

Valient Faith

Study Notes

Solving Life's Puzzles with the Philosophy of
Faith & Valient Service to God



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Deathbed Repentance: What it is and Isn't

It means if you turn your life around, and just so happen to die valiantly shortly thereafter, you're on the right track.

It doesn't mean if you just say God's name that you believe in him as you are about to die that you're good to go.

Some priest showing up as you're dying and getting you to say Christ is your Savior doesn't do much if anything for your salvation.

Ecclesiastes speaks of whatever direction you're going at the end is the direction you'll keep going.

This doesn't mean you can plan to retire from evil when you're an old person. For one, your heart will likely be too hard by then to even want to turn around. For two, you'll have missed many opportunities which cannot be gotten back. For three, is that sincere real repentance if its so calculated? Beware.

King Benjamin's Sermon: A Manual for Discipleship by Elder Neal A. Maxwell – Lecture Highlights

Maxwell looks at various aspects of Benjamin, one would think that he knew him personally. Maxwell uses knowledge of what makes a society and shows that Benjamin had all those aspects of leadership. Some of those can be taken from textual implications.

- a focus on spiritual over political, even though both are essential, and large parts of his life.

- how teach your children to not lust for power? Show them.

- discipline your children or they won't have faith like Eli's sons.

- Benjamin tells it like it is, telling the future and the details of how men will treat religion; Maxwell includes examples from Greek and modern secularism to show time and again the secularization of society.

- professionals telling when War will and won't be are often wrong; only God knows!

- pray to know what are little matters, and what are big matters (*this could save the soul, pointing to correct action)

- those who are honorable but not consecrated wholly may even be happy, BUT THEY WON'T BE FULFILLED. (*here is the motivation to wake up early, to push ourselves, etc.)

- a large rebuke of who won't give their all; if you don't know Jesus, you won't serve him, and you won't care about what's important in this life. (*thank God for a prophet who gives large rebukes)

- he lets us know that we aren't to be consumed in our hobbies; (*no proud man can read this and walk away unaffected, neither the humble, but the humble has joy in the progress already made, whereas the proud are tempted to curse God and die.)

- when we see someone so very weak, we think to always tell them to toughen up, but we are so weak to God, yet he comforts us, so likewise we should comfort one another.

- “How difficult it is to teach the natural man, who comprehends nothing more than that which he sees with the natural eye! . . . Talk to him about angels, heavens, God, immortality, and eternal lives, and it is like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal to his ears; it has no music to him; there is nothing in it that charms his senses, soothes his feelings, attracts his attention, or engages his affections, in the least.” (Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses (18 December 1859) 1:2; see also Discourses of Brigham Young (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1954), 260.)

-Alma 38:12 sums up missionary rules and Apostle rules.

-give people needed praise and recognition. Clothe people in “the garment of praise” (Isaiah 61:3).

-you may want to garden so you won’t wear yourself out in discipleship, and so you have unhurried time to ponder.

Deferential Jesus said:

“There is none good but one, that is, God” (Matthew 19:17).

“My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me” (John 7:16).

“The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” (John 5:19)

Conscience Essay by Joel Skousen – Highlights

For the complete text visit worldaffairsbrief.com. The essay is much more extensive than this, these are just a few highlights. I loved this essay and have studied it time and again.

Introductory Note: the word conscience may suggest linguistically "with study" or "thoughtfulness". Truly we must be active in how we approach life, anxiously engaged in a good cause. The Lord is the source of good thoughts, Satan the source of bad thoughts. We train ourselves to have our own thoughts be good thoughts.

if you continue to have friends who violate conscience you'll be in trouble

conscience is profoundly accurate

people who think well know that it is an active process

Control and analyze what you think about force yourself to be aware of and analyze every thought to determine its credibility

Replace things which aren't inherently wrong but which are not as productive as other things you could be doing.

God tests us by seeing whether we will act on the good promptings or the bad promptings they both sound like your own voice

Conscience is about helping you sort out conflicting priorities

Following conscience is the best way to avoid depression. Get up and do what you should be doing rather than sulking.

The Lord tests the righteous with turning down the whispering to an almost inaudible level to see if there are truly committed and to train their own abilities to sensitivity at even the slightest error

Parents often become so desensitized to conscience that the bad behavior of their children doesn't bother them enough to stop it.

parents often feel the guilt of being too strict but they're often not sensitive enough to feel the guilt of being too permissive

Satan can get you to make a mistake by giving you an excess of Truth more than is needed for that situation which then throws you off

Parents, have a list of constructive things your children can learn and do in their

spare time. Then train them to discipline themselves about what they should be doing. To feel what they've left undone, etc.

You don't have to be a rule making and legalistic society when you train to listen to conscience do this training by a little promptings you give frequently about how they're feeling and how you're feeling about what they should do.

Intense exercise is an excellent way to train the mind for mental toughness to develop self-control which you can then apply in other areas.

Self-control always works. Mental health personnel are not trained in conscience.

Mood altering drugs cut out the bad and good signals. They dumb down conscience.

Suicide is never your own voice, but is Satan.

Much societal withdrawal is needed for children as they haven't yet learned to resist evil. This is why homeschooling is popular among conscious parents.

When you accept a chronic issue as something you can't overcome, you have dulled out your conscience.

Big Leagues Theory: This Life is The Time, Will You Regret it?

When we know that everyday what we do in this life matters immensely, it changes what we do.

Can we see the generations to come, reenacting what we do, in an almost ritualistic way?

Would they honor us or shrug us off as mediocre?

Will it be said in time 'here is where our forefather lived, this is what he did each day, this is how he handed these difficult situations'?

If this life is the big leagues, the time to prepare to meet God, the day to work out our salvation, the time to stand upon mount Zion as a savior there, are we lifting as we would wish?

Are we trifling our time when so much is at stake? This changes the conversation completely about what is "ok" to do in life.

If you knew each day was to be analyzed by the masses, each hour to be seen by the hosts, would we behave the way we do?

If we knew that these few short years of life, these few short years of parenting, that they were the very test of our souls, and the very predictors of the eternal salvation of our souls and those within our influence, would we mind our ways more carefully?

Consider the gods prophets and sages watching your every move, encouraging your every turn. How oft will you let them down? They overcame in their hour of trial, will not you in yours?

Is your repentance sincere, or are you doing the same thing over each day? Show us that you are improving, and we will bow our heads. Show us that you know more today than yesterday, that your governing was more exact and kind than before, and we will say, it is well with your soul.

On Situational Ethics: Oh No You Don't!

Sections:

1. A GREAT CHANGE HAS COME OVER US, WE HAVE FORGOTTEN GOD'S LAW
2. IT'S NOT RIGIDITY, IT'S FAITHFULNESS
3. WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHOICES OF OTHERS, ONLY FOR OUR OWN
4. DON'T ROB PETER TO PAY PAUL
5. JUST BECAUSE IT'S LEGAL DOESN'T MAKE IT OK
6. REVELATIONS FROM GOD NEVER CONTRADICT ETERNAL LAWS
7. THERE IS ANOTHER WAY
8. ZION OR BUST
9. A PRECAUTIONARY NOTE ON MERCY
10. FINAL THOUGHTS: PASS THE TEST OF LIFE VALIENTLY

A GREAT CHANGE HAS COME OVER US, WE HAVE FORGOTTEN GOD'S LAW:

Since when did we become a bunch of Communists and socialists?

Since when did we forget that we have made solemn covenants with God to obey his laws at all hazard?

Since when did we throw away our moral code of commitment to the laws of God in place of convenience?

If you had to do something bad but it gave you something good would you do it?

Does the end justify the means?

There was once a woman in a prisoner of war camp. Her husband and children were back at home. There was a rule in that camp that if a woman became pregnant she would get to go home; well, there were military officers who could accommodate the means to that end. Should she sleep with the guards to get pregnant so she could return home to her husband and children? What would you do? What if it was your spouse? This woman chose to become pregnant and she was in fact sent home. This woman made the wrong choice. Perhaps she was ignorant of the laws of God and God will have to take that into account, but among those who know the laws of God, we know this is strictly forbidden. The husband and children of this woman would have been better off having her as a legacy of right choices who died than having her come home by questionable means. Yes the children need a mother but if she was to die the husband could have married another woman and given the children the mother they need in that way.



As I said, this woman may not have been familiar with the laws of God. If not, she may have been doing what seemed best to her. But what happens if everyone does this? What happens if we have societies of people doing what they think is best instead of obeying Gods laws? If everyone is willing to trade sexual favors and other debaucheries for freedom and convenience, what then? Then we would have a society run by

manipulators who take advantage of that. We need to stand up and show people that they can't have power from abuse. We live in a corrupt world, but we do not need to add to the corruption.

Gods laws will, at the last day, be seen by all as the one and only great moral code by which societies can thrive long term. Truly Gods ways are the most compassionate and beneficial for the human race. If we want to have pity on the widow and orphan, if we want peace on earth and to meet the needs of them that

want, we must go about it in the Lords way. His ways are higher than ours. When our plans and methods for building utopia go against his revealed word, they will, in time, prove to be inferior and unsustainable.

Even for those without formal religious training and religious backgrounds, everyone has a conscience. This is the light of Christ, and it is given to every person that comes into the world. If we ignore it, it can cease to show us the difference between right and wrong. No matter how ignorant or neglected, there is a level of accountability each person has to God due to the conscience which God gives everyone. When societies in mass start rejecting conscience in favor of lesser ways, God mercifully sends his judgments to help societies start over, lest the rising generation not be given a fair chance to live a wholesome and happy life.

I will note here that little children are innocent before God, as the faculties for discernment between good and evil are not yet sufficiently developed. Scripture gives the age of 8 as the age in which accountability to God begins. Children even younger than 8 need to be taught to make good choices rather than bad ones (as they are capable of making bad choices and do need to be punished for such), but it is not until a certain age that they are their own agents, and therefore accountable to God for those choices as being ones that stem out of their chosen personality rather than common errors of youth.

IT'S NOT RIGIDITY, IT'S FAITHFULNESS:

Some call electing death before compromise as being rigid, but the faithful know that God requires brave people who will keep his laws. The New testament specifically says that if we will not confess Christ to others, Christ will not confess us to his father. In other words, denying one's convictions results in being denied access to the kingdom of God.

History is replete with examples of people who stood up for what's right despite of dire consequences. Foxes Book of The Martyrs relates accounts of thousands of most noble Protestants who saw it better to die than to betray their religious commitments. Both they and their families suffered greatly, but to them, it was worth it. An eternal award awaited them, and surely it does.

Communist school programs ask children questions which force them into a corner to choose the lesser of two evils without presenting the right option as even being a choice. These scenarios are not only unrealistic but they fail to examine all of the possibilities. It is a doctrine of my faith as recorded by Nephi that God will always provide a way to keep his commandments. The New

testament also reads that there is no trial come to us except that which is common to man, and with the temptation God will provide a way to escape.

Sometimes death is simply the right choice when compared to these extremes suggested by the communists.

WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CHOICES OF OTHERS, ONLY FOR OUR OWN:

The 2nd Article of Faith states that we will be punished only for our own sins, and not for Adams transgression.

We are not responsible for other people's actions. If someone threatens you saying that they will kill themselves if you do not comply this does not put any responsibility upon you for their death.

Working with others in the mental health field requires firm boundaries. If someone needs to talk to you about their suicidal thoughts, you accommodate them as much as you can, but at some point you have to say to them 'look I'm sorry you're going through this and I really hope you don't do it but I've got to go to work, I wish you well.' You have an obligation to your family and your employer to show up at work.

If someone were shamed of their ugliness and was about to jump off a bridge because of that, would you beg with them telling them of their immaculate beauty? No, but you could say something without lying, such as pointing out the beauty of their eyes smile and soul. It is not your job to give others false hope that certain mortal ailments will be resolved before the recompense of the great resurrection when all things become fair and blessed.

DON'T ROB PETER TO PAY PAUL:

To 'rob Peter to pay Paul' is to do something bad in order to get a good result. However, this is not necessary, as I will here demonstrate.

A righteous parent allows its child to experience natural consequences. If a parent repeatedly robs its child of natural consequences, the sin of the child is put on the head of the parent. Youth who chose to use drugs, who chose to

assault the innocent, who steal, and other severe and illegal behaviors, should be punished to the full extent of the law.

What if there was a medication that could save your child's life but it costed a billion dollars? Would you steal the money or steal the drug to save your child's life? The morally correct thing to do would be no, you do not do it. It's better to let your child die than to steal. Try to find another way to help the child, but do not break God's laws, lest you contribute to the downfall of the whole society.

JUST BECAUSE IT'S LEGAL DOESN'T MAKE IT OK:

If you have a child who would benefit from a certain political policy accommodating a certain medical condition or something, should you vote for that policy even with the knowledge that it would hurt thousands of others by unduly increasing their taxes etc.? In other words should you harm the many to benefit the one? The correct answer is no you should not. Voters have a moral duty to chose what is best for the most people.

We should not look to the government to provide for all of our needs and wants, however legitimate those needs may be. An individual robbing someone is as bad as a group of people getting together and voting to rob someone by law. Enforcement of corrupt law is mob activity and is morally incorrect.

When we find ourselves in a situation where the laws are corrupt we should seek by peaceful means to change those laws through the political process. When corruption becomes extreme and petitions have been ignored, the action taken by the American revolutionaries is a typical example of just resistance. This is not to be confused with the French revolution where in they chopped off heads of random citizens etc.

REVELATIONS FROM GOD NEVER CONTRADICT ETERNAL LAWS:

The question is raised what would you do if you got personal revelation to do something that is not typically allowed? It is true that some of God's standards may seem strange to contemporary society but in none of God's relations has he ever contradicted his eternal laws of justice.

In the case of plural marriage it was a revelation which opened access to one of the laws of God. This is not currently operable.

In the case of Nephi and Laban, The Book of Mormon gives the reasons why this took place. Laban was a tyrant monarch directly standing in the way of God's plan. His policies were directly resulting in an untold number of people perishing in unbelief.

As for the Israelites being commanded to slay the Canaanites, God did not want Israel to enjoy the spoils of these deeply wicked people. God was sending a message that all of the works of the evildoers will be utterly cut off, and that all time invested in evil is an utter waste.

Why does God have people participate in carrying out his judgments at times? Because he is training us to be involved in justice. He does this because we aren't his pets or his slaves, we are his children, and it's about time that we start learning the family business.

God is the keeper of life and death. It resides with him to decide when to give life and when to take it away, and people carrying out God's will are not to blame.

People need to be careful that they're not acting on false revelation and serving false spirits, such as was the case in the Protestant Reformation when many Christians were tortured and killed in most brutal ways. Surely those carrying out and issuing such orders are both under condemnation. It is better to walk away from such evil at the hazard of one's life than to be a participant in it.

We are also aware that the Hebrew tongue in which the bible was written has two separate words for kill and murder, and the one existing in the ten commandments is the word for murder.

Self-defense, defense of one's family, and defensive one's country, even to the shedding of blood, is just, true, and scriptural. Here I am referring to someone directly attacking your immediate life. It is not the Lord's way to lay down and die in front of attackers. His way is to defend oneself. There are rare exception to this when commanded. The holy constitution of the United States insists that we have an inborn right to arms to defend ourselves. All of this being said, it in no way justifies using corrupt means to preserve life.

Yes there are some rare situations in which it is appropriate and Christian to kill. For more possible reasons visit this my other article "Why God Sometimes Instructs His People To Kill" <http://richardsonstudies.com/2018/01/27/reasons-god-people-kill-others/>

THERE IS ANOTHER WAY:

The question of what is to be done when a person is at a railway station at a switch, and if the train goes one way it kills three people, and if it goes the other way it kills one person: If you choose to switch the rail car to the direction of the one, you're not guilty for the death of that one, you're only responsible for the salvation of the three. This being said, the railway situation is a bogus situation. It rarely occurs in real life, and as stated earlier, God would not tempt us in a situation above that which we are able to bear. The secular humanist also fails to recognize the priesthood option, where in the man of God can call down the powers of heaven to stop the train altogether.

In the book *Ender's Game* by Latter-Day Saint author Orson Scott Card, the main protagonist Ender kills another boy as he is defending himself, and in an attempt to stop people who bully him once and for all. Ender doesn't realize his assault results in the death of the bully. Those observing Ender applaud him for doing this, saying that it was more about WHY he did what he did not WHAT he did. Well, I disagree with this. Though Ender was up against great corruption, there are other options he could have used, less lethal force, and at the end of the day, he may have had to endure some injustice. The bullies were bullying him and he reacted so forcefully that he killed them. (Now perhaps Ender had some level of innocence as he may have been truly unaware of the lethality of his actions, but the point still stands). A just end does not justify unjust means. We do not want a communist utopia where the leaders are ruthless killers. The book *The Giver* does a decent job of illustrating the flaws of such a utopia.

In *Les Misérables* by Victor Hugo a man steals a loaf of bread to feed his starving family. Would you do this? The correct answer is no, you should not. There are other ways to feed your family such as work, and even begging. But it is better to die hungry than to live a thief. Now were the French police justified in giving him such a large sentence for the crime? No. This being said, our current stance on crime could use to be much more strict.

Christ is the way, and his ways, being higher than ours, are often considered foolishness to men's understanding. But the understanding of the prudent shall be hid when compared to the might of God's law. God upholds justice, and mercy does not rob justice one whit. All crimes must be paid for. For those who agree to enter into covenant with Christ to obey his laws, Christ pays the debt of justice to eternal law which we have all incurred to one degree or another. Praise forever be to the lamb of God, who cleanses us and empowers us to become strong enough to obey all eternal law like He does!

ZION OR BUST:

It is better to live a life noble to the laws of God than a life of compromise. I would rather see my children martyred for standing up for Christ than to see them live to a ripe old age without a firm testimony of the gospel of Christ the Lord. As a father and husband I would rather serve my wife and children by showing them the importance of God's laws even at the cost of my life than serving them with my company throughout their lives if it be not a high standard of moral convictions to the laws of God.

People who understand religious truth know that God's ways are higher than man's ways. They know that this life is a short time. It is a test to see if we will do all things whatsoever the Lord God will command as is stated in the book of Abraham. Some people live on this earth a long time, some people live on it only a short time, some people leave behind wealth, some people leave behind poverty, but what matters is whether or not we leave behind a testimony of the gospel of Christ, having stood firmly to it.

If a gun was pointed to your head and you were given the option to deny your faith and return home to your family to care for them in their poverty, or to speak the truth of your faith and die, which would you chose? In the name of God, stand up for your faith! Your wife and children, worlds without end, would rather be the wife and children of a righteous martyr than the wife and children of a coward.

I would sooner kill the man who threatened my life at the extent of my faith than to deny my faith. The scripture is clear when it states that to deny the Holy Ghost is a sin so grave that it cannot be forgiven in this life or the next. The greatest sin is to deny the Holy Ghost. When we deny our faith in exchange for our lives etc., I suggest we are in that instance denying the Holy Ghost which has born witness to us the truthfulness of our convictions about God and God's law. (FYI The second greatest sin is to shed innocent blood. The third is to be unchaste with women.) May we not risk offense toward God.

A PRECAUTIONARY NOTE ON MERCY:

In this essay we have been discussing weighty matters such as whether we should keep the law of chastity, not steal, and not deny one's faith when pressed into difficult situations. It should be noted that there is some flexibility in the more minor affairs. God has given each person agency to choose between good and evil. Sometimes we have to make a judgement call when things are uncertain. I recently watched "Gifted Hands" about a brilliant rags to riches neuro surgeon named Ben Carson. When we was still in training, a man needed urgent surgery, but not surgeons could be reached. It was a choice for Ben: should he do the surgery, however illegal, to save the man's life? Well he did, and it was the right thing to do.

I talked about how those ignorant of God's laws are held to a different standard. I would like to note that even those acquainted with God's laws need to be looked upon with mercy. Were I in the dire situations mentioned in this essay, what I presented is the way I would choose to act. We tend to be harder on ourselves than we are on others, and this is as it should be, for we never know all the details of another person's situation. When they do and don't know, what state of mental and physical health they are in, how strong their testimony is, etc. We can fairly well discern what the optimal thing to do for most circumstances is, but we withhold judgement of others, as this is the role of Jesus Christ. Only He has all the needed details to judge righteously. We should judge inasmuch as it concerns us, but we should not attempt to judge the eternal salvation of others. Christ said we must judge righteously, and not throw pearls before swine. But being wise and careful is not the same as hating and condemning.

Before we came to earth, we knew we would make mistakes. The atonement was provided from before the foundation of the world so that we could indeed go forward with confidence. To use the piano allegory, we could practice without fearing striking a wrong key occasionally. Eventually we would learn to play flawlessly, but en route, we would make many errors. This being said, we must be careful when it comes to life death and moral questions. We are on this earth for a reason, and preserving life must be a top concern. We don't do immoral things to preserve life, but we do EVERYTHING we possibly can. The question of war times and war-like scenarios comes up. 'All is fair in war' they say. There is perhaps some flexibility in how we discern what is best. As for doing things typically forbidden, you better be DARN sure that revelation came from God, as your soul is at stake. If you're going to steal that bread to extend the life of your child, you better turn yourself in thereafter to pay the debt.

One Porter Rockwell story comes to mind where a guy was coming to town to kill him and the guy said "are you Porter Rockwell?" and Porter said "no but these are his dogs" and while the guy was getting ready to kill the dogs, Porter killed the guy. Brigham Young said Porter Rockwell is the most honest

man he ever met. I imagine the people who are coming to kill Porter were coming to do so unlawfully, and his course of action was the only way to preserve his life. We spoke of this earlier, self-defense.

FINAL THOUGHTS: PASS THE TEST OF LIFE VALIENTLY

The scriptures do say this life is a test and that the battle is not against flesh and blood but against false philosophies etc. This being said, we should be very brave and willing to suffer greatly and even die for the truth.

The Doctrine and Covenants states that those who are deceived get the second Glory. It's those who are valiant in their testimony that get the highest glory. God is merciful to everyone, but it's only the faithful to get the highest glory. My understanding is that this means for those of us who know better, we really do need to stand up for what's right. The lower kingdoms of glory are fantastic places, and that is an expression of God's mercy, but we want the highest glory. The Christian Martyrs knew that they were receiving a crown of glory for standing up for the faith even when people were going to kill them for it.

Brad Wilcox gave a fine lecture titled "His Grace is Sufficient" where he talks about the abundant role of grace in the plan of salvation. You'll certainly want to review it. There's also a talk in the October 2020 general conference which made it quite clear that God not only expects us to try, but expects us to achieve. And not just in the next life, but in this life. He said this is evidenced by those who have attained many Christlike attributes in this life, and if they can do it, so can we.

