

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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BUT FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION GOD MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE. FOR THIS CAUSE SHALL A MAN LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THEY TWAIN SHALL BE ONE FLESH: SO THEN THEY ARE NO MORE TWAIN, BUT ONE FLESH. WHAT THEREFORE GOD HATH JOINED TOGETHER, LET NOT MAN PUT ASUNDER.

—MARK 10:6-9

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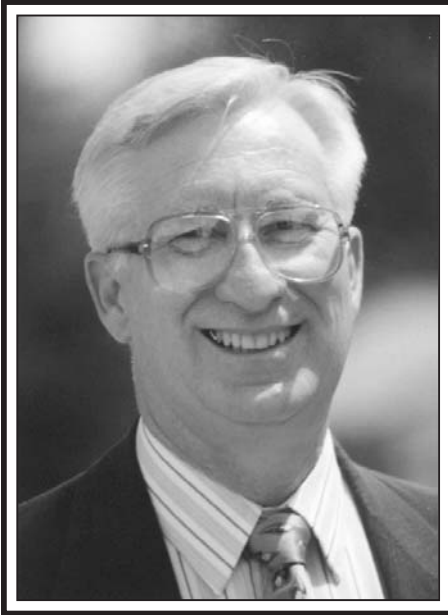
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ZION'S ADVOCATE IS...

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.

Witnessing to God



By Elder Glenn Gill

Month after month members of the church kneel and follow, or repeat in their hearts, this prayer to bless and sanctify the bread of remembrance:

“O God the eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy son Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy son, and witness unto thee, O God the eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he

hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen” (Moroni 4:4).

While we think of the sacrifice of Christ, we are hearing the one praying aloud ask God for that sanctification with the following purposes in mind:

1. That we eat in remembrance of the body of Jesus which He sacrificed for us.
2. That we witness unto God our willingness to:
 - a. Take upon us the name of His Son.
 - b. Remember the sacrifice He made.
 - c. Keep His commandments.
3. That we may always have His spirit to be with us.

The prayer requires actions on our part and promises in return for the privilege and blessing of having the Spirit of God to be with us. That we mere mortals would be counted worthy to witness to God seems an awesome privilege. I think of these words of Isaiah:

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa 55:8-9).

How could it possibly make

any difference to God what we weak and sinful mortals can witness to Him? Yet it is at the very core of God’s plan that we exercise the free will He has given us in ways that make witness to Him of the things stated in that prayer.

The actions mentioned in the prayer are not fully accomplished by our presence and participation in the remembrance we make as we meet together. The witness mentioned in the prayer is made only through actions we take in our daily walk of life. Here are some examples of our ongoing witness to God:

We witness to God by our confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, by receiving and bearing witness of Him and our belief that He made the perfect sacrifice, fulfilled and brought an end to the old law and established a new covenant in love.

“He saith unto them, But who saith ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God” (Matt 16:15-16).

This was Peter’s witness of what the Holy Ghost had revealed to him. If we make that same witness to those around us we are also in the act of wit-

nessing to God that we accept His word and His revelation of the same to us.

We witness to God by keeping His commandments and by overcoming the world. He has commanded us to love Him and to love others. When we do these things we witness to the people around us and also to God.

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the son of God?” (I John 5:2-5).

We witness to God by our humility.

“And humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel; And behold, I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins; And ye shall grow in the knowledge of the glory of him that created you, or in the knowledge of that which is just and true” (Mosiah 2:21-23).

Pride and arrogance do not bring the rewards promised here. Satan would have us depend on and defend our own abilities and the philosophies of

men. God's promises come to those who call on the name of the Lord and stand steadfastly in the faith. When we do this we are witnessing to God and His fulfilled promises in our lives witness to those around us.

We witness to God by bearing witness of our love for one another.

“...If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. ... And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement; because as he is, so are we in this world” (I John 5:12; 16-17).

We witness to God by bearing the fruit of the spirit. As we enjoy that fruit, and walk in that Spirit, others will see the blessings of love, joy and peace in our lives and may desire to know the source. Opportunities to witness to them may open up because of this.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law...if we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit” (Galatians 5:22, 23, 25).

The fruit of the Spirit is not just an individual thing. We also bear that fruit as a family and as a church. If this fruit is not present and obvious in our personal family and our church family we need to search out the reasons and make the necessary corrections.

To summarize: We witness to God and to others with whom we have contact by:

1. Our confession that Jesus is the Son of God.
2. Keeping His commandments and by overcoming the world.
3. By our humility and our prayers.
4. By our love shown to one another.
5. By bearing the fruit of the Spirit individually, in our family and as a church.

These things are essential to our success as we reach out to others. Paul summed it up well. His words are found in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. These words apply to us today as well.

“...Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love: endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;” (Eph 4:1-4).

Each member has a calling to represent the church. Our witness as a church requires a determination by each member to walk worthy of his or her calling, serving and honoring God with all of the energy, talents, liberty, provisions and circumstances He has given us. How we use these things becomes our witness to others and our witness to God.

