

A Richardson Studies Journal Collection of Essays on

# Valiant Faith

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

Testimony & Being Born in Christ

Charity & Service



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## Detailed Contents

### **THE LOVE OF MONEY & SIMILAR IDOLS**.....6

The False Gods We Worship by President Spencer W. Kimball – Full Article .....	6
Consecrated Finance .....	10
Biblical Jesus vs Post-Modern Jesus.....	13
Life is a test, but what's the test?.....	13
Worth based on location .....	14
What happens when you get the first 2 commandments backwards .....	14

### **Assorted** .....

Joy Despite Circumstances for the Faithful – Russel M Nelson .....	15
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### **CHARITY & SERVICE**.....15

Why Service Trumps Education .....	15
Don't Let Circumstances Limit You – Eliza Snow Meme by Mormonr.org.....	16
Service for Donuts meme by Mormonr.org .....	16
Ministring / Home Teaching memes by Mormonr.org .....	16
The Doctrinal Source of Compassion 10.19.22 .....	17
Charity: The Love <b>OF</b> God, Not Love <b>FOR</b> God .....	17
Into The Least Of These Is Unto Me .....	18
Charity for All People: You Decide Your Hell.....	18
Voltaire on Sins of Omission.....	19
The easy yoke of Christ: inertia & service 10.9.22.....	19
Taking Care of Others Before Yourself: Excerpts from “Fear Not to Do Good” by Henry B Eyring .....	20
Holland Quote God loves most being merciful.....	20

### **VARIOUS**.....20

Moses' 3 fasts of 40 days .....	21
Scriptural symbols of separating life from death (move).....	21
Demons Tremble at the Mention of Jesus.....	21
My Testimony of The Church of Jesus Christ 6.4.23 .....	21
Issue with not looking for issues.....	24
Christian “Conviction” by Josie Jo .....	24
3 Reasons for Mortality .....	25
The Doctrinal Source of Compassion .....	25
Christian “Conviction” by Josie Jo .....	25
Stories Of Faith In The Early LDS Church By Ogden Kraut – Book Highlights .....	26

The Gift of Dreams by Ogden Kraut – Book Highlights .....	27
The Gift of Tongues by Ogden kraut – Book Highlights .....	30
Baptism: Becoming an Anointed One .....	33
Saviors on Mount Zion (Mediators), Joint Heirs with Christ 34	
3 Levels of Confession .....	34
Put God First, He Will Order the Rest – ET Benson .....	34
Baptism of Fire, The Event.....	35
Repentance avoids suffering.....	36
The required sign, to heal & preach the gospel - scriptures thoughts & basic principles from Larry Farris.....	36
Do You Reject all Civilization? A Message to Today's Youth 10.10.22 .....	37
“The Church of Kind” by Josie Jo .....	38
Selling The Soul, Easier Than Ever.....	38
One Continual Warfare, Morning to Evening, That is My Life - Brigham Young (get source) .....	38
Raising from the Dead & Other Miracles .....	38
Obedience – Teachings of the Prophets.....	39
On Prayer.....	39
Communication with Jesus Christ: Quotes, scripture, etc. ....	40
Don't Be Your Best Self, Live Through Christ: Thoughts, Scriptures, Linguistics, Etc .....	40
Fairness, Pre-Mortality, etc.....	45
Questions for the 1 Verse per Day Scripture Enthusiasts .....	46
No Hardship Will Discourage the Tribe of Ephraim - Brigham Young Quote .....	49
The Mortal Messiah by Bruce R. McConkie – Book Highlights (Likely the incom notes as vid was 1hr40min) ..	49
“You Don't Stand Alone” Banner: Zion Style .....	53
Principles & Purposes to live by.....	54
Religious Community .....	54
Cling vs Hold Fast .....	54
The Gospel Life is a Marvelous WORK and a WONDER....	54
Deathbed Repentance: What it is and Isn't.....	55
King Benjamin's Sermon: A Manual for Discipleship by Elder Neal A. Maxwell – Lecture Highlights.....	55
Conscience Essay by Joel Skousen – Highlights .....	56
Big Leagues Theory: This Life is The Time, Will You Regret it? .....	57
On Situational Ethics: Oh No You Don't! .....	57
Life is a Pickle .....	62

Heart to the Fathers, not to Secularism: How remembering our Ancestors can save our Souls.....	64
Agency Begins with Saying No .....	64
Earning Respect & God's Universal Standards by Joel Skousen.....	65
Core Duties of Life in the 4 Quadrants: Body Mind Spirit Social .....	66
Core Priorities & Views for The Daily Religious Life .....	67
Judging Righteous Judgement: What do we see when people get away from Gospel Centered Lives? .....	69
Pride & Humility: The Universal Problem & Solution.....	70
Courageous Faith .....	71
Obedience to God Can Bring Seemingly Unrelated Blessings .....	71
Build a Highway to Zion: The Redemptive Life of Moving Mountains .....	72
Faithlessness: Our #1 Problem, & How Faith Hope and Charity Lead to Salvation .....	72
To Obey is Better than Sacrifice: The Secret Code for Valiant Service .....	73
A List of Some Commandments & Councils.....	73
Living Beneath Our Privileges.....	75
Christmas Devotional 2014 Highlights.....	77
Magnifying Our Callings Unto Salvation .....	78
Sacrifice of Animals Showed Serious Commitment, What Now?.....	81
Priesthood Service .....	81
Magnifying Your Calling in the Church & Your Calling in the Gospel .....	82
Effective Co-Creators: Everyday Saviors on Mount Zion .....	82
Non-Predestination Aspect of Gods Agentive Servants .....	85
Possible Hebrew Meaning of Genesis 3:1 .....	85
What is the Rest of the Lord (for Sabbath, Millennium, Heaven)?.....	85
Sleep: Whenever He Says To.....	86
What is Your Calling and Election? .....	86
Ministry of Angels & The 3 Nephites.....	86
Baptism.....	89
Cleon Skousen - Ancient Scripture Lecture – Highlights .....	89
Prophets Identify A Great Terror: Decreasing Sabbath Observance & Scriptural Awareness .....	90
President Hinckley Outlines our Top 4 Priorities .....	90
Self-Mastery by Elder Russel M Nelson – Lecture Highlights .....	91

Prophets Teach Sabbath Observance Standards ( <b>pending</b> ).....	91
Morality Doesn't Make Sense Without God's Law .....	92
Belief and Knowledge unto Obedience .....	92
Touching a Hot Stove: Everybody's Doing It! And Other Ridiculous Excuses We Use – Excerpt from Brad Wilcox....	93
Time Changer Movie Review.....	93
The Cokeville Miracle – Movie Notes .....	94
Surprised by Joy by C S Lewis: Book Notes - <b>unfnished</b> audiobkyoutube at 328.....	96
On Myth & Civilization - Joseph Campbell Lecture Notes...	96
Following the spirit in church meetings rather than preplanned agendas - Example Recounted by Elder Carl B. Cook about Boyd K. Packer.....	97
Scrooge with Albert Finney 1970.....	98
Book of Mormon Manuscript Survives Tornado.....	98
My Song of Love And Joy Amidst Persecution 11.9.22 ( <b>Add</b> Notes) put in songbook and faith book).....	98
Anderson 2023 April conf- focus on Christ doesn't mean only thinking of him .....	99
Gandhi: His Life, Lessons He Taught, Quotes, etc.....	99
Are We Even Real? My response .....	100
Give more priesthood blessings.....	101
Why people long for the past.....	101
Prophet Tells Congregation They Are Hell Bound.....	101
'My Face Will Haunt You Until You Are Baptized' .....	102
A Miracle In My Family: The Knot Untied Itself.....	102
Anxiously Engaged (Good) Vs Steadying The Ark (Bad) ..	102
Faith As A Child, Hope In Understanding, Charity Above All .....	104
Harriet Tubman and the 2019 movie "Harriet".....	104
What Should Church Activities be Like? Religious. ....	105
Story of A Bright Young Man At The Navy Recruiting Office: Born Again .....	105
Charity writings - Joseph Smith: Do Not Turn from A Friend .....	106
Prayer writings - How to Prepare People for Zion Like Enoch - The Prayer of Faith. A Stunning Example. 3.8.23 .....	106
For parent bk too - Religion & Family Center on Obedience .....	106
Scripture Like a Cell Phone? – <b>put</b> with other scrip study essays, either to ed or faith .....	107
A Law to Every Blessing: Pain, Yes, But Also Refuge for those who Heed .....	107
Not Blaming Birth Circumstances: Timothy's Example .....	108

Resource: Doctrines of Salvation by President Joseph Fielding Smith Online Link Full .....	108
Resource: Video of English bible versions family tree .....	108
Resource to learn about ancient eastern scriptures, Islamic Dr Zakir naik .....	108
Resource: Tortured for Christ full movie.....	108



The False Gods We Worship by President Spencer W. Kimball – Full Article

*First Presidency Message by Spencer W. Kimball. The False Gods We Worship. Ensign, June 1976, 3.*

Official full text [click here](#); (Text also Available at the BYU website: [FalseGodsWeWorshipSWK.pdf \(byui.edu\)](#))

I have heard that the sense most closely associated with memory is the sense of smell. If this is true, then perhaps it explains the many pleasing feelings that overtake me these mornings when I am able to step outdoors for a few moments and breathe in the warm and comfortable aromas that I have come to associate over the years with the soil and vegetation of this good earth.

Now and then, when the moment is right, some particular scent—perhaps only the green grass, or the smell of sage brought from a distance by a breeze—will take me back to the days of my youth in Arizona. It was an arid country, yet it was fruitful under the hands of determined laborers.

We worked with the land and the cattle in all kinds of weather, and when we traveled it was on horseback or in open wagons or carriages, mostly. I used to run like the wind with my brothers and sisters through the orchards, down the dusty lanes, past rows of corn, red tomatoes, onions, squash. Because of this, I suppose it is natural to think that in those days we were closer to elemental life.

Some time ago I chanced to walk outdoors when the dark and massive clouds of an early afternoon thunderstorm were gathering; and as the large raindrops began to drum the dusty soil with increasing rapidity, I recalled the occasional summer afternoons when I was a boy when the tremendous thunderheads would gather over the hills and bring welcome rain to the thirsty soil of the valley floor. We children would run for the shed, and while the lightning danced about we would sit and watch, transfixed, marveling at the ever-increasing power of the pounding rainfall. Afterward, the air would be clean and cool and filled with the sweet smells of the soil, the trees, and the plants of the garden.

There were evenings those many years ago, at about sunset, when I would walk in with the cows. Stopping by a tired old fence post, I would sometimes just stand silently in the mellow light and the fragrance of sunflowers and ask myself, **“If you were going to create a world, what would it be like?” Now with a little thought the answer seems so natural: “Just like this one.”**

So on this day while I stood watching the thunderstorm, I felt—and I feel now—that this is a marvelous earth on which we find ourselves: and when I thought of our preparations for the United States Bicentennial celebration I felt a deep gratitude to the Lord for the choice land and the people and institutions of America. There is much that is good in this land, and much to love.

Nevertheless, on this occasion of so many pleasant memories another impression assailed my thoughts. The dark and threatening clouds that hung so low over the valley seemed to force my mind back to a theme that the Brethren have concerned themselves with for many years now—indeed a theme that has often occupied the attention of the Lord’s chosen prophets since the world began. I am speaking of the general state of wickedness in which we seem to find the

world in these perilous yet crucially momentous days; and thinking of this, I am reminded of the general principle that where much is given, much is expected. (See Luke 12:48.)

The Lord gave us a choice world and expects righteousness and obedience to his commandments in return. But when I review the performance of this people in comparison with what is expected, I am appalled and frightened. Iniquity seems to abound. The Destroyer seems to be taking full advantage of the time remaining to him in this, the great day of his power. Evil seems about to engulf us like a great wave, and **we feel that truly we are living in conditions similar to those in the days of Noah before the Flood.**

I have traveled much in various assignments over the years, and when I pass through the lovely countryside or fly over the vast and beautiful expanses of our globe, I compare these beauties with many of the dark and miserable practices of men, and I have the feeling that the good earth can hardly bear our presence upon it. I recall the occasion when Enoch heard the earth mourn, saying, “Wo, wo is me, the mother of men; I am pained, I am weary, because of the wickedness of my children. When shall I rest, and be cleansed from the filthiness which is gone forth out of me?” (Moses 7:48.)

The Brethren constantly cry out against that which is intolerable in the sight of the Lord: against pollution of mind, body, and our surroundings; against **vulgarity, stealing, lying, pride, and blasphemy; against fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and all other abuses of the sacred power to create; against murder and all that is like unto it; against all manner of desecration.**

That such a cry should be necessary among a people so blessed is amazing to me. And that such things should be found even among the Saints to some degree is scarcely believable, for these are a people who are in possession of many gifts of the Spirit, who have knowledge that puts the eternities into perspective, who have been shown the way to eternal life. Sadly, however, we find that to be shown the way is not necessarily to walk in it, and many have not been able to continue in faith. These have submitted themselves in one degree or another to the enticings of Satan and his servants and joined with those of “the world” in lives of ever-deepening idolatry.

I use the word idolatry intentionally. As I study ancient scripture, I am more and more convinced that there is significance in the fact that the commandment “Thou shalt have no other gods before me” is the first of the Ten Commandments. Few men have ever knowingly and deliberately chosen to reject God and his blessings. Rather, we learn from the scriptures that because the exercise of faith has always appeared to be more difficult than relying on things more immediately at hand, carnal man has tended to transfer his trust in God to material things. Therefore, in all ages when men have fallen under the power of Satan and lost the faith, they have put in its place a hope in the “arm of flesh” and in “gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know” (Dan. 5:23)—that is, in idols. This I find to be a dominant theme in the Old Testament. Whatever thing a man sets his heart and his trust in most is his god; and if his god doesn’t also happen to be the true and living God of Israel, that man is laboring in idolatry.

It is my firm belief that when we read these scriptures and try to “liken them unto [our]selves,” as Nephi suggested (1 Ne. 19:24), we will see many parallels between the ancient worship of graven images and behavioral patterns in our very own experience.

The Lord has blessed us as a people with a prosperity unequalled in times past. The resources that have been placed in our power are good, and necessary to our work here on the earth. But I am afraid that many of us have been surfeited with flocks and herds and acres and barns and wealth and have begun to worship them as false gods, and they have power over us. Do we have more of these good things than our faith can stand? **Many people spend most of their time working in the service of a self-image that includes sufficient money, stocks, bonds, investment portfolios, property, credit cards, furnishings, automobiles, and the like to guarantee carnal security throughout, it is hoped,**

**a long and happy life.** Forgotten is the fact that our assignment is to use these many resources in our families and quorums to build up the kingdom of God—to further the missionary effort and the genealogical and temple work; to raise our children up as fruitful servants unto the Lord; to bless others in every way, that they may also be fruitful. Instead, we expend these blessings on our own desires, and as Moroni said, “Ye adorn yourselves with that which hath no life, and yet suffer the hungry, and the needy, and the naked, and the sick and the afflicted to pass by you, and notice them not.” (Morm. 8:39.)

As the Lord himself said in our day, “They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own God, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall.” (D&C 1:16; italics added.) One man I know of was called to a position of service in the Church, but **he felt that he couldn’t accept because his investments required more attention and more of his time than he could spare for the Lord’s work. He left the service of the Lord in search of Mammon, and he is a millionaire today.**

But I recently learned an interesting fact: **If a man owns a million dollars worth of gold at today’s prices, he possesses approximately one 27-billionth of all the gold that is present in the earth’s thin crust alone.** This is an amount so small in proportion as to be inconceivable to the mind of man. But there is more to this: The Lord who created and has power over all the earth created many other earths as well, even “worlds without number” (Moses 1:33); and when this man received the oath and covenant of the priesthood (D&C 84:33–44), he received a promise from the Lord of “all that my Father hath” (D&C 84:38). To set aside all these great promises in favor of a chest of gold and a sense of carnal security is a mistake in perspective of colossal proportions. To think that he has settled for so little is a saddening and pitiful prospect indeed; the souls of men are far more precious than this.

One young man, when called on a mission, replied that he didn’t have much talent for that kind of thing. What he was good at was keeping his powerful new automobile in top condition. He enjoyed the sense of power and acceleration, and when he was driving, the continual motion gave him the illusion that he was really getting somewhere.

**All along, his father had been content with saying, “He likes to do things with his hands. That’s good enough for him.”**

**Good enough for a son of God? This young man didn’t realize that the power of his automobile is infinitesimally small in comparison with the power of the sea, or of the sun; and there are many suns, all controlled by law and by priesthood, ultimately—a priesthood power that he could have been developing in the service of the Lord. He settled for a pitiful god, a composite of steel and rubber and shiny chrome.**

An older couple retired from the world of work and also, in effect, from the Church. They purchased a pickup truck and camper and, separating themselves from all obligations, set out to see the world and simply enjoy what little they had accumulated the rest of their days. They **had no time for the temple, were too busy for genealogical research and for missionary service. He lost contact with his high priests quorum and was not home enough to work on his personal history.** Their experience and leadership were sorely needed in their branch, but, unable to “endure to the end,” they were not available.

I am reminded of an article I read some years ago about a group of men who had gone to the jungles to capture monkeys. They tried a number of different things to catch the monkeys, including nets. But finding that the nets could injure such small creatures, they finally came upon an ingenious solution. They built a large number of small boxes, and in the top of each they bored a hole just large enough for a monkey to get his hand into. They then set these boxes out under the trees and in each one they put a nut that the monkeys were particularly fond of.



When the men left, the monkeys began to come down from the trees and examine the boxes. Finding that there were nuts to be had, they reached into the boxes to get them. But when a monkey would try to withdraw his hand with the nut, he could not get his hand out of the box because his little fist, with the nut inside, was now too large.

At about this time, the men would come out of the underbrush and converge on the monkeys. And here is the curious thing: **When the monkeys saw the men coming, they would shriek and scramble about with the thought of escaping; but as easy as it would have been, they would not let go of the nut so that they could withdraw their hands from the boxes and thus escape. The men captured them easily.**

**And so it often seems to be with people, having such a firm grasp on things of the world—that which is telestial—that no amount of urging and no degree of emergency can persuade them to let go in favor of that which is celestial.** Satan gets them in his grip easily. If we insist on spending all our time and resources building up for ourselves a worldly kingdom, that is exactly what we will inherit.

In spite of our delight in defining ourselves as modern, and our tendency to think we possess a sophistication that no people in the past ever had—in spite of these things, we are, on the whole, an idolatrous people—a condition most repugnant to the Lord.

