

Six Love Actions to work on for January

1. **Schedule** = Are you giving God the first part of your day? Do you schedule your day around spending time with God? Are you reading his words & seeking him in prayer first thing in the morning to guide you through your daily activities?
2. **Relationships** = Do you put God first in your family, marriage, friendships etc.
3. **Finances** = Is God first in your money considerations & work = Are you tithing?
4. **Interests** = Are you considering God in your recreation, your hobbies & free time etc.
5. **Troubles** = When trouble hits do you go to God first? Are you praying over your troubles and asking God to help you? Too often we try to figure it out on our own. **Go to God first.**
6. **Obedience** = Do you daily seek to obey God's Commandments and seek to remove those things from your Life that separate you from God? **We must repent and seek to love and obey God daily!**



January Bulletin Insert - 2020

The Condition of Our Hearts



Matthew 22:36-39 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This year our theme for the Women's Department is all about the condition of our hearts and each month we will address a different condition of the heart. In the Old Testament the word "Heart" is use more than 800 times and more than 200 times it deals with one's thought life, emotions, the wellspring of life, those things that motivate us and mold us. The Bible calls that the heart.

In 1Samuel 16:7 it says: *But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* This tells us something about the importance of our hearts. The Lord looks at our hearts and evaluates us by the very condition of our hearts.

In our physical bodies the heart is the center of life. We can lose a kidney or even a lung or gall bladder etc. but if the heart stops working all other organs cease to function and death ensues. So, it is spiritually that the function /condition of our hearts determines our spiritual health and life.

Our theme for the congregation this year is "Becoming More Like Jesus". The two themes blend well together. We cannot become like Jesus unless our hearts are right. Jesus told us that our hearts must be centered on God. *Matthew 22:36-39 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

To start the New Year we want to focus on: (A Heart That Loves God)

January's Theme = A Heart That Loves God

Do you love God? If so, how much do you love him? The answer to that question may be found by evaluating if you actually put God first in your life. Note in Matthew 22:39 Jesus tells us that everything else hangs on that first two commandments *“love God with all thy heart and thy soul and with all thy mind...love thy neighbor as thyself”*. If we truly love God, we will love our neighbors also.

Is Your Heart Set Upon God? Is He First in Your Life?

Is God Your Treasure?

**Do You Treasure Your Time and Your Relationship with
God Above All Others?**

What Is Your Heart's Treasure?



Matthew 6:19-21 Lay not up for yourselves treasure upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Arthur Oakman says this about our loving God and building Zion: **“We love God that is not our problem. Our problem is that in loving him we do not love him enough. What impedes the kingdom? The thing**

When people have heart transplants, they speak of the new life they have been given. They are renewed and become new men and women. So it is when we give Christ the proper place in our hearts and lives, we become new spiritually. *Ephesians 4:22-24 And now I speak unto you concerning the former conversation, by exhortation, that ye put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; **And be renewed in the mind of the Spirit; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.***



*Our Love for God Must Have
an Action Attached to It!!*

True Love is not just a feeling it is **ACTION = (Love Actions)** are the changes we make in our lives because we love God . Do your Actions show God you love Him? If you desire fulfillment and true happiness in your life you must love God and seek him first. Everything hinges on our love for God. Our actions demonstrate to God that we are putting him first. We must consider what those love actions entail, and starting into the New Year, implement them into our daily lives.

that impedes the kingdom is the fact that we have not learned the truth of the first commandment. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, might, mind, and strength. And if you love him with all your heart, might, mind and strength then your “self”, which is you, will be cleaned and purified and made white and clean, and with such a self you can be left safely to love your fellow men.” (Oakman, Seminar on the Zionitic Community)

We Are in = A Day of Choosing:

Joshua 24:15 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

Will You Choose to Cleave Unto God = Put God First?

Jacob gave us this plea from the Book of Mormon: *Jacob 4:8-10 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, I beseech of you in words of soberness, that ye would repent, and come with full purpose of heart, and cleave unto God as he cleaveth unto you. And while his arm of mercy is extended towards you in the light of the day, harden not your hearts. Yea, to-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts: for why will ye die?*

If we will truly love God and seek him first in our lives, I believe that we would be richly rewarded. God has blessings to give us that he cannot give to us when our hearts are not ready to receive them, one being his kingdom. **He promises to bless us with all we need if we will seek him and his kingdom first in our lives.** *Matthew 6:38-39 Wherefore, seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.*

All things added unto us = What a Wonderful

Promise!!!

Why do we hesitate?

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Action Section

In the Pamphlet put out by the Patriarchs there was an Action Section, for each consideration presented, which is why we added an action section in the bulletin inserts. In the coming year we plan to keep the Action Section, in hopes that it will help us to grow spiritually and become more Christ like. If we don't change and grow, we will not be able to assist in the building up of God's Kingdom. *DC 140:5c The work of preparation and the perfection of my Saints go forward slowly, and Zionic conditions are no further away nor any closer than the spiritual condition of my people justifies.*

Will you choose to change and grow this coming year? You will not be able to do it alone. Ask God to help you in changing and growing, for with his help all things are possible!!



Ephesians 3:17-19 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.

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Protection = Know the commandments of God and obey them diligently. *Doctrine & Covenants 42:1b Again I say unto you, Harken and hear and obey the law which I shall give unto you.*

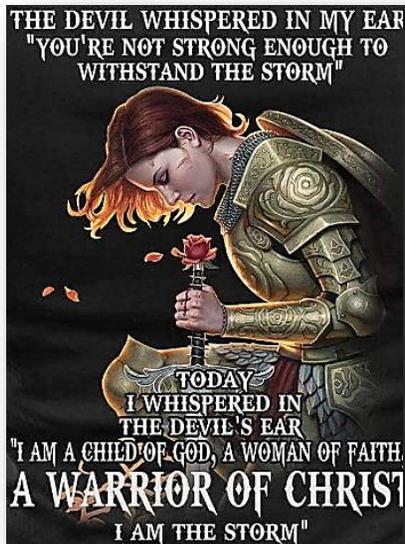
Doctrine & Covenants 24:4b Keep my commandments continually, and a crown of righteousness thou shalt receive. And except thou do this, where I am thou canst not come.

7 Satan leads us into feeling sorry for ourselves, which if not curbed, can lead to total self-pity. He knows that self-pity leads you into anger towards God and eventually alienation from God.

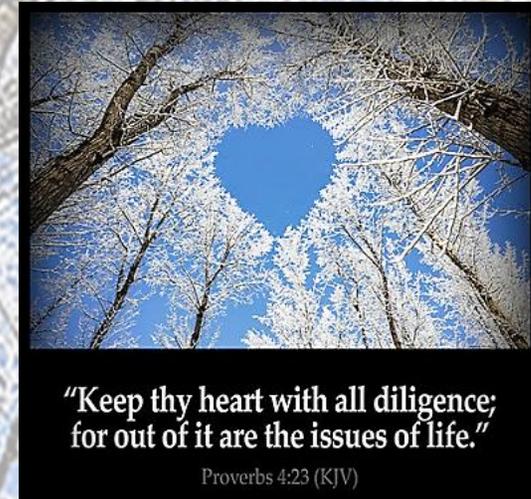
Protection = Develop an attitude of gratitude, giving thanks to God even in the midst of our trials. We can praise and thank God even in the midst of trials and trouble for he has promised to turn it all to our good. Yes, the creator of heaven and earth can turn the worst things that happen to us into something good, if we will trust in him and not go into self-pity.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.



February Bulletin Insert - 2020 *Guarding Our Hearts*



The word **keep** = as found in Proverbs 4:23 in the Hebrew means: To guard, maintain, and obey. The word **diligence** = in the Hebrew means: To watch, to hedge about, be circumspect, save self, look narrowly and observe, wait for and watch for.

This scripture is a warning about guarding the condition of our hearts, since all the issues of life flow from our hearts it is most important that we guard it carefully. Your thought life controls you. What you think is what you are. From your heart springs your thoughts, emotions and the well spring of life.

The condition of our hearts is so important to God that He destroyed a whole civilization because of the evil condition of their hearts. *Genesis 8:10 And God saw that the wickedness of man had become great in the earth; and every man was lifted up in the imagination of the thoughts of his heart; being only evil continually.* Your thoughts—positive, negative, good, or bad—control your attitudes. Your attitudes are the sum total of your thoughts. Your attitudes lead to your actions.