Just a Thought

By Elder Joseph F. Smith

In considering the purpose of restoring the Church of Christ in these latter days one needs only to go to the scriptures to find the evidence of the need for its existence in today's world. The promises made to ancient Israel of the gathering of their scattered seed before the end of time is spelled out abundantly in the Old Testament prophecies. The overall view of the story found in the Bible is centered around first the selection of Israel as God's chosen people, secondly their disobedience and the subsequent punishment, thirdly their scattering throughout the whole world, fourthly the sending of Christ and His sacrifice so that reconciliation could be made, and finally the sending forth of His doctrine and the fullness of His Gospel that they might be prepared for the promised gathering and the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The restoring of the Church with its divinely called and ordained priesthood enabled them to officiate in the ordinances of His Doctrine. If we consider the fact that for hundreds of years the appointed

procedure for becoming a child of God was gone from the earth, then the importance of the restoration work becomes quite clear. Christ told Nicodemus in John, the third chapter that "...Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God..." and then explains that "...Except a man be born of water (baptism JFS), and the Spirit (receiving the Holy Ghost JFS), he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Israel must come to repentance and be born again before they can even see the Kingdom of God, saying nothing about being able to enter into it. If they cannot "see" the Kingdom and recognize it for what it is, the Kingdom of God, how can they be gathered? If official priesthood is not in existence how can they be prepared? If priesthood does not have the Holy Ghost, how can they give it?

We see then that the restoring of the Church of Christ and its Priesthood was a positive requirement of the provisions set forth to accomplish the purpose of the Lord in these last days. This work of restoring was done in the late 1820's and early 1830's, laying the foundation for the work that was to follow.

The provisions established the means for man to become prepared for the promised second coming of Christ.

Christ came into the world and lived among the peoples of His time, providing an example of the life one should live. In all His contacts with man during His life span He showed forth the love one must have for God the Father, and for his neighbor, establishing the pattern of the character the Father desired of His children. Peter gives a description of some of the attributes of the nature of the character of man God desires.

"...Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Christ exemplified all these characteristics. Those of us that desire to render ourselves worthy to appear in His presence when He returns to the earth with a shout will of necessity have to strive to mirror in our daily lives the splendid example left by Christ in His life and conduct among men.

To enable us to reach these

high ideals, early in the work of restoring the Church commandments were given directing the Saints to gather in the land of Missouri. Here it was planned to establish a people who would put into practice those principles laid out so well by the life and conduct of the Savior. The Saints were to bid farewell to the old ways of life, the old culture of selfishness, greed and individualism, and men would learn a way of life wherein the love of God and their fellowmen would rule. The material wants and the spiritual needs of the Saints would be provided for. Provisions were made for the use of properties so that each would have enough, but none would have more than others. Saints living in righteousness would be a daily testimony of their love and commitment to God. There was planned a Holy City filled with Saints living in such a righteous manner as to be an example to the whole world.

It has been said that Israel was a stubborn and stiff-necked people, their history filled with accounts of rebellion against their God. Latter-day Saints (Israel, as adopted heirs, Romans 8:15-17) are no different. In 1831 the Saints had begun to gather to the land of Missouri, which the Lord designated as the land of Zion in July of that year.

“Hearken, O ye elders of my church saith the Lord your God, who have assembled yourselves together, according to my commandments, in this land which is

the land of Missouri, which is the land which I have appointed and consecrated for the gathering of the Saints: wherefore this is the land of promise, and the place for the city of Zion” (*An Outline History of the Church of Christ*, page 44; paragraph 5).

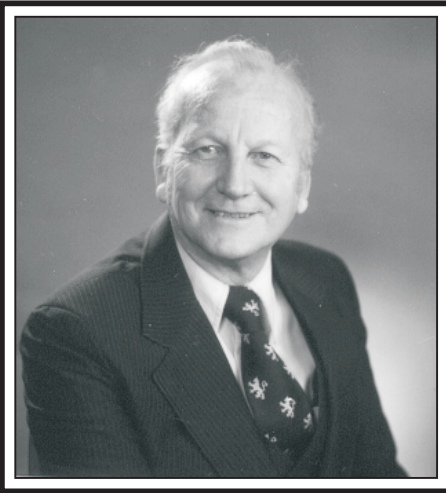
The Saints that had gathered there, however, did not exhibit the desired characteristics, nor did they comply with the commandments they had been given. Instead of saying goodbye to all the old cultures, they began to dilute the commandments to fit their thinking, and ignore those they did not want to obey. The results of this disobedience, and the pride and arrogance that had developed within the ranks of the Saints, was a chastisement from God. Early in the summer of 1833 the citizens of Jackson County Missouri began persecuting the Saints in Independence. By the end of that year they were driven out of Jackson County. Settling in areas east and north of the land that had been designated as Zion, they began to continue their gathering without correction of the errors that had become imbedded in their philosophy. A few short years later they were driven out of Missouri. In September of 1831, chapter 65 of the Book of Commandments was given. In this chapter we see that the anger of the Lord had been tested, and the following statement concerning the Saints living in the land of Zion shows the results of disobedience.

(B. of C. 65:46-47; page

127): “And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land; For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim.”

Since that time we have had 172 years of confusion, contention, division, and discouragement. The question might be asked: Where does that leave us today? Let's go back and consider something we talked about in the beginning of this word. The main purpose of restoring the Church and what goes with it was to prepare mankind for the second coming of Jesus Christ, and the gathering of Israel. That great event is yet before us and it will come to pass. Our need is to prepare ourselves for that day. If we hope to find ourselves worthy to be in the presence of our Lord at that great day we must forsake the traditional thinking that we have learned from the world, the old ways of selfishness, greed, and individualism, and put on the robe of righteousness that Jesus wore when He was here. We must “...shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light;” (1 Peter 2:9).

Pondering the Words of JESUS CHRIST



By Apostle William A. Sheldon

Item 17: The Offense Of Sin; It's Remedy

Matt. 5:29, 30 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

The Lamsa Translation of the Bible, taken from the Aramaic dialect, of which it is said to have been the language of Jesus, informs us that "right eye offend thee" and "right hand offend thee" are idioms of this dialect, meaning,

(Quotations are from the King James Authorized Edition of the Bible and from the 1908 RLDS Edition of the Book of Mormon; same chapters/verses as Independence Edition.)

respectively: stop envying and stop stealing.