**We are a warlike people, easily distracted from our assignment of preparing for the coming of the Lord. When enemies rise up, we commit vast resources to the fabrication of gods of stone and steel—ships, planes, missiles, fortifications—and depend on them for protection and deliverance. When threatened, we become antienemy instead of pro-kingdom of God; we train a man in the art of war and call him a patriot, thus, in the manner of Satan’s counterfeit of true patriotism, perverting the Savior’s teaching:**

“Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

“That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.” (Matt. 5:44–45.)

**We forget that if we are righteous the Lord will either not suffer our enemies to come upon us—and this is the special promise to the inhabitants of the land of the Americas** (see 2 Ne. 1:7)—or he will **fight our battles for us** (Ex. 14:14; D&C 98:37, to name only two references of many). This he is able to do, for as he said at the time of his betrayal, “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. 26:53.) We can imagine what fearsome soldiers they would be. King Jehoshaphat and his people were delivered by such a troop (see 2 Chr. 20), and when Elisha’s life was threatened, he comforted his servant by saying, “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them” (2 Kgs. 6:16). The Lord then opened the eyes of the servant, “And he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2 Kgs. 6:17.)

**Enoch, too, was a man of great faith who would not be distracted from his duties by the enemy: “And so great was the faith of Enoch, that he led the people of God, and their enemies came to battle against them; and he spake the word of the Lord, and the earth trembled, and the mountains fled, even according to his command; and the rivers of water were turned out of their course; and the roar of the lions was heard out of the wilderness; and all nations feared greatly, so powerful was the word of Enoch.” (Moses 7:13.)**

What are we to fear when the Lord is with us? Can we not take the Lord at his word and exercise a particle of faith in him? Our assignment is affirmative: to forsake the things of the world as ends in themselves; to leave off idolatry and press forward in faith; to carry the gospel to our enemies, that they might no longer be our enemies.

We must leave off the worship of modern-day idols and a reliance on the “arm of flesh,” for the Lord has said to all the world in our day, **“I will not spare any that remain in Babylon.”** (D&C 64:24.)

When Peter preached such a message as this to the people on the day of Pentecost, many of them “were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37.)

And Peter answered: “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ... receive the Holy Ghost.” (Acts 2:38.)

As we near the year 2,000, our message is the same as that which Peter gave. And further, that which the Lord himself gave “unto the ends of the earth, that all that will hear may hear:

“Prepare ye, prepare ye for that which is to come, for the Lord is nigh.” (D&C 1:11–12.)

We believe that the way for each person and each family to prepare as the Lord has directed is to begin to exercise greater faith, to repent, and to enter into the work of his kingdom on earth, which is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It may seem a little difficult at first, but when a person begins to catch a vision of the true work, when he begins to see something of eternity in its true perspective, the blessings begin to far outweigh the cost of leaving “the world” behind.

Herein lies the only true happiness, and therefore we invite and welcome all men, everywhere, to join in this work. For those who are determined to serve the Lord at all costs, this is the way to eternal life. All else is but a means to that end.

### 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 Henry the VIII,  
"O Cromwell, Cromwell!  
Had I but served my God with half  
I served my king, he would not in  
Have left me naked to mine enemies.



occasions quoted Shakespeare in King

the zeal  
mine age  
“

-while retirement may be alright  
to work for God. "Now, a word to us  
of the Lord's plan of happiness.  
program from priesthood  
physical capacity. While the phrase  
excuse to avoid skateboarding,

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 Principles for any Economy" Gen Conf. Oct. 2009 <https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2009/10/two-principles-for-any-economy?lang=eng>).

from our occupations, we must continue  
seasoned brethren: retirement is not part  
There is no sabbatical or retirement  
responsibilities—regardless of age or  
“been there, done that” may work as an  
decline the invitation for a motorbike

-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 lets look at some extreme weal 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



(Source unknown)

Life is a test, but what's the test?

5.23.23

We are tested to obey God, but how do we pass?

It is whether we will call upon the grace of God for every moment of every day.

Everyone (yes, everyone) here on Earth is trying to be a good person. We all have that innate desire as children of God.

But those who pass the test are they who aren't fighting it alone. They are calling upon the grace of Christ every hour.

Life for them is hard, but they don't focus on the hardness, they focus on the graciousness. On the pleasure that it is to be enabled by God to serve him. They focus on the wonder that it is to be a part of the family and body of Christ.

Holy men have always been classified as those who call upon God.

Holy men hear God's admonitions, and smite their breast in humility, pointing themselves toward the better way, even if slowly and drunkenly.

The grace of Christ invites them gently and happily to wake up early, to rock a baby, to read something, to fix something.

And when they respond to those invitations, they feel grace flow through them, unto the renewing of their flesh.

[Worth based on location](#)

If we feel worthless it's the setting

Water cost varies by location

Store 1

Movies 4

Plane 6

[What happens when you get the first 2 commandments backwards](#)

You focus on others rather than God and become swayed into their ways away from God

It's others that you focus on not God.

You don't worship God, you just follow others

## Assorted

### Joy Despite Circumstances for the Faithful – Russel M Nelson

"Saints can be happy under every circumstance. We can feel joy even while having a bad day, a bad week, or even a bad year!

My dear brothers and sisters, the joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives.

When the focus of our lives is on God's plan of salvation, which President Thomas S. Monson just taught us, and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel joy regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy." Russell M Nelson

#### Joy and Spiritual Survival

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2016/10/joy-and-spiritual-survival?id=p13-p15&lang=eng#p13>

## CHARITY & SERVICE

### Why Service Trumps Education

"the greatest of these is charity"

John Taylor 1/21/1883 JD 24:36 Is there are any greater position that man can occupy upon the earth than to be engaged as a herald of salvation, commissioned of the great Jehovah to proclaim the words of life to a fallen world, and to call upon them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins, promising them if they do it that they shall receive the Holy Ghost?

Joseph Smith also speaks of proclaiming the gospel to be our greatest duty.

We can learn all day everyday, but if we don't get out and change the world, it is all in vain.

Naturally one way to change the world is to learn and teach what we learn, but that's not a complete ministry.

The key is family life. Not holding back in family creation is the key to administering food to the poor, to comforting the downcast, to encircling the nations with love and promise.





me as soon as I show up for  
8am Saturday cleaning duty







god restoring  
a whole gospel  
and church and  
everything in  
the last days

my minsitering



#### [The Doctrinal Source of Compassion 10.19.22](#)

Why did Christ not obliterate evil-doers? Why did he turn the other cheek? Why did he serve?

He knew all are his brothers and sisters. He was their kin, and his father was their father. Out of respect for their righteous father, and as an extension of the benevolence of his father, whose will it always is to bless and heal.

He knew that the way you treat someone's child, is the way you treat their parent.

He knew that we all need to grow, that we all started somewhere, and that we owe it to others to help them just like we were helped.

Some say that we learn compassion from hurting others then turning from this, which teaches us to have mercy on those who were like us. But this isn't necessary.

We react to suffering with bitterness or compassion, the godly react with compassion, and develop that habit.

He knew that all have the potential to become like his righteous father (or mother), a glorious exalted being.

Only a few will defect to perdition. Perhaps those are the people Christ was particularly hard on. Most people are just going through the hardships of life, doing their best, and will inherit a kingdom of glory. There is a hell, an awaiting of punishment, and some will have to pay for their crimes thus, but surely Christ rebuked those who were living in sin as well. But even a sinner is of infinite worth, and after he has paid the utmost farthing, will inherit a kingdom of glory where they are comfortable, which will truly be a heaven to them.

#### [Charity: The Love \*\*OF\*\* God, Not Love \*\*FOR\*\* God](#)

Fourth Nephi if not shortly before that says the people dwelled in righteousness and peace etc. because of the love of God and their hearts note that it is not say love for God but rather it says love of God in other words this was God's love it was a gift that they had

from God it was a quality of God that they were operating upon it was not just a feeling or direction where they're pointing their own love it was not their own love it was the love of God the love of God is more powerful the love that we can conjure on our own character of God must confused with ours we are to be capable of peace and righteousness

I remember once having a conversation at lunch at work with some of my colleagues and it came up that I was doing a certain thing which was quite difficult my colleague asked how I did it and I responded by explaining why I did it to which he responded "Yes I understand **why** this is important and good **but I don't understand how you are doing it** this man had a great point and what I should have done was Bear witness of Christ that any good thing I might be doing through the grace and power of Christ unfortunately I did not take this opportunity to Bear witness of the power of Christ which thing I regret

Another scripture related to this is where Moroni says to pray for charity which is the love of God again we are seeing it's not love for God it's the love of God meaning it is the love which God possesses it is the attribute that he has which he can bestow upon us on our natural abilities it says to pray for this gift with all the energy we have this is further evidence that it's a gift that we don't currently possess we can't just decide to love on the same level that God does something that has to be given to us from God

It is not something which the average person is capable of it's not even something which great people are capable of it's only something which Christian people are capable of it is true there may be many great people out there with many great things for not Christians but pure charity and the pure love of God something beyond that something even more enduring and powerful and unique

#### [Into The Least Of These Is Unto Me](#)

A few days ago when I was teaching class one boy was ridiculing another I told him to stop the boy said why do you care I'm not being mean to you I responded that this is my classroom and that when you're mean to someone else in my classroom it's the same as being mean to me. After I realized what I had said I gained a new understanding of the scripture which says applying to everyone on this Earth that as much as we've done it unto the least of these we've done it unto God. This Earth is God's property and he takes personally everything that goes on here.

We also consider the stirring implications of how we advanced in pre-mortality, and that we do not want to sin against the noble and great ones of God.

#### [Charity for All People: You Decide Your Hell](#)

"I don't ever want to see that person again" says one. Well, until you learn to love each human as yourself, you'll be forever stuck. You'll be in a sort of a hell. You must grow to have no enemies, like Joseph Smith said that he had none.

"I only love people who mean something to me" says one. Well, you must overcome this tendency, and have compassion on all mankind.

"I'll avoid and never see them again." Well, look in the long term, look beyond this life, there's plenty of time and they'll be right here where you are, and sooner or later you'll need to learn to love them. Do you really think you can avoid someone forever? Do you really think this life is the only phase of existence?

Surely hell is being around people you don't want to be around. Learn charity for all, and hell cannot bind you. The only way you can be free of someone you don't love, is by choosing to love them instead.

Those who cannot love runaway from those who can into a little corner, and they're all stuck there by their own accord, and it happens to be quite a miserable place with all manner of unloving people, and we call this place hell.

Well was it said by Truman G Madsen, that Satan holds the key to his own cell, but will never use it.

#### Voltaire on Sins of Omission

"All men are guilty of the good they do not do." - Voltaire

#### The easy yoke of Christ: inertia & service 10.9.22

With inertia you can overcome resistance

Keeping a bike upright in moving very slowly is more difficult than doing so moving quickly

A hike taken very slow can bring more pain than going quickly as you're multiplying the time that you're out there, the time carrying the pack, and the forces on your body multiply with 5x with a series of 5 small steps rather than 2 big ones.

I recall a hike where I had to go slow and stop often to help children, it was more difficult than if I had gone quickly along.

2 lessons from this

First is keep going in the good work of God and Christ's yoke is easy, his burden light, particularly compared to worldly ways which bring no peace. Being anxiously engaged in a good cause will keep you going, will keep you healthy and happy, will enable you to make more of your life.

Second is that helping others and being Christlike doesn't necessarily entail doing something beyond your capabilities, it often means doing something you can do but designed at helping someone. Sometimes this can mean "going slower" etc. There is some pain and difficulty with this but it's nothing beyond your ability - it's more of a choice to live with service rather than to do things your way, the way that just suits you and is easiest for you.

Consider teaching kids to do chores, it's often easier to just do it yourself, but they aren't learning.

So the service life, the Christian life, often means giving your time more so than giving something very fancy. Everyone can give their time. That's the test.

Examples: you can cook. But will you also cook for the poor? You can read, but will you teach someone else to read?

As you see, the services we offer in life are often based on our abilities, passing those on, rather than going out to do something "amazing". Giving your time is amazing.

I've often been impressed that the gap, the real difference, between myself and great people I look up to, is that they gave a much larger percentage of their time to good causes. That's it! They spent their lives doing good, not in selfish ways. This has been a goal for my life, to try and redirect my attention and means to a higher good than self.

I saw a sign for "thrill seekers". I wondered, where are the truth seekers? Where are the Christians and other good people of the world, laying down their lives to make the world a better place?

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.

[Holland Quote God loves most being merciful](#)

"Surely the thing God enjoys most about being God is the thrill of being merciful, especially to those who don't expect it and often feel they don't deserve it." -Elder Jeffrey R Holland, Conf. Report, April 2012.

VARIOUS



#### Moses' 3 fasts of 40 days

Joshua Erickson points out the 3 40 fasts of Moses:

He goes up the first time to receive the original set of sapphire tablets with both the Melchizedek and Aaronic parts of the Law (Exodus 24:18).

While Moses is gone the golden calf incident occurs. Moses goes down, breaks the tablets, destroys the golden calf, etc. see Exodus 32. In verse 30 Moses goes back up to intercede for the Israelites.

Skipping to Deuteronomy 9:15-19 we have a longer account of the intercession of Moses where he says it was an additional 40 days.

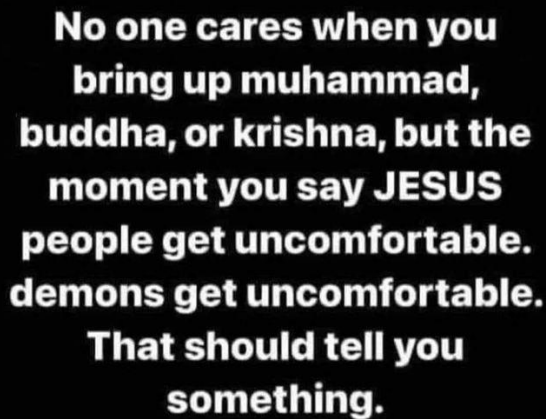
Then in Exodus 34 Moses spends another 40 days (see verse 28) to get the second set of tables. These he had to chisel himself, but he came down with his face shining and needed a veil (which is also an interesting connection to Yom Kippur).

#### Scriptural symbols of separating life from death (move)

There is among the Jews a wholesome tradition of not eating milk with meat, to not mix life and death.

Another example of symbols of separating life and death is concerning menstruation. Why does the Old Testament prohibit marital relations during menstruation? It's likely not so much about cleanliness, but similar to mixing life with death. A symbol.

#### Demons Tremble at the Mention of Jesus



**No one cares when you  
bring up muhammad,  
buddha, or krishna, but the  
moment you say JESUS  
people get uncomfortable.  
demons get uncomfortable.  
That should tell you  
something.**

Especially at the mention of the real Jesus as taught by Joseph Smith!

#### My Testimony of The Church of Jesus Christ 6.4.23

In conference last April someone said speaking of Christ **doesn't mean you just say Christ** over and over. I'll center my thoughts

on Christ but they'll touch on why Christ is important, not just the name of Christ alone. Missionaries also preach the restoration. Book of Mormon also teaches the plan of salvation. True religion also teaches the temple. The point is, **every blessing we have comes from Christ**, an extension of God's love for us. I assure you everything I'll say here is directly related to Christ. If we just speak the name of Christ but never about what that means, we are lost. **If someone tells you the importance of sunlight but never takes you outside**, you'll never really know what they were talking about. And forgive me if I reference notes collecting my thoughts here and there, I'll try to say this by the spirit. If I say something wrong, a real possibility, it's your job to figure that out, and learn what's right **by the spirit**.

If I bore you by reading the book of Numbers, let the spirit turn that into just what you needed to hear today.

I might **offend** someone but if I'm not **willing** to do that I don't know that I'm really a **Christian**. Christ was prince of peace, but he also defended the truth, which made people so mad at him that they **killed him**, as they have many of his messengers. I intend to tell you some things you **won't hear at any old protestant** church. The restoration has so much truth and power more to offer.

Most protestant churches believe we are the **only world** with people. Now that we can see how big space is, that idea is almost laughable! The creation **wasn't a big poof**, or a big bang, it's one world, one system at a time, it is **on going**, and the scriptures about the beginning and the creation are about this world, not the whole of all space.

We know **exalted beings can become like their heavenly** parents. there's plenty of space for them to create too. We know our heavenly **parents came from their parents**. There's plenty of room that way too.

The **double mirrored bridal chamber** is spoken of in the apocryphal book of the gospel of Philip. We see eternity past, and eternity future. A never-ending chain of ancestors, and a never-ending chain of posterity.

Christ created the worlds in this Kolob system under the authority and direction of his father.

If Christ is the creator as scripture assures us he is, then it wasn't an accident. **Most schools** today teach the philosophies of men, that creation wasn't planned, it was a series of accidents with **no God overseeing** and directing the process. Until science admits the reality of intelligent design, they will always be in sin, and in the dark, ever learning, but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.

The **leading statement of our missionaries**, lesson 1 section 1 in the missionary manual, is that we are children of God. God made our spirits, we all know that. But remember, In our **genealogy, we go to Adam, then** who was his father? Literally God. So **did you evolve** from fish monkeys and Neanderthals? That is an impossibility. I've taught science for many years now, and ive **never yet found a reason to believe we evolved** from lower life. We actually come **from higher life**, and we **fell** down. Without knowledge of **the creation and the fall, the atonement of Christ becomes trivial**, we become **animals with low** expectations, rather than eternal beings with high expectations.

Christ created many worlds, he came to **this world, the most wicked** of them, to die to redeem them all.

He suffered the atonement in the garden, then on the cross, and we have **2 parts of the sacrament** to commemorate this, to partake of it.

We are the **only church who teaches that God has a body**, and that God the father and the son are **two** distinct beings. Jesus **prayed to someone**, didn't he? Jesus **showed up with a body**, didn't he? And the **great witness of this church** is that both the father and son **appeared to Joseph** Smith.

If you've seen Christ, you've **seen the father**. Though they are distinct beings, the father dwells in the son. The **power and glory and mind of the father**.

And so can we, Jesus prays for this, for **us to be one with them**. We can get **plugged into the celestial computer** that knows all things, and we too can know all things. We can be **joint heirs** with Christ.

The whole purpose of the priesthood and temples where we get priesthood, and **women have it in connection with their husbands** just like how can't **get the fullness of priesthood without their wives** (and remember women can go into temples



without priesthood ordination, men can't), the purpose of **priesthood is to get the same keys** that God has. The keys to God's car, to his house.

As Jesus redeems this system of worlds, he presents it to the father, and they **both move upward**. God's work never ends. **His children are his glory**, and he is **always adding** to that glory.

I was once asked **how I did something**. I responded by telling why I did it, and the questioner responded he knows why, but the question is HOW did I do it. I'm a weak person and I have many sins. The initial and most correct answer of how I do it is **"imperfectly"**. But if ever I do anything good, it is by the **power of Christ**. Saints **aren't spectacular** people, they are people who **pray**.