Life is a Pickle

SECTION 1:

Mortality is like a perpetual scenario of Adam and Eve: struggling to decide what to do to please God when it seems there is no easy way out. We must choose between hard decisions daily and deal with not being able to accomplish all we wanted to. It's critical that as we make these choices; we pray daily for God to forgive us for not being able to do more. We recommit to make everything better and beg forgiveness for the status quo mess that we have made. In the status quo mess, we can't always make the 'what would Jesus do' choice because Jesus wouldn't have got himself into that mess in the first place! Of course in every scenario there is a good better and best way to handle things, and that is generally what we mean by 'do what Jesus would do', but my point is that sometimes there is no black and white answer.

Perhaps there is always a black and white answer, but it is sufficiently hidden to us so as to test us. What good is a test if the solution manual is always provided to the student? Why ask us to believe if God shows up every 5 minutes? Indeed, pre-mortality was the school, and mortality is the short placement exam! Though we think life is not fair and wonder how this life could be an eternal placement test, God designed the test, and we are getting EXACTLY what we want out of life. There are no coincidences, our small daily choices are perfectly reflected in our life circumstances, attitudes, etc. Truly at the judgement day, all will confess to God "thy judgments are just". He will recognize fully well that he has given us billions of chances to show our true colors, and our true colors will show indeed!

SECTION 2:

Some hold that rather than a test, life is like a school, or an apprenticeship. This is a beautiful perspective which highlights the companionship of God, God's desires for us to become like him, and the overall mercy and tutoring God includes in our mortal experience. But it remains true that based on our choices in this life, we will be placed in either the celestial terrestrial or telestial kingdom of glory. This being said, life is, among other things, a test. Progress in the spirit world after this life isn't an excuse to procrastinate preparations. Alma makes it clear that this life is the time to prepare to meet God, the time to perform our labors. The gospel teaching in the spirit world is focused on those who didn't have the opportunity to receive it here. We won't be perfect by the time we meet death, and we will have progress to make after

death, but to think that a person walking south will turn around and walk north just because death has arrived is a sectarian notion rejected by the master. Yes Ecclesiastes speaks of being able to turn around until death, but the modern way this is depicted in many Christian religions is that an enemy to God can say on his deathbed that he is sorry, and somehow qualify for the great glories of God. For example, one Christian movie titled "God's not Dead" features a devout atheist professor who spent his life tearing down faith. Near the end of the movie he gets hit by a car and while his lungs fill with blood he says in effect 'I'm so scared, I'm an atheist. OK I accept Jesus'. Then the preacher rejoices and claims his soul saved. This is like spiritually debt reckless spending followed by declaring bankruptcy. Just because you filed for bankruptcy doesn't mean you're 'saved' You have lots to learn about financial/spiritual wisdom, you have not yet taken upon you the countenance of Christ in righteously governing that which has been appointed to you. The Book of Mormon clarifies the doctrine of repentance in showing that various atheists who are about to die yet confess on their deathbeds that they lived in sin, aren't much better off than when they were living in sin. Life is about becoming something, and deathbed repentance is void of that. Jesus taught this succinctly when he said, "Not everyone that saith 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into my kingdom."

A discussion on deathbed repentance usually goes to the thief on the cross. Modern revelation has shown that a better translation of this passage is 'this day thou shalt be with me in the world of spirits.' This suggests that rather than jumping into the same celestial boat as Christ's disciples, this man is going to a place where he can learn of the lesser portion of God's glory, which is still available to him. That availability will not be the same as what is available for those who used their lives for good, who stopped doing bad things, and became descent people, regardless of how much they did or didn't know about God. Everyone has the light of Christ from birth, sometimes called a conscience, and how we have listened to or rejected that light will be the key factor at judgement day.

Recall that hell is temporary, a place of refining for the wicked, so they can be painfully purged and go to live in the lowest kingdom of glory, called the telestial kingdom. It's still a place of glory, but it's nowhere near as glorious as the two higher kingdoms, namely the terrestrial and the celestial. Those who enter the telestial kingdom essentially qualified for that in the premortal existence.

The only permanent hell is the place where Lucifer himself lives, along with the 1/3 who openly rejected God's plan while staring God in the face in premortality, and the small handful of people in this life who knowingly reject God to a similar level in this life. Such rejection is a deeper evil than murder etc., and is often referred to as 'denying the Holy Ghost'. Jesus said that those in this category receive not forgiveness in this life, nor the life to come (Matt. 12:32). These people not only speak against Christ, they speak against all holy

things, they love evil and hate good. For more scriptures about this group, see the LDS Guide to the Scriptures, topic of “Sons of Perdition” (at this link <https://www.lds.org/scriptures/gs/sons-of-perdition?lang=eng>). There is some information on this and other components of God’s plan found in the bible, but the Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants have 100-fold information on these subjects.

Let us remember that Elder McConkie of the Quorum of the 12 Apostles taught in his discourse titled “[The 7 Deadly Heresies](#)” that if one rejects the missionaries in this life, they drop a kingdom, and can only qualify for the terrestrial in the life to come, not the celestial, notwithstanding work for the dead.

SECTION 3:

Perhaps some of our choices from where we stand can’t be perfect ones, but are simply the best given the circumstances. We do our best and beg forgiveness daily because we greatly need it daily. Never forget the holiness of god and the nothingness of man and the requirements of god upon man. Remember the angel that came to rebuke Joseph Smith for living beneath the expectations of God in his young trying days of getting the plates (actually all of his days were trying days) and think not that you are better than Joseph, that you are not worthy of rebuke. We are all worthy of rebuke. Our character lies in whether we stand up to it or run away from it in cowardice, hiding as it were under the rocks, kidding ourselves that judgement day will never come.

No one is exempt from some level of ambiguity in their day to day choices. God lets us choose. His will is sometimes our will. That’s what happened for Nephi (3rd Nephi). God told him ‘you figure it out I will back you wherever you go with this, let’s see what you’ve got kid. You can do it, I’ve been watching you. Stick around and check this out, you may even surprise yourself’.

Life is a pickle and who can get out? the answer is that no one can get out; the purpose of life is to see what you’re going to do when you’re in a pickle; we want to see what you do when there’s no right answer – what will you pick in the only options are to fail in one thing or two fail in something else. yes, you’ll see bits and pieces of success, and God will comfort you through your trials, but life IS a trial.

One good analogy of this is seen in *Ender’s Game* by Orson Scott Card, wherein Ender is judged not only based on what he did, but why he did it.

Another analogy to consider is the “Golden Parachute Clause” principle of corporate businesses. This is where a VIP employee is essentially considered to be so valuable, that he is allowed to make mistakes, even big mistakes, and not get fired. This doesn’t mean he comes out in forthright rebellion, no, he is

always TRYING to make the right choice, it's just that sometimes, he simply messes up. And when you're in the driver's seat and you mess up, consequences can be big. But he does so much good that it overwhelms the bad. The ripple effect of the good that he does is so much bigger than the ripple effect of the bad that he does, that the company would be at a great loss to get rid of him. In other words, the NET EFFECT you have on the world is GOOD. The end result of your presence on earth has been an overall increase in goodness, peace, prosperity, justice, mercy, love, etc.

Notes:

One thing that need not be ambiguous is our testimony of Jesus Christ and his restored gospel. Some remain ambiguous in this, but there is a gift of the spirit of not just believing these things but knowing them. Seek that gift!

The D&C even goes so far as to say we should covet spiritual gifts!

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" -Jesus Christ

"This is life eternal, to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." -Jesus Christ

Heart to the Fathers, not to Secularism: How remembering our Ancestors can save our Souls

The world likes to show how their ancestors were wrong; but the Lord says we should “turn our hearts to the fathers”. The world is interested in reinventing a new wheel, the Lord says repent. I’m not saying we should copy some of the bad of our ancestors or prejudice. I am saying we should ask ourselves, “How would my ancestors react if they saw the way I dress? The way I treat the holy scriptures? The way I treat my neighbor? The way I treat my kids and spouse? The way I use my money and free time?” I think most cases will bring us to better behavior if we think in this way. The Lord said that lest we do this, the earth will be “smitten with a curse.” (see book of Malachi)

Your family history work will greatly influence your family future work for the better!

You don’t have to reach back to Adam and Eve today. That will come, and sooner than you think, many have done it already. But you can focus on 4 generations back, and add pictures and stories etc. The Church has invested massive amounts of money to FamilySearch.org, a mighty program to make a safe keeping of these memories and stories, and family trees.

Note - Buy a 2’x3’ chart of 9 Generations already filled in from the database at FamilySearch.org at the BYU Family History Library for \$7.

This social media forum may be helpful: LDS Genealogy and Family History (~1,700 members) <https://www.facebook.com/groups/LDSGenealogists/>

Agency Begins with Saying No

Ideas from BYU Family Life Professor Thomas Draper. I share these ideas with permission of the author.

This suggests that the power to meet our goals lies in our ability to say no to distractions, etc. We have the power to choose what we do. We are not powerless. Perhaps we should make “No” our new favorite word we tell ourselves.

Agency exists because we can say no despite what physiological reaction we have to stimulus. Professor Thomas Draper of BYU says in his SFL 290 class presentation 6 on critical thinking.

"First, it exists. Despite neuropsychological studies that say it is a self-flattering illusion.

Neurological studies are helpful, but usually interpreted incompletely."

He refers to Libet's experiment on when we react to stimuli. Libet suggests that it's just an illusion that we chose to do things, that we are powerless to stimuli.

"The beginning of agency is
saying “No” to what is starting to happen
In your body." says Draper.

He continues, "No doubt, some actions are prefigured by neural impulses of Biology; Temptations; Natural man (or woman) Pre-decisions Habits"

Consider Joseph fleeing from Potiphar's wife.

Draper continues,
there are moral moments
more complex, unlike the simple hand and finger movements in the
neuroscience experiments.

They cause us to pause and break
out of our everyday routine and do
a much more complex moral
evaluation, and take more complex
action.

The parable of the Good Samaritan
The baby in the road

Consider that "we get to choose our goals"

Sailor on the lake metaphor:

The boat = genetic endowment

The lake and the winds = the physical and social environments

The person sailing the boat = the moral agent

But after we do we must obey the laws that will get us to our goals.

Often not a lot of choice about how we must behave to get to the goal.

Saying “yes” to the goal means saying “no” to distractions & temptations.

Getting to the same goal can be harder for some people than others.

[due to]

Different genetics

Different social and
physical environment

But if is a moral goal one will have Divine
help and grace to get there.



Earning Respect & God's Universal Standards by Joel Skousen

The angle Skousen is getting at here is that though we love everyone, we don't have to vote in their Babylonian political policies, and we don't have to appreciate their lifestyles. For example, I don't appreciate the lifestyles of pedophiles, or even homosexuals for that matter. Some of these are legal some aren't, but there is a big movement right now for people to not only allow people to live how they choose, but to put a stamp of universal approval on every walk of life.

Here are brother Skousen's words which put it so well, from from the World Affairs Brief by Joel Skousen, November 9, 2018 (worldaffairsbrief.com):

"Utah replaced compromising Republican Orrin Hatch with former presidential contender Mitt Romney, who is already showing signs of playing up to the establishment. In his post election remarks to the press his first order of business was [pandering to the politically correct lobby](#). *"I believe [my victory] is a call for greater dignity, and respect. I believe it is an affirmation that regardless of one's gender, or ethnicity, or sexual orientation, or race or place of birth, that we are equal, not only in the eyes of God, but also in the respect and dignity we are due from government and from our fellow Americans."*

Everyone seems to have bought into these kinds of "feel good" statements about universal tolerance, but let me explain why they are dead wrong.

1) Everyone is not entitled to our respect simply because of being a member of a protected class by the Left. Dignity and respect must be earned by one's individual conduct, attitude and performance. And, the more correct our standards, the more difficult it is for people to gain our respect. But even though a person doesn't come up to our respect, it doesn't mean we don't see their need for help, and extend a guiding hand of concern.

2) We are not all equal in the eyes of God, and God clearly does not respect everyone. Think of all the hundreds of old testament references to the fury of God—aimed at people who disregard his commands and abuse others. In fact, everyone is judged individually by God. Christian liberals often misinterpret the scripture statement about God, "not being a respecter of persons" to mean He doesn't respect one person above another. This is not true. He clearly favors the righteous. What it really means is that he doesn't play favorites in arbitrary ways. At its core, it means He judges everyone by the same uniform standards, thus ensuring fairness.

That is why there is no such thing as the “unconditional love” of God. How else do you explain Him calling the Pharisees “vipers, hypocrites, and whited Sepulchers” —that’s certainly no form of acceptance love. Neither is there unconditional acceptance by God just for being a member of any class or group. You must come up to His standards of purity of heart and righteousness or you cannot abide His presence. His rewards or consequences strictly match what you really are.”

Core Duties of Life in the 4 Quadrants: Body Mind Spirit Social

What are the Duties of Life? Here I've broken down what I could think of into the 4 categories of body spirit social mind.

Note: Elder Richard G Scott said to not be discouraged if we can't do all of these at the same time.

We also should take breaks in evenings etc. even when all is not finished, lest we go crazy, relationships die, etc. This is what pioneers and disaster relief efforts were instructed to do by church leaders historically. Joseph Smith taught that you must unstring the bow from time to time, or it will lose its spring.

Body:

Regular BMI
Word of wisdom: don'ts & dos
Garden
Clean living space
Well groomed

Spirit:

Prayer
Scripture
Church & Church calling
Missions
Genealogy
Temple
Journal
Know Church history
Be aware of conflict between God's kingdom and the kingdom of the Devil, and take a stand.

Social:

Serve neighbors
Fun time with kids, spouse, friends
Teach kids academics
Teach kids gospel
Teach kids work
Local politics, current events
Homemaking
Employment skill
Community events
Emergency Preparedness \$, skill, supplies
Financial independence, taxes
Expose secret combinations

Mental:

Math
Science
Language
Fun to de-stress
Good grades (make the most of an education)
Pursue your talents

Core Priorities & Views for The Daily Religious Life

Sections:

Introduction

Education

Music

Preaching

Family

Vocation

Philosophy

Health

Friendships

Hope

INTRODUCTION:

Primarily be known as a religious person. One who seeks religious skills, religious causes, religious language, religious recreation, etc.

EDUCATION:

Unlock new skills and feed curiosity.

Commit to lifelong learning, including reading books every day.

Commit to uniting the human family and unlocking The mysteries of the past through foreign language competency. Hebrew is the Lord's language, emphasize learning and teaching it. If you know a foreign language, be committed to maintaining it and using it for good in the world.

Reject the false theories of evolution socialism and communism and recognize the duty to promote true science and government. Accept the religious world view as true wonderful and the exciting revolution that will change the world forever for a majestic future.

Believe in waking early, regularly exercising the body, and the daily reading of books, practicing instruments and languages, and searching the scriptures, as these things need daily practice to be attained.

MUSIC:

Value the power of music and dance to open the soul to joy and relationships.
Commit to developing skill in musical instruments and wholesome dance.

PREACHING:

Be dedicated to preaching the gospel and defending church doctrines.

Become a latter-day saint philosopher. I ask bold questions and give bold answers. Publish findings in every feasible way to uplift the human race. Brigham Young Parley Pratt Hugh Nibly and many others endorse this mission. Not everyone will understand it or support it but the Holy Ghost drives one to it.

Above all studies & activities, these preside: the study of religion & the preaching thereof.

Make it relentlessly clear the why and how of living every gospel doctrine and standard in complete Holiness to the Lord and rejecting all false teachings.

Believe that are answers to the questions, that the evidence stands with the truth, and that the defender of the kingdom of God may become so well equipped that he can have no issue in defending every doctrine and practice of the people of Zion.

FAMILY:

Commit to putting marriage and parenting as top priorities. Invest time learning and playing with family. Treat family with respect friendliness and openness. Never resort to force and abuse in fulfilling family roles.

Each child needs time its parents regularly.

VOCATION:

Disavow the pursuit of wealth.

Believe in independence, self-reliance, and learning useful traits. Become familiar with invention which promotes the betterment of mankind. Believe in the importance of temporal labors and that all things should be kept in their proper order. Do not believe that it is the duty of a man to spend all his time in spiritual arguments, but rather to testify and declare doctrines of reality and let it stand, then move on to manage all the duties of life. Hobbies we choose to

pursue must be useful, preferably on multiple levels.

Trust God will provide and aid daily in the pursuit of providing well, and that those who favor gods laws will ultimately come out on top.

Avoid priestcraft in all its forms. When it comes to the gospel, freely receive, then freely give.

PHILOSOPHY:

Commit to traditionalist not progressive philosophies. A religious world view as taught by the prophets.

Create the ideal. Do not blame the imperfections of others, but build despite handicaps of all kinds in family, self, and elsewhere. If there is beauty, create it. Mastery, discover it. Truth, uncover it. Joy, embrace it. Do not wait for Zion, but build it right here.

Avoid extremes. Seeing both sides of an argument. Avoid judging others. Love the taste of freedom, and seek the Lord.

HEALTH:

Nutrition and fitness are requirements of happiness. Animal products are not necessary in times of plenty and only for emergencies, & are connected with disease illness and misery. Reject the standard American diet as toxic & evil, and seek whole nutritious foods instead.

Personal health is not the top priority, and other duties often override the need for sleep. We should get a lot into a day, in having a sense of urgency, in pushing ones limits, in not over sleeping.

Seek health in personal intensive activities, but particularly in activities with my children, service to others, and some amount of intense personal fitness. Enjoy sports, as they build relationships, strengthen bodies, and bring overall balance and health when used with discretion.

Humans should be healthy, using the BMI guidelines, and glorify God and happify their fellow beings in being beautiful according to the nature of their creation.

FRIENDSHIPS:

Make new and keep old friendships. Commit to respect and good boundaries, not pushing others into what they don't seek. Befriend everyone and invite them to higher ways. Seek as closest friends those who value Zion first.

HOPE

Trust that a better world will come soon, that your employment will be most satisfying, that God will teach you more than your fondest dream, that your family relationships will overflow the soul with joy, that your skills in all things beautiful and useful will increase, that your people will have wealth and brotherly kindness, that Earth will become a garden paradise, that you will soon have personal acquaintance with Christ & Father in Heaven, that your body and mind will soon become celestial, that your children will be saved in God's kingdom, that you will have time to learn and a sharp mind to recall and understand, that you will be yet still a great missionary for God throughout the world, that the voices of doubt and despair in your mind will cease and that you will resist every temptation.

Judging Righteous Judgement: What do we see when people get away from Gospel Centered Lives?

Yes we should judge righteously. These judgements aren't to condemn others to hell, but are safeguards for us to help us in our discipleship. We do not shun those who reject the counsel of the prophets, but we should be able to discern who they are so that we can be careful about fully embracing their counsels and lifestyles.

We can discern the heart of others by their actions.

Cast not your pearls before swine the master said.

We should stand in holy places and be not moved.

We should also be involved in making the world a better place (be in but not of the world).

When it comes to tolerance, we do not tolerate evil. We don't call on non-members to pay tithing, but we do expect civility and wholesomeness.

Here are some pesky things that seem to get the best of us down, and block our path to Zion. May we at length (shorter than longer) learn to say 'get thee behind me Satan' when confronting these ills of our time.

- immodesty
- sexual movies/TV
- R rated movies
- tolerance of evil
- idleness
- greed
- elaborate clothing
- foul language
- show up at church sometimes but don't contribute
- video game addiction
- postponed marriage
- postponed childbearing
- word of wisdom leniency
- neglect of scripture study
- rare & shallow prayer
- infrequent temple attendance
- white lies
- tolerance for apostate groups
- excessive social lives

- complaining attitudes
- entitlement
- cessation of learning
- cruelty towards children
- lack of discipline for children
- slothful approach to counsel from church leaders
- political complacency
- disinterest in one's neighbors
- a rushed life with no time for others
- hostility toward the church, especially Joseph Smith

Meat (in most cases meat isn't needed (see D&C 89), but no one seems to care about that anymore (except the 7th Day Adventists and a few others).)

Money (Who among us can say they truly dedicate all surplus to helping the poor?)

Time (Everyone has it, it reveals our priorities in unmistakable clarity before God.)

Clothing (ironic how we have too much of too little clothing; modesty is perhaps the key symbol of rebellion among the daughters of Zion (Isaiah has a few words on that subject).)

Music

Careerism

Retirement

Sabbath games (instead of worship and charitable service)

Abusive or neglectful parenting

Large empty homes (childlessness, debt, and unrestrained luxury)

Fast food (Defiling our bodies, thinking them to be worth no trouble to maintain.)

Big city life (As opposed to small community living where everyone has a name and a purpose.)

Social status / social circles (as opposed to freely associating with everyone, and parting our substance among them.)

Course entertainment (As opposed to using the vast resources of wholesome materials.)

Priestcraft (earning profits / wages from gospel related things)

Pride & Humility: The Universal Problem & Solution

Some aspects of pride:

-I want to do it my way.

-I want to get to heaven in the end (happiness), and I'll get there in my time, and in my way.

-Jehovah has given councils, but those are not suited to me personally, I have tried those and failed, I shall set those aside and do things my way. I shall reach heaven nevertheless. I do not fear, I am confident that going on in the way I currently am is fine.

-No one should interfere with the way I do things, not even the councils of prophets of Jehovah.

-I am different and the councils of Jehovah do not apply to me, they will not lead me to happiness as quickly as my ways are doing so.

Some aspects of humility:

-Faith (assurance) in God's existence, and that his councils are better for me than my chosen methods. They will lead me to heaven, and they alone will lead me there. There is no other way. Should I set aside the councils of Jehovah, I will be on a different path. Since only Jehovah's path leads to heaven, I will end up at a destination other than heaven.

-Faith that I can be successful in areas of my life where I have formerly not been successful. Jehovah has power to change my capacities.

-Inacceptance that my life will never progress. A determination to be better than I was yesterday. Assurance that the human is designed with the capacity to use it's past to construct a different future. I will repent all of the time, saying sorry to Elohim for when I have acted according to my wisdom instead of His wisdom, and ask forgiveness in the name of Jehovah. Ask Elohim for the strength to not make similar mistakes in the future. I am determined that I shall not make these same mistakes in the future. I will pray more frequently until I have overcome this habit.

-I am willing for my life to change upon the councils of Jehovah. I am willing to be humiliated for this. The only person I care getting approval from is Jehovah.

