 173 years later, the kingdom won't be complete until the Lord will recover His ancient covenant people—His "other sheep."

This is the only church that can claim Revelation 14:6, which says, "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," as referring to the establishment of the Church of Christ here on the earth. The Holy priesthood was delivered by an angel. His kingdom will ultimately fill the earth.

Joseph Smith asked, "Which Church shall I join?" He was told not to join any of them. They were all wrong.

The Lord, by revelation, pointed out the spot for the temple to Joseph Smith in July of 1831. Malachi 3:1 tells us that "...the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in...."

The Saints were driven from Jackson County in 1833 but came back in 1867, in accordance to a revelation given to Granville Hedrick in 1864.

III Nephi 10 and Ether 6:1-3 tell us that this is the people and the place for the New Jerusalem and the Temple of the Lord. We have custody.

In the 1920's false doctrines, human innovations, came into the Church. There were faithful men who insisted on compliance. We lost about one-third of the membership during this time. The office of President was rejected because it was un-scriptural, and the apostolic order was restored.

The remnant is to establish the kingdom of God, reigning with Jesus Christ for one thou-

sand years.

Second Part: A presentation of the future of the Kingdom of God.

May 1927, a revelation given to apostle James E. Yates. The Lord has preserved a remnant to carry His work to final completion. He has held us in the hollow of His hand, an instrument of His choosing. It is the heritage which we celebrate. This prophecy is being fulfilled in our sight.

It is the Lord's work. He is doing it. We have an opportunity to be a part of it.

This is Israel's day. The remnant of the seed of Israel shall know, I Nephi 4:16.

Vision of Ken Oar, August, 1998, as we knelt in prayer prior to Placido Koyoc Yam's ordination to apostle. Suspended above Yucatan was a small tree. It spread over almost all of Central America. Its canopy spread rapidly.

Vision of John Case in 2000: As he was seated a cloth, off-white in color, dropped in front of him. Close observation revealed the fibers were relaxed. It had strength and value. It represented the church. Some are doing more than they can, some are not doing enough. The voids in the cloth began to be filled. It had flaws, but the cloth became strong and valuable, and it became brilliant white. It was washed in the blood of the Lamb. He saw works of an unseen hand, to repair things that separate and divide. The Lord knows how to repair.

Revelation 3 describes the church of the Laodiceans. They were lukewarm. Our present problem is that we have a life of comfort, freedom, and peace. We have health care, a job, etc. We like a comfortable life style. "...But thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked..." verse 17.

II Timothy 3:1: "In the last days perilous times shall come." It lists the traits of sinful men in that day. The world has an effect on God's people. The world has a form of godliness but denies the power of God. We mingle with the world and then come to church on Sunday. It is dangerous, perilous.

Don't excuse yourself in the least on any point. Romans 12:1-2—Present your bodies a living sacrifice—be not conformed to this world. What are you called to sacrifice?

Galatians 5:24—Crucify the flesh. Are you setting a standard that is high for our children and grandchildren? Jesus endured the cross, Hebrews 12:2. We are called to be separate.

There will be two churches only (Nephi's vision, I Nephi 3:219-228). The power of the Lamb of God will defeat sin. God is going to cleanse. The Lord is going to bring a dreadful

day.

The New Jerusalem will be here and "Satan will have no more power over the hearts of the children of men:" I Nephi 7:32. He will preserve the righteous, even destroying their enemies by fire. The righteous need not fear, verses 36-37.

If you are not righteous, you will fear. Get out of your comfort zone.

Rick Olson's dream just before his ordination. There was violence done in front of him, but a veil was there so that he couldn't see it. The Lord stood in the gap. If you do not know the Lord, there's a sacrifice needed.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM OTHER SERMONS

Isaiah 51:4-8: Harken to me, my people... My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait on me, and on mine arm shall they trust... the heavens shall vanish... the earth shall wax old... Harken... the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men... my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation."

Our brothers spoke of the church in the past and of the church now. Many things are uncertain:

What to do? Is there a fear in you? God has not given the spirit of fear, but of love and a sound mind. You have a sound mind, with love and trust in the power of God. We resist change.

The hope: You can call upon the Lord and trust in Him, Psalms 27:2-4; God will comfort and guard you while the ungodly will fear, Psalms 4:3.