In this age of entitlement and unconditional love, we must **know our unworthiness** and worthlessness **before we can know our worth** and worthiness. **Without Christ**, mankind and life itself are worthless and tragedies. With Christ, mankind is lifted up into exaltation. Exaltation was taught in the early church and in the bible, yet churches today limit God's power to bring us up into godhood with them.

We are children of God. Trace that genealogy chart back till you get to Adam, then go one more generation, and there's God, our father. God is also the direct father of our spirits.

Now in life we chose whether **to live the gospel, or hash it out on our own**. Those who love the gospel are **adopted into the family of Christ**. They become sons of Moses and Abraham, **heirs to the priesthood**, and primarily sons of Christ, and have the **same destiny as Christ**.

It's **no limited enrollment**, it's for everyone who keeps their temple covenants. And we are doing **work for the dead** who never had access to the temple, so **everyone** that ever lived has **full opportunity** to accept all the father has.

Christ is the Lord of the universe, of this star system, and though there be many gods, to us there is 1 God.

I feel God's love, I've been born again, I am happiest when I'm serving the Lord because I love him. I often mess up, but I know my trust in God, my working in that direction, will not fail, because He helps me.

In heaven, it's **not about deacons bishops and apostles. It's about fathers and mothers**. It's a patriarchal order. We don't get exalted to be missionaries, or counselors in a relief society. As a family unit, we are then in the **holy order of God**. This **Church is a pro-family church** because we know **that's how the kingdom of God works**, and **we want the kingdom of God here on Earth**. The most important thing we can do in life, our **chief aspiration** above any career goal or social status or political office or bucket list item, is to live the gospel in the context of marriage and family, this should be our highest ambition, or aim. It's where the real joy in life is found. Family is what you do **throughout your journey**, not something you do after your other adventures.

An important part of following Christ is in following his messengers. Can we **say we follow someone if we reject their message, delivered** to us by their servants? This is why the name Joseph **Smith will always be an essential** part of the church in these last days.

Last days doesn't mean things are ending. There is no end. Only it means **the wicked are ending, their schemes** to destroy our souls will be thwarted. The millennium is upon us, even at the doors. President Nelson has said that we will see the **greatest miracles between now and Christ's return**. If you're familiar with the scriptures you know there have been some mighty big miracles. You will have a rich life of experiencing all of this. If you're not **excited** about the Lord returning soon, I think you're missing a **big part of what our living prophet** is trying to tell you. **Never fear death**, the **resurrection** is nigh at hand. Never fear anything! The Lord commanded us to fear not, and to rejoice, we can repent and keep those commandments.

We don't just follow Christ, we **completely give ourselves** to him. All mankind **must be born again**, or they cannot enter the kingdom of God.

We have the **choice to decide where to draw the line**. The **old youth manual** which drew the lines for us is out. Will we draw the lines to allow more of the adversary into our lives, or to allow more Christ into our lives?

As a family-based (home based church supported) church, parents can be guided in which standards they teach their children rather than being bound to the standards of a manual. Seek the **higher holier** way prophets speak of, seek it in prayer, be born again, and **don't keep you kids down to where you were**, lift them boldly into the higher way. If you feel you can't, then **speak**

**for Christ**, in his place, he is worthy to call them up, and you must speak for him. Set the bar high and watch them astound you. The church will give general principles, and the **home will show how to apply those principles**, based on the ability of the children to receive in that home.

.....

In the 80s, every ten year old Mormon knew the doctrine of exaltation, etc. With a worldwide church, since president mccay the focus has shifted to giving the milk throughout the world to a young general membership. The church can never compete with the dinner table. Church classes must adhere to the least common denominator.

Our children to know the reason for the hope in us - It's our primary mission.

You can't say you love God if you hate his messengers. This is why Joseph Smith's name will always be important in a Christ centered church in the last days.

We have more doctrine than a typical Christian church, Catholic or Protestant. It's in our canon. Where God comes from. What we do in heaven, beyond harps on clouds. Marriage and family continuing in heaven. Heaven being a series of real planets. We are the only church who believes God has a body now, early Christians certainly did.

What is our doctrine? The church is big, room for everyone. Only under covenant to believe the standard works.

Big church fast growing, blessed for righteousness, growing fast. Similarly are Muslims: less divorce, abortion, sodomy than Americans. Surely this promised land is in trouble. Thankfully we know stakes of Zion will protect saints when the Lord pours out his wrath without measure.

#### Issue with not looking for issues

It's said "don't go looking for problems, when there's a problem you'll know." In other words, don't be too cautious or worried about your choices in media, your choices in everything.

But Moroni constantly fortified. So should we. That means inspect, build up. Don't wait for a break in the wall, go and ensure that all is strong.

On the one hand we are commanded to fear not and even commanded to rejoice and be merry, but we must temper this with additional instructions that we are to be always watchful, looking for the Lord to return, looking to not let secret combinations take hold and overcome us, and we are told to be more concerned and diligent at home. We are told to seek learning from the best books, to use this time of mortal probation wisely, to not be overcome by sleep.

#### Christian "Conviction" by Josie Jo

Today I was listening to a powerful sermon, wondering how many people this passionate man would "convict" of their sins. I thought on that word "convict" and realized it could also be understood in terms of those who go to prison for their misdeeds, as in "a convict". Similarly, the word "conviction" means to have a firmly held belief.

So many in the church are living without conviction. It's interesting that "convicting" them with the word of God could



also help them live with conviction if they opened their hearts to it. We're all sinners, but only the truly convicted know of the mercy that is available and are living with conviction in Jesus' name.

### 3 Reasons for Mortality

Shared by Gabriel Owen,

Everything was created spiritually (and that is the real existence) then it was created temporally for 3 reasons,

1-So we could get bodies (Our spirits must grow from a seed, together with mortal DNA) Mortal bodies, have an eternal imprint on the spirit, so that the actual mortal body does not need to be present during the resurrection process.

2-Probation: We get to show everyone who we are, and what we will do.

3-Divide spirits into families (eternal family units) so we have an unbroken link (as shown in JFS vision) back to Adam.

### The Doctrinal Source of Compassion

10.19.22

Why did Christ not obliterate evil-doers? Why did he turn the other cheek? Why did he serve?

He knew all are his brothers and sisters. He was their kin, and his father was their father. Out of respect for their righteous father, and as an extension of the benevolence of his father, whose will it always is to bless and heal.

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Christ learned obedience by the things he suffered. This leads to the idea of service producing Godly attributes. I once knew of a bishop who was very service oriented, and he cared for the members of his ward and community. He stood and said that was the best ward in the church. What happened was that he grew in love for the people as he served and lived among them. Brotherhood, service, compassion, love, these grow together.

Open up the truth of compassion, of what it is, and it can flow freely.

### Christian "Conviction" by Josie Jo

Shared with permission

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Stories Of Faith In The Early LDS Church By Ogden Kraut – Book Highlights  
<https://youtu.be/H2Xzrl0i9UM>

Multiple people seeing Moroni him appearing as a normal man

Someone coming to Joseph and Joseph singing vision is progress on his journey to him where he stayed the day before etc.

Being warned miraculously of people coming to storm the house to get the plates and moving them just on time

An occultic lady with a crystal ball told mobs where Joseph hid the plates but Joseph was warned before they came for them to move them each time

Joseph could not translate until he apologized to his wife for an argument

Joseph spoke to a small congregation and shown as if a searchlight almost as transparent and told them that the Savior had been present but they could not see him because they are on milk not meat

County judges and officers of the Peace were among the number of the mobs as well as clergy leaders

Hailstorms falling on the people gathered to destroy the saints

Joseph prophesied on one occasion that he and some brethren who had been taken to law and their items taken etc. that they would get all that was taken back and they did Even though no two items were in the same place

Whenever Joseph said "thus saith the Lord" you knew it would happen

It is reported that the people were arguing over how to kill Joseph and his brethren whether to burn them shoot them blow up the jail they were in tear them apart etc. and they could not come to any conclusion amongst themselves and Joseph and his brethren got away

Those set to guard Joseph Smith in jail we're often one over to his cause and became his friend in the guard had to frequently be changed

Mobsters reported that whenever you threaten to kill a Mormon they say that's fine we'll be happy anyway

Several were sent to kill Joseph and those who believed in him due to some false reports and when they got there Joseph spoke to them and when they shook his hand they felt a strange power that they'd never felt before and one of them reported not being able to move and another reported that he wouldn't kill Joseph Smith for the whole world and several of them volunteered to walk Joseph home to protect him which they did

They reported that they had never met a more harmless innocent man

More accounts are given of casting out evil spirits etc.

Joseph Smith said the nearer a person approaches to the Lord the greater the adversary will rise to prevent him from his purposes

#### The Gift of Dreams by Ogden Kraut – Book Highlights

In the old times when making decisions it was always said, “I will sleep on it” hoping to have some inspiration.

These are highlights from the text, which can be found in its entirety at [OgdenKraut.com](http://OgdenKraut.com)

The Arabs saw almost every dream as inspired and the Egyptians etc. took dreams very seriously

Dreams are a gift of the spirit and should be respected just as much as the gift of tongues or other gifts

Jer 23:28

The Jews had great respect for dreams as guides

The state of peace during sleep allows for communication from God

Several writers & mathematicians have taken breaks in their work to sleep and they wake up with the solutions to their questions

Note- my brother is a builder and didn't know how to build a certain staircase. He slept and awoke knowing precisely how to build it. He told me, “Nate that is true I was reading in my scriptures every night and I had a house that I was working on and I wasn't sure how to build the curve stairs. So i read my scriptures and prayer like normal and in the morning I knew exactly how to build the stairs. So I think I owe that to my mom for teaching me good and my father for the inspiration.”

There is an account of a man who had a long message impressed upon him he knew it all verbatim awoken from his dream where it was told to him, but someone called for his attention while he was scribing it and he went to take care of that business and when he came back the rest of the message was gone. Give priority to recording these important messages.

Parly P Pratt spoke of how the righteous have dreams of being righteous, and the wicked have dreams of doing wickedness; he also said that if there is a marriage which cannot be but is destined to be at a later date by some premortal arrangement which is cut off by death or some other circumstance, that this person will minister to the other in dreams.

Beneficial productive dreams are of God.

Unbelief and treating lightly the things we have received is a major reason for condemnation.

Pratt said there is no possibility of one who follows the holy ghost being led astray

Woodruff said pay close attention to dreams you feel may be inspired

God spoke to Joseph father of Jesus by dream

Inspired dreams often need inspired interpretations

It is quoted that we are repeating what Joseph in Egypt went through. We as a people have been cast out of society but will be the means of saving society and of saving Israel

The Mormon elders promised the same thing that Peter promised people who would get baptized, the same gifts of the Spirit and this was the test of whether or not they were true messengers from God.

If people do not have manifestations from God, these gifts of the Spirit, then they are not the people of God

There has never been a prophet who has not received Revelation from the Lord in dreams

it is difficult for the Lord to reveal things through dreams these days because nobody believes that dreams can be revelation

Numbers 12:6 the Lord speaks to All his prophets in dreams

Note - perhaps this is one reason we keep the word of wisdom - to keep our minds clear to receive dreams from God

Joseph Smith said that if an angel appears to you try to talk to them and by the third attempt they will respond

There are ministering spirits assigned to us

One indication that a dream is inspired is that you awaken after it which gives you more opportunity to remember it

another way that we know our dreams inspired is if it is clear not cluttered

If you have a dream and don't understand it, pray for the meaning of it and if the meaning does not come, dismiss the dream as unimportant

One had a dream of the thoughts of people at church, they were all thinking of things other than the worship, it was disgraceful.

The gifts of the Spirit are only for those who live their religion

Several accounts of people seeing other people in dreams, getting to know their names, what they look like etc. long before ever meeting them. Missionaries being assigned to the very exact places of who had the dreams who saw them.

There are angels who gather the prayers of the saints to make incense to God

Wilford woodruff had a dream that his first child would die the next day. he received in the post shortly thereafter that this was the fact, and the dream beforehand helped brace him for the impact.

John Taylor had a dream of his first wife being very sick so he prayed greatly for her and she recovered.

One missionary was quite poor and in need of a new hat. Someone was told in a dream to get him that hat, but he could not get the hat, and then the day he was supposed to have the hat came and he knew the missionary would arrive. That day, a very nice hat flew off of a passenger on a train, that was the hat for the missionary and it fit quite well.

One dream involved people jumping off a boat and another person gave an interpretation that the people who jumped off the boat in that order were the people next to die. So it was, and it was Orson Pratt who gave this interpretation, and

Orson Pratt was one of the people jumping the boat, and the man declared when it was Orson's turn, and Orson indeed went next.

Several other dreams related predicting deaths of certain people

A missionary had a dream of being told to go into a house where there were many serpents. He did so and when the serpents attempted to attack him they fell down dead. Later this missionary saw the fulfillment of this as mobs were gathered against them. The mobs came to attack them but fell over dead. He knew what was going on and trusted God rather than running away.

Abraham Lincoln had contempt against the Mormons, and he dreamed of his assassination 3 weeks before it occurred.

Dreams warning of bombs planted in cars.

A nightmare awoke a man sleeping in a room filling with poisonous gas.

A man saw his wife in vision about to get in a car wreck he yelled out to her. She heard this and veered off the road. He then gave her further instructions of how to exit the car before it burst into flames, and all of this while they were 9,000 miles from one another. She later confirmed that she heard his voice instructing her, she repeated the exact words he said, and he spoke and walked her through this at the very time of the incident.

Note - it seems many small impressions that save us are from our kin watching over us.

Several men were warned in a dream that Indians were coming the next day and would scalp them. So they left their employment and got out of there, and in fact the Indians did come and kill several, which they escaped.

God will reveal every important thing which his people need to know by dreams or by whispering to them (from Millennial Star)

One young man was warned in a dream about a woman who he was going to marry, that she would bring great shame to him. He later found out that the woman was a mistress of another man, and was just playing him in a plot to bring shame on the church.

One man had a dream that he was driving in a certain place and knew to slow down when there was no appearance of danger. He couldn't think of an interpretation to this dream so he forgot about it. But the next day he was driving and recognized himself in that very place he saw in his dream, so he slowed down and he saw that there were many black cows in the road, it was at night, he would have hit them had he not significantly slowed down.

Note I remember an account which Kevin kraut told me - when he was a young semi-truck driver, he was from the Arizona desert and didn't have much winter driving experience. He found himself on a treacherous road in a heavy winter blizzard where trucks were driving off the road every couple seconds, and these were called over the radio. A large truck behind him got him on the radio, recognizing that Kevin looked afraid and inexperienced, and walked him through what to do at every turn and every corner so that he made it out safe. Kevin attempted to thank him, but the truck disappeared.

Nope I remember a strange event when I was a youth in a very difficult season of life it was the very early morning and I was walking to my house and a man drove up the road and stopped to give me a religious pamphlet. He then turned around and left the same way he came, it was strange and I've often considered that encounter.

Dreams are visions and these can be had during the day as well

Joseph Smith had a dream of two people who plotted against him. They were snakes which could not attack him because they were caught up with themselves

Our ancestors watch us and they want to know what we have done with their name

Prophets are the world's greatest benefactors due to the large influence they have

One woman dreamed of a great silver wave coming to crash upon her. She was in a train she said "I see the wave coming to crash upon me" then the train crashed and she died.

Several accounts of soldiers having dreams about the exact events that would take place in the battles of the next day including who would be wounded and where etc.

Many times Wilford woodruff had communication with Joseph Smith after Joseph's death through dreams etc. where Joseph explained to him his mission.

Many visions of the last days and the plagues etc. One where poison fell from the sky which could not be seen, and the saints gathered together were told when to be inside their tents to avoid these things.

Wilford woodruff and others saw the Salt Lake Temple before they went west

Jessie Knight was inspired to start the Eureka Utah mine which was able to deliver the church in a time of great financial, settling maintain the credit of the church

The "dream mine" was a mine about which a bishop had. He said it's fulfillment would come at a time when the nation was in spiritual and temporal bondage

One woman had a vivid dream of her death. She had memories of regret of whenever she chastized her children in anger. She could remember back in her life up to when she was married, before that it wasn't so relevant. She was allowed to the celestial city, and told she had indeed been in error at times due to not praying enough, but that God saw her repentance.

She was told she could go to the celestial City, and others nearby who were not granted entry became angry at her. There was a director in a plain room (or temple) who told people where they could go (to which kingdom).

She was very happy. She saw Elder Woodruff teaching at her funeral, giving a sermon prophesying that she was very happy.

She went around for a few places as a spirit. she went to theater etc. and saw many other spirits of all ages and all different kinds of dress, and she could plainly distinguish between those who were spirits and those who were not, and the spirits did not particularly notice each other or speak to each other anymore than we do to others on the street. She saw the director judge who said to those who were destined for bad places, that they knew of their own free will and plainly and chose this, and it was recognized that very few went to the celestial City.

note- Dimitri Mendeleev had a dream where he saw the periodic table assembled! Naturally this aided his discovery of it.

note - I heard of a man called to preach to Indians, nobody knew the language, and it was taught to him in his sleep in 1 or a few days. Fascinating how the gift of dreams and the gift of tongues can work together! It is preponderous indeed of how fast and directly our spirits can learn.