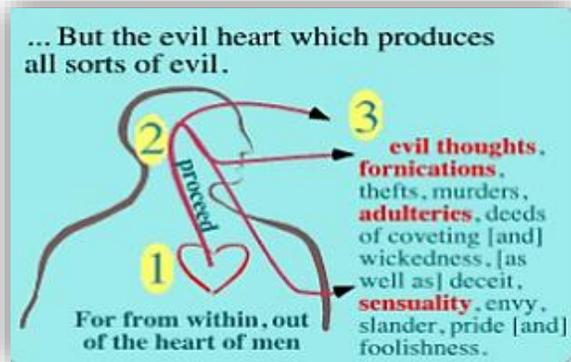
As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he (Proverbs 23:7).

That is why Paul says to us in *Romans 12:1-2* *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God is.*

The Lord wants us to present our bodies to Him, including our minds. When we are in tune with God and have His Spirit dwelling within us, we will think right, live right and do right. When God is not first in our lives, we get off course, we think wrong, we live and do wrong. Can you see why the devil battles for your mind? Yes, a terrible battle is taking place right now for your mind/heart. Satan wants us to have hardened hearts and tempts us continually. *1 Nephi 3:125* *And the mists of darkness are the temptations of the devil, which blindeth the eyes, and hardeneth the hearts of the children of men, and leadeth them away into broad roads, that they may perish, and are lost.* **God has given us important instruction on how to fight this battle for our hearts in his scriptures. We must study them to seek out these instructions.**

♡♡♡

Digging Deeper to Guard Your Heart



4 Satan reminds us of our sins and our past, seeking to destroy our self-confidence and convince us that we under God's judgment and not worthy to be in God's service. He wants us to feel guilty and just give up the battle.

Protection = Daily reading of the word increases our faith = When our faith is strong, we know that Jesus died for our sins and if we repent, we are washed in the Blood of the Lamb of God. That is why scripture study is so important. We can fight Satan's lies with the truth.



Ephesians 1:7 *In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

Doctrine & Covenants 58:9c *Behold, he who has repented of his sins, the same is forgiven, and I, the Lord, remembereth them no more.*

5 Satan amplifies our worries causing us to be anxious and afraid. Often rendering us ineffective and unable to serve.

Protection = Memorize Scripture = We will not be fearful if we focus our minds on the promises of God. Memorizing scripture = having God's word hidden "stored/memorized" in our hearts and minds, frees us of fear. When fear comes upon us, and we remember or quote scriptures that promise God's help in times of trouble, our fear leaves us. Faith and fear cannot dwell together. *Doctrine & Covenants 68:1d* *Behold, this is the promise of the Lord unto you, O ye my servants: wherefore, be of good cheer, and do not fear, for I, the Lord, am with you and will stand by you.*

6 Satan always seeks to tempt us into disobedience = To sin.

1 Satan seeks to dampen your passion for God by dimming your desire for prayer.

Protection = Start your day with prayer and pray continually as you go through the day sending up arrow prayers. Don't stop praying, even though you don't feel like praying, pray anyway. *2 Nephi 14:11 For if ye would hearken unto the spirit which teacheth a man to pray, ye would know that ye must pray: for the evil spirit teacheth not a man to pray, but teacheth him that he must not pray.*

2 Satan seeks to demean you and make you feel less than you are = worthless.

Protection = Know your true identity. Do not forget you are a child of the King. *Doctrine & Covenants 24:1a Hearken unto the voice of the Lord your God...for verily I say unto thee, All those who receive my gospel are sons and daughters in my kingdom.*

3 Satan seeks to destroy your family. He wants a divided family. He wants division in the home, the church and among friends. He wants you to think others are your enemy.

Protection = Again prayer is a uniting force within our families, our church and in all our relationships = When division arises stop and pray together. Know who the real enemy is and pray against him.

Alma 16:219 Yea, humble yourselves, and continue in prayer unto him; cry unto him when ye are in your fields; yea, over all your flocks; cry unto him in your houses, yea, over all your household, both morning, mid-day, and evening; yea, cry unto him against the power of your enemies; yea, cry unto him against the devil, who is an enemy to all righteousness.



Matthew 15:17-19 But those things which proceed out of the mouth, come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. These are things which defile a man.

Elbert A Smith, in his book *Blue Pencil Notes*, talks about our hearts. He says: “Heart and mind must be synchronized and not at war with each other. A man divided against himself cannot stand. The heart moves us powerfully: sometimes too little, mean deeds or speech. Things we should be ashamed of and sometimes we are ashamed of...On the other hand, the heart may move to the most sublime sacrifice, even the giving of a life to a great cause or to save a friend or family member...Good impulses require intelligent direction; bad ones need to be curbed and directed into other channels. Those who rule consecrated hearts with wise and consecrated heads are home builders—good citizens. Those who are driven by undisciplined hearts leave a trail of wreck and ruin. And so, the wise man wrote, “*Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of Life (Proverbs 4:23).*”



Instructions & Helps for Guarding Your Heart

Look at your February calendar page and you will find some suggestions there; but let us also look at the rest of Proverbs 4 and other scriptures that tell us how to guard our hearts.

Proverbs 4:24-27 tells us how to guard our hearts:

(Paraphrasing)

1. Guard our speech.
2. Guard what we see.

3. Carefully choose our pathway.
4. Stay the course and avoid evil.

Action Section

Psalms 119 is all about our hearts. We find multiple instructions on how to guard our hearts: (Paraphrasing)

1. Seek God with our whole heart by walking in his ways and keeping God's precepts and statutes diligently.
2. Praise God with an Uprightness of Heart.
3. Do no iniquity.
4. Don't wander from God's commandments but keep his commandments and our hearts will be enlarged.
5. To keep God's word hidden in our hearts and to not sin against them or forget them because they are a lamp unto our feet, and we are to let our hearts stand in awe of God's word.
6. Our lips should offer praise to God and our tongues should speak God's word.
7. We are to hate vain thoughts and tell evil doers to depart from us.
8. We are to cry unto God with our whole heart and he will quicken us and answer us.
9. We are to testify of God's goodness and loving kindness.
10. We are to think positively. At least seven times a day praise God, for he is faithful to all generations and a righteous judge.

Ephesians 6 is all about Guarding the Heart:

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. If we put on the armor each day which is: belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet shod with the gospel, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and praying always, our hearts will be safe.

Can you see that if we would do the things listed in the above scriptures how these actions would guard our hearts? Let us respond immediately and put these things into action in our daily lives.



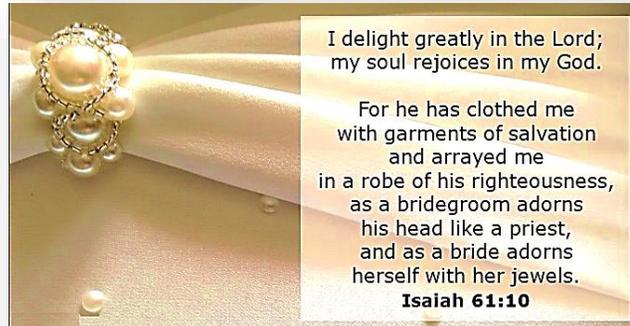
We are not alone in this battle to guard our hearts. If we call upon God, he will assist us in our warfare. He is powerful and against him, Satan has no power. When David went up against Goliath, he was definitely underpowered. The foe before him was a fighting machine, a giant of a man that the strongest warrior was afraid of, yet the young boy went with nothing, but a sling shot. David

was victorious because he knew to tap into the ultimate power source. David went in "The Name of the Lord of Hosts". That was David's power source and it is also ours.

It is important though to know our enemy and his strategy, so we can protect our hearts.