-I recognize that each day will be an opportunity to master myself. I expect to master myself, and SOON.

-I refuse to become discouraged, not because I accept my life the way it is and that it's ok to remain the way I am, but because I am sure that Jehovah will help me improve in every way which is aligned with his councils as I ask him to and give my best efforts. Though I need time to relax, I also need time to work, and know Jehovah can make my weaknesses become strengths.

-The main question I ask myself is “How can I draw nearer to Jehovah today than I was yesterday, based on doing the things that he has counceled me to do?”

-I know the prophets modern and ancient are the mouthpiece of Jehovah, so their councils are my top priority. This is because I want to go to heaven, and the way of Jehovah is the only way to get there.

Summary:

-If we are not progressing, it is because of pride. Pray more often to get out of pride. None of the councils of Jehovah are optional for our happiness. They alone will lead us to heaven (happiness here and hereafter). Our top concern should be to find the aspects of our lives not in tune with the councils of Jehovah, and change those into being in tune with the councils of Jehovah.

Courageous Faith

-See also article Great Expectations of Young People essay.

-See also the “Torch Lighter” series, an animated video series of courageous Christians throughout the world and persecutions they’ve been through.

-See also the group “Voice of the Martyrs”. They have a FREE magazine and charts showing where Christians are persecuted today throughout the world. See their website, persecution.com

–President Joseph Fielding Smith stated: “We all know something of the courage it takes for one to stand in opposition to united custom, and general belief. None of us likes to be ridiculed. Few are able to withstand popular opinion even when they know it is wrong, and it is difficult to comprehend the magnificent courage displayed by Abraham in his profound obedience to Jehovah, in the midst of his surroundings. His moral courage, his implicit faith in God, his boldness in raising his voice in opposition to the prevailing wickedness, is almost beyond comparison” (The Way to Perfection, 86).

–“Because the trend in society today is away from the values and principles the Lord has given us, you will almost certainly be called upon to defend that which you believe. Unless the roots of your testimony are firmly planted, it will be difficult for you to withstand the ridicule of those who challenge your faith. When firmly planted, your testimony of the gospel, of the Savior, and of our Heavenly Father will influence all that you do throughout your life.” (Thomas S. Monson, “May You Have Courage,” Liahona, May 2009, 126. Also in Ensign 2015 April in 1st Presidency Message

https://www.lds.org/liahona/2015/04/president-monson-calls-for-courage?cid=HP_SA_3-28-2015_dPTH_ffPMxLIDyL1-C_&lang=eng#footnote7-12564_000_003)

–“The messages portrayed on television, in movies, and in other media [today] are very often in direct opposition to that which we want our children to embrace and hold dear. It is our responsibility not only to teach them to be sound in spirit and doctrine but also to help them stay that way, regardless of the outside forces they may encounter. This will require much time and effort on our part—and in order to help others, we ourselves need the spiritual and moral courage to withstand the evil we see on every side.” (Thomas S. Monson, “Three Goals to Guide You,” Liahona, Nov. 2007, 118–19. Also in Ensign 2015 April in 1st Presidency Message https://www.lds.org/liahona/2015/04/president-monson-calls-for-courage?cid=HP_SA_3-28-2015_dPTH_ffPMxLIDyL1-C_&lang=eng#footnote7-12564_000_003)

–“As we go about living from day to day, it is almost inevitable that our faith will be challenged. We may at times find ourselves surrounded by others and yet standing in the minority or even standing alone concerning what is acceptable

and what is not. ...

May we ever be courageous and prepared to stand for what we believe, and if we must stand alone in the process, may we do so courageously, strengthened by the knowledge that in reality we are never alone when we stand with our Father in Heaven.” (Thomas S. Monson, “Dare to Stand Alone,” Liahona, Nov. 2011, 60, 67. Also in Ensign 2015 April in 1st Presidency Message https://www.lds.org/liahona/2015/04/president-monson-calls-for-courage?cid=HP_SA_3-28-2015_dPTH_ffPMxLIDyL1-C_&lang=eng#footnote7-12564_000_003)

-“One day in my high school English class, the teacher announced that we’d be viewing an episode of a TV show I knew I shouldn’t watch. While other students cheered in excitement, my classmate Sarah raised her hand and asked if she could leave. When the teacher asked why, Sarah responded matter-of-factly, “Because I’m Mormon and I don’t watch shows with profanity.” Her courage to stand up in front of the class was amazing. Thanks to Sarah, I too stood up and waited outside with a clear conscience for the show to finish. I was forever changed. I started explaining my beliefs instead of avoiding the subject. And as a result, I found confidence in myself and participated even more in Church and school activities. I never told Sarah how much her example meant to me, but I try to emulate her example of confidence. I now realize that being a member of God’s wonderful, sacred Church is absolutely nothing to be ashamed about. I hope that I can, through my example, be someone else’s Sarah.” (Ensign 2015 April in 1st Presidency Message https://www.lds.org/liahona/2015/04/president-monson-calls-for-courage?cid=HP_SA_3-28-2015_dPTH_ffPMxLIDyL1-C_&lang=eng#footnote7-12564_000_003)

Obedience to God Can Bring Seemingly Unrelated Blessings

To say only nature can reward us, i.e. not getting punishment for breaking laws of the land, is atheist. Obey God in, per se, writing in your journal, and God can bless you with finding a 5\$ bill on the street. What does finding random currency have to do with writing about your day? Nothing. Yes there can be a blessing. Imagine a child with a parent, and you can understand how obedience to the parent can bring rewards in what ever way the parent sees fit, even if not directly relating to the action taken by the child. I clarify and repeat: there is a being in yonder cosmos who is involved in your life. He is God. Obey him, and he will interact with you in a positive way. It's not merely that Gods laws are wise ideas. Some of them are strange, and seemingly irrelevant. But obey God, and be blessed.

In other words, you can indeed be blessed for rendering obedience. Obedience for the sake of obedience. Getting a blessing for the sake of obeying. This philosophy requires theology, and is impossible with atheism. Is this true doctrine? Read your bibles. You'll see the miracles of God. Look at Jesus healing those who wash in the same pool everyone else is washing in, yet they come away healed, despite prior bathing in that very place which would have been common in their lives. Look at Moses, whom went to cross the Red Sea at precisely the time it parted when everything was at stake. God told him what to do. He obeyed. He was blessed. Or consider Moses and the hand in the robe upon the word of God changing it. Yes, God is not a mere wise man, he is a God of miracles!

If you don't think you can and will be blessed merely for the sake of obedience to God, you deny that God is a God of miracles! God has more power. More science. More dominion, etc. God has already been through life and death and been resurrected. He has been there done that. He knows everything now. We are like toddlers in comparison to his operations, though we can learn much, and should we press on faithful, we will learn all he knows, and become like Him, our Father. Don't children have the capacity to grow up to be like their parents? Yes. And God is our Father. Do you taste this? This is good doctrine. You can taste it.

Build a Highway to Zion: The Redemptive Life of Moving Mountains

Build a highway for the people of God to return. This in part means do the work of God however difficult and back-breakingly heavy, and your life will pass by as a dream, and you will die exhausted and look back and say, “what happened?” And you will see that you have carved through the mountainside and a trail is behind you. You will see that you have been moving mountains for others to have a pathway to come to ZION.

Faithlessness: Our #1 Problem, & How Faith Hope and Charity Lead to Salvation

The biggest problem with me and anyone else who has a problem is the lack of faith – the lack of concrete trust in God – the lack of confidence in God – the lack of a surety that the end of days, yes, that the Millennium of millenniums is here, upon our doorstep! The knowledge that the times are here, it's all here for The Showdown. This aspect of Faith as well as others are the most important thing that we need; this brings the good faith to teach your kids; you need the faith to read your books; you need faith learn the history of the earth; in faith you must defend Christianity and Mormonism; you need faith faith faith faith to do these things; faith brother is what you and everyone else with a problem needs more than anything – faith faith faith faith!

1. Faith leads to hope, hope leads to charity, charity leads to salvation.

aka faith -> hope -> charity -> salvation

2. Satan's goal = damn us.

aka disable our salvation.

How can be best do this?

Trace back the line, salvation ultimately comes from faith.

The book of Moses shows us that in Satan's brief encounter with Moses, he struck at Moses' faith.

3. charity is the step before salvation (see Matthew), "inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these" is the line in the sand for salvation.

4. charity is more likely to come to pass when a person has faith and hope. In faith, we learn 1. what we have been given, and 2. what may yet be hoped for in the future. These inspire charity.

5. missionaries baptize persons after a few weeks of meeting with them rather than years, because once faith is there and the Holy Ghost from baptism, the rest comes from God, via the Holy Ghost. The sewer plants a seed, then God sends the rain and sunlight. Our part is easy, just like Christ said, "my yoke is easy, my burden is light." Faith is like a germ which devours cancerous cells, spreading quickly throughout the whole system.

6. a study of the gospel changes behavior faster than a study of behavior changes behavior (Elder Packer said, see Preach My Gospel manual for missionary service.)

7. When you're depressed or dissatisfied with your life, its not because you don't believe enough or hope enough, but because your acts aren't enough. You aren't participating in the advancement of the human race as well as you anticipated. So faith is not the endgame, charity is the endgame. But we've seen

that charity is most likely produced via the foundation of faith. I submit further that in order to have perfect charity aimed in the right direction and applied in the right way, this type of charity can ONLY come via faith.

8. lack of faith is the universal problem in society and individuals, and the universal remedy is faith.

9. Alma 32 speaks of gaining belief, and says if you don't believe, use a des

10. synonyms for faith hope and charity are belief motivation and action/behavior.

11. Charity = power + righteous application.

Thus, an antonym for charity is power + unrighteous application = abuse.

12. Belief proceeds action because you won't try for something which you don't really believe is there.

13. When you believe in something enough, and are sufficiently motivated (which motivation comes from the belief), you WILL act for it.

14. Faith comes from hearing the word of God, you need someone to introduce you to faith. You can't even fathom faith and spirituality without an introduction, you wouldn't even know that part of your brain existed not to mention how to use it. Someone to suggest the correct reading (the scriptures ancient and modern).

15. Lack of motivation/desire (hope), you must have more of the belief/faith. Faith hope and charity are 3 rungs of a stair set. If you don't want it, you don't believe it's great. Learn about this better world, where is it, what is it, why is it. The more you learn about it, the more it opens channels of your mind that have been closed for too long, the more premortal memories you awaken.

16. A Relief Society sister in General Conference said God will give you as much power as you are wise enough to handle. Wisdom here probably is synonymous with belief. Believe the right things, the right way to handle and approach things, and you'll get more power. In other words, the more faith you have, the more charity you'll be given.

17. You go from step 1 (faith) to step 3 (charity) quickly. The middle step 2 (hope) is almost subconscious; the thing to work at is building your faith, then hope comes, then charity comes. Refer to verse 6 of this document, that a study of the gospel changes behavior faster than a study of behavior changes behavior.

18. A general and major source of depression is lack of service to others (charity). Is it any wonder that the soul of man is depressed when he is not doing the thing which produces salvation?

19. Charity is not something we do in this life so we can relax in heaven.

Brigham Young said the streets of heaven if gold, were paved by the saints to become that way. God works, his work is our salvation (immortality and eternal life (see Moses 1:39); immortality means that your body and soul will live on forever, eternal life means that you'll live the life like God lives). God weeps. This is one of the greatest revelations of the last days; in the book of Moses, we have the account of Enoch, and his interview with God, wherein he sees God

weeping. When Enoch asks why he wept, God responds that these are his children suffering, and though it is worth it and he does it for us, it is indeed hard. God lives a flavorful life. The scripture says in the millennium God will wipe away all tears and there will be no more sorrow because there will be no more death; indeed, there will be a great period of rejoicing, but the work of God goes on, and as new candidates are introduced to the plan of salvation, they will go through some amount of suffering, and this will to some extent sadden our souls at times.

20. We cannot imagine that there are no real requirements for salvation. See Elder Christofferson's message on the need for a Savior. Furthermore, though our good works are as filthy rags as the scripture says, we also know that exaltation must be earned, it cannot be given to unworthy candidates. All fall short, but some things must be done for exaltation.

To Obey is Better than Sacrifice: The Secret Code for Valiant Service

To serve God valiantly is to do all that he commands, not just good hobbies, not just what I think is tolerable. its to do the boots on the ground hard work that needs to get done. Do you want to please God? Then ask: Am I out of debt? Am I spending time with my family regularly and teaching them the gospel? Am I being nice to those around me? Am I doing well in school and career goals for the betterment of society and my household? Am I making good choices with my body, including healthy food and exercise? Am I making my home an environment for ideal child development, and keeping the doors open thereto? Am I ministering to my spouse and neighbors? Young men, have you completed your church missions? Young adults, ask, have I married and got my children on the way and my career beginning, including taking full advantage of educational opportunities? (For a brilliant discourse from Elder Anderson in 2011 about having children while going to school see his message “Children”, where he recounts president Kimball’s council to a young student, “would the Lord want you to break one of his important commandments in order for you to become a doctor? With the help of the Lord, you can have your family and still become a doctor. Where is your faith?” (Conf. Report, Oct. 2011

[https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/10/children?lang=eng.\)\)](https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/10/children?lang=eng.))) Know that yes, God will give me time for recreation, hobbies, learning and teaching of the various fields of knowledge, especially gospel knowledge, but when He has commanded, and the servant is not quick to obey every call, that is a slothful servant, and loses his reward.

Remember always, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams (1 Sam. 15:22). If you have a great idea but it means you would not be able to obey the commands of the Lord to enact that idea, know that said idea needs to be put in its place, and take a backseat priority as compared to the Lord’s commands. Long have the people of the Lord been commanded to offer the firstlings of their flocks, the cream of their crop, the best of the harvest, not the leftovers or the blemished. There may be room for the sand after the rocks have fit into the jar, but never will the rocks fit if you put the sand first. To put the rocks in first (meaning the prophetic priorities) is to trust God and lean not unto your own understanding (Psalms 3:5-6). While following the promptings of the Holy Ghost to do wonderful things in the Lord’s kingdom, being not commanded in all things but doing much good of your own free will (D&C 58:26), we must discern that the spirit of God is what leads us in accordance and within the boundaries of the laws of God.

A List of Some Commandments & Councils

This is a list of things which God has asked us to do via his prophets in the Latter-days. If you doubt any of these, notify me and I'll help get you the reference for them showing prophets who have asked these things of us. Though some of these may be considered mere 'councils' rather than 'commandments', we, like Jesus our leader, seek to 'live by every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God'

- The ten commandments, including '6 days shalt thou work'
- The word of wisdom (don'ts as well as do's; no tobacco alcohol coffee tea, yes wheat fruit vegetables meat sparingly and exercise etc.)
- the law of tithing (10% of your income give to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints)
- study the scriptures often (Elder Ballard says to do it thirty minutes each morning before you start your day)
- live the law of chastity (no sexual relations except between a man and wife lawfully married)
- follow the prophet (receive their council as from the mouth of the Lord Himself)
- pray often (to the Father in the name of Christ)
- the law of the fast, including fast offerings (In The Miracle of Forgiveness, President Kimball says to not fast is a sin; not only sins of commission are sin, but sins of omission are sin too.)
- young men to serve full time missions (if you question as to weather this is a commandment, see my post "Missions: Commanded to Go". I've compiled prophets quotes on how this is not up to debate.)
- service in the church
- monthly home teach for men, visit teach for women.
- men receive the Priesthood
- women have children
- be baptized
- come unto Jesus Christ
- teach your children the gospel freely by age 8 (or the sins of the child are on the parents' head)
- get endowment in the temple
- marry in the temple
- keep temple covenants
- redeem your ancestors via the temple
- men provide for your family
- women nurture your family
- have 1-year supply of food storage
- love God and your neighbor

- establish a house of order
- no dating until 16 years old
- dress modestly (see church guidelines)
- find people for the missionaries to teach
- rejoice
- lift up your head
- warn your neighbors about the gospel
- get a personal witness from the Holy Ghost that the gospel of Jesus Christ is true, that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is his true and living church on the earth today.
- sustain your local church leaders
- obey the law of the land
- partake of the sacrament (worthily) on Sundays
- repent of all your sins
- don't let secret combinations take charge of your nation
- stand up for the rights of your children and country
- follow the Holy Ghost's promptings
- be still and behold the salvation of God
- be anxiously engaged in a good cause
- don't run faster than you have strength (Elder Neil A Maxwell says this is a type of nervousness that disables us from giving our all)
- study foreign and local governments
- study geography, oceanography, and things over the earth
- study languages of foreign nations
- study all good science and learning
- give all you have to build up the Church and Kingdom of God on earth
- don't judge others unrighteously
- pray for mercy
- turn the other cheek when others smite you
- when asked to go one mile go two
- when asked for something give it and more
- settle disputes amongst yourselves rather than taking things to court when possible (agree with thine enemy whilst thou art in the way with him)
- uphold the Constitution of the USA
- pay back those you have wronged
- don't gossip or backbite
- elect political leaders whom are righteous men of God
- feed the hungry
- clothe the naked
- visit the lonely
- care for your parents when they grow old
- visit the imprisoned
- treat others with the same respect and charity that we would Christ

- always recognize your nothingness before God and your dependence on him and his hand in all things.
- confess your sins at church
- attend your church meetings faithfully
- magnify your calling (leave it better than you found it like the parable of the ten virgins)
- attend the temple often
- flee from Babylon
- build Zion
- seek to make your calling and election sure (Joseph Smith admonishes us to do that as well as Paul)
- have Family Home Evening once a week (usually Monday nights)
- avoid debt like the plague (TSM calls debt a demon)
- be civil in your dealings with others
- what you would have done to you, to do others
- don't idol away your time
- learn the mysteries of the kingdom of God.
- confess major sins to your bishop, whom will help you be forgiven in the name of the Church seeing as he is a judge in Israel.
- men no earrings or other piercings
- women only one pair of earrings.
- no tattoos

Living Beneath Our Privileges

-Brigham Young says how he could weep like a whipped child when he thinks of how far the saints fell short of their possibilities and opportunities. (see Hugh Nibley BofM/PoGP lectures for source)

-“If we are to build that Zion of which the prophets have spoken and of which the Lord has given mighty promise, we must set aside our consuming selfishness. We must rise above our love for comfort and ease, and in the very process of effort and struggle, even in our extremity, we shall become better acquainted with our God.

Let us never forget that we have a marvelous heritage received from great and courageous people who endured unimaginable suffering and demonstrated unbelievable courage for the cause they loved. You and I know what we should do. God help us to do it when it needs to be done, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.” (<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1991/10/our-mission-of-saving?lang=eng> President Hinckley, Conf. Report Oct. 1991 Our Mission of Saving)

-we are commanded to rest on the Sabbath all throughout scripture. Working on the Sabbath is living beneath your privileges! You could have the day off, and God would take care of you if you only trusted him!

-when it becomes evening time, it's time to stop worrying about money and be satisfied with the provisions we have and be involved in non-financial ordeals, of which there are many of import. Psalms 104:23

23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

-The laborer is worthy of his hire: we can have according to our needs if we're only willing to work!

-“... God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them. ...” (*Teachings of Joseph Smith*, p. 149.)

-“We are not yet caught up to the ancients in spiritual matters. They had higher spiritual knowledge than we do. “We have yet to gain that full knowledge and understanding of the doctrines of salvation and the mysteries of the kingdom that were possessed by many of the ancient Saints. O that we knew what Enoch and his people knew! Or that we had the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon, as did certain of the Jaredites and Nephites! How can we ever gain these added truths until we believe in full what the Lord has already given us in the Book of Mormon, in the Doctrine and Covenants, and in the inspired changes made by Joseph Smith in the Bible? Will the Lord give us the full and revealed account of the creation as long as we believe in the theories of evolution? Will he give us more guidance in governmental affairs as long as we choose socialistic ways which lead to the overthrow of freedom?

We have yet to attain that degree of obedience and personal righteousness which will give us faith like the ancients: faith to multiply miracles, move mountains, and put at defiance the armies of nations; faith to quench the violence of fire, divide seas and stop the mouths of lions; faith to break every band and to stand in the presence of God. Faith comes in degrees. Until we gain faith to heal the sick, how can we ever expect to move mountains and divide seas?

We have yet to receive such an outpouring of the Spirit of the Lord in our lives that we shall all see eye to eye in all things, that every man will esteem his brother as himself, that there will be no poor among us, and that all men seeing our good works will be led to glorify our Father who is in heaven. Until we live the law of tithing how can we expect to live the law of consecration? As long as we disagree as to the simple and easy doctrines of salvation, how can we ever have unity on the complex and endless truths yet to be revealed?

We have yet to perfect our souls, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel, and to walk in the light as God is in the light, so that if this were a day of translation we would be prepared to join Enoch and his city in heavenly realms. How many among us are now prepared to entertain angels, to see the face of the Lord, to go where God and Christ are and be like them? . . .

Our time, talents, and wealth must be made available for the building up of his kingdom. Should we be called upon to sacrifice all things, even our lives, it would be of slight moment when weighed against the eternal riches reserved for those who are true and faithful in all things.

(Ensign, Apr. 1980, 25 Bruce R. McConkie)“

-Joseph Smith said he could have taught the people much more than he did about the Kingdom of Heaven, but they weren't prepared to receive it.

-Video from President Uchdorf on the subject: <https://www.lds.org/media-library/video/2013-01-001-your-potential-your-privileges?lang=eng>

-“We all know that the priesthood is much more than just a name or title. The Prophet Joseph taught that “the Priesthood is an everlasting principle, and existed with God from eternity ... to eternity, without beginning of days or end of years.”¹ It holds “even the key of the knowledge of God.”² In fact, through the priesthood the very “power of godliness is manifest.”³

The blessings of the priesthood transcend our ability to comprehend. Faithful Melchizedek Priesthood holders can “become ... the elect of God.”⁴ They are “sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies”⁵ and can ultimately receive “all that [the] Father hath.”⁶ This may be hard to comprehend, but it is beautiful, and I testify that it is true.

The fact that our Heavenly Father would entrust this power and responsibility to man is evidence of His great love for us and a foreshadowing of our potential as sons of God in the hereafter.

Nevertheless, too often our actions suggest that we live far beneath this potential. When asked about the priesthood, many of us can recite a correct

definition, but in our daily lives, there may be little evidence that our understanding goes beyond the level of a rehearsed script.

Brethren, we are faced with a choice. We can be satisfied with a diminished experience as priesthood bearers and settle for experiences far below our privileges. Or we can partake of an abundant feast of spiritual opportunity and universal priesthood blessings.

...