We should not be unaware of the prophecies.

The natural man is an enemy of God and seeks the needs of the flesh; is self-willed. We saw it in Hitler. People are covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, fight against Zion. It can be in the church. Denying the power of God, blasphemy to say our ways are best.

Matthew 24:6-7: There will be wars and rumor of wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes. Jesus said, "see that ye be not troubled." It is near at the door. This generation shall not pass until all be fulfilled, verse 34 and Luke 21:32.

Luke 21:24: The kingdom of God is nigh at hand. In 1967 Jerusalem not trodden down of Gentiles.

Proverbs 30:17: God's judgment will be upon those who are after the flesh. Today's battle leads to Armageddon.

How many of the world have heard the name of Christ? ¼, ½, ¾, 99%? Less than 1%. God has a plan. Matthew 24:14 says that this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world and then the end comes. The Lord's work is changing fast. Are we willing to labor for the Master?

In Jacob 3:14: We are called to labor with the Lord, keep all the commandments. Call all people out of the world. Romans 12: "Be not conformed to this world." We can't go with immorality.

We have to labor with our might. Be excited. God has control if we allow ourselves to be used.

III Nephi 10: Jesus speaks of all these events of the last days, of the New Jerusalem, of the covenant people to be gathered. The promises in verses 18-26: "My kindness shall not depart from thee (nor) my peace be removed; all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children; thou shalt be far from oppression... and from terror; No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord."

Search these things of Zion.

The Apostasy: The church went into the wilderness. It was restored April 6, 1830. In one year there was a President. Satan put back into the church the very thing that put the original church into apostasy. After Joseph Smith was martyred the church split. Like "King of the Mountain," the restoration churches vied for the position of Christ's Church. The Lord saved a remnant.

Are we ready for Zion? Zion could have been from the Restoration time until now, but it hasn't happened.

We have the opportunity of a lifetime.

II Nephi 12:86—The Lord will commence His work to bring about the restoration of His people.

He will smite the earth and slay the wicked. There will be a great division. He will spare His people, even if it be by fire. Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling, together, and a little child shall lead them.

The first two commandments are not the goals of the world or the U.S. God's kingdom is the only one to last forever.

We justify ourselves that tithing is all that we have to give. The widow of Mark 12 gave her all.

What are you willing to give up for the kingdom of God?

He has a kingdom, and it begins here. We

have to think about the kingdom we're trying to build up. "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" Philippians 2:3-4. That's what will build this kingdom.

We are guardians of the truth. You and I will help with the future history of the Church of Christ.

In business, if you don't continue to grow you lose your identity. The same is in the spiritual world.

The power of God continues to bless those that are His. Perilous times shall come. Dreams and visions will reveal to us. Alma 9:18: If men will not harden their hearts, the mysteries of God will be revealed to them. If we are quick to discount, that's hardening the heart, not allowing the Lord to work with you and through you.

I Nephi 7:32-36: Satan shall have no more power over the hearts of the children of men. The wicked shall be burned. His wrath will be poured out. He will preserve the righteous by fire. Verse 48—The righteous need not fear. The Lord must reign in your heart now if you want protection.

We should anticipate events in fulfillment of prophecies.

How do you put down false doctrine? The Bible and Book of Mormon. None can come against the truth of God.

Do you ever feel alone? God has always worked with one—one man, one family, one body.

In Alma 12:208-13:50: Alma was the guardian of the truth. He presented it to the king. The king was ready to give up half of his kingdom to know the truth. What did you give up to build up His kingdom—retirement, insurance, vacations, fun, etc.? I'm not saying give it all up—there are necessities we're responsible for. Many are living "high on the hog." Do you have to have the best?

Daniel 2 tells us there was a kingdom set up that would never be destroyed and not left to other people. We are custodians and guardians of the truth.

Daniel 2:44-45: The power of the world is going to fall. Do you believe that? "The dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." If you're a member of His church you're part of that stone.

If we know God, we know the future.

Jacob 4:8: "Cleave unto God as he cleaveth to you."

BUSINESS MEETINGS for the general conference ended with the afternoon session on Monday, April 7th. The following two days were spent in reunion with prayer and testimony meetings, sermons and song services.

HIGHLIGHTS

PRAYERS

For the gifts of the spirit—understanding, wisdom, revelation, healing, prophecy—that we would be a light, because of this power in our midst.