In a more general sense, it would appear as admonition to put away the temptation to sin in whatever way it is demonstrated through human weakness; to resist that temptation through overcoming effort and by mighty prayer to God; to cut it off. It has a spiritual connotation rather than a physical. The remedy is simply repentance. The effect of sin is ultimately death, except there has been repentance. Even so, there is no final remedy except through the infinite atonement of Christ, through faith on his name.

Alma 16: 215-217 ...That great and last sacrifice will be the Son of God; yea, infinite and eternal; and thus he shall bring salvation to all those who shall believe on his name; This being the intent of this last sacrifice, to bring about the bowels of mercy, which overpowereth justice and bringeth about means unto men that they may have faith unto repentance. And thus mercy can satisfy the demands of justice, and encircles them in the arms of safety, while he that exercises no faith unto repentance, is exposed to the whole law of the demands of justice; therefore, only

unto him that has faith unto repentance, is brought about the great and eternal plan of redemption.

Item 18: Non-resistance To Evil; Love Your Enemies Also

Matt. 5:38-48 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, [and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more

than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.]

The only significant difference in the Book of Mormon text is in the parenthesized latter portion of the above. The following is inserted in its place:

3 Ne. 5:91, 92 ...Therefore those things which were of old time, which were under the law, in me are all fulfilled. Old things are done away, and all things have become new; therefore I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect.

Why Jesus did not continue with the love theme as in the Bible may be because of His reference to "publicans," which would not have been a known term among the Nephites. His statement relative to old things under the Mosaic law having passed away is significant.

His inclusion of Himself being perfect, even as His Father and "your Father," is also significant. He had overcome the world; and so, too, may His saints.

Item 19: Personal Exaltation Of Good Works Forbidden

Matt. 6:1-4 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

3 Ne 5:93-96 Verily, verily, I say that I would that ye should do alms unto the poor; but take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven. Therefore, when ye shall do your alms, do not sound a trumpet before you, as will hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; That thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

The principal consideration in the above is that we are commanded to give alms (cash or valuable goods) to those in need in the true spirit of charity (pure love of God), and to not make a show of it to anyone, nor to even dwell upon it in our mind, nor to expect a return from those who received the aid. His words in Matt. 5:42, as previously covered, are corollary to this. God's return to such a giver will be more than ample, though it may not be in in this mortal existence. See also the following:

Luke 14:12-14 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Item 20: Prayer

(This subject is inserted here [not specifically covered previ-

ously] as a preliminary to what follows immediately hereafter).

Luke 18:1-8 And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

The urgency by Jesus at this point is really a commandment, as are all His conduct teachings: **WE ARE TO PRAY ALWAYS!** Impossible, you say? Well, in the sense of literally expressing by mouth or in our mind a petition directed toward God, perhaps so. However, consistent purity of thought or semblance of godliness in normal speech or action in relation to our fellow man is a reflection of a "walk/talk" with Jesus Christ, and in a broad sense is indicative of continual prayer to God. Such demeanor reflects the influence of the Holy Spirit within. The concluding statement of Jesus should be a constantly sobering reflection for all: **Will I be found faithful when He comes??**

As a follow-up, Jesus continued:

Luke 18:9-14 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in

themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

How vital, then, is a REAL spirit of humility! Even so, in a congregation given to open united prayer, it should be undertaken in concentration toward God. We are not praying “toward” the congregation. Such should not be overlong, for He knows our needs and desires; and consideration should be for others to occupy similarly if they desire. Then if one desires to pour out his soul to God privately, and at length, I am sure this is well-pleasing to God.

Matt. 26: 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

What is meant by “Watch”? Obviously, we are to watch our own lives, our thoughts, our speech, our conduct. It is so easy to enter into conversations and actions displayed by those of the world which more often than not are not on a spiritual plane acceptable to God; it may actually be foolishness or unprofitable. This certainly does not mean to watch comedic, and usually, sexually oriented television programs! Jesus

explained the “watch” of His counsel to us in a prophetic statement relative to events to be revealed in the last days:

Luke 21: 34-36 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

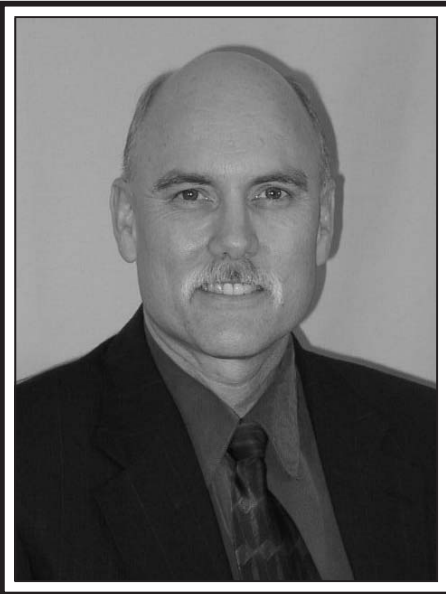
Surfeiting? Over-indulgence in anything: eating, TV watching, computer “games” or otherwise, playing the stock market, work or play without observing the Lord’s day of rest, including worship, etc., etc. Such things are stated as “cares of this life,” and will overcharge the heart and the whole body. Thus we are WATCHING THOSE THINGS with little or no concern for those of real value which are spiritual. We are to “watch and pray” that we may stand, and not fall. Watching is also to search the scriptures and observe the events in fulfillment of the prophecies relative to our times, or the second coming of Christ.