As you read the scriptures and listen to the words of the prophets with all your heart and mind, the Lord will tell you how to live up to your priesthood privileges. Don't let a day go by without doing something to act on the promptings of the Spirit...

As bearers of the priesthood, let us never become hardened to the wonder and awe of what the Lord has entrusted to us....

My dear brethren, may we diligently seek to learn the doctrine of the holy priesthood, may we strengthen our testimonies line upon line by receiving the revelations of the Spirit, and may we find true joy in daily priesthood service. As we do these things, we will begin to live up to our potential and privileges as priesthood holders, and we will be able to "do all things through Christ which strengtheneth [us]." (Philippians 4:13.)" (President Uchdorf, Your Potential, Your Privilege, Conf. Report Apr. 2011 https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/your-potential-your-privilege?lang=eng#19-PD50028768_000_3040)

-“We live beneath our privileges when we allow worldly anchors to keep us away from the abundant joy that comes from faithful and dedicated priesthood service, especially within the walls of our own homes. We live beneath our privileges when we fail to partake of the feast of happiness, peace, and joy that God grants so bountifully to faithful priesthood servants.” (President Uchdorf, Your Potential, Your Privilege, Conf. Report Apr. 2011

https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/your-potential-your-privilege?lang=eng#19-PD50028768_000_3040)

—Elder Maxwell reiterated President Brigham Young's assertion that “we live far beneath our privileges” in terms of receiving revelation from God for guidance (see Discourses of Brigham Young, sel. John A. Widtsoe [1954], 32). Elder Maxwell counseled: “To the degree that we cease to live beneath our privileges, we can lift the Church.” (Apr. 2003 News of the Church <https://www.lds.org/ensign/2003/04/news-of-the-church?lang=eng>)

-“We don't have the luxury of living beneath ourselves or being casual about seeking the gifts of the Spirit.

But we are up to the challenge.” (Jan. 1999 Liahona We Are Not Alone Sheri L. Dew Second Counselor in the Relief Society General Presidency; <https://www.lds.org/liahona/1999/01/we-are-not-alone?lang=eng>)

-“ in 1870, Eliza R. Snow asked thousands of women a question that I'd like to repeat today: “Do you know of any place on the face of the earth, where [a]

woman has more liberty, and where she enjoys such high and glorious privileges as she does here, as a Latter-day Saint?" 1 I bear witness that the women of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints do enjoy grand and glorious privileges." (Gratitude: A Path to Happiness: Bonnie D. Parkin Recently Released General Relief Society President; Apr. 2007 Conf. Report <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2007/04/gratitude-a-path-to-happiness?lang=eng>)

-"...All of this is to try to tell you how your Father in Heaven feels about you and what He has designed for you to become. And if for a time any of you are less visionary than this or seem bent on living beneath your privilege, then we express even greater love for you and plead with you to make your teenage years a triumph, not a tragedy. Fathers and mothers, prophets and apostles have no motive except to bless your life and to spare you every possible heartache we can spare you." (To Young Women

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland

Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

<https://www.lds.org/liahona/2005/11/to-young-women?lang=eng> Nov. 2005 Conf. Report)

-“There is no doubt, if a person lives according to the revelations given to God’s people, he may have the Spirit of the Lord to signify to him His will, and to guide and to direct him in the discharge of his duties, in his temporal as well as his spiritual exercises. I am satisfied, however, that in this respect, we live far beneath our privileges.” (Brigham Young, JD 12:104)

—Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles once shared a story from his personal experience that illustrates President Young’s observation. Several years after Elder Ballard had returned from serving as a mission president, one of his former missionaries came to see him in his office at Church headquarters.

“President,” this missionary said, “I think I’m losing my testimony.”

Elder Ballard was surprised because this missionary had been one of his most faithful elders.

The young man continued, “For the first time, I have read some anti-Mormon literature [and] I have some questions, and nobody will answer them for me.” Though the questions were what Elder Ballard described as “the standard anti-Church issues,” he explained to the young man that he would like some time to collect the appropriate materials to ensure that he could provide some meaningful answers. The elder agreed, and they set an appointment to meet again in 10 days.

As the former missionary left the office, Elder Ballard stopped him and said, “Elder, you’ve asked me several questions here today. . . . Now I have one for you.”

Elder Ballard then asked, “How long has it been since you read from the Book of Mormon?”

The missionary admitted that it had been a long time.

“All right,” Elder Ballard responded. “You have given me my assignment. It’s only fair that I give you yours. I want you to promise me that you will read in the Book of Mormon for at least one hour every day between now and our next appointment.”

The missionary reluctantly agreed. Elder Ballard’s own words describe what happened next:

Ten days later he returned to my office, and I was ready. I pulled out my papers to start answering his questions. But he stopped me.

“President,” he said, “that isn’t going to be necessary.” Then he explained: “I know that the Book of Mormon is true. I know Joseph Smith is a prophet of God.”

“Well, that’s great,” I said, “but you’re going to get answers to your questions anyway. I worked a long time on this, so you just sit there and listen.”

I answered all of those questions and then asked, “Elder, what have you learned from this?”

And he said, “Give the Lord equal time.” (M. Russell Ballard, When Thou Art Converted: Continuing Our Search for Happiness (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2001), 51–52.) (https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/daniel-k-judd_wonderful-flood-light/ “A Wonderful Flood of Light” Daniel K. Judd Dec. 7 2004, BYU Speeches)

-“Phineas (Young) visited a young woman dying of consumption, he was prompted to “lay hands on the sufferer and rebuke the disease.” He did so, and the woman was healed. He wrote, “I had never seen anything of the kind in my life, but had always believed the people were living far beneath their privileges.”” (Maxfield, pp. 1–2.) (By Leonard J. Arrington and JoAnn Jolley Ensign AUGUST 1980 THE FAITHFUL YOUNG FAMILY: THE PARENTS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF BRIGHAM)

Christmas Devotional 2014 Highlights

See

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/watch/christmas-devotional/2014/12?lang=eng&vid=3929047363001>

-We declare it in song old and new, that Jesus is coming.

-Pray that we may learn and do and become what the Lord NEEDS us to become.

-President Hinckley said how the greatest forces for good in the world are babies, that God uses such to change the world.

-Shepherds are who saw first baby Jesus.

-Our birth is something of a condescending also for we though not physical children of God are his spirit children (*he gave life to our spirits in pre-mortality and raised us there before he sent us here to earth). We like Jesus came to earth to do great things. Jesus needed earth experience so do we.

-Just as Jesus we came down from heaven to do the will of him that sent us.

-To ascend on high we need to defend at least below some things.

-These experiences that we can learn to have mercy on others and how to succor them according to their infirmities.

-Joseph F. Smith 6th President of the Church when a young father worked at the church tithing office 6am to 11pm he got 3 dollars of tithing pay which meant he could go to the tithing place and get flour or meat or molasses. He wanted to please his children on Christmas but had not a cent to do it with. He saw the stores, and wept. He played with his children, and was grateful and happy only for them.

-Jesus gave near constant service.

-When you feel like serving others, it's a sign that you feel more committed to the Savior.

-Love people enough to ask the mission President to send missionaries to a certain home to offer someone the gift of the gospel.

-The light of Christ is the universal intelligence with which all humans are blessed.

-“I know as surely as I live that the resurrected Savior lives” (President Eyring).

Consecrated Finance



Use your means not to constantly and lavishly recreate, nor to excessively hoard. Rather use your time learning and serving God modestly. Yes have a year of financial reserve so you don't lose your home in a crisis, but get away from the money obsessed culture we live in.

- "If we are to build that Zion of which the prophets have spoken and of which the Lord has given mighty promise, we must set aside our **consuming selfishness**. We must rise above our love for comfort and ease, and in the very process of effort and struggle, even in our extremity, we shall become better acquainted with our God.

Let us never forget that we have a marvelous heritage received from great and courageous people who endured unimaginable suffering and demonstrated unbelievable courage for the cause they loved. You and I know what we should do. God help us to do it when it needs to be done, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen." (<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1991/10/our-mission-of-saving?lang=eng> President Hinckley, Conf. Report Oct. 1991 Our Mission of Saving)

-The focus is honest focus on the gospel and all that entails.

-study as guided by the Lord (even if he tells you to be a finance major etc.)

-continuing education in the highest form may be outside of the official school's; this is not to discourage those with opportunity for these degrees, but we live in a special day when the boy who pushes the plow may know more from books than the doctors and scholars.

-be willing to live a humble life.

-people need to be helped spiritually as much as temporally

-Zion is (very) often referred to as the poor. We can, at least, be poor in heart, not having our heart on riches, regardless of how much riches we have.

-people get to where they are struggling to provide for family and hence not in politics (and other important social or religious or family issues) much, but the worst is when we are working for recreational vehicles etc. and using that as the reason why we aren't involved. Heaven forbid!

-Dan E Christensen, in his book "The birth of the Kingdom of God The destruction of America" he speaks of how we are obsessed with planning our retirement etc. and use Sabbaths to worship the God of NFL and other sporting leagues.

-we should work 6 days a week like God's commanded ("six days shalt thou labor") and not worry about getting out of it!

-Joseph Smith is one of the greatest men who ever lived (D&C 135:3). Jewish texts suggest that the 7 heads of dispensations are the 7 archangels, and the 7 angels whom will pour out the plagues of God upon the earth at the last days. That great archangel dispensation head Joseph Smith worked only enough to eke out a meager living, then spent the rest of his time studying languages ancient texts re-discovering history etc. to help his people and find his way to God. We can be like him and not be afraid but trust in God.

-by and large, those who serve God are delivered from the trials of the last days, not necessarily those with the most money. "The summer is past, and my soul is not saved" they will may say.

-President Monson has on several occasions quoted Shakespeare in King Henry the VIII,

"O Cromwell, Cromwell!

Had I but served my God with half the zeal

I served my king, he would not in mine age

Have left me naked to mine enemies. "

-while retirement may be alright from our occupations, we must continue to work for God. “Now, a word to us seasoned brethren: retirement is not part of the Lord’s plan of happiness. There is no sabbatical or retirement program from priesthood responsibilities—regardless of age or physical capacity. While the phrase “been there, done that” may work as an excuse to avoid skateboarding, decline the invitation for a motorbike ride, or bypass the spicy curry at the buffet, it is not an acceptable excuse for avoiding covenant responsibilities to consecrate our time, talents, and resources in the work of the kingdom of God.” (President Uchtdorf, “Two Principals for any Economy” Gen Conf. Oct. 2009 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2009/10/two-principles-for-any-economy?lang=eng>).

-Don’t be obsessed about having a house of your own. “And Jesus saith unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” (Matthew 8:20).

-when it comes to finances, we should not put our lusts in higher priority than what the Holy Ghost tells us what to do. What’s right for one person financially could be wrong for another. Some things are more solid like avoiding debt, but other things are more flexible like what a person does for their career (though they must provide for their family or they are worse than infidels and deny the faith (1 Tim. 5:8)

-prophets have taught that if we don’t find time for 30-60 minutes of scripture study a day, we have our priorities wrong and need to humble ourselves and re-prioritize.

Take a look at these two situations of what is going on in the world of poverty and foolish use of wealth:

“I’m not like other people. I don’t eat every day.” – Les Misérables, as depicted in the 1998 Film

Elder Richard J. Maynes, at an April 2017 at a Stake Conference in Utah I attended shared some interesting thoughts on poverty:

- 1/100 people in the world have a college education;
12/100 people have more than 1 pair of shoes; ½ people have clean drinking water;



- These numbers are even smaller when you look back further in history. So, you see, we think we are in the middle of the ladder, and focus on those ahead of us, but really, we in America today are second from the top, and we only focus on the rung above us.
- Many don't worry about international travel, but about whether they have enough to get on the bus to go in to town. Yet those people find happiness despite their lack of possessions.
- They can wear the same shirt every day of their lives and still be happy.

Now let's look at some extreme wealth of our times. Here are some highlights from the book "Richistan: A Journey Through The American Wealth Boom & The Lives of the New Rich" by Robert Frank, published about 2008.

- "Richistanian" is the name he uses to refer to this new type of people
- Has a good deal to say about how some treat wealth differently and
- the shift from national elitists to global elitists.
- the 500-foot boats.
- how often 18 cents of every dollar given to major charity groups goes to the charities, as well as some wealthy people trying to correct that.
- The other part goes toward the private schools of the children of the people who run the charities.
- mentalities of the children who grow up in homes with wealth, and how some parents choose to have their children work for everything.
- the wealthy being same made now as compared to inheritance of the old rich.
- the economic boom we've been seeing where it's not about being a millionaire anymore but about billionaire.
- how they give to charity balls then throw their own charity balls and expect everyone to give to those, and how it's more about finance than charity.
- people who work 16-hour days, consuming their entire lives with seeking and finding material wealth.
- ignoring natural disasters while people shop for boats.
- how the wealthy are republicans, but the super wealthy are democrats.
- the extensive training butlers receive to perform the ballet of service. Speaks of how the wealthy all feel like to be financially secure, they need double of what they have.
- 4 levels of wealth: 1-10 million, then 10-100 million, then 100 million-1 billion, then multibillionaires. Speaks of their envy of each other.
- people who always work while on vacation and send emails through the night and during watching films.
- support groups for rich people where they speak about their problems

- a wealthy man seeking to reclaim his family and having good success by having Saturday morning breakfasts with his daughter.
- how even the wealthy often live beyond their means
- how it's fast to get rich today, but also fast to lose it all
- how they don't consider themselves rich usually
- how they live in fear of poverty
- one wealthy family who spends its summers in 3rd world countries to help the people there and see what their real needs are.
- applying business skills to charity groups

Magnifying Our Callings Unto Salvation

First a few thoughts from me then a myriad of quotes from the prophets on the subject.

-the person who benefits from doing a church calling the most is the person doing the calling, not the people receiving his service. This is because we are agents to act not to be acted upon and thus will only advance fully as we give, not receive.

-is there any way to be saved other than doing your home teaching, or other callings, however great or small? No. Why? Isn't it living the gospel that saves us, not those little callings? Answer: Part of the gospel is "repentance", which means stop breaking Christ's commandments, and start keeping them. Have we been commanded to home teach? Yes. So if we aren't doing it and have no intentions to start doing it in the immediate future, we are not repenting, and are thus not repenting.

-When Christ said, "I am the way" and "none cometh unto the Father but by me" it meant that if you don't follow his instructions, you're never going to find the promised land, meaning exaltation. No other map can show you the way. We look at the gospel map with its commandments and we think that some are not important, so we neglect them, but such actions lead to our slow destruction. All the Devil needs to lead us away to hell, according to the Book of Mormon, is a little flaxen cord. A very slight almost unnoticeable alteration of the plotted course.

-Does this mean its hopeless? No, it means we must try, and want to succeed. We cannot live in the rebellious state of complacency.

-So we conclude that callings aren't just helpful in the path to salvation, they are the only path to salvation. Callings are the appointed mechanisms for the growth of his children. Do you expect to obtain his status if you aren't doing the things he has appointed for obtaining that thing? Like a student who does no homework and expects to pass the class, so is the Elder who does no home teaching and expects to be exalted.

-I remind you that home teaching/ministering is the alternate form of government boots on the ground level. There is hierarchical leadership in the church thankfully, but the bottom and most essential level is home teaching. Though it seems a small thing, neglect it, and all is lost. Souls sink softly into hell as their hunger for gospel truth is not quenched by the simple teachings of the Priesthood of God

-“ if it (your Priesthood) is magnified, your priesthood service will bless Heavenly Father's children more than you can now imagine is possible.”

(President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“I found three wonderful things in place to speed my growth in the priesthood. The first was a president who knew how to sit in council with the members of his quorum. The second was great faith in Jesus Christ that led to the great love we have heard of—love for each other. And the third was a shared conviction that our overarching priesthood purpose was to labor for the salvation of men.”

(President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“we prayed together, the priests quorum and I, and I then asked each to speak. I listened intently, and it seemed to me that they did too, to each other. After a while, a feeling of peace settled on us...It became clear to me what the quorum was to do and not to do...miracle for me was to see a united priesthood council’s faith in Jesus Christ bringing revelation to the man with the priesthood keys.” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“key to increased learning is to have love foreach other that comes from great faith. I am not sure which comes first, but both always seem to be there whenever there is great and rapid learning in the priesthood.” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“Love invites the Holy Ghost to be present to confirm truth. And the joy of learning divine truths creates love in the hearts of people who shared the experience of learning...Discord or jealousy inhibits the ability of the Holy Ghost to teach us and inhibits our ability to receive light and truth. And the feelings of disappointment that invariably follow are the seeds of greater discord and faultfinding among those who expected a learning experience that did not come.” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“The priesthood holders who learn well together always seem to me to have great peacemakers among them. You see peacemaking in priesthood classes and in councils. It is the gift to help people find common ground when others are seeing differences. It is the peacemaker’s gift to help people see that what someone else said was a contribution rather than a correction.

With enough of the pure love of Christ and a desire to be peacemakers, unity is possible in priesthood councils and in classes. It takes patience and humility, but I have seen it happen even when issues are difficult and the people in councils or classes come from vastly different backgrounds. It is possible to rise to the lofty

standard set by the Lord for priesthood holders in making decisions in quorums. It is possible when there is great faith and love and the absence of contention.

” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,”

Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“Speaking of those given great priesthood trust in this life, the Lord said, “Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first lessons in the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men. In the priesthood we share the sacred duty to labor for the souls of men. We must do more than learn that this is our duty. It must go down into our hearts so deeply that neither the many demands on our efforts in the bloom of life nor the trials that come with age can turn us from that purpose.”⁵” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“with great intensity he said to me, “Why am I still living? Why am I still here? I can’t do anything.”

I told him that he was doing something for me. He was lifting me with his faith and his love. Even in our short visit, he made me want to be better. His example of determination to do something that mattered had inspired me to try harder to serve others and the Lord.

” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,”

Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“ time in the school of the priesthood in this life will be relatively brief compared to eternity. But even in that short span, he has mastered the eternal curriculum. He will carry with him, wherever the Lord will call, priesthood lessons of eternal worth.” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>

Speaking of a man eager to serve in the Priesthood by trying to convert others even in his old age etc.)

-“Not only should you be eager to learn your priesthood lessons in this life, but you should be optimistic about what is possible. A few of us may limit in our minds our possibilities to learn what the Lord sets before us in His service.”

(President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“You may have thought at one time how much better your life would have been if only you had been admitted to study in some fine school. I pray that you will

see the greatness of God's love for you and of the opportunity He has given you to enter His priesthood school.

If you will be diligent and obedient in the priesthood, treasures of spiritual knowledge will be poured out upon you. You will grow in your power to resist evil and to proclaim the truth that leads to salvation. You will find joy in the happiness of those you lead toward exaltation. Your family will become a place of learning.

I testify that the keys of the priesthood have been restored. President Thomas S. Monson holds and exercises those keys. God lives and knows you perfectly. Jesus Christ lives. You were chosen for the honor of holding the sacred priesthood. In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

” (President Eyring April 2011 Conf. Report “Learning in the Priesthood,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 62–65 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/learning-in-the-priesthood?lang=eng>)

-“sometimes, in spite of our good intentions, we delay doing what we should do or we misunderstand what we were taught. As a result, inspired words of counsel might not have the promised effect.” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012: <https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

-“We human beings have a strange tendency to complicate simple things. We set up rules, laws, by laws, processes, and subprocesses. Eventually, we pile upload after load until we end up under a huge weight of expectations that are so complicated it is difficult to keep track of them, let alone meet them. This is one of the reasons Paul said, “The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life” (2 Corinthians 3:6).

Too often, we complicate the beauty and simplicity of the gospel of Jesus Christ with endless lists of meticulous expectations. However, when we focus on the “why” of the gospel, much of the confusion fades away. Why are we here? Why are we asked to obey the commandments? Why is the Atonement of Jesus Christ of such value to us?

The proper “why” questions will lead us to the proper “who,” “what,” “when,” “where,” and “how” decisions.

” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

-“There are many ways to enhance our precious council time, like always coming well prepared. We could handle scheduling or other organizational matters by memo, phone, e-mail, or text. When we allow organizational matters to dominate our efforts and time in our councils, we run the risk of missing the mark of why the Lord has called us to minister in His Church. We meet in

councils to seek the inspiration of the Spirit in building the kingdom of God. We meet to seek the answers to two basic questions:

1. How can we help our members better love the Lord our God with all their heart, soul, and mind?

2. How can we help our members better love their neighbors as themselves?

” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

[https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng)

[training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng\)](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng)

-“By simplifying and strengthening the council process and by inviting the Spirit, we will find the life and fire of the Holy Spirit, who provides guidance and heavenly support for our efforts.

Some may be tempted to say, “Just tell us what to do, and we’ll do it.” While we commend a righteous desire to be obedient, there is more to leadership in the Church (and more to life) than simply checking items off an assigned to-do list.

As you have noticed, the new handbooks do not specify in great detail every action you are to take in your calling. These handbooks were provided for the right amount of structure without regimenting every detail. It might be wise to look at the handbooks and even the scriptures not as checklists or detailed scripts but rather as opportunities to prepare our minds and hearts to receive divine inspiration for our responsibilities.

Unfortunately, we sometimes don’t seek revelation or answers from the scriptures or the handbooks because we think we know the answers already.

Brothers and sisters, as good as our previous experience may be, if we stop asking questions, stop thinking, stop pondering, we can thwart the revelations of the Spirit... We can block the growth and knowledge our Heavenly Father intends for us. How often has the Holy Spirit tried to tell us something we needed to know but couldn’t get past the massive iron gate of what we thought we already knew?

” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

[https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng)

[training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng\)](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng)

-“Real growth, however, is defined as growth in the number of active members... Perhaps the more accurate indicators of real growth in the gospel of Jesus Christ are those that we can’t measure as easily, such as daily prayer, scripture study, family home evening, love at home and for our neighbor, and personal experiences with Christ’s Atonement. These are recorded not by a clerk in Church records but in our hearts and in heaven.” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012: [https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng\)](https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng)

-“missionary efforts are compromised if we baptize God’s children but do not maintain love and friendship with these precious new members who are excited to find fellowship with the Saints and a place of belonging in the household of God...our councils can deliberate on the spiritual and temporal welfare of every member—taking special care to consider each new convert. Our work as a council is to help our members grow in their love for Heavenly Father and their fellowman. If we focus our efforts here, one-on-one, many more members will feel that they have found a home in the Church—that they have found the “why” of the gospel.” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

-“if you are focused on the “why” of the gospel, the Spirit will direct your humble efforts.

” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

-“If your circumstances are less than ideal, please take comfort in knowing that the Lord will support and enhance your efforts, sanctify your decisions and actions, perfect them through the tender mercies of Christ, and “consecrate [your] performance ... , that [it] may be for the welfare of [your] soul” (2 Nephi 32:9) and the souls of those you serve.” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

-“there is little good in hearing the word of God if we do not translate what we hear into our lives. Consequently, we ask that you take the following steps without hesitation and continue to do so throughout your service in your callings. First, individually and as councils, prayerfully consider the instruction you have received. Think of priesthood power in the home, honoring divine covenants, rescuing others, focusing on the one, strengthening our youth, and building eternal marriages and families by applying gospel principles in our daily lives. As you consider these topics, ask yourself about the “why” of your service and ministry and the resulting “therefore what” in your responsibilities as individuals and as councils. In this process, please open your hearts and minds to the will of heaven, and I promise that the Spirit will reveal the things that matter most—for you, your family, and your responsibilities in the Church. Second, as a result of pondering and discussion, determine a few specific actions you will commit to implement. Please keep in mind that the actions of each organization, ward, stake, family, and individual may be different. They should fit your circumstances and needs. The unity we seek is not necessarily that we all do exactly the same things at the same time but that we each listen to and

always follow the direction of the same Holy Spirit. Third, once you have made these commitments, follow up on them within the scope of your responsibilities and callings at each of your council meetings. Please do this. We ask you also to bring your decisions and efforts before the Lord in your daily prayers and ask for further light and direction. Trust Him. He knows you, and He loves you.” (President Uchdorf: Acting of the Truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: worldwide leadership training meeting, Feb. 2012:

<https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-leadership-training/2012/01/acting-on-the-truths-of-the-gospel-of-jesus-christ?lang=eng>)

—President Harold B. Lee has said to the teachers of the Church that it is not only important to be understood but also not to be misunderstood. (Harold B. Lee, in Teaching, No Greater Call(1999), 52.)

– “We are here to assist our[Heavenly] Father in His work and His glory, ‘to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man’ (Moses1:39). Your obligation is as serious in your sphere of responsibility as is my obligation in my sphere.” (President Gordon B. Hinckley, “This Is the Work of the Master,” Ensign, May 1995, 71.)

Sacrifice of Animals Showed Serious Commitment, What Now?

We used to show that we take religion seriously by sacrificing animals. Now how do we show it? How do our kids etc. see it? The animal sacrifice was so graphic, so obvious. Now what? How does a broken heart and contrite spirit become as obvious as the animal sacrifice was? Is anyone serious about religion anymore? (I'm not calling for animal sacrifice, and yes some do take it seriously, I'm looking for flagship ways that this is manifest)

Honoring the Sabbath, regular practice of family prayer/scripture study, etc. When teaching/correcting/comforting children use scripture when possible. Family gatherings around spiritual things be it, broadcast messages, service activities, etc... It's the daily practices of our lives that show what we value. And explaining the "why" to our children often.

We do this because we love the Lord and want to honor Him.

We don't do this because the Lord has commanded it and we seek to obey (even, or especially, if "this" is a desirable thing, and we point that out, too, so they know that it's truly a sacrifice). He blesses us so much, we want to show our gratitude by...

Sometimes children need us to be obvious about it

The Law of Sacrifice is an eternal law. A simple way to explain it is trading (or giving up) something of value now, for something of greater value we want more.

For example:

If we are fasting, we are giving up food for the purpose of our fast. (Answers to prayers, blessings, guidance and direction.)

It might be something we want to buy, for paying tithing, or consecrating to the poor and needy of the church.

It might be alcohol, coffee and drugs for our good health.

It may be our time we trade, for the time we donate to carry our church responsibilities, or to be "in service to our fellow man"

What ever it is we are sacrificing, the important thing that our children understand is the moral reason why we are doing it.

In the example you gave from the Law of Moses, they were sacrificing animals, for the remembrance of our savior and the sacrifice that he made for us. (in their case, the sacrifice that He would make for them.)

Understanding what He sacrificed, "trading something of value, for something greater" is what will reach our children's hearts, and turn them to Him.

Priesthood Service

Priesthood is authority to heal. To help. To persuade. To reveal the future in such clarity in all it's brightness so as to gain the confidence of your friends and lead them along to it in the bravery if sacrifice. To show them self-care in the midst of care of others. To initiate them in all things in the character of Christ and show them how to so put upon themselves.

Everything in the kingdom of God is voluntary. We chose to live there, to serve there, to be served there, to play these, to take naps there, generally speaking to live there. The kingdom of God isn't just about serving others, it's about living. Yes, we serve others, but it's a choice.

Naturally you can't live there if you never serve anyone, but it's about the lifestyle altogether. They know how to party harder than anyone. They play much more enjoyable games. They soar the skies, the glide across the galaxies, they whisk through the clouds and skim the waters.

You might say its a wise economic decision if you like to use those terms. We give, but we get back even more. It's a worthwhile giving. We are rewarded so much that we don't even realize we are giving. We bask in the warmth of the love of Jesus Christ. We build things without paying taxes on them, without looters taking them from us.

We serve in the kingdom of God only when we are persuaded to. We are asked to do nothing until we have been given sufficient incentive. Priesthood works only by voluntary exchange. Forced charity is the definition of evil. Of course, there cannot be forced charity. That is slavery. Charity us something that flows naturally from the wells of our hearts. We find the joy of service, and we remember that we are pleasing the person who gave so much to us, more than we even comprehend, Jesus Christ. And His Father gave Him everything. And Fathers Father gave Him everything, etc. In God's kingdom we are always heirs, receivers, more than we are givers. All we give is but a token of what we have received.

We persuade others to serve. We invite them to act. When they need a rest they are free to take it. When they don't understand what we are asking they are free to go and think about it. We are not pushy salesmen. We love the product, so we can get carried away in our attempt to share it, but it is a gift which cannot be received under pressure. One must pull it toward them self, it cannot be pushed upon them.

The kingdom of God is a happy place, and service is but one component if the lifestyle of its inhabitants. Without service it wouldn't be happy. With too much

service it wouldn't be happy either. How much is too much service? That is to each individual to decide. If a person wants more blessings, they can serve more. This doesn't mean that those with a fullness of joy are constantly serving, but it does mean that there is a lot of work to get done, and who better than us to do it. A person will be happy not only as they serve but as they rest and play. There are seasons of work and seasons of play. Some seasons are average, some are quite hard. One is willing to let the Lord have a voice in telling which season we are in.

Today we are weak, but in the resurrection our bodies will be strong, and capable if both working more and playing more.

Alma taught people the plan of salvation before teaching them the commandments. We establish God's happy play for you, then we talk about how to make it happy, today and always. Where there is no vision the people perish. Study scripture and prophets and inspired writings of various types. Not only does the body need constant nourishment, but so does the spirit. This feeding the spirit is done by scripture, music, literature, games, exercise, work, research, teaching, resting, etc.

Magnifying Your Calling in the Church & Your Calling in the Gospel

Joseph Smith taught (in “Lectures on Faith”) that a religion which doesn’t require someone to give their all doesn’t have sufficient power to save them. That’s a high bar! As a Mormon family follows the prophets and follows their conscience (within the parameters of the councils of the prophets), only God knows the astounding things the couple will be called upon to do.

We are familiar with the concept of a calling in the church which must be magnified to gain exaltation. Less familiar is the idea that we have callings in the gospel, which also need to be magnified to gain salvation. How is a calling in the gospel different from a calling in the church? It’s similar to the old testament concept of a “free will offering” – you choose what it looks like. You choose what sign you want to give to God. The calling in the church is about doing well with a very specific assignment given to you from priesthood leaders. A calling in the gospel is doing well with yourself and your family in obeying the whispered instructions of the Holy Ghost (which always fall within the parameters of the teachings of the prophets).

I once had a debate with a protestant wherein he said, “that’s not reasonable, reason has never been on the side of Mormonism”. First off that’s a stupid debate tactic, but second off, the wisdom of God is far different from the wisdom of man! I’m proud of the fact that I belong to a church that looks different from society at large! It wasn’t reasonable for Noah to build the ark. Wasn’t reasonable for the early pioneers to give up their property and trek into poverty in Zion. Wasn’t reasonable for John Tanner to give up his fortune to save the temple then in construction. Wasn’t reasonable for Cowdry to go wander looking for Joseph Smith for a reason he knew not. There are plenty of examples where we can see in hind sight that crazy actions for the sake of church and gospel callings turned out to be the means of saving many souls. Granted keep all this in wisdom and order, but within the parameters of wisdom and order there’s plenty of room for bold, daring, and what others would call “unreasonable” acts of faith.

Effective Co-Creators: Everyday Saviors on Mount Zion

Thesis: not only God, but humans also, have the power to vastly effect, or “CREATE” the eternal destiny of human beings. Your contributions are significant, for good or ill. God’s plan includes, and perhaps is even based on, humans impacting each other. Complacency with the idea that “God will take care of everyone” is not only going to end up bad for you, but bad for others, and that eternally. The end of the document has brief dialogue of my answering questions from LDS people and a Protestant friend regarding this theory. This is the most plain writing I could conjure, and it is appropriately bold.

Your effect on others creates for them a different experience and opportunity than they would have had without you

Consider God. were it not for him, we would not have progressed to our current corporal status, and we would have no hope of resurrection, just to name a few things.

Now consider mankind. Can their effect be great upon others?

I’ve heard some men say they are afraid to preach the gospel because they fear that if their hearers reject their message, the hearers will be somehow eternally disadvantaged because of them.

I’ve heard some men say ‘why does it matter if I contribute a lot or a little to the preaching of the gospel (and other good causes), God will make sure everyone is taken care of, God would not put another person at risk because of me, a third party.

This is dangerous logic. God watches over us all, this is true. But he has already done so much for us, and though he continues to do lots for us, our interactions with each other can bring even further blessings.

Consider this: God values our autonomy (independence) so much, that he lets people make good choices and bad choices. the good leads to exponential growth. the bad leads to exponential decay. the repercussions or fruits of these actions are not inconsequential.

God gives the human race so much power, that they can influence each other powerfully unto the effect of saving or damning their fellow man.

Will God protect us from all evil? Will he force us toward all good? No and no. So much of the fate of the human race depends on their interactions with each other!

God is creating us into someday-Gods. We are children of God and have the seeds of divinity in us. Mortality isn’t our first rodeo, we learned much in premortality. Now here in mortality we are all given massive power to impact the lives of our fellows. This is part of what makes mortality such an effective

test; some men have said “how can God pass eternal judgement upon us after grading our performance for a measly 80 or so years? Can that really determine the way I will spend eternity?” The answer is yes, it can, and it does. Let me explain: the impact we have for others in this life for better or worse is so monumental, that if it be an impact for good, it will merit our eternal salvation. And if it be an impact for bad, it will be so far reaching that it will be clear grounds for the eternal damnation of our souls. You see, mortality is the final battle, the last stand, the point of no return, the test of eternity, this is where God determines which of his children have chosen to become like him, and which will cut themselves off, not being willing to bear such an “eternal weight” of glory and joy.

Now granted, God in his goodness has prepared more than just a heaven and a hell, but varying degrees of each so the sort of good person doesn't get stuck with either the valiant or with the devils, and so the sort of bad person doesn't get stuck with either the valiant or with the devils. This plays into government theory, its why socialism and communism don't work. If there is only a heaven or hell, then why should the good person bother being his best, or why should the bad person bother with not being his most deplorable self? You see, a free market is similar to how God judges his children: if they do much good, they get much reward. If they do a little good, they get a little reward. If they do much evil they get great punishment, if they do little evil they get little punishment. This doctrine shows us that God is completely fair with us.

Let it further be noted that God has loaded extra mercy into his government via the service of his divine son Jesus Christ. I and everyone else desperately needs Christ. Christ performs 2 functions: 1. pay for our debts (sins), and 2. help us learn to be independent (debt free, aka not sinning anymore, able to build our own great things rather than just begging others for help all the time; the person eventually becomes a helper instead of one to be helped)

So let me summarize a few key ideas: it does matter how much you participate in promoting goodness in this life. You do have power to lead others toward salvation which could result in souls saved which would have otherwise been lost. You do have power to lead others to damnation whom otherwise may not have been damned. God has given his children (the human race) epic amounts of power, and will measure their eternal assignment by the way they have used that power. Perhaps the fact that we don't often realize how much we are impacting others (how much power we have) is part of the test we are going through. When we meet God the blinders will be removed from our eyes and we will understand all things, and we will confess that his judgments upon us are just! No wonder Joseph Smith taught that a religion which does not require one's all does not have sufficient power to save him!

Here are my responses to some issues LDS people have had with this theory:

When I say capitalism is like heaven this is what I mean: the fact that we have multiple levels of heavens suggests that the harder one works, the greater his reward will be. Such is not the case in communist governments which look much like Satan's kingdom. Protestant religions have 1 heaven only, and that doctrine demotivates work ethic. One example, if being a doctor paid the same as being a nurse's aid, I wouldn't bother going to med school. In other words, if simple belief in Jesus was enough for heaven, I wouldn't bother being a Mormon (it's a lot of work!). I look forward to living the law of consecration where I will have no use of extra money, but I will have the blessing of the celestial kingdom which is better than terrestrial, better than money, etc. Yes service is missing in capitalism, but governments are about protecting our rights, not about compelling us to be charitable! Even God doesn't force us to have charity! About independence, it refers to a later stage where we become God's having equal power over all things with God. At our current stage we certainly need to rely on Christ. We will forever praise and worship Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father for their role in our advancement to Godhood. We will then help our posterity become just like ourselves, like how our Heavenly Father helped us become just like Himself.

One more word on the analogy of business: God is the CEO. Is independent, possessing all power. We are currently beggars. Thank God for his mercy to provide for us (air, food, bodies, power, etc.). Eventually, as a child of God, he wants us to become his equal, helping us to start our own companies and be CEO of them, and have all power with him and his father's (and yes, prophets have taught that Heavenly Father has a father). When we become CEO's, we are no longer dependent. Satan wanted to be a CEO like God, but he wanted to replace God rather than starting his own business and all the work that would entail. This he is damned. He was more of a mutineer than a businessman. He rebelled against God instead of aligning himself with the ways of God.

Here is a brief conversation with a Protestant friend pertaining to the last segment here "When I say capitalism is like heaven this is what I mean..."

a. COMMENT FROM PROTESTANT FRIEND: Thanks for sharing Nate! I love getting to understand other religions and beliefs as they test my own faith. As a Protestant, our ultimate motivation behind good deeds and works is the love of and for God- to bring Him glory. We believe that Christ is certainly enough and the only way to receive salvation. A true believer who has accepted Christ wouldn't just want Him for their ticket to heaven. They would be motivated out of love and gratitude for what Christ did to be the most Christ-like person they can become. But we all fall short of the perfection of Christ. Thank God for grace! Lol- literally!

b. RESPONSE BY NATE:

You're welcome glad to see some of this jargle gets read

So I'll say this

in response: Out of his love for us, Christ centers his involvement with us on making us better people. Christ isn't obsessed with being worshiped, he is obsessed with helping others. I worship him because he helps me. If he did not help me, I would not worship him. So at face value Protestants are inherently more pure than Mormons because they worship out of love instead of out of gratitude, but I suggest that premise is incorrect. Loving God is one thing, but it's why you love him that's important. I don't love someone just because they call themselves God. If Christ wasn't my ticket to heaven, I would not worship him. My chief focus in this life is to get myself, my family, and whoever else I can to heaven. Anything less would be further from right on a scale of right and wrong. In one sentence, you said you don't just worship God because he is a ticket to heaven, but in the next you said you worship him in gratitude for "what he did". Well "what he did" is give us a ticket to heaven. So I think that your adoration of Christ is more centered on the ticket than you're ready to admit. It was a nice thing of Christ to keep company with prostitutes, it was a nice thing of Christ to teach his disciples, it was a nice thing of Christ to heal lepers and raise dead people back to life. But none of those things are why I worship Christ; many prophets before and after Christ have done all of those things, yet I don't worship them. The one and only reason I worship Christ is because he offers me salvation. Another word for salvation is "a ticket to heaven". Also you've defined what it means to be a true believer in Christ, and you claim I don't fit that definition. Belief is subjective and personal, so I won't tell you what you believe, and you don't tell me what I believe. The most classic in the book is bible reading persons arguing about what it means to have the correct idea about what it means to be a "true believer" (hence the many churches of different creed and title). You and I have 2 different and passionate views about what it means to be a believer, but for the sake of friendship, we will avoid calling each other non-believers. I'm glad that you recognize that I believe (and I'm even more glad that you agree with this) that Christ is the only way to salvation.

c. RESPONSE FROM PROTESTANT FRIEND: "This is such a great response Nate. This is why I love conversations like this and I think that the more we discuss, the stronger our faiths become. I think that you are SO right when you say that my adoration of Christ is more centered on salvation than I am ready to admit! And for me, that is a sin, and something that I want to work every day on moving away from. Someone once asked me if I would worship Christ even if he did not die on the cross for us. If I'm honest with myself, that might be hard to do because of my inherent selfish human nature. But I would hope that I would. My chief focus in life is bringing my God glory for the amazing God that He is. I worship him for who He is, and I do good works (obedience, service, etc.) in gratitude for what He did. The fundamental difference between our two faiths is who the person of Christ is. Protestants believe that Jesus Christ is fully human, and fully God. I believe that Jesus Christ IS God in the flesh, and that is

the most important reason why (or maybe rather why I SHOULD) worship Him. But that gets us into some pretty deep theology that might be better for another

time You say at the end that we both agree that Christ is the only way to salvation, but you also say that in order to be saved, there is more work for you to do in addition to what Christ did. This is where we differ, though each of our acts of worship of Jesus remains genuine. What I will say is this- I absolutely do respect your faith and I love learning more about it. I think that Mormons are some of the most kind, most faithful, and most dedicated people to their faith. I wish that more Christians were like that. Thanks again for sharing”

d. RESPONSE BY NATE: Thanks for the compliments. To keep it brief I'll say this: LDS do believe Christ is God. Book of Mormon 3 Nephi 11:13 “I am the God of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, and have been slain for the sins of the world.” so FYI Mormons do believe Christ is God. Old testament names God as “Jehovah”. Yes, JESUS CHRIST IS JEHOVAH, AND JEHOVAH IS GOD. Yes, we differ in that you don't believe Jesus (Jehovah) has a Father. If we wanted to get into it, I could explain how God (Jesus) having a father is critical to having hope. Basically, it shows that we can become Gods just like Jesus became a God. It shows that the universe is ever expanding, and posterity “as the stars” is ever expanding, allowing us to have the full large-scale parental joy that Gods have. Further, God the Father is the standard that God the Son (Jesus Christ) lived up to become a God. God the Son came to earth to show us the prototype of how to become God. Thank goodness that we have access to mercy or we could never become the kind of just people that Gods are. Mercy hurts, and we are learning to not just receive it, but to give it. Being saved (having a happy afterlife) is about what Christ did for us. Being exalted (reaching your full potential, becoming a God like your father (we are the children of God)) is about what we do for others. The other issue you bring up is the need for works “beyond Jesus” for salvation. Well, Jesus said that not only those who say Lord Lord get into heaven but those who do good works. That is a theme throughout the bible and I won't bother you with 50 references to support it. Heaven knows I have at least 10 essays doing just that on my website from prior conversations like this that I've had. I now focus these discussions on boldly declaring my beliefs rather than dancing around about how to interpret what the bible says (which I suggest Protestants aren't as united on as you may think). Basically the argument that there is only Jesus and no personal effort to get salvation is ignoring the essence of Jesus as an example. The Book of Mormon brings to mind the idea that bible readers have forgotten, that Jesus says over and over “be like me”. Another key difference between our religions is The Book of Mormon. At the end of the day arguing about what the bible says isn't that important to me, because it's not the comprehensive dictionary of my faith. I believe in the Book of Mormon, which means I believe in a certain

interpretation of the bible, and reject other interpretations of the bible. PS good job on discovering that the cross-less Jesus wouldn't be someone to worship. Don't feel obligated to read any of this but if you're ever really curious, these I have more essays which relate to topics we are discussing in the exaltation, eternity, & redemption sections of my books.

Non-Predestination Aspect of Gods Agentive Servants

God's servants are not pawns, they are free independent agents, without predestined future. It is true they are called to a great work, but it remains their choice whether they will accept and accomplish that work.

We think about spirituality as "God gives a person agency, and the righteous person gives their agency back to God." No, it goes like this: God gives a person agency, and the righteous person makes choices, and those choices become the will of God. For example, the brother of Jared brought stones for God to make bright to light his vessels; God then made it happen. Could Jared have chosen another way and it still have worked, still have been sanctioned by God? Yes! It's like when Nephi got the sealing power; God trusted that the choices Nephi would make would be appropriate, NOT THAT he would do the exact things, the marching orders, of God. No, Nephi became an executive agent for God, a person whom did things that pleased God. God didn't come up with all of Nephi's ideas, but God did approve of Nephi's ideas. Nephi became someone who acts, and is not acted upon. Nephi is learning the character of God, growing into his divine birthright. Beginning to receive the endowments of his Righteous Father, whom is God.

Possible Hebrew Meaning of Genesis 3:1

The scriptures treating Eden say that Satan was the most subtle, above all the beasts of the field (Gen. 3:1). Subtle can be translated to naked in Hebrew. It also uses that word to describe Adam and Eve, stating that they were naked. Later we read of being clothed with coats of skins. One possible interpretation is that this scene took place before a physical setting where man and beast had bodies, and were later clothed with bodies (coats of skins). We know the earth was created spiritually before physically. It could be calling Satan the 'most naked', suggesting that Satan would fail to receive a body, and remain 'naked' / without the glory of having a body, forever.

The fall could mean an entrance into mortality, a step in the journey that would be difficult but necessary. A place where we could procreate physically and thereby obtain bodies which could become eternal, akin to that of God.

God is not a spirit, but a full and exalted man, meaning a spirit clothed with a physical body, which will never decay, and which body can procreate (procreation is only permanently afforded to those who prove faithful in all things).

An analogy could exist that Adam and Eve were coming out of a cave at the event of the fall. The Legends of the Jews text, if I recall, describes something of this nature. This could be symbolic of a rebirth, coming forth from the womb of the earth into new life.

What is the Rest of the Lord (for Sabbath, Millennium, Heaven)?

It is not just to sleep a lot

When you have peace, even hard things are restful.

When you have the mantle of your calling, you have peace.