Thanking Him that the Lord has raised up men to serve Him; that He has used us weak vessels; for great love and long suffering and that He has labored so long with us; for opportunity to gather in one, that we would be unified and lay aside the things that separate us.

Asked for deliverance from our enemies, spiritual and physical.

To the fill the vacancy in the council of apostles.

Make known His will and to understand prophecy, be one in purpose, doctrine, and belief.

For strong Christian families.

To send His angels and the three who have tarried to the peoples of this world; that Israel would recognize the shortness of the day and that all might be accomplished according to His Holy will.

TESTIMONIES

Two men were working a mine. The mine car was on a slope. They braced it against the rib of the wall with a log. They wanted to move it a little. So one of them stood about ten feet ahead of the car ready to put a steel pin into the spokes to lock up the wheels as it came to him. The other man took the log away to let the car roll down the slope and grabbed onto the car to slow it. But the first man missed his chance to lock up the wheels with the steel pin. By that time the legs of the one on the car were under the car and sliding along. The car weighed a little over a ton. He saw in vision the tie on the railroad track. He understood perfectly to let go. He was going to look around to see the tie. The lights went out and the car hit the tie throwing it off the track. He was trapped under the car. The other man was very strong and was able to lift the car off him. It wouldn't have happened had he obeyed the still small voice of the Lord telling him to let go.

A sister told of her experience that morning, being awakened suddenly from a troubling dream. God gives us dreams to prepare us for things coming, as He had done for her

before. When she was sixteen years old the Lord gave her a dream preparing her for the death of her father a week earlier. She was admonished to pray that she would understand. Her father died as she was praying for understanding of her dream in a prayer meeting. He will warn us if we will heed. The horror can be avoided if we listen. He shapes our lives. If there are things that need to be changed, that He would reveal to her, then she might be spared cause for great sadness and loss.

WE ALL KNELT IN A HEARTFELT SEASON OF PRAYER FOR HER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DREAM AND STRENGTH TO OBEY.

From the Philippines:

One of our missionaries told how when they got off the plane they saw defiance in the stares of the native people that they hadn't noticed before, an anti-American sentiment. He was never frightened, only unnerved, because they felt our prayers for them. There was a bombing in Davao, one and a half miles from where they stayed. The military closed the city and airport. In the little town of Terrell, people wanted to buy a piece of property on the Muslim side of town. A van load of them went to see it in the jungle. They turned off onto a little narrow road. They went about two miles when they saw a motor bike taxi (it hauls about ten people) right in the middle of the road. There was no one around, and they couldn't move it. One of the church members went to see what was going on. He met a leader of the Terrell group in a Jeepney coming from that direction who told him that there was a rebel group camped ahead and that it was too dangerous. Who placed the motor bike there? "Because of your prayers we and the brothers and sisters in the Philippines were protected."

In one village they scheduled forty-seven baptisms. The candidates were lined up down to the river.

From a sermon: A meeting was scheduled in Mount Carmel. One of the elders wanted to meet prior to this to be prepared. The Lord had spoken to him. He told him that there was danger to Christians in Carmel. So they changed their plans. The next day the International airport at Davao was bombed and there were two other bombings, kidnappings and shootings. The elders were informed that one of the Philippine elder's sons had a dream warning not to go to Mount Carmel. In the dream he saw men in uniforms with guns and knives. There was a lot of blood and hostages were taken. Had we not listened, that dream would have been fulfilled.

From Honduras:

An elder expressed appreciation of our prayers for that mission. They have problems there that we don't have here. The mechanic had replaced the springs on the Land Rover, and was told the U-bolts were replaced. It was two hours to get to his destination on a rough road. The car didn't feel right. He checked the U-bolts to tighten. One of the nuts was missing. One side already was pulled out of the harness. He tightened the other bolts, then left the problem to the Lord. He drove to his destination. Then when he left, he stopped at the mechanic in town. His arm was broken but he welded, but not all. He drove on. He felt the same feeling, as before, to stop. The same bolt had fallen off. The others were loose. He tightened them. When he got home, he discovered that two bolts were missing. He said, "Of all the problems that could happen, they don't because the Lord is blessing us."