*The Gift of Tongues by Ogden kraut – Book Highlights*

(also in missionary and education books)

<https://youtu.be/PK5xjR3YLmM>

(Many of these are quotes not just Kraut speaking)

When someone says something mean to you respond by silence it is the most powerful reply

The Latter-Day saints should be known as a people of excellent linguists as this is the spiritual gift promised to us

Anyone with the spirit of God can gain the gift of tongues

The many languages is a curse and it will be lifted

On the day of Pentecost they spoke in tongues they had not first learned

Brigham Young had the gift of tongues to speak to the Indians and this prevented much strife

Brigham said it is better to feed the Indians than to fight them

Joseph spoke the language of Adam and said that we will speak that language in Zion Brigham also spoke this language

Brigham and Heber Kimball could speak in the gift of tongues whenever they please but Joseph did caution against the overuse of it and that doctrine would not be taught in it

One young woman was about to be stolen by Indians and some of their company killed they were afraid she prayed and then she rose up with great joy and prophesied and spoken tongues in the native language of the Indians telling them that they were wicked in their desires to kill and steal and that they weren't the only strangers people driven from their lands that we were too and that this land does not belong to them it all belongs to the great spirit and that the great spirit is watching them and will kill them if they harm them and they shared some food with the Indians and the Indians shook their hands and left them alone

When constraints to speak by the gift of tongues a person should do it where they will offend the spirit

If there's no interpreter don't use the gift of tongues except in private and to God

Never use the gift of tongues for a sign to people and don't call a congregation together to hear you speak in tongues

Using the gift of tongues can bring you comfort

Various prophecies and promises have been made with the gift of tongues

Heber (Grant's) mother had prophesied of Heber becoming an apostle in the church

When someone speaks in tongues another person will be impressed with the interpretation of that and they must stand and give it

One occasion is reported where someone new that someone in the congregation needed to stand and prophesy and called out for them to do it and eventually the person did it

An account is related on one who gave a very spirited and lengthy discourse by the gift of tongues then another stood and had the interpretation of it

When Faith is low the gifts of the Spirit Will be Low

Joseph said gifts of the Spirit are food for our spirits and we need them

Accounts are shared of women speaking in tongues

Note this is like what Brigham said that prophecy is not in office it's a gift and that Eliza snow had it etc. and as I recall Eliza snow spoken tongues as well

An account is shared of one who spoke in an Indian tongue to an Indian telling him to get baptized which he straightway did

An account is shared where two people of different languages converse freely

An account is shared of a Hebrew scholar hearing a young simple person speak perfect Hebrew and that person was speaking in tongues and was not able to converse in Hebrew with the scholar after this and did not even know what they said and it was assigned to the scholar

One young missionary was set apart that he would have the gift of tongues for his mission language he arrived to his mission I think it was Samoa he did not understand anything the people were saying he was then to get up and bear his testimony and he did so for 15 minutes and the perfect language of the people  
From that point on this young missionary was able to understand perfectly and speak perfectly the language

One young missionary they're trying to learn Dutch only knew a few sentences but when he had to bear his testimony he was able to do that fluently and understand what the person was saying that he was talking to later the gift left  
Then when he was called on to speak he was able to speak fluent Dutch again

Note I remember on my mission with my first companion he was surprised that I could speak the language and so was I

There's been a lot of cases of people in various denominations who think they can just go without any study and have a gift of tongue to a foreign land and they always fail

Only those who keep the gospel by repenting and being baptized into Christ Church have the right to the Holy Ghost and gift of tongues

There was an unusual exception case as seen in the New Testament and it was rare and for a specific purpose

Songs sang in tongues, at times in the language of Adam.

One person had the gift of tongues but would not use it so it was taken from him and given to someone else

One pair of missionaries who could not speak Dutch went into a home the woman could understand English and the husband could not but then the husband spoke to them and the missionaries understood they replied in English and he understood and when the Dutchman spoke to one of the missionaries that missionary understood and the other did not and when the Dutchman spoke to the other missionary that missionary understood and the other did not

One group of pioneers needed instructions about a difficult journey they were about to make and later only spoke English but they understood his instructions at that moment of urgency

Sometimes a person will get the gift of tongues and speak and then the interpretation comes to them and they say the interpretation

Note I remember a recent account of an apostle speaking and the translator wasn't all that good but someone in the congregation helps the translator and afterwards come to find out that person in the congregation didn't even speak English but they still understood the apostle speak English and were able to help with the translation

Sometimes the devil gives people the gift of tongues and they say all men are foul things in that language  
One time somebody spoke Chinese this way and someone present who understood Chinese supported that it was very foul

Heber Kimball's 2nd wife had MANY spiritual gifts and experiences, prophecy, tongues, many things (note this is evidence she wasn't living in sin, righteous authorized polygamy isn't sinful, it brings a person closer to God and God's gifts!)



By the second century gifts no longer continued in the church due to the apostasy

Where the gifts are not the kingdom is not

These gifts are how the saints become perfected

Speaks of one who walked 7 miles to church regularly

When speaking in tongues you might not know what you're saying, others might.

One case this happened in church, the man confessed his sins and didn't know it, others did know it.

It's sin to dance among the wicked

If you don't have gifts of the spirit go look for the gospel because you don't have it

As with the early Christian church so with the LDS church, at first they had many gifts of the spirit, then they dwindled due to the dwindling faith

(Note this is strong evidence that we are NOT as righteous as the early church members!)

Spirits can speak many ideas at once

Says Orson Pratt

#### [Baptism: Becoming an Anointed One](#)

Baptism is when Jesus became the Christ, when he started his ministry, when he became the anointed one.

This is when we become “Christians,” when we become anointed, when our name and chief role in life becomes Christian. This is our death, and renewal. This is when we become Christ’s (lower case “c”, you could say). This is when we become saviors on Mt. Zion, as prophesied in scripture. This is when we become “the body of Christ”, and each member of the body is critical to the work and plan of God for the salvation of His children.

Some suggest that to become like God we must live again as a Jesus Christ, I don’t know that that would be necessary, we should be Christ’s in this life. There will be more experience to gain after this life, but I don’t think another mortal probation is required to fully become one with and perfect like Jesus Christ and our Father in Heaven.

When a child is baptized at 8, this is very young. The child is accountable at this age, but perhaps it is also symbolic of a parent (who approves of the baptism) who is committing to rear that child in the ways of a Christian. Of course the Christian rearing begins far before age 8.

Historically re-baptisms were performed as a sign of renewed commitment, but today we refer to the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper as a time of renewal. Interestingly it has been pointed out recently by Elder David Bednar that the term “renewing our baptismal covenants” isn’t found in scripture, so we should not focus on this phrase when teaching of the sacrament. It does appear that we need to make personal revivals, daily repentance, and finding God time and again as we face the trials of life. But we must be cautious: those who have come to the Lord are no longer ignorant, and are under strict law to follow him.

Baptism can be a time of great manifestations. Persons upon true Christian baptism have come forth from the waters speaking in tongues, prophesying, seeing glorious beings, and so forth. This can be our lot as well when we have truly repented before baptism. We can realize that “baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost” like Alma the younger and others in scripture.

Michael Ness shared:

we qualify as Saviors as Saviors on Mount Zion, through the Atonement of Christ, for our dead, and as Christ asked for his disciples to be one with him, they are one with us, and we mediate for them

me·di·ate

verb

/ˈmēdē, āt/

1.

intervene between people in a dispute in order to bring about an agreement or reconciliation.

Which is what a Priest does, is to bring others into the presence of God

We are making sure they are qualified by oath and covenant to enter back into the presence of God

### 3 Levels of Confession

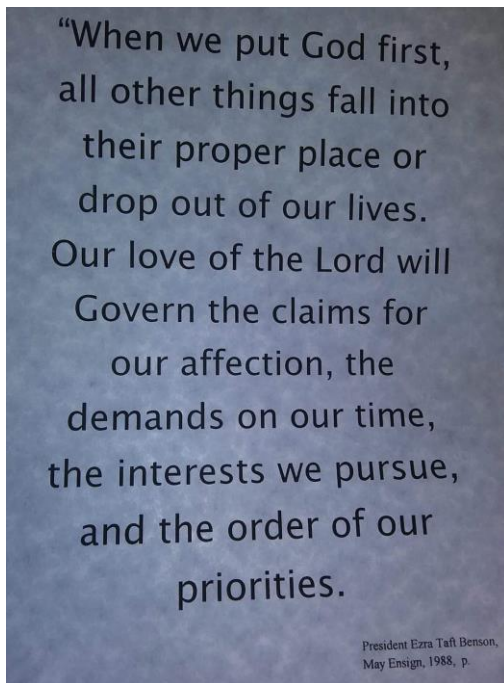
It seems **celestial** confession is voluntary. We all mess up, and if we confront that head on, we are showing responsibility and great progress can be made.

**Terrestrial** is admitting fault when caught, and going through the dregs of repentance when compelled to do so, at least so far as to satisfy the law.

If you're wise, you can use getting caught as an opportunity to turn it all around and turn your repentance into celestial repentance by turning your heart around and making all amends toward the new life.

**Telestial** is that when you are caught, you still deny, and want nothing to do with confession or improvement. You buy into the lie that all problems in your life are someone else's fault.

Put God First, He Will Order the Rest – ET Benson

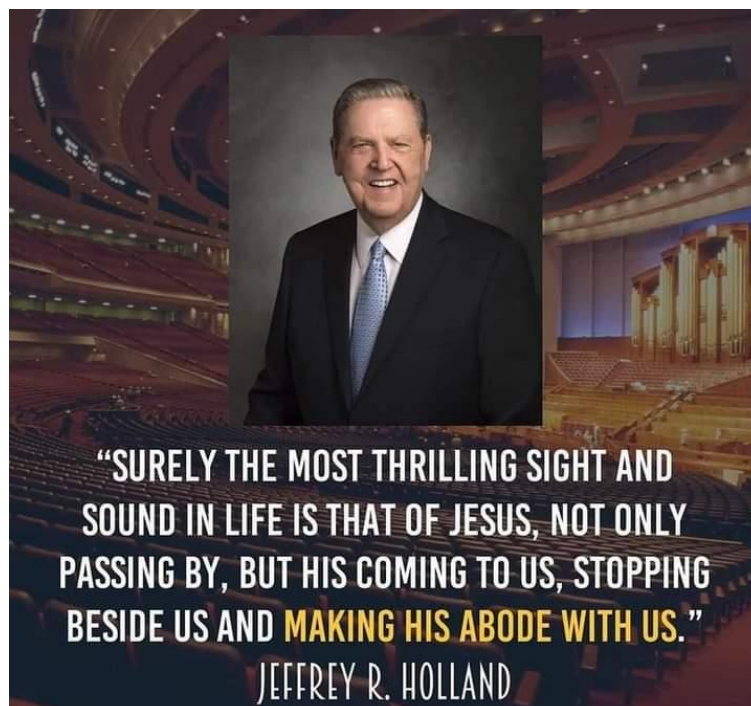


#### Baptism of Fire, The Event

There's evidence it isn't just a life-long process/journey, but a firey event. This can last a lifetime, and may need tuning up now and then, as all hell will fight you when you are a soldier for God. You march into battle, and don't expect a picnic!

I testify of this event. When I discovered from the Book of Mormon that I don't have to go to hell, I prayed with all my soul, and found redemption in Christ, and was filled with the Holy Ghost. From then to now I've fought for God enthusiastically. I've been weighed down at times, and I've needed renewed commitment at times, but I can witness of the baptism of fire, where your soul's desire is to do good, and serve God, to do things His way. I've not yet seen the Lord but have felt his presence routinely.

Elder Holland has certainly experienced this:



[Repentance avoids suffering](#)

Yes we avoid sin, but we don't avoid repentance.

Dc19 says repent or suffer

Hebrew repent can be and sometimes is translated turn.

Turn from things that keep you from being renewed by God, that keep you from seeing your relationship to God.

[The required sign, to heal & preach the gospel - scriptures thoughts & basic principles from Larry Farris](#)

I met an amazing man who has no shame of the gospel of Christ. He emphasizes that the main duties of any Christian, especially one with the fullness of the restored gospel, is to preach repentance, and to heal the sick, as Jesus always said. Those two come hand in hand.

So Larry has learned that he is a witness and minister of Christ in all places. He doesn't hesitate to stop a stranger on the street (or in a store) who is wounded, and offers to bless to heal them, to pray for them, and he witnesses to them that there is power in this, that there is a God who loves them. These healings, he reports, usually work. You have to completely believe. He is shocked when a person ISN'T healed.

He teaches the importance of having and speaking of spiritual experiences, and doesn't subscribe to the idea that these are too sacred to share. He says they were given for the express purpose of sharing, to help convert others.

He teaches that people can get revelation on the lives of others, and share such. That they may not have stewardship over them, but that he can still witness to them, and if it is received by the Holy Ghost, it is the word of God, just as much as if it were said from any prophet. After all, didn't Moses say that he wished all would be prophets?

Here are some teachings of Larry which ring true to me as an echo of the words of Christ:

What of it being a wicked generation who requires a sign? Jesus gave many signs, and they received them not. To those who came looking for a sign, they perhaps were the ones who had already seen enough, yet wouldn't believe. The signs of healing the sick, casting out demons are required signs of the church. We are supposed to seek and receive those signs.

What of faith to be healed? Sometimes Jesus healed people who didn't even know who he was.

What of receiving revelation for another you don't preside over? You're welcome to speak by the spirit, and they received it if it was by the spirit. The spirit can tell you anything.

More from Larry on healing the sick, here's the basic principles -

Faith to heal: Know it is God's will.

Power: gift of the Holy Ghost

Words: speak directly to the mountain

Tenacity: keep at it until full healing or breakthrough

Resistance: cast out demons

Retain your healing: draw closer to Jesus, share your witness of healing

Resources: scripture

More power: fasting

[Do You Reject all Civilization? A Message to Today's Youth 10.10.22](#)

They claim all we do by way of decency is just culture, just arbitrary decisions based on the whims of superstitious people.

This secular view is indeed disturbing. They reject all true art, science, religion, and society.

They reject the family as the core of society.

They reject the need for clothing, for good language, but all social boundaries.

They allow for all media violence and horrifying murderous disturbances, claiming they are mere entertainment, and have no effect on their personal behaviors.

What then, would you claim that to abuse someone is just someones free choice, that it won't effect the rising generation? No, but the youth will grow to be like their forebearers, inheriting all manor of evil behavior, and their government will collapse, they being a people who cannot be governed.

They say they swear because their parents swear, that there is no harm in this. The dignity of our people, their chivalry, their respect for women, their respect for leaders teachers and authority figures including parents, it is all wasting away with the sands of time, and no restoration or preservation is in their hearts.

They will not have purity, they call good evil, and evil good. They cry for freedom, but their choices bring the most abject slavery.

These people cannot be taught. I heard recently a parent say 'my child stole, because they had no reason not to!' I was appalled and wondered, 'have you not given them a reason not to? Have you failed to discipline them, and failed to teach them the laws of God, and a fear of God?'

Surely the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. If we only see God is a giant teddy bear in the sky, this god is useless, and these claims are blasphemous. God is the unchanging lawgiver, and will not be mocked. Those who claim Christ allows all permissive behavior will burn in hell, and there is no deliverance for these rebellious souls who crucify Christ anew, and spread their lies to the nations, corrupting the whole.

Woe unto our forefathers, who have revealed Gods truths, and brough progress to our people. It surely repenteth them for working to bring us freedom, prosperity, and intelligence. What have we done? We have wasted all things. We have done all evil, and mocked all God-fearing men and women who have given us these gifts.

All things are ruin, and our doom is at the door, and is overdue. We are without excuse, and are fallen every whit. Escape, oh remnant, escape Babylon before she falls upon thee! Tread not upon her high places, and seek not her sages!

"I feel like there is a new religion that has emerged in my lifetime called the "church of kind". It's a non-denominational world religion and a lot of Christian churches have merged with it. Kindness IS a virtue, but we have so elevated it above every other truth and doctrine that it's damning us. Kind people, if they do not love the truth, will be classed among those good and honorable who were blinded by the craftiness of men. We must love the truth first and foremost, or the PURE love of Christ is not in us!

"Moroni 7:45 "...charity... rejoiceth in the truth..."

"It doesn't skirt, rationalize, avoid, ignore but REJOICES in truth.

Note: I agree with Josie, that many things are being pushed in the name of tolerance love and kindness, which have disastrous outcomes. Truly Satan parades as an angel of light, and this generation cannot endure sound doctrine. This isn't saying don't be kind, it's saying have true kindness, not woke politically correct virtue signaling.

### Selling The Soul, Easier Than Ever

It seems that many people sell their souls for evil causes and lose them and have found out how to do this business deal on their own. Historically the devil's assistance was needed but now we figured the whole business out. The Devil used to help people figure out how to gain worldly things in crafting methods which were fast and easy. Well now all those things are fast and easy and you don't even need to make a formal deal with the Devil it's pretty easy to figure out these days. So many people think that just because they didn't shake hands with the devil that they haven't lost their souls but they are mistaken - if they trade over their time and energy of this short life for vain things they will lose their souls. This is because the devil really had nothing to offer in the first place. Evil is not so much an entity but it is the absence of good. You can be evil on your own account or with the help of the devil either way you're damned.

One Continual Warfare, Morning to Evening, That is My Life - Brigham Young ([get source](#))

"But now **we have got to fight the good fight of faith, sword in hand, as much so as men have when they go to battle**; and it is **one continual warfare from morning to evening**, with sword in hand. This is my duty, and **this is my life**." -Brigham Young

([see kraut marriage covenant for source](#))

### Raising from the Dead & Other Miracles

Elijah and Christ did this. What of our dispensation?

We have very little raising of the dead (that's rarely God's plan perhaps), but very much raising of those on their deathbeds in my observations.

A friend commented "My husband works in healthcare and he has witnessed so many miracles and miraculous healings. . I hear Latter-day Saints complain and make the astonishing allegation that there are very few miracles and healings. That is far from true. I don't know how about the actual raising of the dead. I would think that only Christ could do that but there are many who have come back from the dead and had near death experiences."

We have a few. My ancestor John Parry was involved in raising someone from the dead. Also Ephraim Hanks was involved in one or more raisings from the dead, he had a particular gift of healing. I think Lorenzo Snow was raised himself or did raise someone. I've heard of others which I don't recall now.

Brigham Young appeared to a following President, as a resurrected being. Lorenzo Snow raised a young woman from death in a blessing. There is an experience I read about of a faithful saint who told what he saw wherein a resurrection came to pass of a child. Most such experiences are not really shared with everyone, being too sacred to do so. Most of those who have such experiences don't share them, like patriarchal blessings.

### 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)

### On Prayer

-at times Pres. Eyring prays all night

-Jesus prayed all night when trying to choose which to call as the 12 Apostles

-Elder Holland describes meaningful prayer as pounding on the gates of heaven to be let in.

-Hugh Nibley describes prayer as culture shock, trying to leave here and go there, that things are very different in heavens culture.

-Joseph Smith called for sincere prayer, for not ‘braying like a jackass’ when we pray; to not use strange loud voices, etc. “Don’t ever let me hear you pray like that again” was Joseph’s reply to such an absurd prayer.

-Prayer is where we directly access God and His truth. We should be willing to receive personal instruction which may be heretofore unheard of. When prompted to stay quiet on something, ensure you do. Joseph said he could keep a secret till doomsday, and that one reason God doesn’t reveal more to people is that they’ll announce everything God tells them.



"The greatest and most important of all requirements of our Father in Heaven and of his Son Jesus Christ, is, to his brethren or disciples, to believe in Jesus Christ, confess him, seek to him, cling to him, make friends with him. Take a course to open and keep open a communication with your Elder Brother or file leader -- our savior."

-Brigham Young

Journal of Discourses vol.8, page 339

Note: Alma is saved from hell by calling out to Jesus.

Note: Scripture says pray to the father in the name of the son.