What is Your Calling and Election?

Hyrum Andrus pointed out that each persons is different, and that we ought to find what ours is and humbly work it out. You are not only called to the celestial kingdom, but to perform a certain work and calling.

It is apparent that there are specific missions we need to fulfill, and I presume many of those, if not most, do not come by way of formal calling in the Church.

Far Out! Ministry of Angels, The 3 Nephites, & Aliens

Angels, other aliens and their interactions with Earth. Naturally angels are often mortal people doing Gods will, but there are fun accounts of those on the other side of the veil giving assistance too, and some other accounts which seem so angelic, that we don't know if the ministers were mortal or no.

-First here's a (3 Nephite?) encounter I had: Once while proselyting in a rural area of Georgia USA, we saw an Indian man in a large white truck who drive past us, on his rear window was printed on large text the book of Mormon scripture about how is a church isn't called in the name of Christ it is not Christ's church. I recall the man had a very purposeful look on his face. I was impressed that this could have been one of the three Nephites. That just doesn't happen in Georgia.

-One more from me: Once when I was a struggling teen walking in the night / very early morning in a somewhat rural area. A truck drove up, the man driving gave me a gospel tract, then turned back where it was coming from, as though it had come just for me.

- in the book called "The First 100 Years of The Logan Temple" where the 3 Nephites appeared to protect the records of the temple. They identified themselves as such to the then temple president.

-supposedly Ogden Krout has a book compiled of 3 Nephite sightings.

-story from Michael Rush in book A Remnant Shall Return: a man was abducted and given a Bible like book, they told him to believe in Jesus, they were from an ancient civilization who lived millions of years ago; The man started telling his story and the CIA showed up on his porch, and demanded the book, and left. They didn't ask any questions, etc.

-Joel Skousen (worldaffairsbrief.com) says aliens are real, but there's so much bogus info on them that it's basically useless to see who's right and not on the subject.

-Alien existence makes sense, & who's to say some of the sightings aren't real. There are other populated worlds without end!

-There are also possibly other forms of life, part animal so to speak. The book of Revelation indicates there are many animals of form that we don't know of.

-They say portals have been seen into temples, bringing angels into them.

-They say temples are full of angels doing work. One says she had a live ordinance recently, and forgot her bag and asked to go back for it, and was told ok, but make sure you don't go in any of the rooms, go straight there and straight back. Well en route the rooms were in her peripheral, and she saw them full... Perhaps resurrected beings doing ordinances, or other trainings etc...

-in the first Saints book, as recounted in someone's own words: So this is about David Whitmer, who ended up being one of the three witnesses and he had heard about Joseph Smith and the plate so he wants to go to Harmony immediately, he's gotta find out about this and his dad reminded him "Look, you have two days' worth of heavy work to do before you can leave, you have to sow plaster of Paris in your fields." and it's like 20 acres worth and it's a ton of work.

And so David's father gave him advice, he says "You know, you might wanna just pray and see if this is really some place you should go. Do you really need to go and see this Joseph Smith?" This Joe Smith, as they would call him and so David did, he took his father's advice and he prayed, hoping the Spirit would tell him that he just needed to go and so he felt like he needed to finish the work and then head to Harmony as soon as he could.

Well, the next morning, David walks out to the fields and he saw that the work had all been completed except for one furrow, one row that needed to be done and he's like "What in the world?" He can't even believe it and so his sister's house, who was not very far away from his, it says it was just a few yards away and he said "Do you know who did this? Like what? Why is my field done?" And I love this, this is what the sister said "Why said she in surprise. You sowed it all day yesterday and it was sown by some... Or one of the children came and begged me to go out and look at some men who were sowing plaster in the field for said day."

"Mother, you never saw anybody sow Plaster, as fast as they do in your life, I went and I did see three men to work in the field as the children said but supposing that you had employed some assistance because of your hurry to get

your work done, I passed into the house without giving any further attention to the subject."

"David made considerable inquiry but not being able to ascertain who had done it, he related the circumstance to his father, who was quite at much a loss to determine how the thing was brought about and then he did, I love how his father said to him "There must be an overruling hand in this." he said "And I think you'd better go down to Pennsylvania as soon as you finish that last row."

Here are a few accounts shared by people online recently in some forums:

1. My 4th great grandpa, Benjamin Brown, was visited by two of them. Here is an excerpt of his journal.

"...as I found it stated that the three Nephites had power to show themselves to any persons they might wish, Jews or Gentiles, I asked the Lord to allow me to see them for a witness and testimony of the truth of the Book of Mormon, and I covenanted with him, if he complied with my request, that I would preach it even at the expense of my life, should it be necessary. The Lord heard my prayer, and, about five days after, two of the three visited me in my bedroom. I did not see them come, but I found them there. One spoke to me for some time, and reproved me sharply on account of my behavior at the time when I first attended the meeting of the Saints, and treated so lightly the gift of tongues. He told me never, as long as I lived, to do so again, for I had grieved the Spirit of the Lord, by whose power that gift had been given. This personage spoke in the Nephite language, but I understood, by the Spirit which accompanied him, every word as plainly as if he had spoken in English. I recognized the language to be the same as that in which I had heard Father Fisher speak at the meeting. Such a rebuke, with such power, I never had in my life before or since, and never wish to have again. I was dumb before my rebuker, for I knew that what he said was right, and I felt deserving of it. How these men went, I do not know, but directly they were gone, the Spirit of the Lord said to me, "Now, you know for yourself! You have seen and heard! If you now fall away, there is no forgiveness for you."

Did I not know then, that the Book of Mormon was true, and that Joseph Smith was a Prophet of the Lord?"

2. My Dad got out of the car, popped the lid of the car and discovered that the part that broke in the only car that they had wasn't a part that could be sourced from any of the nearest parts stores. Both my parents could not stop their tears. Turning to prayer, they begged Heavenly Father to help them and to let them know what my Dad should do concerning their future. Shortly after saying amen, a man pulled up behind my parents in an old beat up car and asked them if they needed a hand. My father let the man know that he probably wouldn't be able to help because the part that was broken was one that was near impossible to find. The man told my Dad, "I'm a traveling repair man, I fix all sorts of things, I have a bunch of parts in the back of my car, lets see what part in your car is broken. After taking a look at the broken part, the man went to the back of his car and pulled out the EXACT part that my dad needed. Soon the car was running again. After fixing the car together the man looked at my father and said, "Don't quit your education. It's worth it in the end." My father hand't ever told this man that he was studying. The Man never introduced himself to my parents, nor did he ever ask my parents names. Today, my father has a PhD in Mechanical Engineering. They both believe that this man could have been 1 of the 3 nephites or an angel. Either way, Heavenly Father loves us and cares for us deeply.
3. While on my mission in Pennsylvania Philadelphia in 2008-2010, my companion and I were knocking doors in our area. We knocked a door and a lady opened. She looked at our name tags and said, "Oh, your back! But where's John?"

We looked at each other, introduced ourselves and said, "Ummm, who's John?"

She said, "The other guy with the name tag. He knocked my door last week and told me about your church. He had that same name tag."

We were like, "Are you sure it was this name tag?" I unclipped my tag and handed it to her.

She was like, “Yep. same one. He was knocking on people’s doors telling people about your church!”

I then asked, “Was he with anyone else?”

She said, “Nope, he was by himself... He was such a nice guy too!”

4. Many years ago my mom was visited in the middle of the night (while in the hospital) by 2 men dressed in all white who laid their hands upon her head and blessed her then they disappeared.
5. I was driving in the far right lane along Freedom Blvd. in Provo during a terrible snow storm. My car slid in the snow and my front wheel got stuck in a ditch. I got out of my car to look at the situation and within seconds 3 men pulled up next to me and jumped out of their car and picked my car out of the ditch without using anything but their bare hands. They never said a word to me. They placed my car back on the road and before I could say thank you they were gone. It seemed like the whole experience took about 60 seconds. I’ve always thought it was the three Nephites because I have no explanation how 3 men could do something like that so quickly and easily.
6. I was making Christmas deliveries for work with my son in the car. I was driving on a narrow road up in Wanship UT and I had just finished praying that heavenly father would protect me while driving and then I rounded a corner going fairly slowly but slid off the road. There was no one in front of me or behind me. Out of nowhere a truck full of I think 2 men and 2 teenage boys pulls up. Gets me on the road. No interaction. No talking. Didn’t even get to say thank you. And then they hopped in the truck drove away and it was so fast it was almost like they never were there. I sat and cried and prayed and shook and said thank you thank you thank you. And then went home and journaled about it later. But I KNEW in that moment they were angels of some sort.

7. He was surfing one day and had some kind of accident in the water and he was having trouble. A guy helped him get back up on his surfboard. He turned around and the guy was gone...he could feel the guy's body helping him
8. My cousin was doing family history in the family history center. A faithful researcher for my Reid family. She had come to a dead end and didn't know where to search next. This was about six years ago or more so research was a little harder back then. But she's been doing this for years. She prayed at a table and asked for help on what she should do. Then a man came and sat down across from her and said she looked like she needed some direction could he help her, and he told her to go from a side line of the tree (cousins) and work her way back down the line. Gave her more suggestions and then she said thank you so much, and he left. When she looked over at a table near her, there was a couple in tears looking at her. She said are you okay? They said, "we just saw you having a conversation with someone we couldn't see!!!"
9. Every two years there was a caravan of two large greyhound buses full of teens and sponsors that would trek from Woodbine, Iowa, going up through Detroit, Michigan, through Canada to New York and then follow Joseph Smith's movements across the states to home. We would see all the sites and walk where he walked. A beautiful journey to the past. We were on the interstate to our next destination when one of the busses started to smoke and then the engine died. The men all went out to try and figure out what to do or if they could fix it but know one had a clue. There weren't cell phones so you couldn't just pick up and call AAA. The bus that was running said they would go and find help. It was hot so all who wanted off sat in the grass on the side of the road. A gentleman showed up. No one saw him walking in or a car stop and he get out. He offered to help and had some tools that might be of assistance. He knew exactly why the engine did what it did and just happened to have a replacement hose for the one that blew. Had the tools to use and started our bus. Our bus driver turned around to thank him and he was gone. Just poof and gone. Wasn't walking, or got into a car but just a true to look and say thank you and no longer there.

Now a word on green aliens: Einstein's Trip to to Roswell

Many have seen them. Real? Quite possibly. Purpose? Perhaps a creation of someone, perhaps a servant clone machine.

There are many stories on this subject, most of them not trustable. But here is one which well may be...

The following is an excerpt from worldaffairsbrief.com by Joel Skousen on Oct. 29, 2021. It is Joel's belief that these are real, but that finding good information on them is very difficult with all of the falsehoods that go around.

EINSTEIN'S SECRET TRIP TO ROSWELL

Adding credibility to the story that a UFO spacecraft crashed in 1947 in New Mexico and was taken to Roswell in extreme secrecy and examined, is this taped interview with Albert Einstein's assistant who admitted that the government had flown her and Einstein to a military base in NM to view the craft and the aliens that had survived the crash. Here is the [fascinating story](#) by UFO Explorations. (see ufoexplorations.com)

In a 1993 taped confession never before made public, Albert Einstein's assistant in the summer of 1947 made the stunning admission that she and the Professor were flown to Roswell, NM under government direction and examined the debris and bodies resulting from the crash of an extraterrestrial vehicle.

*The interview of the assistant can be listened to [in the link above]. **Dr. Shirley Wright** earned 2 PhDs and was an academician at Florida universities for nearly 50 years. In the winter of her life, she felt an obligation to history to reveal the truth. She acted on this by allowing herself to go on record and detail the trip that she and Einstein made in July of 1947 to examine a craft and crew from another world.*

Her Roswell story was originally told by the late UFO researcher Leonard Stringfield in entries in his privately published 1990s "Status Report - UFO Crash Retrievals" monograph series. Stringfield did mention in his book the name of the researcher in Florida who met with Dr. Wright to interview her, a woman named Sheila Franklin. Stringfield and Franklin collaborated to document what the woman had to say... Franklin taped Wright's Roswell testimony when the two arranged to get together in Miami, FL in November 1993.

Wright explained to Franklin that in 1947 she has been chosen from a number of gifted students to work for Professor Einstein during the summer in 1947... it was in July of that year that an event transpired that remained vividly emblazoned in her memory for life. She had accompanied him to attend a "crisis conference" taking place at a Southwestern army air base with military and other scientists in attendance. They had flown from Princeton to Chicago on a regular flight, where they took another flight to a small civilian airport. It was raining when they landed and a colonel in a trench coat drove them perhaps 50-75 miles through the desert to the base. They were taken to a heavily guarded hangar. It was there that Wright and Einstein realized that they were dealing with something unearthly.

She described the craft stowed in the hangar. "It was disc-shaped, sort of concave. Its size stood up to one fourth of the hangar floor." The craft appeared in some way damaged on one side. She said that unfortunately she was not able to get close enough to see fine details as the craft was surrounded by guards, photographers and specialists that were studying it.

Wright said that "the body of the ship was what I would call today a rather reflective material but when you got up close to

it, it was rather dull." She added, "they were very curious about what the materials were."

Franklin asked Wright what interested Einstein most? Wright replied, "Propulsion and more about the universe." But Wright and Einstein were shown something more than just a craft.

Also inside the air base hangar were extraterrestrial creatures. She said of them, "Some of the specialists were allowed closer looks, including my boss. To me they all looked alike all five of them. They were about five feet tall, without hair, with big heads and enormous dark eyes, and their skin was gray with a slight greenish tinge, but for the most part their bodies were not exposed, being dressed in tight-fitting suits. But I heard they had no navels or genitalia."

Later in their stay, there was another leg to their trip. She and Einstein were escorted by jeeps about 50 miles through the desert to a lone, isolated building with guards at the door. Ushered into the building, they were greeted by an officer to an area where uniformed personnel and medical people were gathered around a Gurney on which a creature was struggling in pain. It made unusual sounds, but never "spoke". Wright herself was kept at a distance, but described it as a greyish bipedal, perhaps a bit more human than the others she had seen previously. Its torso was grotesquely expanded. "It must have been a fresh case, but I was told nothing and before long all of us were dismissed from the premises." Wright told Franklin that later she had heard that the creature had survived.

Wright says that Einstein "who had the right clearance, made a report, which I didn't see. I was just told to keep my mouth shut." Though she was not made to sign any papers, she was reminded of her pledge to say nothing. Franklin recalls that Wright had mentioned that the Roswell trip would be denied,

that there would be no written documentation of the trip and that any evidence of it having ever been made would be deleted. Wright had uneasy concerns that at certain times after the event, she may have had 'tabs' kept on her in some way, including officials questioning people in her surroundings about her.

Baptism

-The D&C says you may as well baptize a bag of sand if the baptism isn't done by proper authority, it is worthless, and you remain in an unbaptized state.

– Based on requirements for baptism from D&C 20:37, broken heart means will listen to God, contrite spirit means will obey God. Taking upon you the name of Christ it means to live as if you changed your name to Jesus Christ. To act like he would act.

-*On my mission when one accepted the invitation to baptism and I felt the fire marble stone in my chest quietly penetrate me, I knew that this was one of the most important things that she would be doing with her life.

-*Working with a family on my mission, they wanted their little boy of 9 years old to behave better before getting him baptized. We taught them that if he met the minimal requirements, his baptism would help him make it the rest of the way. We shared 2 Nephi 32:5 showing them that “after ye enter in by the way (baptism), the Holy Ghost will show you all things what you should do.”

-*A family on my mission told me their story of how this sister investigated the church for ten years before being baptized. She told me she learned more in the year after her baptism than all the ten years before her baptism. This is because the Holy Ghost is the mighty teacher, and that companionship has been promised for those who are baptized. John 3:5 relates the Savior teaching us to be born of water and of the spirit, this is the way.

-*earth at 8 God days old was baptized (7 in creation, 1 since Adam)?

Circumcision was at 8 days also. It's the sign of how you are for the Lord and Israel. Baptism is revealed today to be for those of 8 years of age or older who have faith.

-*Baptism only occurs once, for its sort of an indicatory ordinance of bringing you into the program. It's only if your totally kicked out of the program (excommunicated from the church) that you need to be re-baptized.

-*Most powerful experiences I've had attempting to teach the doctrine of baptism have been from using the Book of Mormon.

-Illustrative lesson: shoe polish on hands, then don't feel like holding the scriptures to get them dirty etc. We feel guilt. Then scrub hands. That hurts. It's like repentance. Then we are able to dip them in water and it comes off. Like baptism after repentance. Also put on gloves like The Holy Ghost. Can take those gloves off at any time (like not living worthy of the company of the Holy Ghost), but so long as keep them on they'll keep you from getting dirty, from sin.

-*Since baptism is Moses 6:58-60 shown to be a new birth like birth into this world, we see it is spiritual death to not be baptized!

-*Remembering our baptismal covenants is a good way to remember to act as if the Savior were beside us; remembering that changes the way we act.
– the first fruits of repentance are baptism. Must manifest by our works that we're ready for baptism; so must repent, and the first fruit of that will be our baptism. That is what repenting yields. It yields that desire and willingness to be baptized. see D&C 20:37, Moroni 8:25.

God the Same Forever: New Testament Demonstration of Works for Salvation

The Imploring God of the New Testament

Works are the other aspect of grace. If grace is what God does for us, works are what God asks us to do for him.

This document is to refute the idea that the Old Testament God is the strict / imploring God, then changes in the New Testament. For more treatment of this topic, see my article “The Graceful God of the Old Testament: Scripture References”

This is to show how works have always been expected of God’s people, including New Testament times, and modern times. This is in opposition to the popular idea that by grace alone we are saved. I am bold in this, not thinking it a crime to rely on the scriptures rather than the creeds of men!

John 9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

James 2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

John 6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

James 2:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

Titus 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Hebrews 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1 Corinthians 3:13 Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is.

John 14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

1 Timothy 5:10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.
Titus 2:7 In all things shewing thyself a pattern of goodworks: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,
Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Acts 14:26 And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

(you get access to grace by doing works!)

2 Timothy 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

Mark 14:6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

(if you believe in Christ, you'll do what he says. He says we should do good works. It's like if you believe a train is coming, you won't stand on the tracks. You'll do the work of moving, based on your faith of the coming event. Like how you'll do your homework in college if you have faith that it will get you a good job.)

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

James 2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

James 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

James 2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

James 2:25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Matthew 16:27 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 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

1 Timothy 2:10 But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.

1 Corinthians 4:12 And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

2 Thessalonians 2:17 Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Colossians 1:29 Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Galatians 6:4 But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.

1 Timothy 6:18 That they do good, that they be rich in goodworks, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;

2 Corinthians 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Ephesians 4:28

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Revelation 2:26

26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth myworks unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

1 Corinthians 12:10

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

2 Timothy 3:17

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Titus 3:1

1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey

magistrates, to be ready to every good work,

Titus 3:14

14 And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Acts 15:18

18 Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.

1 Corinthians 16:10

10 Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

John 5:17

17 ¶ But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

John 5:20

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

Matthew 13:58

58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

(in addition to the obvious meaning of this passage, it well shows that unbelievers in the true gospel refuse to recognize faithful lifestyles for what they are, and recognize their role!)

James 1:4

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Hebrews 3:9

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years.

Hebrews 10:24

24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

2 Corinthians 9:8

8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

John 7:3

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judæa, that thy

disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

James 3:13

13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

James 3:16

16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

1 Corinthians 3:14

14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1 Corinthians 3:15

15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Matthew 21:28

28 ¶But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

1 Timothy 3:1

1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

John 10:25

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

(this shows that "by their works ye shall know them"!

John 10:37

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

(this shows that "by their works ye shall know them"!

John 10:38

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

(this shows that "by their works ye shall know them"!

2 Thessalonians 3:10

10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

(*since we must live to work out our salvation, we see work is needed for salvation, since we die if we don't work, and being dead, how would we work out our salvation?!)

2 Thessalonians 3:12

12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Matthew 23:3

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

(*we see doing is required)

1 Corinthians 9:1

1 Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord? are not ye my work in the Lord?

Ephesians 3:7

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Revelation 20:13

13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

1 Thessalonians 4:11

11 And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

Revelation 3:2

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

Revelation 3:8

8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

Revelation 3:15

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

Revelation 18:6

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Revelation 22:12

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his workshall be.

Revelation 18:6

6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

Revelation 22:12

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his workshall be.

2 Timothy 2:21

21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

1 Corinthians 15:58

58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in thework of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Mark 6:14

14 And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mightyworks do shew forth themselves in him.

Revelation 9:20

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk:

2 Peter 3:10

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with

fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

John 8:39

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

Acts 26:20

20 But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.

1 John 3:12

12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.

Philippians 3:21

21 Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

Ephesians 4:16

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:28

28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

1 Thessalonians 1:3

3 Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father;

Revelation 2:2

2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:

Revelation 2:5

5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick

out of his place, except thou repent.

Revelation 2:9

9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 2:13

13 I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.

Revelation 2:23

23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

Luke 13:14

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day.

Acts 13:2

2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

Acts 9:36

36 ¶Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.

Matthew 11:21

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Matthew 11:23

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

Mark 13:34

34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

Titus 3:8

8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain goodworks. These things are good and profitable unto men.

1 Peter 2:12

12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.

Hebrews 9:14

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from deadworks to serve the living God?

Philippians 2:12

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Luke 10:13

13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty workshad been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

Revelation 3:1

1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

Mark 6:2

2 And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

(*Jesus told us to do the things we have seen him do!)

Revelation 20:12

12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Modern Scriptures:

– “thrust in your sickle with all your soul” (D&C 31:5)

-work with “all your heart, might, mind, and strength” (D&C 4:2).

–Through every major Nephite prophet, for example, the Lord declared: “Inasmuch as ye shall keep my commandments ye shall prosper in the land; but inasmuch as ye will not keep my commandments ye shall be cut off from my presence.” (2 Ne. 1:20—Lehi; see also 1 Ne. 2:20–21—Nephi; 2 Ne. 10:19–20—Jacob; Mosiah 1:7—Benjamin; Alma 9:13—Alma; Alma 48:25—Mormon; Ether 2:7–9—Moroni and the brother of Jared.)

-“wickedness never was happiness.” (Alma 41:10.)

-“the joy of the saints.” (Enos 1:3.)

Old Testament Scriptures:

– Psalms 141:4

4 Incline not my heart to any evil thing, to practise wicked works with men that work iniquity: and let me not eat of their dainties.

– Psalms 90:17

17 And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.

– Exodus 36:4

4 And all the wise men, that wrought all the work of the sanctuary, came every man from his work which they made;

– Nehemiah 6:3

3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?