An elder who went to Yucatan told that when he was asked to go, he was reluctant. He was nervous because he didn't speak the language; he is diabetic. He didn't know if he should go. Finally he decided to go. He corresponded by e-mail with brother Moser. He got his tickets, reservations, and schedules off the Internet. He found out he would be in Houston at the same time as Brothers Moser and McIndoo, and was so happy to see Brother Moser coming to meet him. The Lord was working it out. At the Ministers Conference he didn't understand but he enjoyed it and even preached a few times. Once when they were going into town in the car, he was involved in the best spiritual discussion in his life. He learned valuable lessons from his experience there. The people hunger and thirst after spiritual things. He felt the spirit and love of the people. God watched over him.

A sister shared with us that her missionary grandfather told her he would probably not live to see the return of Christ, but that she probably would. She is eighty years old and still has that hope.

OTHER BLESSINGS OF OUR TIME TOGETHER

A SPECIAL MUSIC SERVICE featuring the Conference Choir singing a beautiful cantata, the theme centering around charity. In addition there were solo and group offerings. It all blended into a beautiful spiritual experience. We thank all who participated.

THE UNITED WORKERS LUNCHEON

The women had a refreshing retreat and

luncheon together at the East local annex. All was beautifully decorated, complete with costumed hostesses, to reflect the theme of the four foreign missions of the church—Africa, Honduras, Mexico, the Philippines. We were treated to talks by those who have visited and ministered to three of those areas, one of them a missionary to the Philippines. We were inspired to support those missions with our prayers and money. One project we will take on as a group is to make a certain amount of money available to each of the missions for whatever the missionaries in charge feel necessary for the support of the mission. We finished with a get acquainted game that had us get initials of others, besides a variety of activities relating to travel, and specifically to the areas of our missions, of as many as possible in the time allotted. Numbers were placed under certain chairs for prizes on each table. This year it was a mesh bag with items for travel survival. Our hats off to those that arranged and participated in a loving, fun, educational and inspiring time together.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS: These are the groups of people that get many important things accomplished for the welfare of the church.

MANY THANKS TO ALL THE WORKERS: The **apostles** for their dedication and exhausting efforts before, during, and after the conference; the **other ministry** who took charge of meetings and other needed affairs; the **Conference secretary and assistants**; the **kitchen committee** for their expertise, organization, and sacrifice to feed us delicious meals; the **musicians**—director, pianists, singers for their offerings of love; the **custodians** who arranged for clean up, and the others who were willing to make the effort to clean up after the rest of us; the **housing committee** who made sure everyone had a place to stay; the **sound technicians** who tirelessly recorded by video and audio the sermons and other services, making tapes available to any who wanted them.

For all who made the effort to attend from near and far, you were rewarded. For those who couldn't make it, we encourage you to come next year, and make it the best ever by coming with a prayer and real desire in your heart for the kingdom of God.

MOGOLLON, ARIZONA

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a glorious Easter Sunday and I must write. I must savor the memory of my dear Savior, as He does always remember us. Joel and Hube Yates ministered to us today. My friend Olivia almost did not come today, but the Spirit bid her to come, so she did. Of course Olivia was so blessed by a powerful sermon and wonderful testimonies, related to us by our traveling ministry, that were given at this year's April Conference. I am so happy to see the Lord working in her life and feel she will soon be our sister in Christ.

With all that is going on in the world it was so good to take a breather and be with the Spirit of God. Yes, we have many weak-

nesses and need to repent continually. We are tainted by this society of pride and wealth and our ministries are trying to hold us steady to the course. Today we were truly brought the pleasing word of God that heals the wounded soul. What God and His Son provided for man from the very beginning is nothing short of pure love. Our Lord even endured separation from His Father for a moment on the cross because of our sins. It was a process of events that led from the garden to the cross, and our lives are a process, the crucifixion of our flesh, as we yield to the enticing of the Holy Ghost.

I thank the Lord for faithful servants and friends who come to serve and teach us, with love unfeigned. It makes for a long

day for them, but I trust the Lord will bless them for their sacrifices.

Christ in our heart, I am reminded this day of all that we have, my heart is full, my praise is not nearly sufficient, but His mercy and grace are. I long for the day when every knee shall bow, and all will finally acknowledge the honor due Him. The workings of Christ are manifest in all of the world, and I believe it is only beginning; great and marvelous things we will behold because He Lives.