The example of repentant Nephites, following the preaching of Alma and Amulek, as also the teaching of Christ later, is appropriate for us today:

Alma 10: 109 And [they] began to assemble themselves together at their sanctuaries to worship God before the altar, watching and praying continually, that they might be delivered from Satan, and from death, and from destruction....

3 Ne. 8:47, 48, 51-54 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye must watch and pray always, lest ye be tempted by the devil, and ye are led away captive by him. 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... For Satan desireth to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; therefore ye must always pray unto the Father in my name; and whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you. 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.

Articles of Faith & Practice



By Elder Gordon McCann

Article #14

Jesus commanded His disciples to “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:” (Matthew 28:19-20). The same quote

as written in Mark 16:15 says, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

These words of Christ were emphatic where all peoples of the world were to have an opportunity to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. The church and its organizational structure was established with the authority that Christ gave it, combined with the divine gift of the Holy Ghost, to be that foundation on earth to present the gospel as taught by Christ to the world. The Apostle Paul was referring to Jesus Christ when he used the words “And he” in the following statement concerning the authority and organizational structure that comprises the body of Christ:

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists;

Article #14

The primary function of the general church, of which each local church is a component part, is missionary and the building up and extension of the Kingdom of God in all the world (Matt 24:14; Mark 16:15-18).

and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a per-

fect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:" (Eph 4:11-13).

The motivation for the body of Christ to fulfill the commandment "and preach the gospel to every creature" is not just out of obedience, but also an act of charity towards all mankind. The scripture is clear concerning the fate of mankind since the fall of Adam where in the words of King Benjamin he said, "For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been, from the fall of Adam, and will be, for ever and ever;" (Mos 1:119), and also in the words of Paul where he said, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" (Rom 3:23). All of mankind became separated from the presence of God because of one man's disobedience, and there is only one path and narrow gate that would lead them back, and that is "the truth," which is the pure teaching of the gospel of Christ. Jesus Christ Himself confirms this thought when He made the following statement:

"Jesus saith unto

him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Therefore the words of Lehi speak to the act of charity towards all mankind by the preaching of the gospel when he said:

"Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the holy Messiah," (2 Ne 1:73).

I will leave you with the following words of Christ:

"Behold I have given unto you my gospel, and this is the gospel which I have given unto you, that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me; And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; and after that I had been lifted up upon the cross, I might draw all men unto me: That as I have been lifted up by men, even so should

men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil; And for this cause have I been lifted up; therefore, according to the power of the Father, I will draw all men unto me, that they may be judged according to their works. And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name, shall be filled; and if he endureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father, at that day when I shall stand to judge the world. And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire, from whence they can no more return, because of the justice of the Father: and this is the word which he hath given unto the children of men" (3 Ne 12:25-30).

GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

BOOK OF MORMON HEROES
STORM AT SEA

REFERENCE: I Nephi 5:181-211

INTRODUCTION: In our last story, Nephi and his brothers finished building the ship that would take them on the final part of their journey. Soon they would begin a new life in a new land. But first they had a huge ocean to cross. Let's find out what happened.

The ship pushed away from the shore. At last they were on their way! The Liahona showed the sailors which way to travel. God sent a gentle wind to speed the ship across the ocean. Everything was going so well. Laman and Lemuel forgot that it was God who was giving them such a good journey. They did not thank Him. They began to celebrate with wild parties. Nephi was afraid that God would be angry after all that He had done for them. "Brothers! You must stop acting this way! God will be angry with you!" "You're our younger brother!" they shouted. "You can't tell us what to do anymore!" They grabbed Nephi and tied him up!



GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

Then everything went wrong! The Liahona stopped working. Laman and Lemuel didn't know which way to steer the ship. The sky grew dark and the wind began to howl. Rain poured down. Huge waves splashed against the sides of the ship! The mighty wind whipped the sails and blew the ship backwards. For four days the ship was driven backwards, back toward the shores they had just left! Laman and Lemuel decided to loosen the ropes around Nephi's hands, but they did not untie him.

With tears streaming down her cheeks Nephi's wife begged, "Please untie my husband!" Lehi was old now, he was tired, but he spoke strongly to his oldest sons. "This is a terrible sin. You must untie your brother!" Laman and Lemuel would not listen to anyone. Angrily they warned everyone, "If you don't want to get hurt yourself; you had better not try to help Nephi!" Even though they were old Lehi and Sariah had given birth to two more sons, Jacob and Joseph. They were so worried that they became sick, too sick to care for their young sons. Still Laman and Lemuel would not untie Nephi.

Nephi's hands hurt so badly. They were swollen from the tight ropes. But he was not angry with God because of his troubles. "Thank you for keeping me alive!" he told God. "I know you will help me."