– Exodus 28:15

15 ¶And thou shalt make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod thou shalt make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shalt thou make it.

– Nehemiah 5:16

16 Yea, also I continued in the work of this wall, neither bought we any land: and all my servants were gathered thither unto the work.

– Exodus 36:1

1 Then wrought Bezaleel and Aholiab, and every wise hearted man, in whom the Lord put wisdom and understanding to know how to work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded.

– Ecclesiastes 8:14

14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also is vanity.

– Numbers 8:4

4 And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold, unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the Lord had shewed Moses, so he made the candlestick.

–Exodus 31:15

15 Six days may work be done

–Leviticus 23:3

3 Six days shall work be done

– Exodus 36:8

8 ¶And every wise hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle made ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work made he them.

– 2 Kings 22:5

5 And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work, that have the oversight of the house of the Lord: and let them give it to the doers of the work which is in the house of the Lord, to repair the breaches of the house,

– Exodus 39:3

3 And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work.

– Exodus 35:2

Six days shall work be done

-Exo. 36:1 work all manner of work for the service of the sanctuary, according to all that the Lord had commanded.

– Nehemiah 7:71

71 And some of the chief of the fathers gave to the treasure of the work twenty thousand drams of gold, and two thousand and two hundred pound of silver.

– Psalms 28:4

4 Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert.

– Proverbs 16:3

3 Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established.

– Proverbs 20:11

11 Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.

– Jeremiah 48:10

10 Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

– 2 Chronicles 3:10

10 And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image work, and overlaid them with gold.

– Nehemiah 9:35

35 For they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness that thou gavest them, and in the large and fat land which thou gavest before them, neither turned they from their wickedworks.

– Proverbs 18:9

9 He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

– Job 14:15

15 Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of

thine hands.

– 2 Chronicles 24:13

13 So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.

– Proverbs 24:27

27 Prepare thy work without, and make it fit for thyself in the field; and afterwards build thine house.

– Proverbs 24:29

29 Say not, I will do so to him as he hath done to me: I will render to the man according to his work.

–Psalms 104:23

23 Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening.

– Job 1:10

10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

– Hosea 6:8

8 Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity, and is polluted with blood.

-Ps. 106: 23 Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.

-Ps. 106: 25 But murmured in their tents, and hearkened not unto the voice of the Lord.

– Psalms 106:39

39 Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions.

– Nehemiah 13:10

10 ¶And I perceived that the portions of the Levites had not been given them: for the Levites and the singers, that did the work, were fled every one to his field.

– Psalms 77:12

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

– Psalms 145:4

4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

– Psalms 145:5

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

– Psalms 145:10

10 All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.

– Isaiah 66:18

18 For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory.

– Jeremiah 25:6

6 And go not after other gods to serve them, and to worship them, and provoke me not to anger with the works of your hands; and I will do you no hurt.

– Jeremiah 25:7

7 Yet ye have not hearkened unto me, saith the Lord; that ye might provoke me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

– Jeremiah 25:14

14 For many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of them also: and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their own hands.

– Ezra 6:7

...let the governor of the Jews and the elders of the Jews build this house of God in his place.

– Exodus 23:24

24 Thou shalt not bow down to their gods, nor serve them, nor do after their works: but thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and quite break down their images.

– 1 Chronicles 23:4

4 Of which, twenty and four thousand were to set forward the work of the house of the Lord; and six thousand were officers and judges:

– Exodus 25:18

18 And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.

– Ecclesiastes 3:17

17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.

– Psalms 118:17

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.

– Psalms 17:4

4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.

– Job 34:11

11 For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways.

– Job 34:25

25 Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.

– Exodus 31:5

5 And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.

– Leviticus 23:8

8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord seven days...

– Psalms 95:9

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

– Job 36:9

9 Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

– Job 36:24

24 Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.

– Psalms 58:2

2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the

earth.

– Psalms 62:12

12 Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy: for thou renderest to every man according to his work.

– Psalms 9:16

16 The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

– Psalms 9:16

16 The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah.

– Nehemiah 4:19

19 ¶And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another.

Nehemiah 4:21

21 So we laboured in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning till the stars appeared.

– Jeremiah 10:15

15 They are vanity, and the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

– Ecclesiastes 9:7

7 ¶Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thyworks.

Ecclesiastes 9:10

10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.

– Nehemiah 6:9

9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

– Nehemiah 6:14

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would

have put me in fear.

– Isaiah 49:4

4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

2 Chronicles 15:7

7 Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded.

– Exodus 37:29

29 ¶And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary.

– Jeremiah 51:18

18 They are vanity, the work of errors: in the time of their visitation they shall perish.

2 Chronicles 2:18

18 And he set threescore and ten thousand of them to be bearers of burdens, and fourscore thousand to be hewers in the mountain, and three thousand and six hundred overseers to set the people a work.

– Psalms 33:15

15 He fashioneth their hearts alike; he considereth all their works.

– Ezekiel 33:26

26 Ye stand upon your sword, ye work abomination, and ye defile every one his neighbour's wife: and shall ye possess the land?

– Exodus 39:42

42 According to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work.

– Exodus 39:43

43 And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them.

Proverbs 21:8

8 The way of man is froward and strange: but as for the pure, his work is right.

Psalms 101:3

3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn

aside; it shall not cleave to me.

– 2 Chronicles 4:11

11 And Hiram made the pots, and the shovels, and the basins. And Hiram finished the work that he was to make for king Solomon for the house of God;

– Lamentations 3:64

64 ¶Render unto them a recompence, O Lord, according to the work of their hands.

God the Same Forever: Old Testament Demonstration of Grace for Salvation

Grace is the work God does for us. “Works” are the things we do for God. Old Testament scriptures on grace show that God is unchanging, not just nice in New Testament, not just mean in the Old, but the same yesterday today and forever.

This is to show how grace of God has always played a role with God’s people and their salvation.

For a document on scriptures commanding works from the New Testament, see my document “The Imploring God of the New Testament: Scripture References” This refutes the idea that God was mean in the Old Testament and just nice in the New Testament / without any real requirements or expectations.

– Psalms 86:8

8 Among the gods there is none like unto thee, O Lord; neither are there any works like unto thy works.

– Psalms 143:5

5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands.

– Psalms 92:4

4 For thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the works of thy hands.

– Habakkuk 1:5

5 ¶Behold ye among the heathen, and regard, and wonder marvellously: for I will work awork in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you.

– Isaiah 28:21

21 For the Lord shall rise up as in mount Perazim, he shall be wroth as in the valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange work; and bring to pass his act, his strange act.

– Isaiah 29:14

14 Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.

– Exodus 31:15

in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

–Leviticus 23:3

the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; ye shall do no work

therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.

– Exodus 35:2

on the seventh day there shall be to you an holy day, a sabbath of rest to the Lord: whosoever doeth work therein shall be put to death.

– Psalms 26:7

7 That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.

– 5 ¶ And they spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make.

6 And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

7 For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.

– Exodus 40:33

33 And he reared up the court round about the tabernacle and the altar, and set up the hanging of the court gate. So Moses finished the work.

– 2 Kings 19:18

18 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

– Jeremiah 50:25

25 The Lord hath opened his armoury, and hath brought forth the weapons of his indignation: for this is the work of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans.

– Deuteronomy 33:11

11 Bless, Lord, his substance, and accept the work of his hands: smite through the loins of them that rise against him, and of them that hate him, that they rise not again.

– Psalms 28:5

5 Because they regard not the works of the Lord, nor the operation of his hands, he shall destroy them, and not build them up.

– Isaiah 54:16

16 Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy.

– Proverbs 16:11

11 A just weight and balance are the Lord's: all the weights of the bag are his work.

– Isaiah 17:8

8 And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall respect that which his fingers have made, either the groves, or the images.

– Psalms 135:15

15 The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.

– Psalms 102:25

25 Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

– Psalms 73:28

28 But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works.

– Jeremiah 17:22

22 Neither carry forth a burden out of your houses on the sabbath day, neither do ye any work, but hallow ye the sabbath day, as I commanded your fathers.

– Psalms 104:13

13 He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works.

– Psalms 104:31

31 The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever: the Lord shall rejoice in his works.

– Job 1:10

10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

– Psalms 75:1

1 Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

– Psalms 139:14

14 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

– Numbers 28:18

18 In the first day shall be an holy convocation; ye shall do no manner of servile work therein:

– Numbers 28:25

25 And on the seventh day ye shall have an holy convocation; ye shall do no servile work.

– Isaiah 64:8

8 But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand.

– Psalms 106:13

13 They soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel:

– Ps. 106:21-22 21 They forgot God their saviour, which had done great things in Egypt;

22 Wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things by the Red sea.

– Ps. 106:24 Yea, they despised the pleasant land, they believed not his word:

– Psalms 77:11

11 I will remember the works of the Lord: surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

– Psalms 77:12

12 I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

– Psalms 145:4

4 One generation shall praise thy works to another, and shall declare thy mighty acts.

– Psalms 145:5

5 I will speak of the glorious honour of thy majesty, and of thy wondrous works.

– Psalms 145:9

9 The Lord is good to all: and his tender mercies are over all his works.

– Exodus 5:4

4 And the king of Egypt said unto them, Wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works? get you unto your burdens.

– Genesis 2:3

3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.

– Psalms 46:8

8 Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth.

– Ecclesiastes 1:14

14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.

– Isaiah 37:19

19 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

– Isaiah 41:24

24 Behold, ye are of nothing, and your work of nought: an abomination is he that chooseth you.

– Isaiah 41:29

29 Behold, they are all vanity; their works are nothing: their molten images are wind and confusion.

– Micah 5:13

13 Thy graven images also will I cut off, and thy standing images out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands.

– Psalms 118:17

17 I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.

– Psalms 17:4

4 Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.

– Isaiah 43:13

13 Yea, before the day was I am he; and there is none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?

– Job 34:19

19 How much less to him that accepteth not the persons of princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor? for they all are the work of his hands.

– Proverbs 8:22

22 The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old.

– Leviticus 23:8

... in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.

– Leviticus 23:25

25 Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord.

– Leviticus 23:28

28 And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your God.

– Leviticus 23:30

30 And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.

– Leviticus 23:31

31 Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

– Leviticus 23:35

35 On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein

– Job 36:24

24 Remember that thou magnify his work, which men behold.

– Ecclesiastes 7:13

13 Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked?

– Habakkuk 2:18

18 ¶What profiteth the graven image that the maker thereof hath graven it; the molten image, and a teacher of lies, that the maker of his work trusteth therein, to make dumb idols?

– Psalms 9:1

1 I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; I will shew forth all thy marvellous works.

– Jeremiah 10:3

3 For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe.

– Psalms 64:9

9 And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider of his doing.

– Deuteronomy 32:4

4 He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.

– Nehemiah 6:9

9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.

– Nehemiah 6:14

14 My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

– Isaiah 49:4

4 Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my work with my God.

– Psalms 66:3

3 Say unto God, How terrible art thou in thy works! through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee.

– Psalms 66:5

5 Come and see the works of God: he is terrible in his doing toward the children of men.

Jeremiah 51:10

10 The Lord hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord our God.

– Psalms 33:4

4 For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.

Obedience – Teachings of the Prophets

-“The question is frequently asked, “Can we not be saved without going through with all those ordinances? I would answer, No, not the fullness of salvation. Jesus said, There are many mansions in my Father’s house, and I will go and prepare a place for you. House here named should have been translated kingdom; and any person who is exalted to the highest mansion has to abide a celestial law, and the whole law too.

“If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord.”

(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, pp. 331, 308.)

-Joseph Smith told the brethren that it was time that the prophecy of the hearts turning to the fathers it is time for such; he told them to pray for it until they receive it; one brother prayed for it each morning at a time set apart for such and he eventually a feeling encompassed him about how he is nothing compared to God and a conviction that to get salvation he needs to be exactly obedient. (see Personal Glimpses of the Prophet Joseph Smith compiled by Hyrum L Andras and Helen May Andrus)

-by obedience Jesus won (LDS Hymnal)

– Jesus was baptized to witness that he would obey the father in all (2 Nephi 31 The Book of Mormon)

-the earth is more obedient than man because it obeys God (quote Mosiah)

Prophets Identify A Great Terror: Decreasing Sabbath Observance & Scriptural Awareness

-“it has been **frightening to me to see the churches closed**, boarded up, with weeds growing in the yard, or open but empty. We face the **frightening thought of a generation raised without any contact with scripture.**” ((Elder Boyd K. Packer, ‘The Only True and Living Church’, Conference Report, Oct. 1971 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1971/10/the-only-true-and-living-church?lang=eng&query=only+true+church#watch=video>)

-“When a community or nation grows careless in its Sabbath activities, its religious life decays and all aspects of life are negatively affected. The blessings associated with keeping the Sabbath day holy are lost. We **should refrain from shopping on the Sabbath and participating in other commercial and sporting activities** that now commonly desecrate the Sabbath. Latter-day Saints should set this holy day apart from activities of the world by entering into a spirit of worship, thanksgiving, service, and family-centered activities appropriate to the Sabbath. As Church members endeavor to make their Sabbath activities compatible with the intent and Spirit of the Lord, their lives will be filled with joy and peace.” (Preach My Gospel: What Should I Study And Teach: The Commandments: Keep the Sabbath Day Holy; <https://www.lds.org/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service/lesson-4-the-commandments?lang=eng>)

President Hinckley Outlines our Top 4 Priorities

1. Family 2. Employer 3. Lord's work 4. Ourselves

"Each of us has a fourfold responsibility. First, we have a responsibility to our families. Second, we have a responsibility to our employers. Third, we have a responsibility to the Lord's work. Fourth, we have a responsibility to ourselves.

First, it is imperative that you not neglect your **families**. Nothing you have is more precious. Your wives and your children are deserving of the attention of their husbands and fathers. When all is said and done, it is this family relationship which we will take with us into the life beyond. To paraphrase the words of scripture, 'What shall it profit a man though he serve the Church faithfully and lose his own family?' (see Mark 8:36).

Together with them, determine how much time you will spend with them and when. And then stick to it. Try not to let anything interfere. Consider it sacred. Consider it binding. Consider it an earned time of enjoyment.

Keep Monday night sacred for family home evening. Have an evening alone with your wife. Arrange some vacation time with the entire family.

Two, to your **business** or your employer. You have an obligation. Be honest with your employer. Do not do Church work on his time. Be loyal to him. He compensates you and expects results from you. You need employment to care for your family. Without it you cannot be an effective Church worker.

Three, to **the Lord and His work**. Budget your time to take care of your **Church responsibilities**. Recognize first that every officer has many helpers, as we have been reminded today. The stake president has two able counselors. The presidency has a high council of dedicated and able men. They have clerks as they need them. Every bishop has counselors. They are there to lift the burdens of his office from his shoulders. He has a ward council, together with others to whom he may and must delegate responsibility. He has the members of his ward, and the more he can delegate to them, the lighter will be his burden and the stronger will grow their faith.

Every priesthood quorum president has counselors, as well as the membership of the quorum. It is so with the Relief Society. No bishop can expect to fill the shoes of his Relief Society president in ministering to the needs of the members of this ward.

Four, every Church leader has an obligation to himself. He must get needed **rest and exercise**. **He needs a little recreation. He must have time to study**. Every Church officer needs to read the scriptures. He needs time to ponder and

meditate and **think by himself**. Wherever possible he needs to **go with his wife to the temple** as opportunity permits”

(President Gordon B. Hinckley, “Rejoicing in the Privilege to Serve,” Worldwide Leadership Training Meeting, June 2003, 22–23).

Taking Care of Others Before Yourself: Excerpts from “Fear Not to Do Good” by Henry B Eyring

Oct. 2017 General Conference

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2017/10/fear-not-to-do-good?lang=eng>

Because they have no doubt He watches over them, they become fearless. They ignore their own trials to go to the relief of others. And they do so out of love for the Lord, asking no recompense.

When the Teton Dam broke, a Latter-day Saint couple was traveling, miles away from their home. As soon as they heard the news on the radio, they hurried back to Rexburg. Rather than going to their own home to see if it was destroyed, they went looking for their bishop. He was in a building that was being used as the recovery center. He was helping to direct the thousands of volunteers who were arriving in yellow school buses. The couple walked up to the bishop and said, “We just got back. Bishop, where can we go to help?” He gave them the names of a family. That couple stayed mucking out mud and water in one home after another. They worked from dawn to dark for days. They finally took a break to go see about their own home. It was gone in the flood, leaving nothing to clean up. So they turned around quickly to go back to their bishop. They asked, “Bishop, do you have someone for us to help?” That miracle of quiet courage and charity—the pure love of Christ—has been repeated over the years and across the world.

If you read the journal entries of those pioneers, you see the miracle of faith driving out doubt and fear. And you read of Saints leaving their own interests to help someone else for the Lord, before getting back to their own sheep or to their own unplowed fields.

Challenges and the opportunities ahead will require even more.

We cannot foresee the details, but we know the larger picture. We know that in the last days, the world will be in commotion. We know that in the midst of whatever trouble comes, the Lord will lead faithful Latter-day Saints to take the gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. And we know that the Lord’s true disciples will be worthy and prepared to receive Him when He comes again. We need not fear.

Opposition will strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ, as it has since the days of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Faith always defeats fear. Standing together produces unity.

Self-Mastery by Elder Russel M Nelson – Lecture

Highlights

General Conference Oct 1985. For audio and video of this message, [click here](#) or use this URL: <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1985/10/self-mastery?lang=eng>

-FASTING & CRAVINGS: “Fasting gives you confidence to know that **your spirit can master appetite**... Fasting fortifies discipline over appetite and helps to protect against later uncontrolled cravings and gnawing habits...

-ALCOHOL: “In order to avoid water that might be contaminated, we were even counseled to brush our teeth with an alcoholic beverage. We chose not to follow that counsel, but simply did what we had learned to do once a month. We fasted that first day, thinking we could introduce simple food and fluids gradually thereafter. Later, **we were the only ones in our group without disabling illness**...

-STIMULANTS: “as you develop courage to **say no to** alcohol, tobacco, and other **stimulants, you gain additional strength**. You can then refuse conspiring men—those seditious solicitors of harmful substances or smut. You can reject their evil enticements to your body.

If you yield to anything that can addict, and thus defy the Word of Wisdom, your spirit surrenders to the body. The flesh then enslaves the spirit. This is contrary to the purpose of your mortal existence. And in the process of such addiction, your life span is likely to be shortened, thereby reducing the time available for repentance by which your spirit might attain self-mastery over your body...

-CHASTITY: “Shakespeare expressed such self-conflict as one of his characters contemplating conquest in lust spoke these lines:

What win I, if I gain the thing I seek?

A dream, a breath, a froth of fleeting joy.

Who buys a minute’s mirth to wail a week?

Or sells eternity to get a toy?

For one sweet grape who will the vine destroy? ...

– EXERCISE: “I would not want you to neglect your body. It deserves daily care. Physical conditioning through regular exercise **requires self-mastery** too. I marvel at Elder Joseph Anderson, now in his ninety-sixth year. **For decades, the strength of his spirit over his body has induced him to swim regularly**. But his motivation has never been to attain physical longevity. That has come only incidentally. **His desire has been to serve God** and His anointed. Elder Anderson has followed what I label as the Lord’s prescription for a long and

useful life. Those faithful in “magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They become ... the elect of God.” (D&C 84:33–34.) Elder Anderson’s exercise program agrees with the perspective of Paul, who said: “Bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.” (1 Tim. 4:8.) Handsome and fit, Elder Anderson personifies this scripture: “**Glorify God in your body**, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Cor. 6:20.)

-ENTERTAINMENT & SPEECH: **It really matters what you listen to, what you look at**, what you think, say, and do. Select music that will strengthen your spirit. Control your speech; keep it free from profanity and vulgarity. Follow the teachings of this proverb: “My mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. “All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing ... perverse in them.” (Prov. 8:7–8.)

-LONELINESS, DEATH, & SERVICE: “I’m lonely, but I’m not lonesome.” Do you know what he meant? Though he was now without his sweetheart, he was so busy assisting family and friends, he had replaced sorrow with service and had **displaced self-pity with selfless love**.

Prophets Teach Sabbath Observance Standards
(pending)

Morality Doesn't Make Sense Without God's Law



Bill Nye the Science Guy, a militant atheist, argues that morality is based on feelings that there is a majority consensus can is what is required to make a law (no respect for God's laws like not commit adultery). He says we cannot tell someone else that their behavior is wrong because of morality because morality is based on feelings. If you apply this logic to other areas of morality other than sexual freedom, what happens? What if a large group of people think it's okay to suicide bomb what if a large group of people think it's okay to kill babies (oh wait they already do)? What if a large group of people think it's okay to abuse their spouse? What about Nazi Germany? You see, morality doesn't make sense without God's law. Dennis Prager is noted as having said that you can have nice people without religion, you just can't set up a social system of nice people without religion.

Funny how Bill always starts his shows with chanting, "Science rules!" It seems he meant this to connote that science, not God, rules the universe. Chaos then!

Belief and Knowledge unto Obedience

The more I learn about nutrition the wiser choices I'm able to make since I go from believing to knowing that certain things are healthy, but I still know so little.

For example if I think a T-Rex is about to come to my house, I'll probably leave. But if I know he is coming, I'll leave immediately no questions even if it's hard! I must study and pray for an increased testimony of nutritional principles so I can put them into practice.

It's the same way with the gospel: as we transition from belief to knowledge, we will more perfectly execute commandments. This life is a test because it's so tricky to move from apathy to belief, and all the harder to move from belief to knowledge. However, it is possible. Elder McConkie said that when he bathes the Savior's feet with his tears, he will know no more certainly than he does now that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of all mankind. There are others who similarly specifically have testified in General Conference that though they have not seen the Savior, they know that he lives, and they know him. Some say you can't "know" the Book of Mormon is true, you can only believe. Well, Elder Holland and many others including I would certainly disagree with that.

Touching a Hot Stove: Everybody's Doing It! And Other Ridiculous Excuses We Use – Excerpt from Brad Wilcox

The following are thoughts from The Continuous Atonement by Brad Wilcox. He takes the sin is touching a hot stove analogy to a splendid level.

-If you touch of hot stove your instincts tell you to take your hand off so that you don't get hurt worse. Consider that touching this hot stove is like sinning. When you sin do you say things which are really quite absurd? Let's compare this to the stove. You could say:

I'm afraid if I take my hand off I won't be able to keep it off.

I'm only feeling pain because of my Mormon culture.