### [Don't Be Your Best Self, Live Through Christ: Thoughts, Scriptures, Linguistics, Etc.](#)

It seems that those who live by faith have, like Joseph Smith, learned how to walk out on a limb, and expect God to help them. I remember the stories of Joseph needing something, and being able to pull it off against all odds in the allotted time frame. There are many such stories. A faith filled person can do things which normal people, even normal excellent people, simply cannot do. Naturally the excellent person has used the light of Christ to progress whether he knows it is of Christ or not, but to those who call upon God in the name of Christ and take upon them the name of Christ, and know how to have real living faith, there is something living, something far beyond what one could otherwise do.

Here are some brilliant thoughts from some friends shared with permission on the subject of how to live as one's "best self." I was surprised to learn that we shouldn't strive to live our best self – we should get rid of ourselves, and live through Christ! Let Christ live through us! Naturally, God is interested in our self improvement. But the secret in how to best do this lies in actually having Christ live through us, being defined by Christ rather than other random identities, etc.

Here we go:

First, here are some general thoughts on God's expectations of us, and how we can do so much more as we live through Christ:

As we seek perfection (Celestial living) we must remember that Heavenly Father does many things at once: As I ask for help in prayer to have more patience....and those irritating things arise more frequently, those irritating things are answers to my prayers and Heavenly Father is giving me opportunity to have patience with them.

At the same time, Heavenly Father is testing those who are the irritation (giving them the chance to see the results of unkindness).

As I firmly believed Heavenly Father would not direct me to do more than I could handle. Then, when I was, he showed me that

through time-management and receiving the nutrition I was lacking...With His help, it really was not more than I could handle.

Life is short, juggling an additional ball is an additional blessing, If we are not adding the additional ball(s) we become complacent and stop progressing.

We all drop the ball(s) sometimes when we are juggling one.



Now we will go a bit deeper, defining who we really are scripturally:

I would say that I am not sold on the aspect of being "our best self". The scripture state:

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. (Gal 2:20).

Jesus stated:. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

Also, we know from The book of Mormon that " what we are supposed to do" while we are here is to become more Christ like: For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God."

(Alma 34:32)

Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you" (Moroni 10:32).

How?

And it shall come to pass, that whoso repenteth and is baptized in my name shall be filled; and if he cendureth to the end, behold, him will I hold guiltless before my Father at that day when I shall stand to judge the world. (3Nephi 27:16)

By just these few passages alone and not bombarding us all with the boat load more that we can pull, I would contend that we are to deny ourselves and not try to become the best self. Rather we are to try and become more like Christ, in whose image we are created. In this process, I think there is much grace. I don't think that God is looking how many balls we are juggling. For some, their best effort may be one. For others their best effort maybe 20. What matters is that we endure, not how many balls we endure with.

In order to be "one's best self", onemust first know what the self is. Afterall, how can one be one's 'best self' if one does not even know what the 'self' even is? Herein lies the problem:

Take the time to ask people around you this question; "Who are you?" Most individuals think they can answer this, but in reality, they can't. Their answers will almost always fall in one of five categories:

1. Name
2. Body
3. Possessions
4. Activity
5. Opinion

Let me break this down for you to better understand it.

## WHO ARE YOU?

1. You are NOT your name. You can change it at any time, and yet you (the real you) still exist. You can change it monthly, and yet you, the real you, still exist.

In fact, The Bible tells us that believers in Christ will be given new names in heaven that is, a new and different character, patterned after that of God. (Isaiah 62:2, 65:15)

In biblical antiquity, a new name was given to remember major event of significance (Genesis 17:5; 32:28; Ruth 1:20; Hosea 1:6, 9; 2:1).

Also, The New Testament states: "He that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says unto the churches: To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows save he that receives it. (Rev. 2:17, JST/IV)

"And I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God — this is New Jerusalem, which comes down out of Heaven from my God — and my new name. He that has an ear, let him hear what the spirit says unto the churches." (Rev. 3:12 JST/IV)

2. You are NOT your body. If I were to show you a photo of yourself at the age of 4 and 14, and ask you "who is that?", you would state "That is me!" Yet, it is clear that the body you had at 4 and 14 is very clearly not the same body you have at this current time. Yet, you (your true self) still exist even though the body at 4 and 14 are no longer here (your body regenerates itself about every 7 years).

The New Testament tells us: "Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God? And you are not your own, for you are bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 JST/IV)

[Also see 1 Corinthians 12:14-17] These verses give us an understanding of the purpose of our body.

3. You are NOT what you have. You can lose everything you own in a fire, through theft, etc. yet you still exist. This includes friends, family, houses, cars, collectables, etc. If you are left with nothing but nakedness, your true self still exists.

The New Testament states: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust do corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Mathew 6:19-21 JST/IV)

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal; 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." (3 Nephi 13:19-21 BOM)

4. You are NOT what you do. You can change hobbies, change jobs, kick addictions, create and lose habits, etc. and yet you (the true you) still exist.

"Truly I say unto you, it is not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that does the will of my Father who is in Heaven. For the day soon comes that men shall come before me to judgment, to be judged according to their works. And many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, and in your name have cast out devils, and in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I say unto them, you never knew me. Depart from me, you that work iniquity." (Matthew 7:21-23 JST/IV)

"Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (3 Nephi 14:21-23 BOM)

5. You are NOT what other say you are. One may call a person beautiful, and another may call that same person ugly, one may say that you are bitter, and yet another may say you are sweet and yet you still exist. Descriptors are not facts of identity. Such things are opinions. Opinions are like rectums, everyone has one, they are nearly always full of hot air, make a lot of noise, and often stink!

"And blessed are you when men shall revile you, and persecute, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake, for you shall have great joy and be exceedingly glad, for great shall be your reward in Heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:11-12 JST/IV)

So if you are:

NOT your name,

NOT your body,

NOT what you have,

NOT what you do, and

NOT what others say you are,

then WHO ARE YOU???????

How can you be your BEST SELF when we don't even know who are self is????

To answer this question, we need to go back to Genesis:

"...And I, God, said unto my Only Begotten, who was with me from the beginning, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And it was so...

And I, God, created man in my own image, in the image of my Only Begotten created I him. Male and female created I them. And I, God, blessed them." (Gen. 1:24-28, Moses 2:24-28 JST/IV)

Our true self is found as the IMAGE OF GOD. Thus, to understand who we are we must then seek God.

The reason so many are lost today is because they do not know God. Since they do not know God, and they are created in the Image of God, then they do not know themselves. Thus, they identify the self with the illusion of the 5 things.

I am convinced the 5 false identifiers (5 I AMs) are a reflection of Satan's 5 "I wills" found in Isaiah 14:13-14 -

I will ascend into Heaven;

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;

I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north;

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

I will be like the Most High.

Humanity has taken this path with the "5 I AMs" I speak of pertaining to self.

Thus, the vital importance of repenting, and being baptized for the remission of sins is of vital importance to walking in one's true identity. For baptism identifies one with one's true Identity- CHRIST!!!!

Lastly, I want to leave you with this final thought:

Theologically speaking, the word which has been translated as 'sin' is the Greek word "hamartía" meaning: "to miss the mark".

Hamartia is made up of two parts: ha -which is a negation (like un-or dis-or without), and -martia, from the Greek root meros, meaning "form, origin, or being." The fundamental meaning is "negation of origin or being" or "formlessness." Hamartia (sin) is thus the negation of our original form, and therefore the identification with a distorted form.

With these two definitions in mind, what we find is that to miss the mark is to negate the very origin of who God designed you to be by identifying with a distorted form that is other than God intended. What origin is that? "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him..." (Genesis 1:27 NASB emphasis my own) Humanity's origin is in the image of God. Now lets take a moment to unpack this further.

- a. If "God is Love" (1 John 4:8,16)
- b. And we are "made in the image of God" (Genesis 1:27)
- c. That is to then say that we are made in the image of Love.
- d. Therefore, our identity is beloved.
- e. Thus, the Father is not looking at humanity as some disgusting entity, but rather views us as His beloved! It is as if He is looking into a mirror and the image He sees reflecting back to Himself is Love. He cannot see the image as anything else! Your failure of the list of do's and don'ts can never change that. Please take the time to read that again and absorb it! Sin is the neglect of one's identifying oneself as God's beloved!

Now that we have learned that God created us to identify as His beloved, and that we misidentify with a distorted identity that is other than the image of God (sin). That we can change the way we think about this distorted identity and turn back to our original identity as God's beloved (repentance).

The modern church has taught us that repentance means "making a U-turn away from sin (not achieving the do's and don'ts)". On the surface this is correct, but it is worthless without understanding the root. Religion would have us stop at turning away from sin, so that it can keep us in its behavioral modification program. The problem is that without understanding the root, all we can do is run through cycles until we are dizzy, yet without any results.

The root of repentance is found in the Greek word it is translated from, "metánoia" meaning: "a change of mind". If we do not understand what is the cause of the action in the first place, how can we ever break the cycle?

Side note: Want to know the secret to knowing if you have truly repented? If you change the way you are thinking about the issue and that change of thought leads you in a change of direction (pointing you back towards Christ), you can be sure you have truly repented!

"And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Romans 12:2 JST/IV)

The Greek word for "conformed" is "sychēmatizō" meaning: "to conform one's mind and character to another's pattern. Paul was speaking regarding the religious of his day.

The Greek word for "transformed" is "metamorphoō" meaning: "to change into another form".

Paul is telling us not to conform to the religious patterns (sychēmatizō-keeping our mind and character in bondage) of the world, but rather be freed from its shackles by changing the way we think (metánoia). He implores us to break free from this bondage by "renewing" (to bring back to its original, new state) our mind (see ourselves how God sees us) which will reflect in our character (metamorphoō -change into another form) as the beloved image of God -our original identity! This identity is truly "our best self!"

#### Fairness, Pre-Mortality, etc.

Let's say I had 2 sons I had one do 10 push-ups every day and I had the other do 100 push-ups.

The one might say father loved you more because he only made you do 10.

After a year of this when the 100 push-up son is buff and capable. The weak son might say, "father loved you more because he helped you be strong and successful."

Which is more fair?

HF puts us through trials.....is that fair?

Leah had 6 sons Rachel had 2 is that fair?

Rachel was the mother of Joseph, Leah's son Reuben committed adultery, she had to be his mother...is that fair?

We see Leah was blessed in these trials.

The parable of talents, or even the 11th hour parable....they all got the same reward.

Joseph was blessed by being sold into Egypt.

He saved his whole family from starving.

#### PREMORTAL LIFE?

According to scripture our first estate determines what family/kingdom we are born into.

Our pre-earth life has little effect on what we choose to do here in this life.

None of us know why we were born to the parents we were, that decision was made before our memories.

But every single person has the possibility of gaining eternal life.

What of minor conditions? Some handicap spirits are truly amazing and special spirits, more mature and kind hearted. They can help show the work of God.

In this mortality, one can be born in a stable and become a Savior, and another can be born in a palace and lose their eternal life.

What of minor conditions? Some handicap spirits are truly amazing and special spirits, more mature and kind hearted. They can help show the work of God.

In this mortality, one can be born in a stable and become a Savior, and another can be born in a palace and lose their eternal life.

### Questions for the 1 Verse per Day Scripture Enthusiasts

When I hear people talking about reading a verse of scripture a day being sufficient I want to, in the spirit of Alma 5, ask them the following questions.

Before the questions, consider that Elder Ballard specifically said that this well intended council from Bishops or others to read “even just a few verses a day” is not pleasing to the Lord. This is what he said, “I have heard many well-intentioned Church leaders and teachers instruct congregations to find time for daily scripture study, ‘even if it’s only one or two verses per day.’ Though I understand the point they are trying to teach and applaud the sincerity of that conviction, may I gently suggest that if we are too busy to spend at least a few minutes every day in the scriptures, then we are probably too busy and should find a way to eliminate or modify whatever activities are making that simple task impossible” (Elder M. Russell Ballard, When Thou Art Converted, 68).

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Here are a few other quotes from modern prophets before we get into my list of questions:

-“When God offers a blessing or knowledge to a man, and he refuses to receive it, he will be damned.” (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 323)

-“It is a paradox that men will gladly devote time every day for many years to learn a science or art; yet will expect to win a knowledge of the Gospel which comprehends all sciences and arts, through perfunctory glances at books or occasional listening to sermons.” (Elder John A Widstoe, Evidences and Reconciliations, 1951)

-“I promise you that as you consistently give the Lord a generous portion of your time, He will multiply the remainder.” (Russel M Nelson, “Becoming True Millennials”, An Evening with President Russell M. Nelson, Worldwide Devotional for Young Adults, January 10, 2016, Brigham Young University–Hawaii, <https://www.lds.org/broadcasts/article/worldwide-devotionals/2016/01/becoming-true-millennials?lang=eng>)

- “We should not be haphazard in our reading but rather develop a systematic plan for study. There are some who read to a schedule of a number of pages or a set number of chapters each day or week. This may be perfectly justifiable and may be enjoyable if one is reading for pleasure, but it does not constitute meaningful study. It is better to have a set amount of time to give scriptural study each day than to have a set amount of chapters to read. Sometimes we find that the study of a single verse will occupy the whole time... It would be ideal if an hour could be spent each day; but if that much cannot be had, a half hour on a regular basis would result in

substantial accomplishment. A quarter of an hour is little time, but it is surprising how much enlightenment and knowledge can be acquired in a subject so meaningful. The important thing is to allow nothing else to ever interfere with our study (President Howard W. Hunter, Ensign, Nov. 1979, 64, emphasis added).

- “We are counseled and urged to read the four standard works from beginning to end. You should do that—read each of the four books of scripture from beginning to end more than once. You could hardly use your time to more advantage” (Elder Boyd K. Packer, Ensign, Dec. 1985, 50).

- “We often hear...that the scriptures have the answers to all of our questions. Why is this so?...Reading...the scriptures will...put us in a position where we can obtain inspiration to answer any doctrinal or personal question, whether or not that question directly concerns the subject we are studying in the scriptures. That is a grand truth not understood by many....Again, even though the scriptures contain no words to answer our specific personal questions, a prayerful study of the scriptures will help us obtain such answers” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, “Studying the Scriptures,” Fireside given November 24, 1985).

- “Do not suppose, however, that those first principles [of the gospel] are the only ones to be learned; do not become stereotyped in your feelings, and think that you must always dwell upon them and proceed no further. If there be knowledge concerning the future, . . . the present, . . . [the] past, or any species of knowledge that would be beneficial to the mind of man, let us seek it; and that which we cannot obtain by using the light which God has placed within us, by using our reasoning powers, by reading books, or by human wisdom alone, let us seek to a higher source—to that Being who is filled with knowledge, and who has given laws to all things and who, in his wisdom, goodness, justice and mercy, controls all things according to their capacity, and according to the various spheres and conditions in which they are placed.” (Orson Pratt, March 14, 1875, Salt Lake City, 16th Ward, reported by David W. Evans)

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Now here are my questions for the 1 verse per day enthusiasts, which questions reveal the “why” behind the need for you and I to be “well versed” rather than “single versed” in the scriptures:

- Have you received the image of God in your continence?
- Have you conquered every vice, and mastered your temper, your lust, your idleness, and every other unclean or impure practice?
- Can you hold water in a biblically based debate with a priest from another church?
- Can you explain clearly from the Book of Mormon the doctrine behind our practices as Latter-day Saints?
- Can you spell out the signs of the times? Are you thus filled with the spirit of prophecy?
- Are you confident before God that you are leading your family to life and salvation?
- Have you seen the face of God, having made your calling and election sure, and communed with the church and assembly of the First Born?
- Are you prepared in all things to preach the gospel to the nations of the earth should you be called upon tonight to leave your home and do so?
- If the Lord were to come tomorrow, could you speak to him and witness to him that you know well the doctrines and covenants of his kingdom, and that you are thus prepared to meekly inherit the earth and be a judge in Israel, assisting in the great governance of his sheep?
- If you were called this day to be a shepherd in Israel, and teach the burdened soul the doctrines of repentance and salvation from the scriptures, could you do so?
- If you were called upon this day to preach a sermon to your local congregation on any one of the doctrines of the kingdom of God, could you do so, drawing upon scriptures to support your message?
- Are you spiritually and intellectually prepared to dwell with and become like God your Father? Do you understand your role as heir in his kingdom?
- Do you have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost to bring to your remembrance all things of Christ so that you can successfully face every combat which the adversary is not pitching and will yet pitch heavily against you?
- When asked a question of faith by a peer, can you readily open the scriptures, and show the answer to that question, whatever it may be?
- Can you say that you are sufficiently read in the scriptures like the prototypical man Jesus Christ was when he preached at the temple at age 12 to the doctors there? And what of the adult Christ who rebutted the dogmas of the chief religious leaders of his day by drawing upon scripture both old and new?
- Do you understand the historical and symbolic meaning of all the doctrines of salvation?
- Could you sufficiently teach your peers and your children the doctrines of the kingdom, independent of any church aid or teachers sermons or manuals?
- Are you well verse in not only the doctrine of the church but the feelings and perspectives of the prophets?
- Has the Holy Ghost taught you all hidden things from the scriptures upon your having asked it of him, having taken thought before hand instead of just asking? Is your offering and knowledge thus acceptable before God?



-Are you confident about what God's expectations are for you and others of your generation, and of his people past and future?

-Do you understand God's feelings on government, and know how he has instructed his people to govern in past present and future?

-Do you know what the antichrist doctrines are of your day and how to combat them using scriptures and faithful reasoning?

Have you taken time to be holy, or when it comes to spiritual knowledge and compass are you in spiritual poverty and even debt?

Have you been diligent in your seminary studies?

-Is the law written upon your heart, so that you could expound upon it in wisdom and holiness?

-Are your scriptures "on the table" (figuratively or better yet literally) when you study the sciences of the world, to compare them to see which theories hold water?

-When you do focus on just a verse, do you pause for prayer, and plead with the Lord to open your mind to the meaning of that passage?

-Do you consider the written word of God as a conversation with your maker, and if so, are you interested in having a meaningful conversation with your maker?

-Do you want your relationship with your Heavenly Father to be one of closeness and transparency, of training and revelation, or are you satisfied with a sort of hi and bye relationship as is commonly seen in divorced families? In other words, do you seek kinship with the world, or with the Lord?

-In your attempt to live in but not of the world, have you abided the command to stand in holy places and be not moved?

-Have you applied scripture in the various aspects of your life, such as reading God's word with specific decisions in mind?

-Have you, as Elder Bednar has suggested, read through the Book of Mormon many times each time with a different topic in mind?

-Have you, as President Kimball, Lehi, and many others have suggested, read through the standard works cover to cover time and again?

-Have you found scriptures coming easily to mind when you ponder about your days business and relationships and the status of affairs?