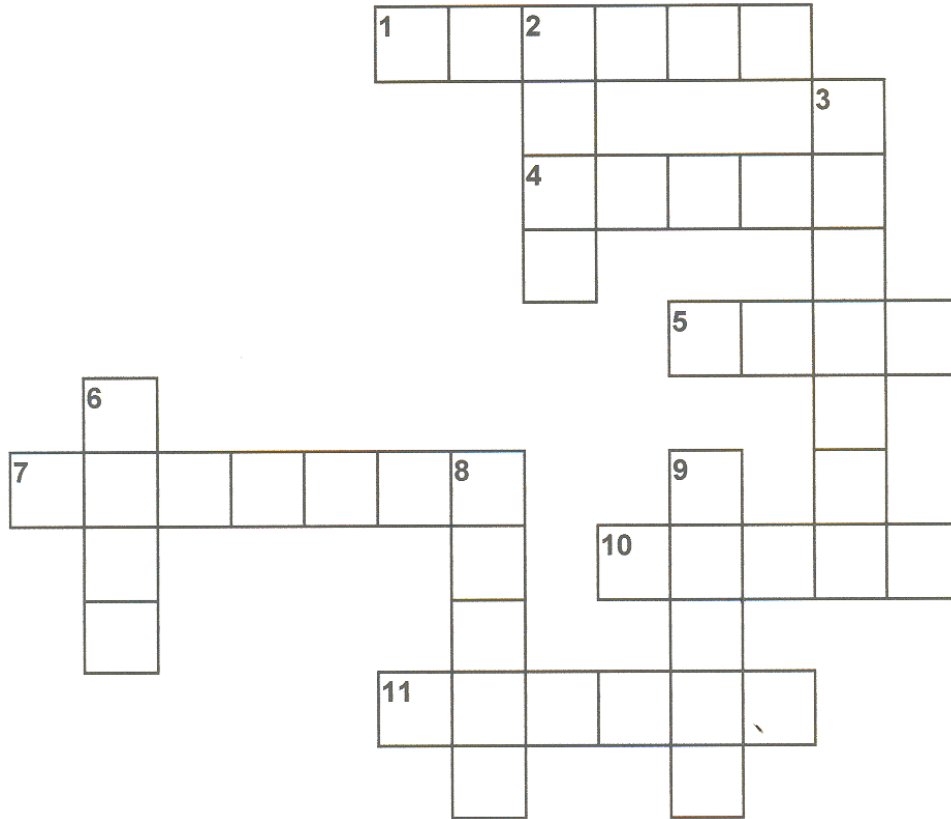
The storm got worse. The ship rocked and dove up and down into the huge waves. Water splashed across the deck of the ship. The ship was going to sink and they were all going to drown!

Finally Laman and Lemuel understood. "God is angry with us." They untied Nephi. His arms and legs were so stiff and sore from the tight ropes that Nephi could hardly move, but he hobbled over to the Liahona and picked it up. The Liahona began to work again! "Please stop the storm," Nephi prayed to God. The wind stopped; the sea became still.

For the rest of the journey Nephi piloted the ship. Again the gentle wind from God began to blow, pushing the ship closer and closer to the Promised Land.

BOOK OF MORMON HEROES

STORM AT SEA



Across

- 1. My parents couldn't care for me.
- 4. My hands and feet were sore.
- 5. I spoke strongly to my oldest sons.
- 7. Nephi's brothers had wild _____.
- 10. I tied up my brother
- 11. Nephi did this

Down

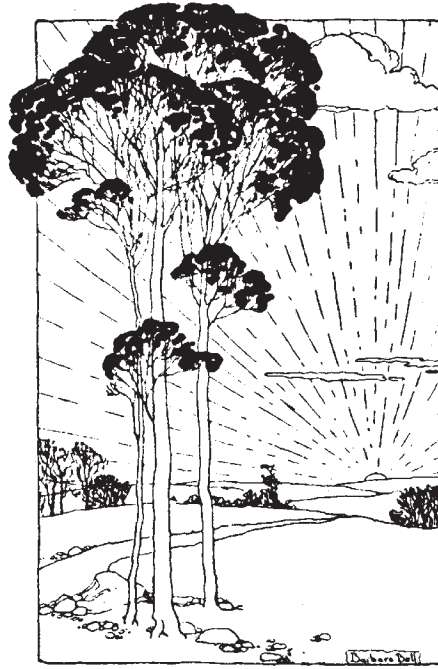
- 2. The ship was going to _____!
- 3. It stopped working.
- 6. The sky became _____.
- 8. God sent this when he was angry.
- 9. Huge _____ tossed the ship.

PATHLIGHTS

My Search for the Truth

It was the summer of 1996. I was working in the office of Friend Contractors, which was downstairs in my son's house in Kodiak, Alaska. I looked out the window and saw two young men in black suits and tie walking up to the door. I had heard about the Mormons, how they went door to door, and that they had a different Bible. When I was growing up I heard people say that you shouldn't even talk to them. I had no idea why. So I decided, okay, this is my chance. I'm going to find out. They introduced themselves very politely and I invited them in. I don't remember our conversation but they left a Book of Mormon with me. I had just finished reading the King James translation of the Bible and I was thinking of getting a different translation and reading it through. I read the Book of Mormon all the way through in that same week. I had invited the Mormon Missionaries to come back the following week and they did. I knew the Book of Mormon was true but I had loads of questions. They came back on a weekly basis and each time they would bring something else for me to read. I read their Doctrine and Covenants, and that's when I knew something wasn't right. I could almost pinpoint when something had gone wrong in the church. I prayed and fasted and prayed some more. I told God I was willing to do whatever He wanted me to do. I read the History of the Church. I attended services for five months. I studied with the elders and their wives and the Bishop and anybody that would talk with me. I lost track of how many books I read from the Church Library and from the public library. I knew the Book of Mormon was true but I could not accept their beliefs.

I had dug deep enough to learn



PATHLIGHTS

things that they don't tell you unless you spend time studying with them. They tried every persuasion to get me to join that church, but even though I accepted the Book of Mormon, the Spirit just wouldn't let me join that Church. I finally got a book that told about the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints at Independence, Missouri, and I thought "All right! This is where I will find the answer." It told about the Temple Lot, and even showed a map of the whole area around it and how the stones, which Joseph Smith had set for the corner stone of the Temple, had been found.