Mogollon Local,
Kathy Cloyd

Our Father

Our Father Whose love governs heaven,
All praise to thee we raise,
Thy kingdom comes on earth,
Thy love abide in us, even as
It abode in Jesus.
Help us each day, to obey Thy will,
And forgive us our sins, as we forgive others.
Shield us from our own weaknesses,
And deliver us from all evils,
For Thine, alone, is the power
And shall be the honor and glory,
Forever, and ever, Amen, Amen.

—*Author Anonymous*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SPRINGFIELD RALLY

We are having the Springfield Rally on Sunday, **June 22**. It will be at the Chestnut Hall, 4319 W. Chestnut Expressway, Springfield, Missouri 65802. Starting time, etc. to be announced.

Contact Pastor **Matt Case** at (417) 877-9282, or Assistant Pastor **Martin Addie** at (417) 862-2255 for more details.

MICHIGAN REUNION

The Bradley, Michigan, Local would like to extend an invitation to join them for their annual Church of Christ reunion. Reserve the dates of **June 28th and 29th**, 2003, to join in fellowship and spiritual renewal with your brothers and sisters in Michigan. All are invited!!!

For housing and questions contact:

Duane Lee at (616) 795-7420
e-mail address: duane_joyce@hotmail.com

Randy Lee at (616) 948-8971
e-mail address: allofustees@voyager.net

MISSOURI REUNION

The Missouri Reunion Committee would like to invite all to attend the 2003 Missouri Reunion, which will be held **August 1st, 2nd and 3rd**, 2003. All meetings will be held at the Church of Christ headquarters building located on the Temple Lot in Independence, Missouri.

We will again organize an ice cream social for Saturday evening after the final preaching service of the day. The social will be held either just outside the Visitors' Center or in the basement of the church building.

For information, please contact:

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

Mike McGhee
18907 E. 6th Str North
Independence, MO 64056
(816) 796-6255

MINNESOTA REUNION

The Church of Christ, Bemidji Local, welcomes one and all to join with us in a week-long Adventure along the Mississippi River at the Minnesota Reunion 2003. The dates set for this event are **June 30-July 6**.

Since the campgrounds for the Tri-State Reunion were unavailable to us this year, we have combined our week-long **Vacation Scripture School** in the weekday mornings to afternoon **Wake-Up Camp** activities and the weekend **Tri-State Reunion** events. This will provide for activities for all ages, whether you are able to attend for the whole week, or just a few special days. It will be a special time for scripture studies, mini-sermonettes, prayer and testimony services, along with physical activities like camping and swimming in the Mississippi River chain, campfires and canoeing on Three Island Lake, hayrides and hiking along the majestic Minnesota forests.

The Bemidji Local will provide for camping tents and food throughout this event—you will need to bring with you bedding and toiletries and Deep Woods Off for your own comfort.

On Sunday, July 6, we will have a special sacrament service with the dedication of our new church building. We long for the fellowship with you during this worship week in the Gospel Bonds of Jesus, the Christ.

Contacts:

Peter Gould
(218) 586-2774

Leah Ferrier
(218) 586-2367

NEW YORK REUNION

Where: Hogsburg, New York
When: July 11-13, 2003

The Akwesasne New York Local welcomes all of our brothers and sisters to fellowship and worship with us starting Friday evening at 7:00 p.m., **July 11**, through Sunday afternoon, **July 13**, 2003.

In order that the proper preparation may be made, please let one of the people listed below know if you will be attending, how many, and any dietary restrictions that you may have. We have some housing available with church members, as well as some space for campers. There are also plenty of motels in the area.

In Canada:

Wayne and Susan Miller
868 Tollgate Road
Cornwall, Ontario
Canada K6H5R6
(613) 933-5469

In the United States:

Paul and Debbie Grant
2576 Chateaugay Street
Fort Covington, New York 12937
(518) 358-2550
dgrant02@twcny.rr.com

Eli and Gretchen Tarbell
PO Box 21
600 State Route 37
Hogsburg, New York 13655
(518) 358-2911
egtartbell@hotmail.com

Dale and Terry Waldruff
187 State Highway 37C
Massena, New York 13662
(315) 764-9571
terrwald@slc.com

PHOENIX REUNION

The Phoenix, Arizona Local would like to extend an invitation to join them for their annual Church of Christ reunion, which will be held on Friday, **November 28**, through Sunday, **November 30**, 2003. If you plan to attend please notify one of the below listed members for accommodations.