-Do you trust the Lord to reveal to you the aspects of his mind and will which apply to your life? Are you fluent in the language of the spirit in which he communicates, which is taught in the scriptures?

-When you're troubled, do passages of scripture come to your mind to instruct and comfort you, or do you wallow in frustrations both day and night?

-Are your dreams full of terror, or can the Lord teach you therein frequently?

-Do you know your spiritual gifts, and have excellency in wielding them?

-Could you tell the Lord today that you know the current scripture well enough to be qualified for the sealed scriptures if the book of Mormon and the other 12 tribes scripture which we urgently have no access to because of our ignorance and idolatry?

-Have you taken time to be holy, or when it comes to spiritual knowledge and compass are you in spiritual poverty and even debt?

Have you been diligent in your seminary studies, taking them as seriously as our brethren of other Christian faiths, or of the Jewish faith, or of the Islamic faith, and so forth? In other words, is your religion the foundation of your identity, or simply a branch of it?

-Is the law written upon your heart, so that you could expound upon it in wisdom and holiness?

-Have you received the image of God in your countenance?

-Have you conquered every vice, and mastered your temper, your lust, your idleness, and every other unclean or impure practice?

-Can you hold water in a biblically based debate with a priest from another church?

-Can you explain clearly from the Book of Mormon the doctrine behind our practices as Latter-day Saints?

-Can you spell out the signs of the times? Are you thus filled with the spirit of prophecy?

-Are you confident before God that you are leading your family to life and salvation?

-Have you seen the face of God, having made your calling and election sure, and communed with the church and assembly of the First Born?

-Are you prepared in all things to preach the gospel to the nations of the earth should you be called upon tonight to leave your home and do so?

-If the Lord were to come tomorrow, could you speak to him and witness to him that you know well the doctrines and covenants of his kingdom, and that you are thus prepared to meekly inherit the earth and be a judge in Israel, assisting in the great governance of his sheep?

-If you were called this day to be a shepherd in Israel, and teach the burdened soul the doctrines of repentance and salvation from the scriptures, could you do so?

-If you were called upon this day to preach a sermon to your local congregation on any one of the doctrines of the kingdom of God, could you do so, drawing upon scriptures to support your message?

-Are you spiritually and intellectually prepared to dwell with and become like God your Father? Do you understand your role as heir in his kingdom?

-Do you have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost to bring to your remembrance all things of Christ so that you can successfully face every combat which the adversary is not pitching and will yet pitch heavily against you?

-When asked a question of faith by a peer, can you readily open the scriptures, and show the answer to that question, whatever it may be?

-Can you say that you are sufficiently read in the scriptures like the prototypical man Jesus Christ was when he preached at the temple at age 12 to the doctors there? And what of the adult Christ who rebutted the dogmas of the chief religious leaders of his day by drawing upon scripture both old and new?

- Do you understand the historical and symbolic meaning of all the doctrines of salvation?
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- Are you well verse in not only the doctrine of the church but the feelings and perspectives of the prophets?
- Has the Holy Ghost taught you all hidden things from the scriptures upon your having asked it of him, having taken thought before hand instead of just asking? Is your offering and knowledge thus acceptable before God?
- Are you confident about what God's expectations are for you and others of your generation, and of his people past and future?
- Do you understand God's feelings on government, and know how he has instructed his people to govern in past present and future?
- Do you know what the antichrist doctrines are of your day and how to combat them using scriptures and faithful reasoning?
- Have you been able to, though the holy spirit of God as guided by the foundation of the scriptures, detect the secret combinations of our time as prophesied by the Book of Mormon prophets? These are, well, secret, and are not know of by and large.
- Are you qualified to fit the description in the scripture which declares that the children of the Lord will not be taken as a thief in the night regarding the general sense of surprise which the population will have at large concerning the coming of the Lord?
- Could you tell the Lord today that you know the current scripture well enough to be qualified for the sealed scriptures if the book of Mormon and the other 12 tribes scripture which we urgently have no access to because of our ignorance and idolatry?
- Can you say to God that you have taught your children the law of the Lord by day, by night, at meals, and throughout the day, as commanded in the book of Deuteronomy, even sufficiently for them to combat the philosophies of the adversary should they so choose? (Deut. 11:19: "And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.")\_
- Do your children know that your philosophies are rooted in the scriptures, having evidence that you have drawn them therefrom?
- Do your children know how to make righteous scripture study habits through life from having watched your actions day by day?
- Have you, like Joseph Smith, paused your work often to study and teach the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- Have you, like Joseph Smith, attempted to become familiar with "the word of the Lord in the original" (Hebrew and Greek)?

#### No Hardship Will Discourage the Tribe of Ephraim - Brigham Young Quote

"We are now gathering [those] who have come through the loins of. . . Ephraim, [who] are mixed among all the nations of the earth. The [children] of Ephraim are wild and uncultivated, unruly, ungovernable. The spirit in them is turbulent and resolute. . . No hardship will discourage [them]; they will penetrate the deepest wilds and overcome almost insurmountable difficulties to develop the treasures of the earth to further their indomitable spirit for adventure" (Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 437 - 438).

#### The Mortal Messiah by Bruce R. McConkie – Book Highlights (Likely the incomp notes as vid was 1hr40min)

The Mortal Messiah: by Elder Bruce R McConkie: Notes

\*=my thought

cd set part 1:

- when we have faith like the brother of Jared we will be able to understand the sealed portion of the Book of Mormon.
- keeping the Sabbath day holy means having a whole day focused purely on spiritual things; God knew that if men would do this they would have the strength to avoid temptation the rest of the week.
- this book was written about 70 years after Talmage Jesus the Christ. It's to build upon that
- ever LDS should study the book Jesus the Christ by Talmage.
- Christ grew up in a spiritually degenerate society like Sodom. He was planted in difficult dry ground.
- we don't have every gospel principal but we do have the fullness of the everlasting gospel, that which is needed to have everlasting glory in the hereafter.
- the modern Red Sea we have to follow our current prophet over is doubt.
- as they dressed for passover in robes to travel, so must we dress in the robes of righteousness.
- the little amount of leaven raises the whole lump; this is to say that the gospel has the power to transform our entire lives.
- the pouring out of water was symbolic of pouring out of the Holy Ghost in the Last days. this is from the Jewish festivals.
- the palm leaves are symbolic of what we now use white hancercchifs in the hosannah shouts; shouts of hosannah were given in the ancient festivals of the Jews.

- the 8th day was also like a Sabbath, \*this is to me like how we do family home evenings on Mondays!
- day of Atonement and other day the women dressed in white and went around the vineyards singing and dancing for the men to pick their spouse.
- they fasted sundown to after sundown the next day when the stars could be seen. \*how do it now? Our Sabbath begins at a different time than theirs. What is to be done?
- synagogues are essential to salvation; God's people must always build places to meet in together or his fullness of blessings can't go to them (ordinances etc). It always has been this way.
- every time the truth has been on earth it has been lead by the Melchizedek Priesthood.
- about ,1200 members per synagogue in ancient Jerusalem.
- almost everything will have Holiness to the Lord inscribed on it in the Millennium.
- Jesus of no doubt went to school as a lad in a synagogue.
- on Sunday we let our flocks and herds fend for themselves, and we leave our careers alone. No golf. No fishing.
- Jesus taught in the synagogues for in them came the people who wanted to learn; he healed therein for there came the people who had faith to be healed .
- in ancient Israel like modern, Jehovah called all people to worship Him in the temple and to work and serve in the temple.
- there came to be unneeded self denial on Sabbaths.
- the home of Joseph and Mary was poorer than most homes in the USA today.
- men married at 16, never later than 20. Women often younger than the men, namely at 14.
- at 2 years the Jewish children were weaned
- at 3 years fathers were to teach the children scriptures and wise sayings and benedictions.
- the children memorize read and wrote the Levitical prayers.
- at 16 or 17 boys were sent to the academies where the rabbi's taught.
- before every meal the families washed and prayed.
- private prayers were said morning and night.
- devout fathers wore phylacteries during prayer with 4 scriptures in them.
- all Jews of Jesus' day were apostate except those who followed Jesus.
- the people of the day of the flood of Noah were destroyed because they were beyond the reach of saving grace.
- the apostasy of the Jews of Jesus' day is one of people who memorized Messianic prophecies; who knew the Messiah was soon to come among them yet rejected him. A people who had the Aaronic Priesthood and the gospel of repentance.
- some find it easy to fight against the truth because of their nature, but they can save themselves through righteousness at any time.
- God said I'll send you all to earth and save those of you who obey me.
- to love Satan more than God, like Cain and the Jews of Jesus' day, is to obey not God's path but what Satan incurs.
- modern Christendom of today can learn a lesson from Jews of Jesus' day, people who should have been the Lord's people, like Christians today which should have been the Lord's people
- throws down mega rebukes against the Jews of Jesus' day
- speaks some 20 minutes of the stupid practices of the Jews at EXTREMELY Ridiculous extremes!
- high priests among the Jews of Jesus' day were that by way of investiture not like their holy forefathers
- Aaron had the Melchizedek Priesthood and was called to preside over the Aaronic Priesthood; the presiding Bishop over the church if you will.
- Aaronic Priesthood offices today are comparable to those of the time of Moses and Jesus.
- Ezra was a prophet and a scribe.
- without prophets the world turns to scholars for their knowledge about God.
- as a general rule, more scripture such as the sealed portions of the Book of Mormon are withheld from the less spiritually apt.
- no book of sacred writ is forever lost.
- Melchizedek stopped the mouths of lions; these accounts were in the Jewish book of Exodus which is more correct than the book which modern Christendom possesses.
- Abraham had vision of Jesus Christ, such is recorded by Joseph Smith in the "Inspired Version" of the bible which Joseph Smith wrote.
- apocrypha much correct in it much not correct in it, inspired people will benefit from studying it; for others it's best to stick to the more solid scriptures.
- pseudographic book of Enoch speaks of 1000 year Millennium then another 1000 years before the end of the world's temporal existence, speaks of premortality, etc. Jude appears to quote from this book. Know that the Jews at Jesus' day had a more perfect version of the bible than the world by large has today.
- uninspired men almost never agree on the meaning of select passages of scripture.
- The Jews of Jesus' day were not inspired, and hence could not understand the scriptures, and that made it so they could not apply the scriptures into their lives.
- is not exaltation a family matter? Is it not, as Elder McConkie has said in the Mortal Messiah, about being a father, and for women about being a mother? Yes, God's constituents are HIS CHILDREN. Over whom he reigns with justice.
- like how Christ told the people of his days, salvation is of the Jews (as they had the prophets writings ect.); similarly were Christ among the people of the world today, he would tell all Christendom, salvation is of the Latter-day Saints.

- the Law of Moses is better than the Christian sects of the world today, and it's better than any other world religion, including Islam and Buddhism.
- 2nd century B.C. world leaders were very wicked declaring religion devoid of morals; sensuality considered alright for slaves to participate in, soldiers encouraged to take advantage of women while on duty, thought that death was a sweet release from life not a punishment and hence did no death penalty to criminals, lead by examples and teachings of promoting suicide, thought sexual relations with any person was fine, etc.
- God the Father, Jesus Christ, and The Holy Ghost are three separate persons, each a male person.
- In the same sense that our birth parents are our parents, God The Father is the parent of Jesus Christ.
- Contrary to popular opinion, God the Father has a body of flesh and bones. He has a being. He is only in one place at one time, although his influence is felt through all immensity.
- Saying the Holy Ghost came upon Mary in the conception of Christ does not mean the Holy Ghost is Christ's Father. God the Father is Christ's father.
- The Lord is a man of war
- When the Jesus went to cleanse the temple, it was him coming suddenly unto his house, but it is at the Second Coming that he will purify the sons of Levi in so doing again. (\*This could refer to the judgements to come upon who attend the LDS temples unworthily).
- No one tries to stop Jesus when he destroys the property of the merchants as Jesus cleansed the temple; there is no bitterness as to financial loss; they merely asked what authority he had to cleanse the temple, since it was initially their duty. They did not object because their conscious brought weakness. "Vice cannot stand one moment against virtue's lifted arm." Devoured as they were, the sellers in the temple could not deny the deed Jesus did in overthrowing the temple. Them asking Jesus by what authority he did this was a sign that they began to fear and actually consider that this might be the Son of God.
- All who saw Jesus' miracles were constrained to say that this was truly the Son of God. The only ones who saw his miracles and denied that he was the Son of God were wicked people.
- Faith founded merely on miracles leaves much to be desired (it's not enough).
- It's somewhat derogatory to call Thomas "Doubting Thomas" because he said to the other Apostles, let us also go with him to die.
- Nicodemus should have known that they could not go on living under Herod, they had to come back to how the ancients lived, that is, according to the Spirit.
- Nicodemus and others probably knew about how Jesus was a teacher from God, as seen in him saying WE know that thou art a teacher come from God.
- The type of life that God lives, that quality of life, is reserved for the sons of men. The requirement is to believe on the Son of God, who came to the world not to condemn the world, but to save it. (\*People condemn themselves by the way they act, Christ is come to help us out of those dead ways we live.)
- We the people reject the doctrines of faith repentance baptism and the reception of the Holy Ghost, Christ cannot possibly communicate to them the deeper doctrines of the gospel.
- to build God's kingdom is to build up his church
- the sin offering had no fragrance, it was a dreadful necessity.
- the red heifer was to clean all people and was burnt throughly unlike the other offerings (\*it is a very particularly a type of Christ's Atonement)
- Jehovah forgave sins and used animal sacrifices to represent that (\*They were symbolic of giving up something that you love, like how Jesus Christ would give up his life for his people)
- the gospel of Jesus Christ will be preached in such a way that those who reject it will loose their souls.
- the fear of the Lord is the type of fear that enlarges our souls.
- The old law was nailed with Christ to the cross and the new law rose with him from the tomb as he was resurrected on the third day since his death.
- circumcision as found in the Law of Moses was a way of the parents showing symbolically that they offer their posterity to the Lord, showing that they will have the child obey the ways of the Lord, showing that the child will serve the Lord, showing that they would teach the child the covenants that the House of Israel had made with Jehovah, it showed that the parent would show the child the right way to go from the very start.
- Jesus was tempted more sorely than any human could endure, yet he never sinned. No more has been tempted in a more severe manor than he.
- Those who cannot do miracles do not have faith.
- Where there is faith all miracles are forthcoming.
- When Christ told his mother woman what have I to do with thee it was during his ministry, and he was then acting independently, choosing for himself when and where he would preach his gospel.
- Those who are not burn again spiritually cannot understand deep spiritual things, neither can those who live in darkness.
- of old full time ministers were to not let the people sleep because of the their words; Jesus did this also; he is the one who commanded such.

- In addition to the baptism of fire, Jesus baptized people in water by immersion as John the baptist did. The disciples of Jesus did this also.
- John the baptist was a legal administrator for God, so when he told Herod and Herodias that their marriage was adulterous, at that point if they did not repent they would be damned.
- Herod almost repented but the seeds of repentance soon died in the stoney soil of sin wherein they were planted.
- In John 4 Jesus tells the woman at the well if she knew the gift of God she would ask of him to drink; the gift is Jesus Christ; for God so loved the world he gave his Only Begotten Son.
- "I have meat ye know not of" here Jesus is referring to how the gospel was like meat to him. Those called to the work of God it is their meat to do that work. It fills them to an extent. They forget about temporal things.
- Like John the baptist, Jesus Christ, Joseph Smith and others, all pilgrims of God have to suffer bondage for a season.
- As seen in the woman at the well speaking of her fathers worshiping in the mount Gerazin, we see that even carnal people have some form of belief about religion, something that appeases their spiritual part of them that does not conflict with their ways of life.
- Like he told the woman at the well, Jesus had no problem telling the would be believers that their forms of belief were wrong.
- To the woman at the well Jesus bore witness of the two top truths of eternity: of God the Father, then of his Messianic Divine Sonship.
- Jesus broke tradition in speaking to the woman at the well who was a Samaritan; it was ageist tradition for a man to speak to a woman in public. It was certainly seen as bad to be seen speaking with a "woman of easy virtue", but Jesus had control of the situation and went through Samaria for the very purpose of teaching her and others of her people.
- Those who are doing the work of the Lord have consuming passion that takes their every thought and word, that taxes their every strength, that requires of them their every ability
- Eventually Jesus declared open war (in plainly condemning his opposers etc.)
- Jesus would deal with the House of Israel before the gentiles, for they were more prepared for the truths of eternity, they were more prepared from developing spiritual talent and ability in the pre-mortal existence. He therefore was carrying out the divine order. He also helped some gentiles like the woman who begged of him, letting the fire of her faith burn through the limits so common among her people.

cd set part 2:

- it's the enmity we have for what the world likes that makes us saints (somewhere in 2nd half of the book I think).
- who tries to kill and who successfully kills are equally as guilty, it's the heart that counts.
- Mote in eye is referring to the LDS
- Have we not cast out many devils in thy name and in thy name performed many miracles? Depart, I never knew you, you never knew me. This is directed to LDS Priesthood holders.
- many who have part of the gospel in other churches have that satisfy their innate desire to worship and when they hear about what we have to say they ask why we say such silly things and claim they have enough with what they have. This is not good. They are not following Jesus Christ all the way.
- we are to have put upon us Christlike attributes during mortality to qualify to live with Christ in Eternity. This is the life where we are charged with the developments of those attributes, and if we don't complete this task while in mortality, we will have revoked privileges in the life to come.
- woman washing Jesus' feet in Simons home was not then forgiven but earlier forgiven, she was baptized and used to be a sinner but now a Saint.

Jesus taught Simon in the occurrence that his supposed righteousness was of naught, he taught in that way that Pharacies thought that 2 way in debt people one who owed more would love the forgiver more when in reality both would love him tons. Simon understood this though and it got the message through to him. \*I see Jesus witnessed of his divinity in this, showing that he himself was the forgiver of sin in that he rebuked Simon for his treatment toward him and praised the womans treatment of him. Guests uninvited could follow the invited guests in and not get kicked out in that day.

- Jesus taught that there was no more middle ground, that who does not keep the commandments he taught, is his enemy and is against him.
- Jesus chose his intimates very carefully.
- those who don't gather with jesus by their indifference and indecision scatter abroad.
- Jesus preached hard doctrine, that you don't have to do evil to be cursed, that the thought or the word of evil brings it, for these prove the heart.
- Jesus didn't give huge signs to unbelievers, such is for who have faith, and agency must be respected. Besides he had done many

miracles from heaven. Also, the one big sign he gives, and the only one, is the sign of the prophet Jonas, that he would rise from the dead. Also, the creation bares witness of the creator.

cd set pt 3/3:

-Jesus paid a tax he did not owe with money he did not earn via the insight to use the fish. Jesus is a Lord not a commoner- he is not to pay the tax, but did so so as to not offend anyone.