When I flew down to Arkansas each summer to see my mother I usually flew into St. Louis, and then to Springfield, but I asked my sister if she would pick me up in

Kansas City in the summer of 1998. My quest was to see these corner stones.

We drove over to the RLDS Auditorium and took the tour of it and their Spiral Temple. The guide thanked us for coming and invited us to come back anytime. I said, "But wait, isn't there something else?" and she said, "No, that's all." I said, "Can we see the Corner Stones that Joseph Smith laid for the Temple?" and she said, "Yes." I said, "Well... can you show us?" and she said, "No." I said, "Oh, are they locked up somewhere?" and she said, "No." I said, "Okay, can you just point us in the right direction?" She pointed out the glass doors and said, "Just walk over that grassy knoll there and you will see a little white Church." We did, and in September of 1999, after three years from the time I first read the Book of Mormon, I was baptized into the Church of Christ with Headquarters on the Temple Lot.

I praise the God of Heaven and Earth for leading me, and not allowing me to give up in my search for the truth. I know He was with me from the beginning because one of the first LDS Missionaries that came to my son's house in Kodiak told me he had had a dream about that house before he ever saw it, and he said that in his dream he tried to get inside it but he was never able to.

Ruth A. Friend

My Personal Testimony

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
I send my testimony that you may know how great is the kindness of my God towards me.

It was May 2000 when I met with my Brother Michael who is now an Elder in the Church of Christ, in a small town known as Suneka. When we came to sit with him in a certain hotel, he started to tell me that he had been finding me but he had not met me. First he asked me how I was going on with my faith, or gospel, because that time I was a Pastor in a certain church (Maranatha). What I replied to him is, "Well, except in my heart I am not feeling comfortable in where I am now." The reason why I told him so is because the whole of my life there were so many questions in me the way churches were conducting the doctrines.

Now Brother Michael started to tell me that, "The reason why I needed you is that there are some visitors of my friend who came from America. They are the Missionaries who are preaching the Word of God. That friend of mine invited me there to entertain them with songs." He continued to tell me that, "When I reached there I met them with a book apart from the Bible and they are teaching people about that book. So I want you to come and listen by yourself and decide what to do." When I heard from him that there was another book, I started to think, what kind of a book is this apart from the Bible? But by all I promised him by the following day I was to attend. So he gave me direction where I was to get them at (Kisii Diocese Guest House).

When it reached a day, which was on Monday, I started to walk from home, where I traveled for 7 km to the main road to get a vehicle, which was to take me to the place where Brother Michael was.

It was 9:30 a.m. when I arrived there and Brother Michael welcomed me because he was the only person who recognized me. After that I saw two big white men there and many other black men and women. The next thing followed was breakfast (tea and

mandasi). When we finished that we entered in the hall, and got seats and we sat.

After we were seated they started singing, where Brother Michael was leading. And when we finished singing we had a word of prayer from one of the white men. So after prayers, in me I started to tell God to reveal to me whether the things which were going to be delivered if they are true. As the scriptures says in the book of James 1:5, "that whosoever lacks wisdom let him ask God with a sincere heart by faith and he shall be given."

It reached a time when I saw a tall white man stand up (whom I came to know by name Brian McIndoo), and started to teach slowly by slowly and the things he was teaching seems to be new in my life even though I was a pastor. He taught about the book, how it was a testimony to the Bible, and many other things, like re-baptizing again to whom has already been baptized from other churches, because he was baptized by the one who has authority from God. He taught also about how God is calling the ministers into his ministry. In fact, that thing touched me because it was one of my questions which was in me.

When I listened carefully I came to know even where I was attending that time, (wrong position). It reached when we break to lunch, and after lunch we returned in the class again for more teachings. And the most surprising thing I saw when we went to lunch is two white men eating food with us, by which I have never seen in my life. Because I have seen several here in our country, it is very hard to get white people eating food even if they will be missionaries. This thing gave a challenge in my life to think, what type of people are these?

When we finished lunch we returned again in the class and we started receiving teaching from the Brothers.

It came a time when Br. McIndoo finished teachings and I was very much blessed. Immediately, when we were ready to walk after prayer, God spoke to me by telling me that this is the true gospel, and these are the men

whom God has send to preach the last gospel.

Now it reached a time when we break the meeting of that day, my Brother Michael asked me how I got it and how I was feeling. The only thing I told him is this, "Today is first time to come here, but I have known the truth again. The Book is a true book and these are the men of God whom He has send Himself, to preach the last Gospel." Br. Michael told me, "That is good, so now try to come every day so that you may know more."

Now I continued attending meetings day by day, and really I received more teaching which gave a light to know the truth. When I finished two weeks attending there, it reached a time when the missionaries asked us whether we were ready to be baptized. When everybody heard about that I was worried to see the number of members who were willing to have Baptism were little than the number were attending. So I was among of the group who agreed to receive baptism.

It was 26th May 2000 in Kisii town when I got remission of sins by getting baptism. This day is a marked day in my life which I can not forget, because it is day I humbled myself to be born again in the Church of Christ, even though I was baptized in the other church. We were 12 people out of sixty and over who received Baptism.

Since then I am enjoying the blessings in the Church of Christ, even though I got many troubles and many trials, which I cannot tell now until next time.

By Moses Nyamira

—Moses Nyamira was ordained to the office of a Teacher on October 24th, 2003.