Just one touch won't hurt. I deserve this.

I was born with the desire to touch the stove.

It's my parents fault, they're the ones who bought the stove.

I just need to adjust to the burning rather than try to overcome it.

I need to become excommunicated so I don't hurt when I touch the

stove.

No one told me touching me stove was bad.

It may hurt but at least I'm touching it with someone I love.

It's not like it's totally wrong it's a gray area.

Everybody else is touching it.

I'll touch it if I want to it's my right no one else is going to tell me what

to do.

Stove, what stove? I don't see any stove.

I just don't care anymore, I'm numb to it.

I know it's wrong but I will move my hand tomorrow.

You can't go without touching the stove all the time.

I've blown it now I might as well touch it more.

Those who don't touch are so old fashioned.

At least it's just my hand and not my whole face.

How will I know it hurts unless I touch it myself.

At least the other stove touchers accept me and don't judge.

There are others who touch it more than I do.

If God didn't want me to touch the stove he would not have given me a

hand.

Brad continues with a few reminders about responsibility for sin:

-Excuses can't help us the way God can, and they certainly can't love us.

-Alma says don't excuse yourself in the least because of your sins.

-Sin can become an acquired appetite, sometimes even stronger than hunger.

-Sin even when wrapped in the tentacles of addiction is always a choice.

-President Boyd K. Packer taught that it is contrary to the law of heaven for any soul to be locked into compulsory behavior with no way out.

Time Changer Movie Review

This is a great fictional movie about a bible scholar from the 19th century who learned by traveling to the future that we can't just teach good morals, we need to teach the authority of Christ who gave those morals. When we just teach morals, it becomes open to debate. Instead, teach who gave those morals, name the name of Jesus Christ. Some absurd things this man sees in our day include children disobedience to parents, actors kissing each other without being married, adults kissing in front of children, people being bored at church, people not going to church, people singing songs at church but having no real devotion to Christ, people of Christ claiming his name but being unwilling to obey his commands, women dressing immodestly, children being raised to not know why certain things are right and others wrong, no prayer or mention of scripture in schools, an inability to even discuss the bible in schools, movies taking the Lord's name in vain, no one being interested in doing missionary work, improper flirtation, television immorality, churches seeking members through the fun social activities they offer rather than a gospel message, children lying to their parents, etc.



Missions are a Commandment: Words of the Prophets

Naturally young women aren't commanded to serve missions as they often have the higher work of family creation to participate in. However, for young men, it is a clear duty, just as binding as the law of the sabbath, or the law of tithing, on their eternal salvation. Men can repent of sins such as not serving a mission, but like all sin, the way of sin is always hard, and it is not wise to play games with God. Fear God, and keep his commandments.

“the First

Presidency and the Council of the Twelve are united in saying to our young sisters that they are not under obligation to go on missions. I hope I can say what I have to say in a way that will not be offensive to anyone.

Young women should not feel that they have a duty comparable to that of young men. Some of them will very much wish to go. If so, they should counsel with their bishop as well as their parents. If the idea persists, the bishop will know what to do. I say what has been said before, that missionary work is essentially a priesthood responsibility. As such, our young men must carry the

major burden. This is their responsibility and their obligation. We do not ask the young women to consider a mission as an essential part of their life's program. Over a period of many years, we have held the age level higher for them in an effort to keep the number going relatively small. Again to the sisters I say that you will be as highly respected, you will be considered as being as much in the line of duty, your efforts will be as acceptable to the Lord and to the Church whether you go on a mission or do not go on a mission.”

(<https://www.lds.org/manual/eternal-marriage-student-manual/mate-selection?lang=eng>)



-“It does not matter if it interrupts your schooling or delays your career or your marriage—or basketball. Unless you have a serious health problem, every Latter-day Saint young man should answer the call to serve a mission” (Elder Boyd K. Packer in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 61; or Ensign, May 1984, 42). (<https://www.lds.org/manual/eternal-marriage-student-manual/mate-selection?lang=eng>)

-“There is increasing evidence that some young women are being strongly encouraged to serve full-time missions. Though capable and effective, young women do not have the same responsibility to serve full-time missions as do young men who hold the priesthood. We are grateful that some desire to serve as full-time missionaries, but they should not be made to feel obligated to do so. A young woman should not be recommended for a mission if it would interfere with a specific marriage proposal” (Church Bulletin, 1993, no. 2, p. 2). (<https://www.lds.org/manual/eternal-marriage-student-manual/mate-selection?lang=eng>)

-“To young men of the Aaronic Priesthood and to you young men who are becoming elders: I repeat what prophets have long taught—that every worthy, able young man should prepare to serve a mission. Missionary service is a priesthood duty—an obligation the Lord expects of us who have been given so very much. Young men, I admonish you to prepare for service as a missionary.” (President Monson’s challenge during the October 2010 general conference)

-“Missionaries are marvelous. They’re called of God by prophecy. . . . They represent the fruits of all that is good within the Latter-day Saint family.” (President Monson)

-“Your mission will be a sacred opportunity to bring others to Christ and help prepare for the Second Coming of the Savior” (Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles “Preparing the World for the Second Coming,” Ensign or Liahona, May 2011, 50)

-“We do not preach and teach in order to ‘bring people into the Church’ or to increase the membership of the Church. We do not preach and teach just to persuade people to live better lives . . . We invite all to come unto Christ by repentance and baptism and confirmation in order to open the doors of the celestial kingdom to the sons and daughters of God [see D&C 76: 51–52]. No one else can do this” (Elder Oaks, “The Purpose of Missionary Work,” missionary satellite broadcast, Apr. 1995).

-“After all that has been said, the greatest and most important duty is to preach the Gospel” (Joseph Smith, quoted in Preach My Gospel, 12).

-**“Teaching the gospel is more important than other good deeds.** You are in the greatest work in the world, and nothing in this world can compare to it. Building homes and bridges is nothing. Building worlds is nothing compared to the lives you are building. The saving of mortal lives isn’t any important accomplishment as compared to what you are doing. You might go out here to one of these cemeteries and raise the dead, even a thousand or ten thousand of

them, and you haven't done anything compared to what you are doing when you are saving people" (The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball[1982], 547).

-“I am convinced that missionary work is not easy because salvation is not a cheap experience. Salvation never was easy. We are the Church of Jesus Christ, this is the truth, and He is our Great Eternal Head. How could we believe it would be easy for us when it was never, ever easy for Him? It seems to me that missionaries and mission leaders have to spend at least a few moments in Gethsemane. Missionaries and mission leaders have to take at least a step or two toward the summit of Calvary.... I believe that missionaries and investigators, to come to the truth, to come to salvation, to know something of this price that has been paid, will have to pay a token of that same price” (Elder Holland, “Missionary Work and the Atonement,” Ensign, Mar. 2001, 15).

-see also <https://www.lds.org/manual/missionary-preparation-teacher-manual?lang=eng>

-Reasons to serve a mission from Church Aaronic Priesthood Manual:

1. Because Heavenly Father has commanded us to do so
 2. To help people come unto Christ and his church
 3. To help people receive the saving ordinances, such as baptism
 4. So people can repent of their sins and be forgiven
 5. To warn people of the consequences of sin
 6. To gather the faithful out of the world
 7. To give us a chance to serve and grow
 8. To set up the kingdom of God and prepare for the Second Coming
- (See <https://www.lds.org/manual/aaronic-priesthood-manual-3/lesson-25-every-young-man-should-serve-a-mission?lang=eng>)

-“The question is frequently asked: Should every young man fill a mission? And the answer has been given by the Lord. It is ‘Yes.’ Every young man should fill a mission. ...

“... Every man should also pay his tithing. Every man should observe the Sabbath. Every man should attend his meetings. Every man should marry in the temple” (President Spencer W. Kimball, “When the World Will Be Converted,” Ensign, Oct. 1974, p. 8).

-“Some of you say in your minds, ‘Oh well, you just don’t understand my case. My situation is different. I plan to be a great lawyer, or doctor, or athlete, or some other great person. Surely neither you nor the Lord would expect me to leave my studies at such an important time. A mission would interfere with my future plans.’ Others are thinking, ‘Yes, I know about missions, but if you had a girlfriend like mine, you’d never leave her. What will happen to her while I’m gone?’ Yet others of you are thinking, ‘Missions cost so much. I just got this job. I just purchased a car and a stereo. It’s just the time of life when I’m starting

to get things together for myself. I can't drop all that now. I just can't afford it.' Then there are also those who are thinking, 'My situation disqualifies me. I have fallen into transgression and am not participating in the Church. I had always planned on being a missionary, but I slipped and now I don't live the standards required of a missionary...' "If I could speak separately to each of you young men, ... I would say with all the power of speech I could generate, 'Just who do you think you are? What right do you have to match your wisdom with that of God, who through His prophets has issued a firm decree, a solemn mandate, that the restored gospel must be declared to all the world by the voice of His disciples? This means you!... [missionary service] is a marvelous gift of time, a time given when you can experience glimpses of heavenly life here on earth. It is a time of cleansing and refreshing. It is a special time when the Holy Ghost can seal upon you the knowledge of the great plan for your exaltation. It is one of your best opportunities to become a celestial candidate. **The highest of all service to others is to teach them truth and bring them into the kingdom of God**' (in Conference Report, Oct. 1981, p. 72; or Ensign, Nov. 1981, p. 50).'" (Elder William R. Bradford of the Seventy in Conference Report, Oct. 1981, p. 71; or Ensign, Nov. 1981, p. 50).

—"Men and women who turn their lives over to God will find out that he can make a lot more out of their lives than they can. He will deepen their joys, expand their vision, quicken their minds, strengthen their muscles, lift their spirits, multiply their blessings, increase their opportunities, comfort their souls, raise up friends, and pour out peace. Whoever will lose his life to God will find he has eternal life" (President Ezra Taft Benson, "Jesus Christ—Gifts and Expectations," New Era, May 1975, p. 20).

—"The Lord wants every young man to serve a full-time mission. ... Not only should a mission be regarded as a priesthood duty, but every young man should look forward to this experience with great joy and anticipation. What a privilege—what a sacred privilege—to serve the Lord full time for two years with all your heart, might, mind, and strength. You can do nothing more important. ... Prepare well for a mission all your life, not just six months or a year before you go. We love all of our missionaries who are serving the Lord full time in the mission field. But there is a difference in missionaries. Some are better prepared to serve the Lord the first month in the mission field than some who are returning home after twenty-four months. We want young men entering the mission field who can enter the mission field 'on the run,' who have the faith born of personal righteousness and clean living that they can have a great and productive mission. ... Give me a young man who has kept himself morally clean and has faithfully attended his Church meetings. Give me a young man who has magnified his priesthood and has earned the Duty to God Award and is an Eagle Scout. Give me a young man who is a seminary graduate and has a burning testimony of the Book of Mormon. Give me such a young man, and I will give you a young man who can perform miracles for the Lord in the mission

field and throughout his life” (President Ezra Taft Benson Ensign, May 1986, pp. 44–45).

-see also <https://www.lds.org/manual/aaronic-priesthood-manual-3/lesson-25-every-young-man-should-serve-a-mission?lang=eng>

Journaling – A Prophetic Mandate

Consider these evidences that the most important reason to learn to write is so that you can keep a journal (it's also a good way to learn to write).

-“Although I was tired, I took out some paper and began to write. And as I did, I understood the message I had heard in my mind. I was supposed to record for my children to read, someday in the future, how I had seen the hand of God blessing our family.... I wrote down a few lines every day for years. I never missed a day no matter how tired I was or how early I would have to start the next day. Before I would write, I would ponder this question: “Have I seen the hand of God reaching out to touch us or our children or our family today?” As I kept at it, something began to happen. As I would cast my mind over the day, I would see evidence of what God had done for one of us that I had not recognized in the busy moments of the day. As that happened, and it happened often, I realized that trying to remember had allowed God to show me what He had done. More than gratitude began to grow in my heart. Testimony grew. I became ever more certain that our Heavenly Father hears and answers prayers. I felt more gratitude for the softening and refining that come because of the Atonement of the Savior Jesus Christ. And I grew more confident that the Holy Ghost can bring all things to our remembrance—even things we did not notice or pay attention to when they happened. The years have gone by. My boys are grown men. And now and then one of them will surprise me by saying, “Dad, I was reading in my copy of the journal about when ...” and then he will tell me about how reading of what happened long ago helped him notice something God had done in his day. My point is to urge you to find ways to recognize and remember God’s kindness. It will build our testimonies....It won’t be easy to remember. Living as we do with a veil over our eyes, we cannot remember what it was like to be with our Heavenly Father and His Beloved Son, Jesus Christ, in the premortal world; nor can we see with our physical eyes or with reason alone the hand of God in our lives. Seeing such things takes the Holy Ghost. And it is not easy to be worthy of the Holy Ghost’s companionship in a wicked world. That is why forgetting God has been such a persistent problem among His children since the world began...Tonight, and tomorrow night, you might pray and ponder, asking the questions: Did God send a message that was just for me? Did I see His hand in my life or the lives of my children? I will do that. And then I will find a way to preserve that memory for the day that I, and those that I love, will need to remember how much God loves us and how much we need Him. I testify that He loves us and blesses us, more than most of us have yet recognized. I know that is true, and it brings me joy to remember Him.” (President Henry B Eyring “O Remember, Remember” Oct. 2007

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2007/10/o-remember-remember?lang=eng>)



-“we urge our young people to begin today to write and keep records of all the important things in their own lives and also the lives of their antecedents in the event that their parents should fail to record all the important incidents in their own lives. Your own private journal should record the way you face up to challenges that beset you. Do not suppose life changes so much that your experiences will not be interesting to your posterity. Experiences of work, relations with people, and an awareness of the rightness and wrongness of actions will always be relevant.... No one is commonplace, and I doubt if you can ever read a biography from which you cannot learn something from the difficulties overcome and the struggles made to succeed. These are the measuring rods for the progress of humanity. As we read the stories of great men, we discover that they did not become famous overnight nor were they born professionals or skilled craftsmen. The story of how they became what they are may be helpful to us all. Your own journal, like most others, will tell of problems as old as the world and how you dealt with them. Your journal should contain your true self rather than a picture of you when you are “made up” for a public performance. There is a temptation to paint one’s virtues in rich color and whitewash the vices, but there is also the opposite pitfall of accentuating the negative. Personally I have little respect for anyone who delves into the ugly phases of the life he is portraying, whether it be his own or another’s. The truth should be told, but we should not emphasize the negative. Even a long life full of inspiring experiences can be brought to the dust by one ugly story. Why dwell on that one ugly truth about someone whose life has been largely circumspect? The good biographer will not depend on passion but on good sense. He will weed out the irrelevant and seek the strong, novel, and interesting. Perhaps we might gain some help from reading Plutarch’s *Lives*, where he grouped 46 lives

in pairs, a Greek and a Roman in each pair. He tried to epitomize the most celebrated parts of their stories rather than to insist upon every slightest detail of them. Your journal is your autobiography, so it should be kept carefully. You are unique, and there may be incidents in your experience that are more noble and praiseworthy in their way than those recorded in any other life. There may be a flash of illumination here and a story of faithfulness there; you should truthfully record your real self and not what other people may see in you. Your story should be written now while it is fresh and while the true details are available. A journal is the literature of superiority. Each individual can become superior in his own humble life. What could you do better for your children and your children's children than to record the story of your life, your triumphs over adversity, your recovery after a fall, your progress when all seemed black, your rejoicing when you had finally achieved? Some of what you write may be humdrum dates and places, but there will also be rich passages that will be quoted by your posterity. Get a notebook, a journal that will last through all time, and maybe the angels may quote from it for eternity. Begin today and write in it your goings and comings, your deepest thoughts, your achievements and your failures, your associations and your triumphs, your impressions and your testimonies. Remember, the Savior chastised those who failed to record important events.” (President Spencer W Kimball “Angels May Quote From It” Oct. 1975 New Era <https://www.lds.org/new-era/2003/02/the-angels-may-quote-from-it?lang=eng>)

-“Behold, there shall be a record kept among you” ([D&C 21:1](#))

-“People often use the excuse that their lives are uneventful and nobody would be interested in what they have done. But I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records, they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations” (“[President Kimball Speaks Out on Personal Journals](#),” *New Era*, Dec. 1980, 27).

-“Each of us is important to those who are near and dear to us—and as our posterity read of our life’s experiences, they, too, will come to know and love us. And in that glorious day when our families are together in the eternities, we will already be acquainted” (“[President Kimball Speaks Put on Personal Journals](#),” *New Era*, Dec. 1980, 26).

-“We are living in one of the most important generations that man ever lived on earth, and we should write an account of those important transactions which are taking place before our eyes” ([Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Wilford Woodruff \[2004\], 130](#))

-While presiding over the Church in England in 1840, Parley P. Pratt asked a rhetorical question: “Do you keep a journal?” And responded, “If not, we would again enjoin it upon you, and upon all who have not before heard the admonition, to commence forthwith to keep a Journal, or write a history; and see to it, that what you write is strictly true and unexaggerated; so that in the end, all

may know of all things concerning this last work, and all knowledge may flow together from the four quarters of the earth, when the Lord shall make his appearing, and we all may be ready to give a full account of our mission, our ministry and stewardship” (“Do You Keep a Journal?” *Millennial Star*, Oct. 1840, 160–61). <https://www.lds.org/church/news/the-power-of-personal-journals-is-enduring?lang=eng>

-“There is one subject I wish to speak upon and that is the keeping of a journal with respect to the dealings of God with us. ... When the Prophet Joseph organized the Quorum of the Twelve, he counseled them to keep a history of their lives, and gave his reasons why they should do so. I have had this spirit and calling upon me since I first entered this church. I made a record from the first sermon I heard, and from that day until now I have kept a daily journal. Whenever I heard Joseph Smith preach, teach, or prophesy, I always felt it my duty to write it; I felt uneasy and could not eat, drink, or sleep until I did write.” (in Matthias F. Cowley, Wilford Woodruff: History of His Life and Labors[1964], 476–77)

-“I urge all the people of this church to give serious attention to their family histories, to encourage their parents and grandparents to write their journals, and let no family go into eternity without having left their memoirs for their children, their grandchildren, and their posterity. This is a duty and a responsibility. ... Those who keep a book of remembrance are more likely to keep the Lord in remembrance in their daily lives. Journals are a way of counting our blessings and of leaving an inventory of these blessings for our posterity.” (General Conference. April 1978)

-“As I view it, in every family a record should be kept. ... That record should be the first stone, if you choose, in the family altar. It should be a book known and used in the family circle; and when the child reaches maturity and goes out to make another household, one of the first things that the young couple should take along should be the records of their families, to be extended by them as life goes on. ... Each one of us carries, individually, the responsibility of record keeping, and we should assume it.” (Elder John A. Widstoe, Utah Genealogical and Historical Magazine, July 1920)

-“In a very real sense, our properly written histories are a very important part of our family scripture and become a great source of spiritual strength to us and to our posterity. ... I have a strong feeling that when this life is over, our personal and family histories and the influence they wield will be of much greater importance than we now think.” (Elder John H Groberg, General Conference, April 1980)

-“Knowledge carefully recorded is knowledge available in time of need. Spiritually sensitive information should be kept in a sacred place that communicates to the Lord how you treasure it. This practice enhances the likelihood of receiving further light.” (Elder Richard G. Scott, 1993 October General Conference)

-“A life that is not documented is a life that within a generation or two will largely be lost to memory. What a tragedy this can be in the history of a family. Knowledge of our ancestors shapes us and instills within us values that give direction and meaning to our lives.” (Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander, General Conference, April 1999)

-“I would like to share with you just a tiny sampling of the experiences I have had wherein prayers were heard and answered and which, in retrospect, brought blessings into my life as well as the lives of others. My daily journal, kept over all these years, has helped provide some specifics which I most likely would not otherwise be able to recount.” (President Thomas S. Monson, General Conference, Oct. 2012)

-“According to the [Center for Journal Therapy](#), “reflective journal writing” has been used effectively to help individuals suffering from grief and loss, recovering from addiction, or battling eating disorders. Other studies have reported that journal writing can result in health-related benefits that range everywhere from improved lung function to reductions in pain intensity ratings after surgery. [Research has shown](#) that journal writers can experience improved sleep, reduced blood pressure, improved memory, and accelerated physical performance.”

(LDS Living Magazine “Surprising Health Benefits from Keeping a Journal” by [Lynnae Allred](#), <http://www.ldsliving.com/Why-Your-Journal-Matters-Surprising-Health-Benefits-of-Keeping-a-Journal/s/81900> ; sites <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/advances-in-psychiatric-treatment/article/emotional-and-physical-health-benefits-of-expressive-writing/ED2976A61F5DE56B46F07A1CE9EA9F9F> and <http://journaltherapy.com/get-training/short-program-journal-to-the-self/journal-to-the-self/journal-writing-history/>)

-Some scriptures on journaling from lds.org:

[1 Nephi 1:1–3](#); [Alma 37:8–9](#); [Moses 6:5, 45–46](#) (Examples of record keeping in the scriptures)

[1 Nephi 6:3–6](#) (What to include in a personal record)

[3 Nephi 23:6–13](#) (The Savior chastises the Nephites for the incompleteness of their records)

-at **2am the lights were often still on the Spencer Kimball home**. He would be writing in his journal responding to letters and thanking them for any bit of faith they had in such letters. In his journals he not only wrote of the things of the day, but he opened his heart. There are **33 black binders of these journals** he kept. He said that **in journals don’t put your sins in neon but write you have weaknesses and quickly get on** to the good stuff, to the inspired. (see Truman G Madsen book on the Presidents of the church)

-JS told people your journals will be sought after as history etc. (from On Sacred Ground: Reflections on Joseph Smith by Truman G Madsen)

-BH Roberts said Journal of Wilford Woodruff is one of the greatest historical treasures we have.

(from On Sacred Ground: Reflections on Joseph Smith by Truman G Madsen)

- Woodruff's daily journal is over 7,000 pages. (see Presidents of the Church book by Truman G Madsen)

-JS wouldn't sleep until he had written down sermons he gave, this has been a great blessing to us. (this might be a typo on my part, it might be that Woodruff wouldn't let himself sleep until he had transcribed JS's speeches) (from On Sacred Ground: Reflections on Joseph Smith by Truman G Madsen)

-they were strict to keep journals from the beginning days of the Church for they knew that they were making history and that one day people would refer to those as scripture. (see Presidents of the Church book by Truman G Madsen)

-Spencer W Kimball regularly admonished the Saints to keep a journal (see book 'In the Company of Prophets by D. Arthur Haycock)