-All infants are innocent.

-though there were varying degrees of sin in pre-mortality, at birth all infants are clean from sin because of the Atonement which was prepared "from the foundation of the earth"

-those who preach false doctrines shall be thrust down to hell.

-it is better to remove one member of the body of Christ, one person that is evil, than to leave him on the body and cause the whole be become evil and cast into hell.

-if some go down to hell, so be it. don't go there yourself.

-every member of the church will be tested in all things to see if he will abide the day, regardless of what happens to others in his family.

books/authors referenced to read:

-Edersheim

-Cannon Ferrar

### [“You Don't Stand Alone” Banner: Zion Style](#)

Don't get too fussy about this one... It's sort of a joke, but does make a point...

I've seen lots of banners saying something to the effect of “healthcare workers you don't stand alone” and then it goes on to list nurses EMT police firefighter etc.

While this is great and all, are they really the unsung heroes? By all means their work can be heroic, but let me highlight **a few much less popular causes which are** where in the people really do feel like they stand alone, which are just as heroic as medical professionals:

Modestly dressed women

People who go to church

People who want government strictly by the Constitution's original meaning

Vaccine skeptics

Homeschoolers

Teens without cell phones

People who don't trust Disney

Kids who don't just hang out

People who follow the prophets on weekdays

Plant eaters

Traditional family advocates

People against birth control

Stay at home moms

Foster parents

Parents who enforce rules & have high expectations

**You do not stand alone!**

### Principles & Purposes to live by

These are flexible according to individual circumstances. These supercede rigid self inflicted vows and schedules.

1. Defend the church, it is true, temples are the center.
2. Befriend in person all people. This is key to ministering not just people on a list but many as prompted.
3. Care for your health Seriously toward wfpb which is best
4. Train your mind in languages, histories, arts, music's, dances, sciences, crafts
5. Home is a happy place, a garden of Eden, peaceful and beautiful. For this to be so, time must be invested in relationships regularly.
6. Life is to be joyful, creative, musical, cheerful, searching
7. Life is a gift, not to be idoled away, time is fleeting, opportunity comes and goes.
8. Share research in usable ways, this is a great calling appointed me.
- 9.

### Religious Community

If a lamb is lost, we seek it, but we send a shepherd, not a lamb.

It seems we send children on foolish errands in the name of missionary work. Kids need good friends, not to convert bad ones. They need to date temple worthy folk, not to flirt to convert.

Closest circles should be among the faithful. Friendship and fellowship are extended to all, but we live high standards and won't come down. Friends predict marriages. If a youths friends are outside the church and or not living gospel standards, they'll marry accordingly.

So we need religious community. We need to live near those who believe and therefore live as we do, or the next generation doesn't stand nearly as good a chance as they otherwise would.

### Cling vs Hold Fast

Cling is emergency, desperate.

Hold fast is staying with it even when things are good.

Cling implies not moving forward.

We all know people who hear the gospel and are excited for a time but then fall away when philosophical opposition comes. These people are not deeply rooted. There is hope for these people, they must deepen their roots.

The Gospel Life is a Marvelous WORK and a WONDER



When people lose touch with God, they often are seeing the gospel life as more “work” than “wonder.”

We can work on the wonder, develop the beauty and awe of the gospel plan.

No one can force another (even their children) to heaven. The gospel must be learned in the heart.

Often people are asked to do the dance steps without hearing the music, as was recently pointed out in a general conference address.

How can we teach people the music of the gospel, the wonder which motivates the work?

First is example. We show people that we are thrilled by the gospel, and full of exceeding hope for a better world (Mosiah 4). Life is generally hard and hopeless, as demonstrated in the Shakespeare tragedy. When we show them something else, they’ll wonder (eventually) what we have going on. Then we invite.

Children should be taught to obey and respect their parents and family culture as a matter of basic dignity, all religion aside. Only when children are trained to be respectful and altruistic people can they begin to be interested in ideas of religion. If the child pushes against religion, so be it. Continue the invitations (politely), and continue on with typical family life.

It is noteworthy that the Book of Mormon says to teach the plan of salvation before teaching the commandments (Alma). This gives the “wonder” before the “work”.

If we find ourselves lacking in gospel work ethic (or general life work ethic and dignity and character), we must build up the vision of the purpose of life, the possibilities of the hereafter for the valiant, etc.

#### [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](http://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!](#)

Section:

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 VALIANTLY

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 God's 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.

God's 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 God's 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 Lord's 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 choose 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 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 exceptions 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 chose 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 that 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 weather 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 chose. 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 Enders 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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 over come 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 counseled 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](http://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](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](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](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](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>)) 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.”<sup>1</sup> It holds “even the key of the knowledge of God.”<sup>2</sup> In fact, through the priesthood the very “power of godliness is manifest.”<sup>3</sup>

The blessings of the priesthood transcend our ability to comprehend. Faithful Melchizedek Priesthood holders can “become . . . the elect of God.”<sup>4</sup> They are “sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies”<sup>5</sup> and can ultimately receive “all that [the] Father hath.”<sup>6</sup> 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](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](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?” 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).

### 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 for each 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.”<sup>5</sup>” (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-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-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>)

-“ 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 is 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 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 of 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 of both working more and playing more.

Alma taught people the plan of salvation before teaching them the commandments. We establish God's happy plan 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 Cowdrey 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 jargon 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.

### [Sleep: Whenever He Says To](#)

When do you go to sleep? Whenever the Lord wants me to. How do you know it's the Lord talking? His sheep know His voice. He is my boss, I've been working with him for a long time. There are seasons where I'm allowed rest, and seasons where I'm not. It all works out. Sometimes there is greater pain than others, and we trust the Lord.

See the learning methods education book for more about great ones who understand the need to miss sleep sometimes.

### [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.

### [Ministry of Angels & The 3 Nephites](#)

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.

- Ogden Krout has a book compiled of 3 Nephite sightings and doctrine related to them see [ogdenkraut.com](http://ogdenkraut.com) for the free text.

-They say portals have been seen into temples, brining 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.

### 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.

### Cleon Skousen - Ancient Scripture Lecture – Highlights

Notes from a lecture found here: <https://youtu.be/a9GZSTSxvbk>

25 min Judah Joseph are supposed to work together in the last days. Could suggest temple institute Levites really will build the 3rd Jerusalem temple

Goes through key dates to take note of, easy ways to remember when prophets were

Goes over Anglo-Saxon history identifying them as the house of Ephraim

Joseph Klausner has a book on the Messianic Idea in Israel He talks about Messiah Ben Joseph will come before Messiah Ben David

and the Messiah Ben David is the Messiah Jesus Christ Messiah Ben Joseph is Joseph Smith  
See around minute 42

The prophet Jeremiah was anointed at year 14 just like Joseph Smith

We found the house of Lehi

Moses was 40 years a prince of Egypt, 40 a shepherd, 40 a prophet

### 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).

### 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.

### [The Cokeville Miracle – Movie Notes](#)

This film is about an event which took place in 1986. It came out on DVD in September 2015.

A bomber and his wife came to an elementary school and held it hostage. Over 100 people were in a small room with the bomber, including 98 children. When the bomb went off the only people killed were the bombers (the man and his wife). Here are more details.

-the builder of the bomb had practiced several times to make it perfect and his test runs went perfectly.

-The bomb was made to blow up something even much larger than that school room.

-the bomb was analyzed and some of the main wires had been cut as though with wire cutters totally apart, and hence several of the detonations didn't go off which should have. Something like only 2 of ten detonators went off. An angel must have come and cut those wires.

-children reported seeing bright people dressed in white coming into the room unbeknownst to the adults in the room. The angels told them that the bomber people were doing a very bad thing and that the bomb would go off, but that they would be okay, and to go stay away from the bomb by the windows.

-many of the angels reported as seen by the children they later identified as the grandmothers or other close ancestors of the children. This is natural since our ancestors would be the people most interested in our wellbeing!

-the bomber was irritated by children bothering him as they sat there 3 hours before the bomb went off, so a teacher made a square of tape around the bomber man that none of the children were to cross. This made it so no children were close to the bomb when it went off.

-children reported seeing angels, bright people dressing in white robes, standing in a square between the bomber and them, protecting them. Surely this must have comforted the children.

-the police of the city were out of town for some reason, and this turned out to be God's will because the bomb went off because they would have stormed in and shot the bomber which would have set the bomb off before they were able to get the windows open which caused the explosion to spread out more.

-the gas was leaking on the bomb because there was a hole in the milk jug it was stored in. In time the gas made the children sick. This caused them to allow the windows to be open so not so many of the children would get sick. With the windows open the blast didn't do as much damage having an area to escape to outside.

-the bomber was a mathematical genius and wouldn't have picked a jug which was leaking to store his gas for the bomb in on purpose. An angel must have poked a hole in it.

-the gas leak from the jug fell onto a powder which was designed to fly up into the sky and cause the air to be a ball of flame. Because this powder became wet from the gas, it didn't fly or ignite.

- there were bullets, large rifle shells, causing shrapnel to heavily damage the walls of the classroom, but this didn't kill anyone. It by all rights should have, there being over 100 people in that room.
- when the bomb went off, it was at a time when the bombers wife was holding the bomb and the bomber was away in a restroom. She accidentally detonated it. When the main bomber came back into the room, he had gun in hand and was shooting at people. Some of the children reentered the room to make sure their classmates had all escaped alive. The room had much fire in it.
- the doors to the classroom had been kept open for some reason, this allowed the bomb to not have as great an impact allowing air to escape.
- one child reported that as she was fleeing the building after the bomb went off, a woman came and helped her out, and once they had exited the building, the woman disappeared.
- at least one child reported seeing many angels with the appearance of brightly lit light bulbs coming down from the ceiling just before the detonation. When the bomb went off they flew quickly into the ceiling. Investigators discovered that much of the bomb detonated into the ceiling.
- shortly before the school was held hostage, the fire alarm had gone off randomly several times. This turned out to be a miracle since it helped the children be extra prepared for how to escape the building after the bomb.
- while being held hostage before the bomb went off, the children spontaneously said to each other, "lets say a prayer, pass it on". They bowed their heads to pray and one of the children said the vocal prayer for safety.
- while the children were held hostage, a school leader at a nearby high school said "I may loose my job for this, but anyone who wants to please join in prayer with me now in behalf of the children being held hostage at the elementary school." They all prayed for them.
- one teacher was shot and the bullet grazed his shoulder. Were it 1/2 inch to the other side, it would have paralyzed and killed him.
- one of the teachers was an older lady. She told the bombers to take her and let the others go though they didn't accept. When the bomb went off, she was the last one out of the building, making sure the others got out alive.
- even in Christ's day not all lepers were healed or all blind recovered their sight, but we must learn to recognize God's hand when we see it.
- the people of the town knew that a miracle had occurred that day, and the town increased in a feeling of love for each other.
- the film is dedicated to the survivors, and to all parents who teach their children to pray.
- 2 Kings 6:16 they that be with us are more than they that be with them.

-cruelty is a greater sin than lust (note: but lust can lead quickly to murder via abortion, and cutting off eternal blessings of posterity)

-school is so obsessed about social climbing that learning anything is hard

-why should creatures have the burden of existence forced on them without their consent? ... some prefer nonexistence to even the slightest unhappiness

(note: this logic points us to pre-mortality where only those who chose to do so were sent to earth!)

-the library was a sanctuary, an escape from the world of competitive sports and social climbing

### On Myth & Civilization - Joseph Campbell Lecture Notes

[Cautionary note on Campbell: When we trivialize revealed religion into the realm of myth, it loses much of its power. I do find importance in Campbell's message which can help people in their progression, but want to make this cautionary note that there is so much more than the mysterious and metaphor. Campbell rejects the idea of there being a true religion, and merely joins them all together, molding themes and generalities as he sees them.]

<https://youtu.be/UvHxII8JZe4>

The best things cannot be taught they transcend

Metaphor is a field of reference

Indians tell in the beginning of it being only darkness and water

Myth creates a deeper awareness of the act of living

To make a difference in this world you must teach how to live in it

Don't just be interested in something because people say they are important but be interested in things which catch you.

Myths Have built civilizations

Myth are the guide posts along the way and if you don't know it you have to work it out yourself

Myth makes life more rich

We don't want meaning in life we want an experience of being alive. We want to fill the rapture of being alive and these clues help us find that. Myths are closed to the spiritual potentialities of the human life. Of what we are capable of knowing and experiencing within.

The inner rapture associated with being alive is what it's all about the fact that we are here we are alive that is amazing

God is a reference to someone who transcends all

The best things cannot be taught because they transcend thought and the next best things are misunderstood because they're about the highest

There are two very different views one is that nature is the signature of the Divine which also lives in US the other view is that nature is all fallen and everything to do with nature is corrupt including our natural desires

The motif of the one forbidden thing. This is where life begins where man becomes his own initiator.

It's absurd to think that Eden paradise without opposites, the ignorance, would be better than life. (Yes! The restored gospel brings back this truth in the faith)

It's absurd to think that all of life before baptism is vanity. (Yes! The restored gospel also teaches this, that people are generally good! Brigham Young taught this.)

Eternity is now if you don't get it here you won't get it anywhere eternity is the transcendent element

The gospel of Thomas says whoever partakes of Christ's word is Christ this is similar to Buddhist thinking that we awaken the Buddha within us We find God and become God We join that program

Campbell mistakenly interprets the resurrection as symbolic relevant literal

We need models of what is appropriate for our current time (Yes we need modern prophets and of course this can extend to beyond formal leaders)

Star Wars is a myth which teaches us about the state versus humanity the state is the machine that could crush us

Luke takes off Vader's mask Vader is the machine He is the state He is the uniform and underneath the mask is an underdeveloped man sort of a worm

Myth opens the dimension of mystery

The computer is a miracle look inside it there's a whole hierarchy of angels and miracles

He says each religion is like a different computer program each working in its own way

You can go out in the wilderness and ignore the world or you can be a part of life and manifest the divine

He says life is meant to be the way it is with the challenges etc and we can enjoy being a part of the battle without becoming overwhelmed by the inherent sadness of life

Following the spirit in church meetings rather than preplanned agendas - Example Recounted by Elder Carl B. Cook about Boyd K. Packer

Just Keep Going—with Faith By Elder Carl B. Cook Of the Presidency of the Seventy

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2023/04/13cook?lang=eng>

Elder Carl B Cook spoke of president Boyd k packer telling him to scrap the meeting agenda, and follow the spirit. He called on elder Cook 3 times to speak in the meeting 15 minutes each time. Later that night the same at another meeting, and one more talk at a meeting the next day.

Scrooge with Albert Finney 1970

1970 Scrooge with Albert Finney is my favorite version.

The Christmas present ghost rips him to shreds while remaining cheerful. Necessary stern rebukes followed by an arm around the shoulder.

The love story has a great song.

Scrooge actually goes to hell before his redemption.

Shows that Scrooge thinks he is in the right, which in many ways he is, but in critical ways he is not.

Lots of classic timeless songs.

Soundtrack:

[https://music.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLR\\_F6phsWNe2TjFEnoL1NionNCUmDogZ3&feature=share](https://music.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLR_F6phsWNe2TjFEnoL1NionNCUmDogZ3&feature=share)

Movie:

[https://youtu.be/gjVP1\\_I\\_5ds](https://youtu.be/gjVP1_I_5ds)

Also Reginald Owen A Christmas Carol non-musical I've heard is good, quite an old one.

Book of Mormon Manuscript Survives Tornado

[Reddit - Dive into anything](https://www.reddit.com/r/lds/comments/gnxk19/the_printers_manuscript_of_the_book_of_mormon/) [https://www.reddit.com/r/lds/comments/gnxk19/the\\_printers\\_manuscript\\_of\\_the\\_book\\_of\\_mormon/](https://www.reddit.com/r/lds/comments/gnxk19/the_printers_manuscript_of_the_book_of_mormon/)

My Song of Love And Joy Amidst Persecution 11.9.22 (Add Notes) put in songbook and faith book)

I wrote you a song, won't you sing me to sleep? 12343212354

I can't stay for long, but I will stay a while 12343212354

It won't be too long fore they take me away 12343212354

I love you forever and always I'll stay 12343212354

Here in your hearts and we'll play all the day 12343212354

[could have alternate notes for last 2 stanzas above]

They've locked me away, and they've thrown out the key  
But ner happier man than I ere has there been

12344323454

And I'll hope to see you beyond those white gates [original notes or 5543432344]  
For you and I, I know that it's not too late [66544321222]~

I needed a friend and you came for me there

It won't be too long now till I find my way,  
Discover my calling and recall the day  
From once I had come here a long time before  
I will remember and see past the shore

Death will not harm me and day will not fade  
Over all of my enemies I shall parade

5.18.23 changed prevail to parade

[and over 665] [my enemies 4432] [I shall parade1122]

(See recording)

5.18.23 changed prevail to parade, a reference to Joseph Smith's teaching of salvation being putting all enemies under foot.

\*To be sang in the mood of the song "Houses of Healing" from Lord of the Rings, with a gentle spirit, soft notes, and hope.

[Anderson 2023 April conf- focus on Christ doesn't mean only thinking of him](#)

[Gandhi: His Life, Lessons He Taught, Quotes, etc.](#)

Be Active and provocative

He was peaceful but he was not a pacifist

He was a lawyer and knew his rights

He kept press involved wherever possible to sire the world how he was treated unjustly

Called for days of prayer and fasting where no one would go to work

His wife said her dignity was in following her husband

He was non violent religiously. I agree this is usually the right way but I do see when it is justified in self defense after much patience, or to maintain order when other means are rejected.

He has done ignorance is biblical truths as evident by his statements such as, "An eye for an eye will only make the whole world blind."

He said to realize that just governments are allowed to use force for the good of all.

He showed the far reaching power of peaceful protests. Civil disobedience, refusing to obey corrupt laws.

Once he was on trial for false charges. The people and press knew it. The judge said you can go on bail at this cost. He refused to pay, the judge let him go free.

He was frequently put in jail, like Joseph Smith.

It was pointed out to me once that the centerfold chapter of the Book of Mormon is in fact the Anti-Nephi-Lehis, who laid down their lives on the battlefield rather than fighting, and in the end won many souls to liberty and God. Perhaps this message of peaceful resistance is more important in some circumstances than we have been willing to consider. I wouldn't say that I'm a pacifist, I certainly am not, for there are greater evils than war, but I do readily see many cases where we must turn the other cheek, and resist with words and actions rather than weapons.

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## Quotes

"Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed."

"You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is like an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty."

"Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever."

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony."