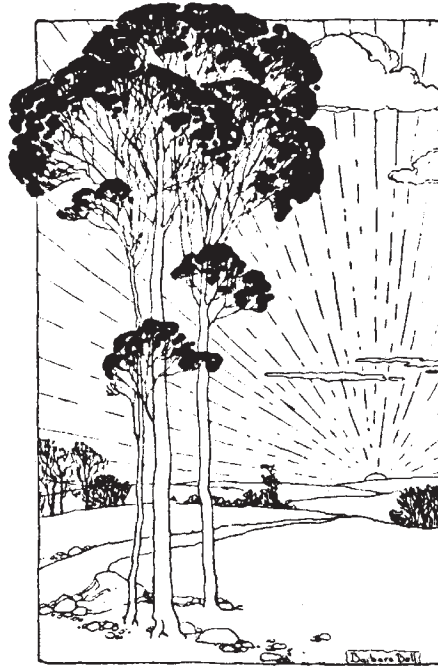
Deliverance Through Christ

Truth always seems so clear after the situation, or after a trial has settled. In our generation of tolerance towards all manner of life, walking the Christian walk has become quite the challenge. Being in the world so our light may shine and influence those around us, to have our lifestyle speak louder than words, is the key to breaking down tolerance.

When I was 21, I made a major change in my lifestyle. During a time of hurt and confusion, the enemy was successful in introducing a great lie and I fell for it. I identified myself as being a lesbian. The great lie was that I could be a Christian and a lesbian. I thought surely if one is born gay, the Lord would not condemn them because it would not be by choice, but rather by genetics. Now I know this theory to be of the world, not of God.

In 1998, I prayed for Heavenly Father to make clear to me all the things in my life that offended Him so I could get back to that beautiful love of Christ, get back to square one and walk close with Him once again. Living an active lesbian lifestyle had stolen so much from me. I was desperate for God to have control over all of me.

Two weeks later, I went to a Bible study with my little sister



P A T H L I G H T S

Kimberly and after the study we sat together to watch a Christian film. When the film had finished, a voice as clear as sound itself spoke to me. Heavenly Father said, "You need to change your lifestyle." I knew exactly what He was referring to... so I did. The healing power of Christ ever so lovingly touched my identity and immediately made me complete again. The desires of homosexuality were stripped away within seconds. Now I was back to square one with Christ as my love, to hold my hand in truth, to lead me out of confusion and back into His world.

I can honestly testify that there is no problem too big for deliverance through Christ, whether one is "born that way" or not.

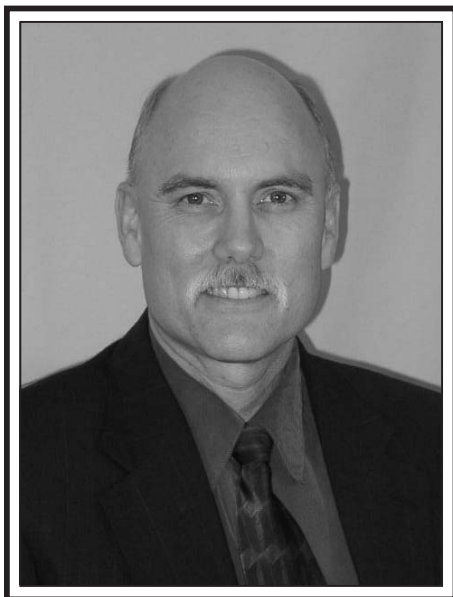
I thank my family for praying for me since 1980. They never gave up on the power of prayer, they never wrote me off as being too "lost," and they held strong to the promise from Christ that He hears the prayers of His faithful. Thank you. Most of all, I want to thank Christ, my first love, that IS the power of prayer. He never wrote me off as being too "lost." Thank you for your unconditional love.

Candy Smith Gentry

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" Phil. 4:13.

CHURCH HISTORY

Church History in Review



By Elder Gordon McCann

In September 22, 1827, Joseph Smith obtained the gold plates and the Urim and Thummin and the Breastplate as promised by the heavenly messenger. Soon afterwards, due to severe persecution, Joseph and his wife

received assistance from Martin Harris and left New York and traveled to Susquehanna County in Pennsylvania. Upon his arrival in Pennsylvania Joseph began copying the characters off of the gold plates, and by the use of the Urim and Thummin translated some of the characters. Sometime in the month of February, 1828, Martin Harris took what Joseph had copied with the translations to the city of New York to Professor Anthon, who was known for his abilities to understand and translate ancient writings. Professor Anthon reviewed what was given him of Martin Harris and said that the translation was correct, more so than any he had seen before translated from the Egyptian. Professor Anthon gave Martin Harris a certificate certifying that what he reviewed was authentic Egyptian, Chaldaic, Assyriac and Arabic characters, accompanied by the correct translation. Martin Harris took the certificate and began to leave when Professor Anthon asked Martin how the gold plates were discovered, and after Martin explained that an angel of God had revealed the location Professor Anthon took the certificate back from Martin and tore it to pieces. He then asked Martin to bring the gold plates to him and that he would translate them, but Martin said he was forbidden to do so.

Professor Anthon replied, "I cannot read a sealed book."

"Wherefore, the Lord God will proceed to bring forth the words of the book; and in the mouth of as many witnesses as seemeth him good, will he establish his word; and wo be unto him that rejecteth the word of God. But behold, it shall come to pass that the Lord God shall say unto him to whom he shall deliver the book, Take these words which are not sealed, and deliver them to another, that he may shew them unto the learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee. And the learned shall say, Bring hither the book, and I will read them: And now, because of the glory of the world, and to get gain, will they say this, and not for the glory of God. And the man shall say, I can not bring the book, for it is sealed. Then shall the learned say, I can not read it. Wherefore, it shall come to pass, that the Lord God will deliver again the book and the words thereof, to him that is not learned; and the man that is not learned, shall say, I am not learned. Then shall the Lord God say unto him, The learned shall not read them, for they have rejected them, and I am able to do mine own work; wherefore, thou shalt read the words which I shall give unto thee" (2 Nephi 11:135-142).