Speaking of our day, Nephi prophesied: *2 Nephi 12:24 For behold, at that day shall he rage in the hearts of the children of men, and stir them up to anger against that which is good.* So, we know we live in a day and time when Satan is seeking to take our hearts captive for his evil cause. Let us look at some of his strategies and what we can do to protect our hearts. Here are a few of the things we can be aware of and protect ourselves against.

time with God. Because of Christ's great sacrifice the veil of the temple was rent. Now you and I have free access to God. He calls to us to come and enter into his presence through praise and prayer and there we will find strength and gladness. How much time do you spend in God's presence? If you are lacking joy in your life maybe you need to go there more often or stay longer. Oh, what joy we find when we commune with God. Choose today to spend time with him.



March Bulletin Insert - 2020

A Glad and Rejoicing Heart

When I am
filled with cares,
Your comfort
brings me joy.

-Psalm 94:19



5. **Find Joy in the Beauty of Nature** = *Psalms 8:1-6 O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens... When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet;* Look around you at what God has created for us to enjoy, even giving us dominion over it. Look at the sky, the sun and moon and stars, the snow in winter, green pastures in the summer, the colors of fall, the flowers and animals. Lift up your head and rejoice in God's creation.
6. **Find Joy in Service to God** = *Psalms 100:2 Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing.* We should never complain about serving the Lord. What better place to put our time and energy. We should be praising God for the opportunity to serve and step out in joy, leading the way.

Want to know how to be filled with Joy? We find the answer in this little verse in: *Acts 13:52 And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.* If we draw near to the Lord and allow his Spirit to dwell within us, we will experience Joy. The Spirit of God is our comforter and even in the most trying of circumstances, he can fill us with overflowing Joy.

**Our Joy is Not Connected to Our Circumstances,
it is Connected to God.**

I had a profound experience that taught me that Joy was not connected to our circumstances when I was in my 20's. My father-in-law passed away. He was only 55 and I had been his main care giver. I loved him and had become very attached to him, having cared for him during his illness. At the grave I was unexpectedly overcome with great sorrow at his passing, so much so that I thought my knees might give out and I would faint and fall to the ground.

The night before at the visitation a man who held the office of priest had come up to me and made a point of saying “Pat, tomorrow at the grave, remember Jim lives and is in heaven with Jesus, he is not in the grave.” I wondered at his remarks, as at that time, I was doing ok; but then this unexpected raw grief hit me at the grave site. I was standing surrounded by people I did not know, as Hal was with his mother, and my family was at the back of the tent. Silently I cried out to God to help me endure this grief and not faint. Suddenly, I had an instant replay of the night before. In my mind’s eye I saw and heard again this man saying, “Pat tomorrow at the grave, remember Jim lives and is in heaven with Jesus, he is not in the grave”. **With this replay came a Spirit of Intense Joy. One minute I was in deep grief and the next minute experiencing Great Joy.** What a change! My joy was so great I wanted to shout “Praise God, Jim Lives” but I knew the people around me would not understand my joy. It was an amazing experience, very real and very intense, all grief was wiped away and my heart was glad, and I rejoiced in the goodness of God.

God has promised to comfort us and bring us joy even in our darkest hour. God keeps his promises. My grandmother felt my grandfather’s arms come around her as she grieved for him. My mother had a visitation from my father after he passed away bringing her comfort and joy. God is so good, and his Abiding Spirit can bring us intense joy in any circumstance.

Digging Deeper to Have A Glad and Rejoicing Heart

As we go through life many things bring us joy: falling in love, our wedding day, the birth of a baby, friendship, a great new job, a new home etc. etc. Remember the joy that rose up in your heart as you experienced such events. But there is a joy that goes beyond anything on earth. How much more joyful is the good news that God loves you. You have a supreme being with great power, who loves you, and tenderly cares for your needs. He loves you so much that he gave his

6 Scriptures to Assist Us in Choosing to Have Glad & Joyful Hearts:

1. **God is your defender** = *Psalms 5:11-12* *But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them; let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favor wilt thou compass him as with a shield.* God is our good shepherd and we can rejoice in his love and protection.
2. **Be Joyful in Your Battles** = *2 Chronicles 20:21-22* *And when he had consulted with the people he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth forever. And when they began to sing and to praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir, which were come against Judah; and they were smitten.* Israel won the battle against their enemies because they praised God as they went into battle. If you’re in a battle be joyful and praise God, he will make you victorious.
3. **Praise and Prayer are a Powerful Force Bringing Peace and Joy to Our Hearts** = *Psalms 150:1-2, 6* *Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts; praise him according to his excellent greatness... Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.* In this closing chapter of Psalms, we are reminded of God’s power and greatness and we are instructed to praise him even to our last breath. God is powerful and there is nothing that he cannot do. The firmament shows forth God’s creative power. This is the power we can tap into when we praise and pray. What joy this should bring to our hearts. No matter your situation, when God is on your side you have nothing to fear, not even death.
4. **Find Gladness and Joy in God’s Presence** = *1 Chronicles 16:27* *Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place.* In the Old Testament days, only the high priests could enter the Holy of Holies to spend intimate

A Heart Full of Love Brings Joy to You and to God: John 15:9-11 *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This says it all. Want Joy= Love God, Love others.*

♡ Action Section ♡

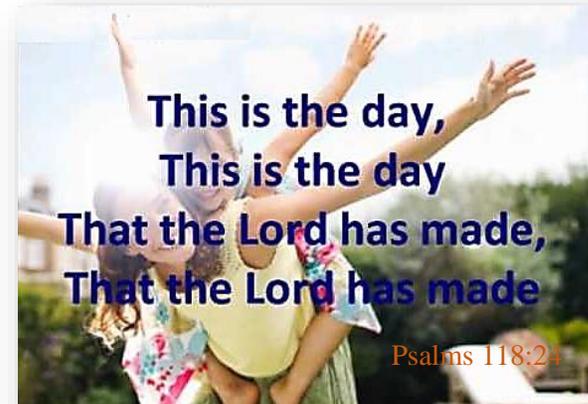


Hang onto your joy because Satan wants to steal it from you. John 10:10-11 *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep.* Satan desires to steal from you. He will steal your peace of mind and your joy if you let him.

Actions for the Month = Be Joyful, Pray Joyfully with Thanksgiving and Praise, Think Positive, Think on the Beautiful

In the days ahead be aware of attitudes and thoughts that steal your joy. Focus on joyful thoughts and concepts and cast away thoughts that steal your joy. **Choose to focus your mind on the goodness of God, follow Philippians 4 = To rejoice in the Lord always, pray with thanksgiving and think on the beautiful. You can choose to do this! Joy is a choice!! If you are having trouble finding Joy in your life read the book of Psalms this month. In the Psalms you will discover that you have many reasons to rejoice.**

Only Begotten Son so you would have eternal life. In him you can and will experience a fullness of joy, beyond any earthly joy. It is a joy not tied to earthly things, as great as they are none of them last forever. We won't last forever. All our hope and joy is in Christ Jesus.



F. Henry in his book “The Devine Purpose in Us” says this about Joy: Quite frequently we use the terms “pleasure” and “joy” interchangeably. When we are writing or speaking carefully, however, we distinguish between the words. Pleasure has a primary reference to gratification of the senses or mind or to agreeable sensations or emotions. Pleasure always has a sensuous flavor. Joy, on the other hand, points toward an exultation of spirit. Neither pleasure nor joy should be goals of endeavor. They are by products, not purpose. If we seek them for their own sake, they elude us. Joy functions on a higher level than does pleasure.

The Book of Mormon tells us that *“men are, that might have joy (2 Nephi 1:115).”* Joy differs from happiness in terms of its depth of emotional fulfillment and its basic spiritual nature. Paul spoke of himself as sorrowful yet always rejoicing. Joy is rooted deep in the emotional and spiritual life and can endure any temporary mood.

Whenever we consider the possibility of a radiantly joyful life, a truly happy life, we naturally think of Jesus. Jesus loved good health and spent a good deal of time healing people's bodies. He was happy. He enjoyed friendship and social life—we know he was the guest of honor at the wedding of his friends. Yet while he did not despise these passing

joys, he was always willing to sacrifice them for the greater joys arising from the satisfaction of overcoming moral enemies, an increase in his usefulness to others...and most of all for the approval of Divinity.