"When restraint and courtesy are added to strength, the latter becomes irresistible."

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

"If I had no sense of humor, I would long ago have committed suicide."

"Nearly everything you do is of no importance, but it is important that you do it."

"A 'No' uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble."

"Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment and the other by acts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment."

## [Are We Even Real? My response](#)

It is said by many, and was asked me by one of my students, "what if none of this is real, what if life is just a hallucination?"

My response was to look them in the eye and say, "I don't believe that."

Perhaps one could go further and add that there is far too much evidence to the contrary to believe such a thing.



And if the person presses for further conversation you might inform them of God's plan, that there is a better world than this for the faithful, that this is patterned after heaven, that both are very real.

Many are the lies and agendas of the adversary to deconstruct reality, undermine the sacredness of life, and incite rebellion against God the creator. The movie "The Matrix" was also heavily pushing this theme of non-reality and rebellion. Non-reality is being pushed by many popular movies, these false endowments, poisoning people against the truth and beauty of life. Of course the youths don't recognize it as agenda driven (nor do many adults), but as rather merely a clever game, which they necessarily, even if subconsciously, do apply to their philosophy.

#### [Give more priesthood blessings](#)

It seems like when we ask for someone to come help give a blessing it's pretty rare for them to be asked.

I remember buying like a massive jug of olive oil to take on my mission, didn't use it much lol looking back I wish I had given blessings more freely, and think even today I should offer them more freely, the men need to stand up and remind everyone that this is still a thing, and the women need to ask for it.

Well is it written about the Lord's servants, that they go about preaching the gospel and healing the sick.

I know of a man who witnesses to whoever he can, anywhere, all the time, and offers to pray for them. If they are sick, he offers to pray for them, and asks for their healing. Often it works, and leaves the person impressed of the power of Jesus Christ. When it doesn't work, he repeats the exercise, and then often it works, like how some in scripture were low in faith and needed some repeated exposure and prayer to effect the miracle. How will you go about doing good and representing Christ? Perhaps your way will look different than his way, but I found this a stirring example.

#### [Why people long for the past](#)

Why do people long for the past? Because it is the future. The goodness we experienced, it is a token of the heaven.

God doesn't want us to have it all. He wants us to grow, to learn charity. Heaven is where we have it all.

So the tender memories, that planets a hope in us for what can be.

This life is the fight, the sacrifice, the tithing, the war against evil in our hearts and our communities. But some day the war will be passed, and the blessed times will be upon us, the curses lifted, Zions fullness and resurrection and eternal lives in glory and splendor will come.

Very few people have it all in this life. That's for a reason. Those who do have their own trials. We should consider ourselves as having it all, and as being on assignment from our Lord who gives it all to us, the penny for the laborers. We aren't to worry about too much fanciness beauty and excellency in all, we are to worry about nothing, and to serve God, and to let him take what he wills, and give what he wills.

For more on this see book "Philosophy of Tolkien" by Peter Kreeft

#### [Prophet Tells Congregation They Are Hell Bound](#)

Paraphrasing one of my favorite church history accounts, Joseph Fielding Smith said to a congregation "you need to repent or many of you won't make it to the Celestial Kingdom"; the congregation began to murmur. Smith returns

sometime later to the congregation, "I've heard that you thought I was too hard on you in my last message here, and wanted me to change my message. So, I indeed want to change my message to you today. You need to repent, or NONE of you will make it to the Celestial Kingdom!" (find this account in Madsen's "Presidents of the Church")

#### [‘My Face Will Haunt You Until You Are Baptized’](#)

Another experience that comes to mind along these lines of a bold Apostle witnessing is this. A missionary I proselyted with on a few occasions during my mission in Georgia was the only convert in his family. His mother was reluctant to join. She went and heard Elder Holland talk. She approached him after the address and spoke of her son on a mission, and how she wasn't a member. He then took her face in his hands and told her that his face would haunt her until she was baptized in the church. She later did join, and my cousin on his mission in Washington baptized her. Some would think this account harsh, but the Lord's anointed do as they are impressed by the Holy Spirit, and sometimes, that is hard thing which the Holy Spirit asks.

#### [A Miracle In My Family: The Knot Untied Itself](#)

My wife was getting a feeding tube removed. But it had tied itself in a knot, and they couldn't get it out. Toxic shot was a real possibility from a foreign object, the doctors were frustrated and ready to rush her into surgery.

I watched kids in the car for a few minutes but had to go to work, it was only supposed to be a 5 minute no problem procedure. We had an older child and the plan was for me to go to work when I needed to, and she would be out in no time.

Her phone was in another room, and doctors were rushing. She raced through her mind as to what to do.

She had a distinct impression that she was living faithfully, and has the right to ask for a miracle, and needed to do so. This surprised her as she wasn't accustomed to asking for miracles, and with the troubles of life and family she didn't always feel worthy.

She then proceeded to ask for the miracle. Just then, upon the last ditch attempt of the physicians before the invasive medications and surgery would begin, the knot in the tube untied itself, and they were able to remove it with ease. He was able to return to her children.

This even stands out to Megan and I as a great miracle of her faith and the watchful care of the Lord over those who do their best to serve him.

#### [Anxiously Engaged \(Good\) Vs Steadying The Ark \(Bad\)](#)

Here are some helpful remarks shared with me on the following question: How do we know if we are righteous in being anxiously engaged, such as taking things to a new level or ‘inspired’ direction, or whether we are wickedly ‘steady the ark’?

.....

I may have different inspirations than the bishop of the Ward. I'm likely trying to steady the ark if I assume that unless the bishop agrees with what I think is right and important, then he must not have the right inspiration. But if I feel that I, personally, and my family need to be focusing on some things that are scriptural and being emphasized to me by the spirit, then I'm likely anxiously engaged.

.....

There is authority given for individuals, callings, and positions in the church. While those lines should not be overstepped, there is a verse in D&C that says something about being "Qualified to the work".

As a Elder I am authorized to perform priesthood duties for my family and my ward if called. But, also if there is a good cause to be engaged in, then do it.

Let's try an example.

If there is a flood and people are out of their homes for safety. It is a good cause to run a shelter and participate in being a helping hand. Anyone can do it at any time.

On the other hand, if you're not at your own house, or those you are assigned to minister to, and someone is in need of a blessing and there is time to set it up, you'll need to ask the local bishopric for authority to perform it.

(In an emergency, I'm sure it won't hurt to do a blessing without having localized authority.

So I'm not sure if this is a good example.)

We could maybe compare it to doing a calling. It's good to help out, like substitute for a class. But, it's not right to take over that class all together without the authority to be called to that position.

....

The secret to the difference is being able to recognize and follow the spirit of The Lord.

Steadying the Ark is doing something against His will. Being engaged in righteousness is doing what we already know to be good.

.....

It's not that complicated. As long as you are not imposing or overstepping into someone else's appointed stewardship against their will or invitation you are fine to be of assistance. Ark steadying is basically telling your head appointed over you that you can do their calling better than them and that you can direct things better than the means or method the Lord directed. Here are some quotes.

Dc 28:6 And thou shalt not command him who is at thy head, and at the head of the church;

"A man or woman may ask of God, and get a witness and testimony from God concerning any work or messenger that is sent unto them; but if a person asks for a thing that does not concern him, such as governing the Church, as a member of the Church inquiring concerning the duty of a presiding Elder, what the Prophet or the Twelve ought to do, etc., he will not get an answer. If he does it will not be from God."

--Brigham Young, August 6, 1843, History of the Church 5:527.

"If you go to degrade your superiors, you will be dishonored in your turn. If you dishonor your head, you will be dishonored."

--Brigham Young, June 29, 1851, Wilford Woodruff's Journal, Midvale UT: Signature Books 1983, 4:43.

"Until the father, the mother, the son and the daughter take the counsel that is given them by those who lead and direct them in building up the kingdom of God, they will never establish Zion, no never, worlds without end. When they learn to do this, I do not think there will be much complaining or grumbling, or much of what we have heard about today--improper language, to man or beast. I do not think there will be much pilfering, purloining, bad dealing, covetousness or anything of the kind; not much of this unruly spirit that wants everybody to sustain its possessor and let him get rich, whether anybody else does or not. I think when we have learned that lesson, we will be willing to take the counsel of those who are set to direct us, the officers who are over us; and if they are not just, true, holy, upright and men of God in every respect, just have faith enough so that the Lord Almighty will remove them out of the way and do not undertake to remove them yourselves. This is the way we should live. There should be faith enough in the midst of this people that if your humble servant were to attempt to guide them in the ways of error, false doctrine, wickedness or corruption of any kind, he would be stopped in his career in twenty-four hours so that he would not be able to speak to them, and if he were not laid in the grave, he would have no power nor influence whatever."

--Brigham Young, August 18, 1872, JD 15:133.

If you have a kingdom and a dominion here, it must be concentrated in the head; if we are ever prepared for an eternal exaltation, we must be concentrated in the head of the eternal Godhead. Why? Because everything else is opposed to that kingdom, and the heir of that kingdom will keep up the warfare with that opposing power until death is destroyed, and him that hath the power of it; not annihilated, but sent back to native element. He will never cease to contend with the opposite power, with that power that contends against the heir of this earth; consequently, if we fancy that we have an independent interest here and in the world to come, we shall fail in getting any of it. Your interest must be concentrated in the head on the earth, and all of our interest must center in the Godhead in eternity, and there is no durable interest in any other channel.

--Brigham Young, August 17, 1856, JD 4:28.

The Ark of the Covenant in the days of Moses, containing the sacred records, was moved from place to place in a cart. And so sacred was that Ark, if a man stretched forth his hand to steady it, when the cart jostled, he was smitten, and died. And would to God that all who attempt to do the same in this day, figuratively speaking, might share the same fate. And they will share it sooner or later, if they do not keep their hands, and tongues too, in their proper places, and stop dictating the order of the Gods of the Eternal Worlds.

--Brigham Young, April 6, 1853, JD 2:29-33.

#### [Faith As A Child, Hope In Understanding, Charity Above All](#)

Faith is what children have. In it's pure state, it brings great joy. It is implicit trust in your caregiver. It is what suits must learn, and children know.

Hope come as we seek to understand the ways of heaven, the expectations, the lifestyle. The mind of the creator.

Charity is when we seek to emulate the creator. We seek to create like and happiness in those around us. We seek to create and care for children of our own, and things have come full circle. We are ready to be the caregiver. We apply faith and hope simultaneously, and produce the fruit of charity.

#### [Harriet Tubman and the 2019 movie "Harriet"](#)

The movie "Harriet" released in 2019 actually did a good job of showing she was faithful, prayerful, had visions, took her escapees to church before they left, and so on. I was stunned to see a movie show this side of the story.

The movie adds the Gideon character for dramatic effect, which was unnecessary. Bigger Long, the man hired to find her, was a true character, black or white I don't know.

She saw visions of future, warning her ways to not get captured

She prayed which way was safe.

God helped her avoid many close calls.

This showed the escaping slaves was God's will.

It seems God will help anyone willing to go out on a limb for his cause.

She was known to be a praying woman. She would stop and stay all the time.

One boy who turned in run away slaves saw her pray, he inspired to turn away from where people were who were going to capture her, and cross a river that should've been too deep, and the boy converted to her cause and joined her. The boy said he lost them rather than tell his peers where they went.

Her visions began when she was a child and sustained a major head injury cracking her skull. This connection opening to God and genius from injury isn't unprecedented.

She did carry a gun.

She had great faith in gods direct communication with her.

She made about 13 trips to the south to free slaves. She freed 70 slaves and lead an armyed raid freeing 750 more.

She sang of Moses let my people go song and became known as Moses.

Her father didn't look at her face, then he could honestly say that he hadn't seen her face since such a such a time. Another time he blindfolded himself so he could say honestly that he hadn't seen any of a group of his family who ran.

The preacher told her upon her first escape of 100 miles alone, that fear is her enemy, to trust God.

Her last words were "I go to prepare a place for you." She died near friends and family.

#### [What Should Church Activities be Like? Religious.](#)

Recently I heard of a woman suggest that the Relief Society activity be going to a "rage room". I can see it now, "Hi we are the relief society, and we're here to destroy things!" Ridiculous! Let that society be a holy one, not just another recreational country club!

I've also heard of youth councils thinking of church activities, and leaders reluctantly saying, 'well guys, we have to have some sort of religious element to what we are doing.' One sister said, 'let us go waterskiing, and consider the waves of life which crash upon us!' Oh dear... another country club.

Another tragedy occurs when a religious group decides to make 1 day a month of their scheduled meeting times as a designated "game night." As if youth of our time need more game time. What, says one, we must bond! Yes, you must, but bond in holiness, not in vanity. I guarantee you can bond as well or better at a service project than at a game night. Cultivate your holiness, learn to appreciate service.

Remember the scripture: Religion pure and undefiled is to serve others. We need a little more Mother Teresa in our spirits, and a little less party (particularly when we are going about as a religious organization).

#### [Story of A Bright Young Man At The Navy Recruiting Office: Born Again](#)

I know of a young man who went to a navy recruiting office. He wanted to join up. He was straight-laced, strong, and sharp as they come, with a humble religious demeanor, and wanted to serve his country.

The recruiting officer reviewed his case, and the young man, around age 22 who had recently returned from a 2 year church mission, had a sweet young bride, was bright, and appeared to be an ideal candidate for service.

As the recruiting process was near its completion, the recruiter asked about his criminal background just to check that off the box, and the young man truthfully yet surprisingly reported that he had a juvenile criminal record with several charges. The recruiting officer reviewed his case, and at length determined that the young man had 1 too many juvenile misdemeanor charges to be eligible for service.

The young man was deeply disappointed, and as he was walking out the door, the recruiter yelled out, "you don't seem like the kind of person that would do these things" (referring to the charges). Without turning around, the noble young man simply replied, "I'm not", and then he was gone.

This true account demonstrates the power of the atonement in a person's life. The young man had so thoroughly and completely changed his life that he could no longer even be recognized with his old troubled younger self. Well and true did Jesus teach, that except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

[Charity writings - Joseph Smith: Do Not Turn from A Friend](#)

"The man who willeth to do well, we should extol his virtues, and speak not of his faults behind his back. A man who willfully turneth away from his friend without a cause, is not easily forgiven. The kindness of a man should never be forgotten. That person who never forsaketh his trust, should ever have the highest place of regard in our hearts, and our love should never fail, but increase more and more, and this is my disposition and these my sentiments." — Joseph Smith (History of the Church vol. 1 <19 November 1833> page 444)

[Prayer writings - How to Prepare People for Zion Like Enoch - The Prayer of Faith. A Stunning Example. 3.8.23](#)

Shared with permission though my friend wishes to remain anonymous.

A friend of mine was called to give the opening prayer at sacrament meeting. He felt these should be inspired, and thought long and hard about what to say. He also thought about his motives: was he praying to be heard of men, or to be heard of God? He was impressed in the prayer to pray that the testimonies that would be shared that day would be "according to thy will".

This was in a ward where most fast Sundays, people would just get up and give testimonies of how hard their life was, or what had happened to them lately which had little to nothing to do with the gospel of Christ.


But this day, that was all different. Those who usually got up to complain or ramble on didn't get up. One who did and was typically negative, got up and said positive things, real testimony things.

It occurred to my friend that he had seen a miracle. The prayer of the righteous availeth much. Not the prayer of the perfect, you don't have to be perfect to be righteous. It occurred to him also that this was how the Zion peoples of the past were prepared by people like Noah, Melchizadic, and Enoch. They prayed in faith for their people! My friend foresaw how this is how the work of the Lord will go forward today as well, that there will be those who pray in faith for their fellows, and this will rise the whole, it will convert hearts, church meetings will bring about mighty changes of heart.

[For parent bk too - Religion & Family Center on Obedience](#)

Religion is inherently about obedience. So is family. Its no surprise then that family is inherently religious (and that anti-religion folks are also typically anti-family, as well as anti-family folks also being anti-religion). its about receiving instruction. About "thy will not mine be done". You learn to obey eternal law, and gain joy therein. Then you help others to do likewise. That is the role of God: One who has done this, and is now helping us to do likewise.

Scripture Like a Cell Phone? –put with other scrip study essays, either to ed or faith

 Brother Matthew - (aka The Outlaw Preache...  
1 hour ago



A Law to Every Blessing: Pain, Yes, But Also Refuge for those who Heed

5.15.23

Life is painful, deeply painful. But it is a short pain. Compared to eternity and the glory of it, it seems this life may even be hard to remember. But remember it we shall, and we shall have compassion for fellow travelers, and children, forever. All must pass, none are exempt. Everyone suffers. But see, here clears a horizon. Can there be a balm in Gilead? Can there be refuge from the storm? To an extent, yes. Obeying law always brings blessings. Ignorance, and passing on the disease of ignorance to Gods laws, brings a sorrowful curse for four generations. Reach oh ye people, reach toward God, and hapily, find him! Believe not in his distance, but in his nearness! Taste the divine in your suffering, feel, and hope for tomorrows grace, and todays support! We must not think that all persons must be equal. There are laws in heaven and earth which is bound by her, and all must pass through the fire of life. In the beginning, in yonder spirit realms before entering here, all were equal. Now, in the fear of God, we press forward, suffering equal rights for all, but not equal blessings for all. God pours rain upon the just and unjust alike, and loves all, but particularly loves and is able to bless to a greater extent those who heed his voice, and seek his holy spirit. Be it for love of man, or love of brother, for these are one and the same, let man press toward truth and holiness, and in Gods laws, find rest and freedom.



Dr. Kent Hovind pointed this out in one of his lectures on creation:

Timothy was born of a marriage of a Jew and a Greek, and the Jews were not supposed to marry anyone but Jews. However Timothy decided to live a good life, and that's how you should react if your parents had you out of wedlock (which at the time of the making of this lecture was 1/3 of people now it's one half) then you don't complain about your life situation, you just get up and make something of your life.

Resource: Doctrines of Salvation by President Joseph Fielding Smith Online Link Full

Volume 1: <https://archive.org/details/Doctrines-of-Salvation-volume-1-joseph-fielding-smith/page/n79/mode/2up>

Volume 2: <https://archive.org/details/Doctrines-of-Salvation-volume-2-joseph-fielding-smith>

Volume 3: <https://archive.org/details/Doctrines-of-Salvation-volume-3-joseph-fielding-smith>

Resource: Video of English bible versions family tree

<https://youtu.be/Zvre1MNat-8>

Resource to learn about ancient eastern scriptures, Islamic Dr Zakir naik

<https://youtube.com/@Drzakirchannel>

Resource: Tortured for Christ full movie

[Tortured for Christ \(2018\) | Full Movie | Emil Mandanac | Raluca Botez | Eduard Adam](#)