Pastor:
Bob Hedrick
2908 E. Rockwood
Phoenix, AZ 85050
(602) 494-9661
bobliza@juno.com

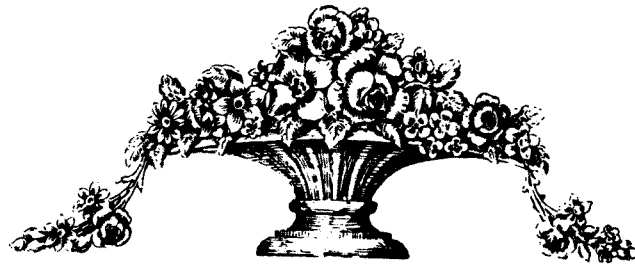
Assistant Pastors:
Andy Brown
2323 E. Rockwood Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85050

(602) 569-9745
tipp.dog@juno.com

Jim Yates, Jr.
1449 E. Rockwood Dr.
Phoenix, AZ 85024
(602) 582-4163
kimnijim@mindspring.com

Archie (Jack) Francis Bell, Jr.

July 15, 1934 ~ March 17, 2003



Archie (Jack) Francis Bell Jr. was born the fourth child of Archie Francis and Martha Clara (Frerichs) Bell on July 15, 1934, in McClelland, Iowa. He passed from this life on March 17, 2003, at the Veterans Hospital in Iowa City, Iowa, at the age of 68 years, 8 months and 2 days. He had survived several years of heart problems.

In Archie's early years he went by the name of Jack and is still called by that name by his early life friends.

Jack moved with his family to Ava, Missouri, in 1937, and graduated from Ava High School in 1952. He was baptized into Christ and the Church of Christ on his eleventh birthday, July 15, 1945, in the creek on his parents farm near Ava, Missouri. He entered the army in 1957 and served in Germany in 1958 and 1959. Returning to Ava after his military duty, he worked for the local Veterinarian, Taylor

Woods DVM.

Archie and Peggy Coonts were married in 1957 and to this union were born four children, Sherry, Cathy, Connie and Gordon.

Archie and family moved from Ava to Oregon and then to Illinois, where he worked in stock yards and feed lots. He worked for the Continental Telephone Company, and when they moved out of state, rather than move with them, he started his own Bell Co. In 1977 he moved to Iowa where he worked for the Central Can Company in Muscatine, Iowa, where he operated a fork lift and other jobs for 15 years and retired in 1997.

Archie enjoyed feeding birds and growing flowers which decorated his front yard, playing cribbage and writing letters, of which many of us were benefactors. Celebrating Christmas was a special joy to him, and he loved his children and grandchildren.

Archie was preceded in death

by his parents, Archie F. and Martha C. Bell, two siblings, Donald Dean and Doris who died in infancy, and one grandson, Braxton Bell, who passed away in infancy.

He is survived by his son, Gordon Bell of Ava, Missouri, his daughters, Sherry Bell of Ava, Missouri, Cathy Craig and her husband David of Elizabeth, Illinois, Connie Downs of Lanark, Illinois; two sisters, Ella Engle and Delores Smith of Raymondville, Missouri, and his companion, Wanda Hoskins, of Columbus Junction, Iowa, and many friends and relatives.

Marvin and Leslie Case and John Bell officiated in the funeral service, which was conducted at the Stacy-Lewis Funeral Home, Friday, March 21, 2003, in Columbus Junction, Iowa. He was laid to rest in Indian Creek Cemetery near Columbus Junction.