The most significant fact about the joy of the Master is that its sources were not at the mercy of men or circumstances. Poor, homeless, about to be crucified, Jesus could still say to his disciples, *“These things have I spoken unto you.....that your joy might be full (John 15:11).”* Joy such as this gives us a hint of the final purpose of life. It is a joy arising out of the trust of his Father, out of his boundless hope for the future, out of a sense of divine approval, and out of the happiness of watching men quicken into new life as they came to know God. The purpose of life includes the achievement of these forces of abiding joy. *Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Instructions and Helps for Having a Joyful Heart

But what about the difficulties of daily life, how do we keep an attitude of joy? The car breaks down, the children are ill with bad colds and the dog just vomited all over the carpet, then your husband calls to tell you he just lost his job. Too often this is the reality of life. The list of things that can wreak havoc in our lives is endless. How do we have a joyful heart in the midst of anxiety, stress and the daily struggles of life? Here are a few of God's instructions concerning joy and our hearts. If you're having trouble being joyful, search the scriptures for more instructions.

An Anxious Heart = Can Become a Joyful Heart: *Philippians 4:4-8 Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice...Be afflicted for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.* (The word afflicted means anxious.)

We say, “Be anxious for nothing?” Is that possible? Yes, all of us choose our response to life's difficulties. Instead of fretting the next time trouble comes turn it over to God. Rejoice in his wisdom, power and knowledge. Who better, could you have working on your problems? It says, “With thanksgiving; let your request be made to known unto him.” Start your prayer with Thanksgiving and Praise. Praise him for who he is. Praise and thank him for his wonderful attributes. He is powerful, all knowing, yet tender, kind and loving. Thank him for what he will yet do in your life and for those you pray for. Then, as instructed, turn your thoughts to all the blessings and good things in life. Think on the beautiful. It will fill your heart with joy! **You can choose how you respond to the trials of life. Develop an attitude of Gratitude! Joy is a choice!!**

A Repentant Heart = Will Become a Joyful Heart: *Psalms 30:5 For his anger kindleth against the wicked; they repent, and in a moment it is turned away, and they are in his favor, and he giveth them life; therefore, weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.* A repentant heart is also a joyful heart. When we repent, we should feel truly sorrowful for our sins. There is a time to weep and repent but when we repent God turns His anger away and Joy comes into our hearts. **The sorrow is gone, and we can go forward with joy into the morning/new beginning. Repent then don't look back; go forth with a Joyful Heart.**

A Betrayed Heart = Can Become a Joyful Heart: *Psalms 27:6, 10, 14 And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord...When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up...Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thy heart.* When we have been betrayed and our enemies come against us, the key to a joyful heart is to offer up the sacrifice of joy. In other words, praise and thank God even for the trial you are going through. Praise takes your eyes off yourself, your trial, and your enemies and puts them back on God. Praise the Lord, he is your defense and high tower. **He has promised to turn all things to your good. You can rejoice in every trial because God keeps his promises.**

Transformation Section

April Bulletin Insert - 2020

By Connie Smith

Having A Repentant Heart

-Repentance requires active effort on our part. Here is a list of 7 steps in repentance: (Taken from the book, *Exercises in Growing Spiritually*, by Barbara Wilkinson © 1976)

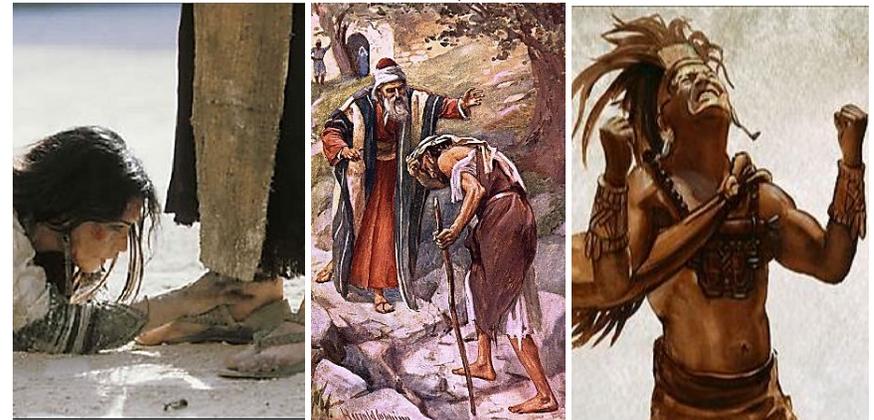
1. **Soul search for areas you need to repent of.** Pray, fast and study the scriptures asking God to impress upon your mind the areas you need to repent of.
2. **Acknowledge and confess your sins.** We are too complacent.
3. **Have genuine sorrow**, leading to a desire to truly change.
4. **Accept responsibility for your sins.** No alibies or excuses such as age, heredity, environment, our parents, etc.
5. **Pray for forgiveness and ask God to help you change!** God is calling you to repent to save you. Have faith and perseverance.
6. **Make amends**, if possible, to anyone you have hurt. (Family, neighbors, friends, co-workers, etc.)
7. **Forgive others!** Forgive yourself!

-Read Alma 3:1-108 once a week.

1. Write his questions down and ponder them. Pray that God will show you your blind spots.
2. Repent, make amends if needed.
3. Replace that sin with something good/Godly. God will answer those prayers as a loving father, not an angry tyrant. **Do not allow the spirit of fear to be God over your heart.**

God loves us and desires for each of us to be cleansed. **It was his crowning sacrifice to give us this gift of repentance and remission of sins.** Exchange your sin for a robe and crown of righteousness.

CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART!
Be ye Clean that Bear the Vessels of the Lord!



Adulterous Woman

Prodigal Son

King Lamoni's Father

Luke 5:32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Luke 15:24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Alma 13:53 And if there is a God, and if thou art God, wilt thou make thyself known unto me, and I will give away all my sins to know thee, and that I may be raised from the dead, and be saved at the last day.

And the Lord God called upon men, by the Holy Ghost, everywhere, and commanded them that they should repent; And as many as believed in the Son, and repented of their sins, should be saved (Genesis 5:1-2).

F. Henry Edwards states: **Repentance is one of the fundamental doctrines of the church. It arises in the heart of the humble man who becomes acutely conscious of the difference between God and himself, and of the awfulness of the sin which separates them.** (For Such a Time, p.117) The root word meaning of **repentance** is **rethinking or think again**. Hope and mercy is extended toward all people who yield to the commandment to repent.

The call to have a repentant heart has gone forth since our first parents walked the earth. God in his foreknowledge, prepared a way for the salvation of what would and did become a fallen race, through the atonement of his son, Jesus Christ. Through this act of **God's own sacrificial love toward his creation, he granted mankind a time to prepare** to come back and live in his presence eternally. For this cause, **we have been commanded to repent and be reconciled to God**; it being a vital part of our preparation. *And thus we see, that there was a time granted unto man, to repent, yea, a probationary time, a time to repent and serve God...therefore as they had been carnal, sensual and devilish, by nature, this probationary state became a state for them to prepare; it became a preparatory state* (Alma 19:84, 91).

Behold, Satan hath come among the children of men, and tempteth them to worship him; and men have become carnal, sensual, and devilish, and are shut out from the presence of God (Genesis 6:50). We “worship” Satan when we yield to temptation. Choosing him over God. These acts/thoughts of self-will = sin = rebellion against God. Is it any wonder God prepared for this and commanded men everywhere in every dispensation of time, to repent?

As we journey back toward our Heavenly Father and his Kingdom, we find that our nature is at enmity with God. A great battle is being fought for each and every soul that has come into the world. Our natural man is at war with the spiritual man. This is how God designed for us to have agency so that we could choose between right and wrong, good and evil. It would seem an easy choice, but Satan is crafty, and we are easily deceived and very self-willed. *Take heed...that your heart be not deceived...(Deuteronomy 11:16).*

F. Henry Edwards wrote: On Calvary, Jesus made sinning his business; and by so doing he did something for us that we could not do for ourselves. We sometimes think that it is easy to know the difference between right and wrong. But, as a matter of fact, this is not true at all. **Sin has become such a part of the world in which we live that our familiarity with it has blinded us...**Someone from outside our sinful environment is needed to help us to see things as they truly are. **The Son of God has satisfied this need by reaching across our blindness, and taking on himself the sacrifice and the cost, and so showing us the**

Here are a couple of examples. I recently talked with a man who is bipolar. In his youth, he did many things that have left him, as an adult, with deep regret and guilt. He attributes much of his mental illness to not being able to forgive himself. I know another man, with a mental illness, who feels the same way, also struggling to forgive himself. This does not mean sin caused their mental illnesses as both men have chemical imbalances. But to deny that their sins and not being able to forgive themselves, hasn't impacted them or perhaps exacerbated the weakness in their flesh would be wrong. Repentance and forgiveness go hand in hand.