(Ref.: *History of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints*, Volume 1, Ninth Edition, chapter 2, pages 18 & 19.)

ANNOUNCEMENT

APRIL MINISTERS' CONFERENCE 2004

As instructed by the 1964 April Ministers' Conference be advised that the 2004 April Ministers' Conference will begin on Monday, April 5, 2004; "Conference Sunday," beginning Sunday, April 4, 2004. The first business session will begin at 9:00 a.m. Monday, April 5, 2004, at the General Church Building on the Temple Lot. According to action taken during the 2003 April Ministers' Conference, Solemn Assembly will be held Friday, April 2nd, and Saturday, April 3rd, 2004, at the General Church Building on the Temple Lot.

All committee reports should be forwarded to the Conference Secretary at least two (2) weeks in advance of the beginning of the first business session. As is always the case, it is requested that any business desiring to be placed before the 2004 April Ministers' Conference be forwarded in advance of the first business meeting so that document packets may be completed for distribution.

The mailing address for the above requested information is:

**Harvey E. Seibel,
April Ministers'
Conference Secretary
9800 E. 32nd Street S.
Independence, MO 64052**

*Your brother in the Lord's work,
Harvey E. Seibel,
2004 April Ministers'
Conference Secretary
Church of Christ
(Temple Lot)*

ANNOUNCEMENT

Camp Teen Challenge 2004

Date: 4 January 2004
To: All Prospective CIT's
From: Bro. Robert Hedrick
RE: 2004 CIT Sign-ups

Prospective CIT's:

Happy New Year to all! The New Year is here and so it is time to start preparing for the Teen Challenge 2004. We are calling out to all prospective CIT's who would like to take the Challenge and sign-up for Camp.

It may seem early to sign up for camp; however, we need your help from the very start of this important service. As taken from Mosiah 1:49: "...that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God." We are **CHALLENGING** you to be in **SERVICE** of your God. **WE NEED YOU!!!** Below are a few details relating to camp.

When is Camp? Camp will be held this year from July 25th through July 30th 2004.

How do you sign up? That is the easy part. Please e-mail Bro. Bob Hedrick at (bobnliza@juno.com) or call at 602-494-9661.

When do you need to sign-up by? We are asking that you sign up to be a CIT no later than May 10th. We need your help in setting up classes and taking part in the planning process of camp.

Don't miss out on this great opportunity! Additionally, be thinking about any suggestions or ideas that you may have for a class at camp!

Don't delay, and sign-up today! We are looking forward to seeing you there!

May God Bless,
Brother Robert Hedrick

P. S. Keep in mind the camp theme for this year. At your first chance, please look up and read the following: **Mosiah 2:13-17.**

CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

Speed delivery of your *Zion's Advocate* by sending us your new address immediately. Each undeliverable *Zion's Advocate* costs the church more than the value of a first class stamp, in addition to regular postage.

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

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.

The **2004 Ministers' Conference** (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, August 2, 3 and 4, at Independence, Missouri.

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Send all orders to the **Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472**

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Article of Faith, #9 - (concerning the Bible and Book of Mormon)	God's Purpose in America
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	What about the Book of Mormon?
	Why? (Amplifies absence of a First Presidency in Scripture)
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Church of Christ

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AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIALS

The following materials are available on loan to members of the Church of Christ from the Audio, Video, Visual-Aid and Archeology Committee:

SLIDE PROGRAMS WITH TAPED NARRATION

Specify program(s) wanted, anticipated dates of use, and the make of your projector. Slide projectors and tape players are not provided except in the Independence, Missouri, or Phoenix, Arizona, areas.

Allow adequate advance time for handling and shipping, and for your own preview of the programs. Write to the AVVAA Committee, Church of Christ, P.O. Box 472, Independence, Missouri 64051-0472.

LAMP UNTO MY FEET, A (32 minutes)—Directed specifically toward American Indian viewers, compiled from three other programs.

LIGHT AT EVENING (27 minutes)—Story of the bringing forth of the book of Mormon and the restoration of the Church of Christ in the 1820's and 1830.

OUT OF THE DUST (45 minutes)—Tells the story found within the Book of Mormon.

RETURN, THE (12 minutes)—Reveals the significance of the return to the "land of Zion" in 1867 by the members of the Church of Christ, especially as holders of Title to the previously dedicated Temple Lot.

HOLY SCRIPTURES ON AUDIO CASSETTE TAPE

Complete set narrating the King James Version of the Bible New Testament and a set of the entire Book of Mormon. Write to Dan Lawrence, 8420 Lee's Summit Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64139. Specify which set is desired and the estimated length of time you expect to use it.

SERMONS ON AUDIO & VIDEO CASSETTE TAPES

For a sermon on cassette tape write to Dan Lawrence, 8420 Lee's Summit Road, Kansas City, Missouri 64139; on video tape contact your local missionary.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS

Send orders for Sunday School materials to Debbie Vogel, 403 West Colonel Drive, Independence, Missouri 64050. All materials are free of charge to members of the Church of Christ, except as noted. Donations will be accepted to cover postage.

Bible Stories to Grow By—52 Lessons about God and Jesus for ages 5-7

Book in the Stone Box, The—About the Book of Mormon

Church History for Juniors—Includes a Teacher's Guide

Jesus' Life and Teachings—4 Quarterlies for ages 8-10

Who Am I?—Bible game on cards; free to Sunday Schools/\$1.30 to individuals.