OBITUARY

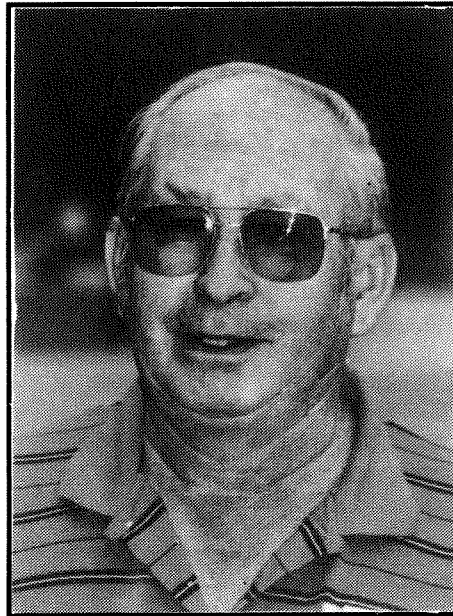
Max Spencer

March 30, 1936 – March 2, 2003

Max Spencer was born March 30, 1936, to Byron and Ruby Spencer at Ravenna, Michigan. He is survived by his wife Vivian, his daughters, Annette (Tony) Bazinaw, Cherye' (Curt) Oudsema; 6 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren and 2 brothers.

His childhood life was spent in activities at Ravenna and the surrounding areas. On October 6, 1956, he married Vivian Heath, whom he shared his love and his life with for over 46 years. Over the years, there were many things that he enjoyed and got involved with. He was a quiet, gentle, compassionate and very generous person, always ready to lend a helping hand to anyone who needed assistance. One of the enjoyments was eating out with friends and loved ones and having good conversation, mostly regarding the Lord. He provided for his family working at a large company in Muskegon, Michigan, for 31 ½ years as a coremaker and finally as a maintenance supervisor. He belonged to many organizations: National Mgmt. Assoc., UAW 539, AOPA (pilots assoc.), charter member of Native American Smithsonian Museum, National Assoc. of Indian Services, and served as V.P. & Pres. of the Westshore Credit Union.

Over time he involved himself



in repairing TVs and radios, installing antennas, learned to fly airplanes, served as a volunteer fireman, and his electronic skills came in very handy when the church building in Ravenna was constructed: he did all the electrical work! He also enjoyed working and making crafts of all different sorts. He produced miniature beaded head dresses, carved images in wood and etchings on glass. Max loved to trade his crafts with the Native Americans, and enjoyed attending Pow Wows.

Elder George Brantner baptized Max into the Church of Christ in August 1960, and Max was ordained to the office of an elder March 15, 1992. The thing most precious to Max and what he loved to participate

in the most was the gospel of Christ. Max logged many miles in traveling to all parts of the country bringing the word of the Lord to all those that he came in contact with. For twelve years he worked at the church's Teen Challenge camp, sharing his knowledge with the youth. He made many missionary trips before and after becoming an elder in the church, traveling to reunions, conferences and working at the Native American church booth at the Cherokee fair. He loved taking his grandchildren with him to these important events. In his later years, he also found time to help out at a food pantry and helping out wherever he could.

I close this compressed version of this my brother's life with these thoughts: not only was I honored to be his brother in law, but also more especially to be his brother in Christ, to share in the ministry and Pastorship of the Ravenna Local Church of Christ with him. Brother Max will be sorely missed, but we rejoice in knowing that he is in the care of our Lord. It was expressed perfectly by our brother before he passed from this life as he stated these words: I'm going home.

Elder Aaron Heath

In memory of Max Spencer

A poem and note from Mark Addington

The tears I shed tonight
For my dear brother's plight
Are for the pain
He must endure
To stay with us another night

When Angels come with brilliant light
To take him home, a justly earned right
It is our own pain
We must endure
As our brother takes his last flight

Max, he continues,
Thank you for a lifetime...of memories
of touching an airplane for the first
time, of hours spent in church in
worship, of time spent at camp-outs and
last, but oh so not least, for making me
a husband to my wife. The son that has
come out of that love, is a true blessing
from God.

The Christian friendship of your
daughters, and the memories that that
has given me will last long past my
passing as I share my memories with my
son.

Know that you have touched my life and
it will never be the same, and I am
blessed for that. If it is not God's will
that I see you again, go with God, and
may the peace of His love guide you.

Contribution by Bud Gage

If I knew

If I knew it would be the last time
That I'd see you fall asleep
I would tuck you in more tightly
And pray the Lord, your soul to keep

If I knew it would be the last time
That I see you walk out the door
I would give you a hug and kiss
And call you back for one more

If I knew it would be the last time
I'd hear your voice lifted up in praise
I would video tape each action and
word,
So I could play them back day after day.

If I knew it would be the last time
I could spare an extra minute
To stop and say, "I love you,"
Instead of assuming you would know I
do.