Corrie Ten Boom wrote in her book, *The Hiding Place*, “**There is no pit so deep, that God's not deeper still.**” She lived in two German concentration camps during World War II. During that time all of the women were made to walk to the shower houses naked. Male guards would sneer and scoff at them. What embarrassment and shame the women endured and anger and resentment. (We would feel the same.) After Corrie was freed, she began several ministries to reach out to the victims of the war. One of those ministries was to tell her story and how Jesus could heal their wounds and help them to forgive their oppressors.

At one place, after her speech, she came face to face with a man who had been one of the most offensive guards. He had accepted Jesus into his life after the war. Here he was, hand extended to her, hoping for her forgiveness. She writes about the inner struggle she had. On her own she could not forgive him. She prayed in her heart for strength. As God's spirit filled her, she was able to reach forth her hand. Once they embraced her heart was filled with the love of Jesus for her offender. Is there someone you can't forgive? **Jesus died to set the captives free.**

What joy we can derive from a pure heart and clean hands. Freedom from sin and the guilt and shame it carries is worth all of our effort. *Thus we see that by small means the Lord can bring about great things (1 Nephi 5:36).* Repentance seems like such a small thing. We even forget we need it. Days...weeks maybe...can go by before we realize we haven't repented.

2 Nephi 3:46-47

Awake my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul!

Alma 3:52 Behold, I say, Is there one among you who is not stripped of envy? (discontented or resentful, longing for someone else's possession, qualities or fortune). It is similar to jealousy (thoughts or feelings of insecurity, fear and concern over lack of possession or safety). Envy and jealousy consist of one or more of the following emotions: anger, resentment, inadequacy, helplessness and disgust. (Whoa, are you talking to me?) All too often we do not think of ourselves as being envious or jealous, but maybe discontent, maybe inadequate, maybe resentful...but only at times. **Repent quickly and look for the good/beautiful in others. Fight evil with good!**

Alma 3:54 Is there one among you that doth make a mock of his brother, or that heapeth upon him persecutions? In Lehi's Vision, he saw the people in the great and spacious building pointing a mocking finger at those who made it to the tree of life. Many who "made it" then fell away. To mock someone means to tease or laugh at in a scornful manner; to have contempt for another. Here is an example of "mocking": gossip/slander. (That can't be talking about me.) How quick we are to judge and see things in others but are blind to see the faults and sins in our own lives. Jesus had some advice for the people of his day and our day: *Matthew 7:3-4 For with what judgment ye shall judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And again, ye shall say unto them, Why is it that thou beholdest the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?*

A tiny spot of blood, no bigger than a small splinter, could block portions of Ken's vision. In other words, it is like trying to see around a beam in his eye. When the beams (sin) are removed from our own eyes, then the sins of others come into perspective. When you get irritated with someone else next time, ask the Lord, "Is there a beam in my eye that is blocking my vision? Help me change so I can see this situation clearly." **Repent quickly. These things cannot be taken into the Kingdom of God.**

Another crucial part of repentance is forgiveness. God forgives us our sins and we in turn extend that forgiveness to ourselves and others. Why is it so hard for us to forgive ourselves? Shame, guilt and unbelief can be buried so deep it needs rooted out.

wealth of love which pursues us and which is so eager to bless us...God will not force us to give up our sins, but he will use every persuasion to make us abandon them. When we renounce sin, he can forgive us and accept us back into fellowship with him.

This is so important, for sin comes with a price. *Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* To become aware of specific personal sin and then persist in it has a cost. **There is a price attached = death; death of relationships (marriages, friendships, parents/children, siblings, etc.), physical and also spiritual death!** Here is a contrast between a rebellious heart and a repentant heart:

Rebellious Heart:

Hard Heart-Gen.6:27
Blindness of Heart/Mind-John 12:40
Gall of Bitterness-Alma 17:16
Bonds of Iniquity-Alma 19:75
Carnal-Romans 8:6-7
Sensual-Genesis 6:50
Devilish-Helaman 4:53

Repentant Heart:

Heart of Flesh-Ezekiel 36:26
Yielding Heart-Hel. 2:31
Broken Heart-Psalms 34:18
Contrite Heart-DC 19:3a
Humble-DC 61:1b
Meek/Lowly-Alma 17:66
Confess/Forsake-Mosiah 11:138

Not only are we too familiar with sin so as to embrace it, we often return to it to repeat it over and over...repent, repeat, repeat, repeat. We have become repeat offenders! No wonder God not only calls this a preparatory state but a probationary state. F. Henry Edwards, referring to a man who repented wrote this, **"But to do only that (repent) would have left him the prey to constant temptation to resume his old ways. His repentance was not secure until he committed himself to a life of service."** (For Such a Time, 125) This is indeed what needs to happen, **repent and replace that sin with service to God. This is the result of a repentant heart. Repentance is the process of ceasing to do evil and learning to do good!**

We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, and an indwelling of his Holy Spirit to be our constant companion through life. There is a pattern in the call to repentance. ***And the first-fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith, unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth***

remission of sins; and the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart, cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God (Moroni 8:29). Repentance leads to baptism, baptism of water and the spirit. Baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. **This is God's gift to us to guide us into all truth and righteousness.** When we stray, the Spirit is right there to prick our hearts and help get us back on the path and head in the right direction. This is so important; without it we would be lost. O the mercy and wisdom of a loving and blessed Heavenly Father.



Digging Deeper to Have A Repentant Heart

My husband, Ken, has macular degeneration in both of his eyes due to diabetes. This causes swelling and bleeding blood vessels near the macula and has cost him most of the vision in his right eye and at times temporary loss of vision or impaired vision in his left eye. Even the tiniest amount of blood floating around in his eye can and does create blind spots in his vision. This blood either dissipates on its own or has had to be removed and the bleeding vessel(s) cauterized.

We have blind spots created by sin, holding on to grudges and the ensuing bitterness. Sometimes these spots are so well hidden from our vision that without help to expose them and “cauterized” (cleansed by the blood of Jesus) we become content to live in darkness with our “impaired vision”. Just as Ken can't stop the bleeding vessels in his eyes without outside help from an expert, neither can we cleanse our heart without help from our expert, Jesus.

Are there people you need to be reconciled with? My in-laws and I had a falling out several years ago. In my anger I wrote them a letter explaining to them all my views. It was not well received and only added to the contention surrounding the situation. Through the Holy Spirit softening all of our hearts, repenting and then meeting together, all of our issues were resolved and a new peace and even joy in our relationships ensued.

I literally felt scales of blindness fall from my seeing eyes. When these scales were removed, I saw my in-laws and especially my father-in-law through new eyes. The Lord brought to my remembrance times when he had tried to reach out and improve our relationship but because of grudges, resentment, and bitterness I was blind to all of his efforts. How my heart sorrowed for lost years. He died 2 months after our “family” talk. Pray in humility and ask God to help you restore the breeches in your life, to soften your heart as well as other's hearts and remove the scales from your eyes.

Lyle Smith once preached a sermon in which he felt compelled to ask the congregation three questions. I will repeat them here:

Alma 3:50 Are you stripped of pride? (Self-focus, conceit, egotism, vanity, vainglory...) **Mark 7:19-21 And he said, That which cometh out of a man, defileth the man. For from within, out of the hearts of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.** In Alma 2 there are many things listed that showed a progression of pride in the hearts of the people. Things like wearing costly apparel, turning their backs on the poor, being lifted up in the pride of their eyes (spiritual blindness), envy, strife, and malice. **The way he confronted all of this was teaching the word of God. The cleansing and convicting word of God. Feast upon the word of God too and repent to rid yourself of pride.**

Alma 3:52 Behold, I say, Is there one among you who is not stripped of envy? (discontented or resentful, longing for someone else's

worship table. I used this picture as part of the arrangement. As the service was nearing an end, we had experienced such a beautiful Spirit and I felt a renewed desire in myself to live a mountaintop life.

As I was sitting in the service, my eyes were upon the picture. The Lord took me away in a vision, and showed me the other side of that door. He showed me the inside of my heart. The back side of the door was before me, and it was lined with dozens of locks. Locks of every description. Chains, slide locks, deadbolts. And most of these locks had been opened. As I stood looking at the door, a great excitement filled my soul. I knew I was the one responsible for unlocking the door and I only had a few left, standing in the way between my Savior entering in and me. **I was unlocking the multitude of locks as I repented of sins and cast out bitterness I had carried around for years.**

Just like the people of Judah and Jehoshaphat, you will receive that which you so **diligently** seek.

May we diligently seek a Mountaintop Life with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. May we cast out those sins that harden our hearts, and take a journey to stablish our hearts with those issues that He desires us to have.

**Behold, the Savior at your door.
Your kindest, truest friend.
Is seeking entrance to your heart,
Your life with His to blend.
The Savior's knocking at your door,
and asking entrance in.
He's knocking, asking o'er and o'er.
O, Open Unto Him.**



May Bulletin Insert - 2020

By Julie Anderson

A Journey of the Heart

When asked to teach a class for the women's retreat in March, I hesitated. Even though I am a teacher by profession, teaching spiritual topics to adults was intimidating. I took my concerns to the Lord and was impressed to teach the class on Doctrine and Covenants 4.



Now, behold, a marvelous work is about to come forth among the children of men, therefore, O ye that embark in the service of God, see that ye serve him with all your heart, might, mind, and strength, that ye may stand blameless before God at the last day; therefore, if ye have desires to serve God, ye are called to the work, for, behold, the field is white already to harvest, and lo, he that thrusteth in his sickle with his might, the same layeth up in store that he perish not, but bringeth salvation to his soul; and faith, hope, charity, and love, with an eye single to the glory of God, qualifies him for the work. Remember, faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence. Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you. Amen

I was drawn to the end of the section, where the list starts with "Remember, faith." The Lord showed me that there are many issues that cause a hardened heart, and we must remove those, so we have room for

His best attributes to reside. As I continued to pray about this list, He impressed on me once again that He has purpose in the exact wording, order, and placement of each scripture. And so began what I believe the Lord wanted me to learn, The Journey of Our Hearts.

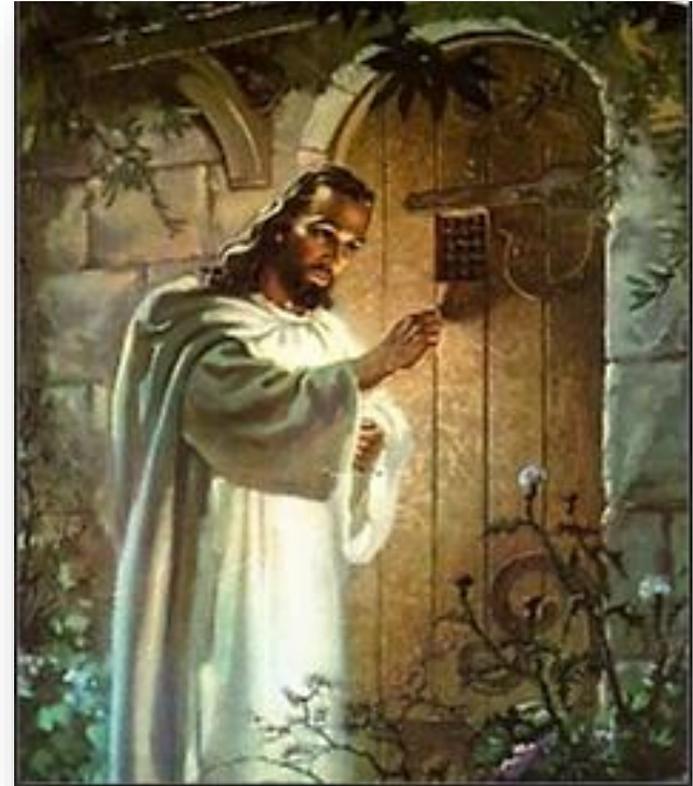
As a child, I was told a specific testimony of my Granny, who was a woman of great faith and was given a mighty blessing and answer to her heart's desire because of her faith. She passed down this gift to my father, and through their witness passed it down to me. Growing up, I never saw my Granny or Dad ever waiver in their faith. However, I suffer from laziness. The Lord showed me in my preparation for this class how praying intentionally and purposefully for the armor of God on a daily basis was critical.

One afternoon I was hit by a trial that came out of nowhere. I tried to handle the problem using a Biblical principle, but the problem worsened. I took the problem to an elder, who tried to handle it. Unfortunately for both of us, the trial intensified again. After a few days of struggling, praying, and being frustrated, I awoke with a question for God. Why? The Lord answered through my morning devotional, the armor of God (Ephesians 6).

I realized I had not intentionally prayed for the shield of faith. As I went to school that morning, an Elder in law enforcement was our chapel guest speaker. He had brought in some of his equipment, including what I called a "SWAT shield." He talked about the importance of the shield being held on the left side, guarding his heart. He shared how even his police badge is worn over the heart for added protection. However, what stood out the most to me was his comment that he must practice with the shield because of its heavy weight, so that in time of trial, he would have the strength to hold the shield up in long periods of battle.

I knew the reason I continued to battle my own trial was because I had not specifically prayed daily for the shield of faith to protect me from the fiery darts of the adversary, nor did I have the strength to carry my shield in times of battle.

Ask and ye shall receive, knock and it shall be opened unto you.



This picture is Sallman's painting called "**Christ at Heart's Door.**" It is my favorite picture of my favorite artist. This picture hung in my father's home growing up, and when I gathered to Independence, my dad and stepmother gave it to me. Kevin and I always took it first into any home we moved into, as a symbol that we wanted Him first in our home and our hearts.

Years ago, Kevin and I were a part of a small group of saints. We had spent months in preparation for a special service, many weeks studying, fasting, praying. We each looked deep within our hearts to try to cast out any sin or transgression that kept us from a closer relationship with our Lord. As we prepared for this service, it was my turn to set up the

Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue;

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; And to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; And to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall; For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:1-11).

In order to strengthen our faith, we must first understand and establish our faith. In Hebrews 11:1, we are given the definition of faith: *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

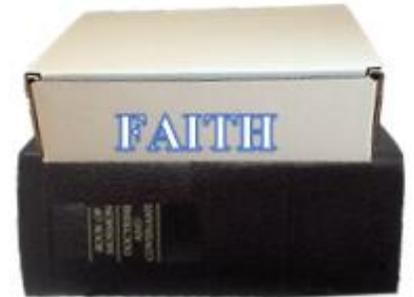
I have a question for you....Have you ever tried to bounce a football?



As you may have seen this past year, when a football is dropped, it bounces in every direction. As players scramble around the field to try to get their hands on it and control it, it becomes elusive and unpredictable. So, it is with our feelings. They are unpredictable and hard to control. And yet, as believers, we try to rest our faith on our feelings instead of the Word of God. We are

afraid to offend others, afraid someone won't like us, afraid we may suffer if we follow the scriptural guidelines. And yet, resting on the absolute rock-solid foundation of the Word of God is the ONLY way to "stablish" our faith. (James 5:8)

As a child, I was taught that when your faith becomes so strong, it transforms to knowledge. One definition of knowledge is "Knowing something with familiarity gained by experience."



Last fall my father was in KU. After a long day in the ER (emotionally draining as this was the first time I had returned to KU after Kevin's death), we finally had Dad in a room and resting. Leaving the hospital at midnight to take my stepmother home, I needed to use GPS to get to Lee's Summit. Unfortunately, GPS took me into a very dark, uncomfortable neighborhood. I was insecure, not wanting to turn down darkened streets, so I didn't listen and kept going the wrong way. GPS had to recalculate. After several failed turns and decisions, GPS said "turn at the second left on SW Turfway." Finally, I was in familiar territory. I believed there was no SW Turfway, but I KNEW I was

getting to SW Trafficway and could find my way home from there. By the second announcement to turn left on “SW Turfway” I was able to laugh at GPS with comfort and humor.