If I knew it would be the last time
I would be there to share your day
Well I'm sure you'll have so many more,
So I can let just this one slip away.

For surely there's always tomorrow
To make up for an oversight,
And we always get a second chance
To make everything just right.

There will always be another day
To say, "I love you,"
And certainly there's another chance
To say, "Anything I can do?"

But just in case I might be wrong,
And today is all I get,
I'd like to say how much I love you
And I hope we never forget.

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone,
Young or old alike,
And today may be the last chance
You get to hold your loved one tight.

So if you're waiting for tomorrow,
Why not do it today?
For if tomorrow never comes,
You'll surely regret the day.

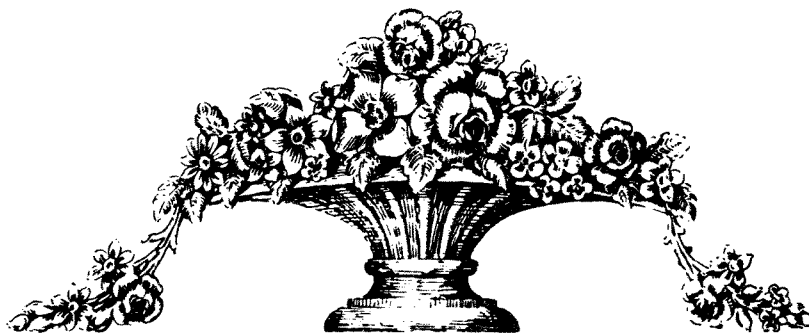
That you didn't take that extra time
For a smile, a hug, or a kiss
And you were too busy to grant
someone,
What turned out to be their one last
wish.

So hold your loved ones close today,
And whisper in their ear,
Tell them how much you love them
And that you'll always hold them dear.

Take time to say, "I'm sorry,"
"Please forgive me," "Thank you," or
"It's okay."
And if tomorrow never comes,
You'll have no regrets about today.

Fern Sepko

March 26, 1914~January 30, 2003



Our Sister Fern Sepko passed away from this life on January 30, 2003. Her sister, Stella Davies, had passed away 15 years earlier on the same day.

She was born Fern R. Matthews on March 26, 1914, in Ellenboro, Wisconsin, to Joseph and Matilda Matthews.

Fern was preceded in death by her husband, George Sepko, and an infant daughter, Mary Jo Sepko, three brothers, Harry, Joseph Jr., Clinton, and three sisters, Josie, Mary, and Stella.

Fern was able to remain in her home of 55 years until recently when a fall and other health problems forced her into a nursing home and on to assisted living.

As many of you read this obituary you will probably wonder who Fern Sepko is, as many of you have never seen or heard of her. Fern was the sister of Stella Davies and the Aunt of Wayne (Louise) Davies and

Sharon (Paul) Leikness.

One of her most favorite things in life was cooking. Her employment most of her life was in the culinary field. She was an absolute wonderful cook, to which many of us benefitted through the years. Fern lost her eyesight later in life so she had to give up her favorite pastime.

She had many physical difficulties in her life. She had polio at age 4, colon cancer in adulthood, and lost her vision. But through all of this she continued on as if none of this mattered. She always had her laugh and warm smile, thanking God for all her blessings.

Fern was a very generous person and did many things to help others throughout her life. She had two special friends who helped her after the passing of her husband George. One of them drove Fern's car for her, taking her wherever she wanted to go. We called them the Three Musketees. One could see, one could hear,

and one could do the thinking.

Fern became a member of the Church of Christ on November 20, 1927. All these many years she remained a faithful and loving member of the body of Christ. She believed in the Lord with all her heart and relied upon the power of prayer. We often said the Lord's Prayer with her. She had a plain wisdom in the Lord that she would share with anyone.

We are thankful for her life and the time the Lord gave us with her. We know that she can now see again and that she is in a far better place.

We would often say to our Aunt Fern, "We love you," and she would say, "Me too." Lots of "Me too's," Aunt Fern.

Sharon (Paul) Leikness

Wayne (Louise) Davies

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CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The **2003 Ministers' Conference** (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 4, 5 and 6, at Independence, Missouri.

The **2004 Ministers' Conference** (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, April 4. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 5. A **Solemn Assembly** will be held prior to the conference, on April 2 & 3. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

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