As we practice (or perform) any tasks, it becomes easier. And with becoming easier, it becomes a part of us, until such a time that we don't even consider *not* doing it. We are faced with dark streets that we are unfamiliar with, but if we are following the Lord's direction, He is going to get us to “SW Turfway” in our life and enable us to find our way HOME.

I had the KNOWLEDGE to find my way home. Isn't that where we all want to get to...HOME. Not our earthly home, but our eternal home with our Heavenly Father. Having faith based on the facts is so comforting to us. We have less “feeling” footballs bouncing all over our hearts and are more secure in the “Facts Knowledge Box” of our Heavenly Father.

Remember, facts from scriptures are safe and secure. Bouncing feelings will lead us astray. Knowing God's voice. Knowing God's will. Knowing God's plan. Knowing God's rules. We must then KNOW THE DIFFERENCE (2nd Peter 1:4)

You may have noticed, I skipped an issue of the heart from Doctrine and Covenants 4. I jumped from Faith to Knowledge, completely skipping over Virtue...or did I?

One definition of Virtue is “moral excellence.” In Vim Horn's sermon recently, we learned that the Hebrew translation of virtue is “strength, might, power.” In 2nd Peter, His Power gives us all we need that pertains to life. We know God is omniscient (all knowing), and omnipresent (everywhere), and omnipotent (all powerful). He knows all. He sees all. He can do all. We can rely all on His virtue. And by becoming more like Christ, we can also know all that we need for our lifetime. If we let down our shield of faith for even the smallest of reasons or let go of our moral excellence for even a split second, the adversary is ready! He is ready to hit us with thousands of fiery darts. We must commit ourselves to pursuing moral excellence in all areas of

As shown, **humility leads to charity, the pure love of Christ.** Understandably, we must continue in charity as we learn and grow in knowledge of our Savior on our mountain top. And we must do so with all **diligence.**

The definition of **diligence** is “**Steady, earnest, and energetic effort, painstaking attention and care.**” (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)

In 2 Chronicles 20, Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the Lord, and with diligence proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. Judah was surrounded by 3 marauding armies, threatening safety, terrorizing them.

When surrounded by storms around you (sword, judgment, pestilence),

Look upward! Turn your attention to the Lord. Be Not Afraid.

*And he said, Harken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for **the battle is not yours, but God's** (2 Chronicles 20:15).*

The enemies destroyed themselves and Judah was saved. Not only saved but won the spoils of war (gold and jewels).

Diligence is found in the Women's Department scripture for the year, **Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life** (Proverbs 4:23).

What are the issues of life?

faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, brotherly kindness, godliness, charity, humility, diligence

appendage at a ball and send it rolling across to their stranger playmate. Often they would fall over in their exuberance to get to a toy. I would watch as they found such joy in the smallest accomplishment.

As an adult, I realized what the Lord was teaching me. It was not by any sin or any mistake that as children we found ourselves at Carrie Tingley. **The Lord had created each of us in His image, and blessed us with our individual challenges to use us to His glory.**

It was by no accomplishment on my part that I had been blessed with two arms, two legs, ten fingers and ten toes. It was by no act on my part that I have been blessed with the gift of seeing, hearing or speaking. It was by His work and His design that I have survived past the doctors' predictions that I would be wheelchair bound by 25 and dead by age 40 (I'm 54 and still on my feet)!

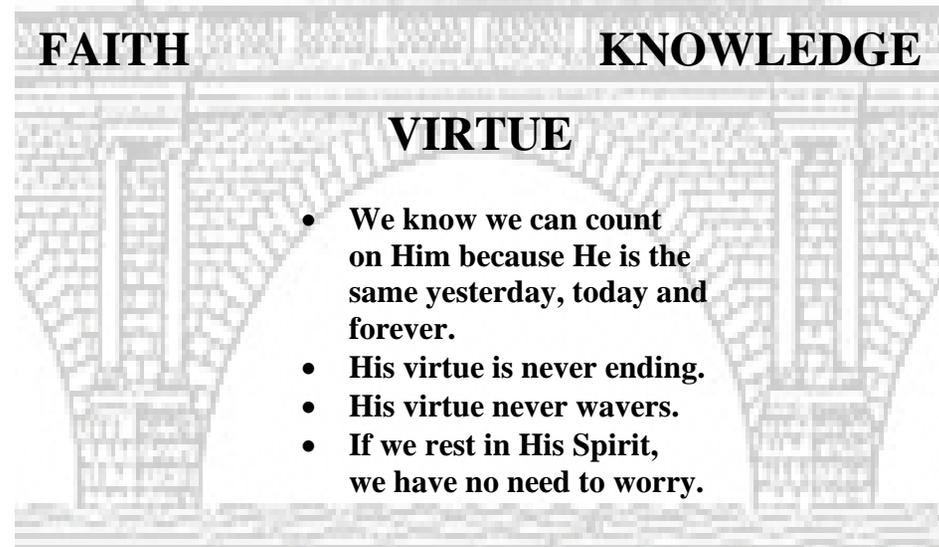
It was only by the grace of God that I am blessed beyond measure. And it is only as we recognize our blessings are from the Lord and not our own intelligence and work that we can experience true humility and in turn experience charity towards others.

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whosoever shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me (Matthew 18:2-4).



our lives. And if we pursue Christ's excellence in our lives, we become more like Christ.

So on our Journey of the Heart, we see that Christ's Virtue is the bridge that carries our Faith into Knowledge.



- **We know we can count on Him because He is the same yesterday, today and forever.**
- **His virtue is never ending.**
- **His virtue never wavers.**
- **If we rest in His Spirit, we have no need to worry.**

As we continue on our journey, don't stop at the end of the bridge. Keep going! There are challenges ahead but the view at the end will be worth it.

The next two issues are Temperance and Patience. I view these as the acts of hiking up a mountain. Climbing a mountain is hard work (especially if you have bad knees!). And yet, it is so worth it. The definition of Temperance is "habitual restraint". Our actions of restraint become habits of restraint.

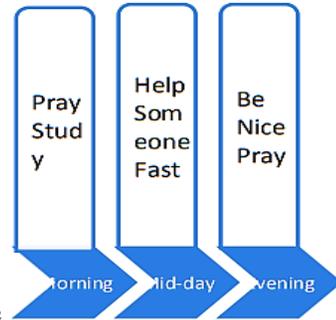
- Temperance is moderation in the things that are good and total abstinence from the things that are foul. (Frances E Willard)
- 1st time temperance is mentioned in scripture is in Proverbs 31 (qualities of a good wife)
- Paul uses it when talking to Felix in *Acts 24:25*: "*righteousness, temperance and judgment to come*"
- Paul refers to it in Gal 5:23, best referred to as "Law vs Spirit"

Your Journey is Waiting

(Read Galatians 5)

- If you live in the flesh, you are guilty of the law.
- However, if you live in the Spirit, you are not under the law.
- Look from a spiritual view rather than the earthly view.

Are we living by a checklist mentality? Are we consumed with our earthly cares, so much that we are not listening for the Voice of our Master? Or are we living each day basking in the Holy Spirit, being led and fed by our relationship with our Savior? Are we spending our days checking off the rules, making sure we have



done every task? Are we consumed with our earthly cares, so much that we are not listening for the Voice of our Master? Are we communing with Him daily? Are we purging those influences in our lives that keep us tied to earthly cares?

We then must have *habitual earthly restraint* in our own lives; in our dealings with other people; in our judgment of others' sins; and in our frustrations with both ourselves and others. And this in turn leads to...

PATIENCE:

- Bearing pains or trials calmly or **without complaint**
James 5:8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
- Not acting rashly (temperance)
- Having patience with things
- Having patience with others
- Having patience with ourselves
- Having patience with God
- Stablish your hearts (make firm)

since been renamed). The first visit was as an outpatient for a week, where I underwent many tests and was fitted with a back brace made of steel. For the next eight years, this brace was a Beast in my life. For six years, I wore it 24/7. Finally, I was able to take it off during the day and only wear it at night for those last two years.



Every three months, we had to return to Carrie Tingley for “Clinic” days. We would arrive early in the morning, and spend the whole day in the giant lobby with a hundred other children. I would be called to the nurse’s office, x-rays, doctor’s office, and brace shop. But mostly, I spent hours in the lobby. My favorite place to hang out was in the brace shop. There were four men who worked in the brace shop, three artists and a biker/welder. Their job was to take each child’s needs and make a prosthetic to help the child’s mobility. They had to start from scratch with each one because we all had different needs.

In my daily life, the Beast affected everything I did and how others treated me. It was easy to be bitter or complain because no one else had to wear the Beast. The Lord used Clinic Day to teach me humility. For you see, in New Mexico, fetal alcohol syndrome is prolific. Hundreds of children are born with excruciating birth defects, scoliosis being the least of their problems. Most of the children did not survive to age 12, so I was also one of the oldest children at the hospital. As I would sit in the lobby hour after hour, I would watch these children. Most would be propped up on the floor while their parents sat in the chairs. There were a few toys scattered around the lobby, and one would swing an

Last summer I took a trip with Susan Freeze out west. While she worked at a conference, I took a bus tour by myself to the Grand Canyon. As I stood before a short stone ledge (about 2' tall), I took a selfie of the canyon behind me and sent the picture to family. My brother immediately texted back, "Get away from the edge. You're about to fall!" He couldn't see the short ledge in the picture.

I picture Humility as a short ledge around our mountain top. It's a reminder to stay back and be careful. As Craig Hill shared in a sermon recently, **Humility means "absence of pride and arrogance."** I prayed for months about how to teach humility in this class because the subject is hard for me to wrap my brain around. To claim humility defeats humility.



And that is when the Lord inspired my mind with a testimony of my youth. He also showed how **humility leads to charity**, the next trait listed.

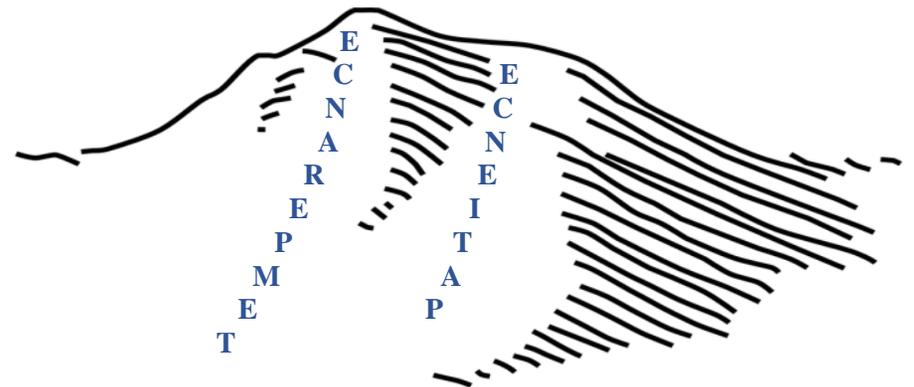
As a child, I was diagnosed with scoliosis, which is curvature of the spine. Many people have scoliosis, but at age 12, mine had become crippling. My doctor recommended my father take me to a specialist. We lived in southeastern New Mexico, next to the Texas border. The best treatment was 7 hours away in the northwestern part of the state at a hospital called Carrie Tingley Crippled Children's Hospital (it has

After crossing the Red Sea, the children of Israel were stopped to rest in Elim, facing a large desolate desert before getting to Mt. Sinai. It was the "In-Between" where they could rest and rejuvenate before crossing the desert. However, they set their armor down and didn't pick it back up promptly. At 2 ½ months, the scripture says they were murmuring again against the Lord. Only 2 ½ months after experiencing one of the greatest stories in the history of the world (parting of the Red Sea), they were already murmuring.

Are we murmuring?
 Are we looking at the glass half empty or half full?
 Can we find the joy and blessing in the darkest of situations?
 Are we praising God in the trial?

Temperance and patience are hard!

It is time for God's people to stop with our excuses: "I'm not a hiker, or a climber. My knees hurt, I'm out of shape."



The climb is worth it when you reach the top.

(Hint: If you exercise a habit (or spiritual attribute) for 20 days without complaint, it becomes a positive issue in your heart.)

The Mountaintop Life



Your Mountain is Waiting...

The next traits mentioned in D&C 4 are part of the mountaintop experience. Brotherly Kindness is defined as “Affectionate; affection” or “Loving; tender attachment.” Do you ever say to your kids, “How many times do I have to tell you?” Yet, God has to say it to us. He has to repeat himself time and again for us to remember, learn, and understand His plan. Over the past several months, several of these topics have been repeated by the priesthood in sermons.

The definition of Godliness is “divine, devout”. Godliness and Brotherly Kindness are listed together many times in scripture. First one, then the other. They are like a wedding ring...godliness leads to brotherly kindness, which leads to godliness, which leads to brotherly kindness. They work hand in hand together. It is beautiful how the Lord reminds us to have divine affectionate affection one for another, and how important attachment is to both traits.

In December at our communion service, Mark Nunn asked us why we had come that day. I immediately thought “to be uplifted.” Mark then asked, “Did you say to be uplifted?” It took me off guard a second, wondering if I had answered out loud. He challenged us that we should be uplifted throughout the week and come to the Sunday service to experience the mountain top. Our speaker for the service was Hal Chadwick, and he shared that it takes two things to reach the mountain-top. 1) Prayer, and 2) Portage. He explained that portage is a boating term, which means “doing my fair share of the work.”

So often we save our mountaintop experiences for special occasions: retreats, reunions, baptisms, ordinations. **I believe the Lord wants us to LIVE a mountain top experience in our daily lives.** He wants us to reside on that mountaintop with Him. There is a popular saying that says, “**Pray as if it’s all up to God, work as if it’s all up to you.**”

Before we married, Kevin shared an experience he had in his youth. He was standing on a beautiful mountain top, staring off in the distance. He could see his loved ones afar off, and he was beckoning for us to come join him. The view was amazing, and the life was glorious. He shared that he felt the Lord gave him this experience to know that he would pass away before his closest loved ones. He wanted me to know of this experience before we married so I would be prepared. However, we neither one felt that the Lord was saying we had to die to this earth before we could experience the mountain top.

As we grow our hearts with godliness and brotherly kindness, we live the two greatest commandments. To love the Lord with all our hearts, and to love our neighbors as ourself. By living the godly life of brotherly kindness, we continue to grow spiritually and become more like Christ. **We grow our faith, through His virtue, which becomes knowledge in His ways. We climb the difficult mountains of temperance and patience, to reside on His Mountain with Him.**

As we experience this life, we must be cautioned to not become prideful. And the Lord gave us the next issue of the heart following godliness and brotherly kindness for a reason. **Humility.**

Shirley used the hymn: “Turn Your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of his glory and grace.”

Shirley then asked us to discover and seek out the example set by Christ: Rejoice in the ways that Jesus Christ is your example. Record them as a blessed reminder. Choose favorite scriptures to express his goodness—that we may become like him.

Action #4 = Shirley encouraged us to take a stand: Let us commit ourselves and embark on this journey to surrender all to Christ.

Shirley quoted the Hymn: I Surrender All, All to Jesus I surrender, humbly at his feet I bow, wordly pleasures all forsaken...I surrender all.

Shirley gave us this challenge: Examine the steps you have taken thus far and make that ultimate response to continue daily in the depths of humility to Surrender All.

Write out your commitment in your own words - from your heart!



**What does it mean to be
Meek and Lowly of Heart?**

June-July Bulletin Insert - 2020
*A Meek and Lowly Heart
Is a Heart that is Prepared to be Changed*



When I looked for information concerning a Meek and Lowly Heart, I was drawn to the writings of our dear sister Shirley Heater. Before she passed on, she had written devotionals for the women concerning “The Patriarch’s Pamphlet = Am I willing to enter into the depths of humility?”

She also was prepared to teach on humility at the women’s retreat but was taken ill and passed on before she could do that. One of her last requests was for me to share her work on humility with her sisters in the faith. I continue to seek to do this by sharing some of her thoughts in this insert.

Shirley from March Week #1 Devotional: “So let’s begin by first asking ourselves, am I truly willing (which actually means unhesitating and eager) to enter into the depths of humility with full purpose of heart? It is in humility we recognize and acknowledge how much God loves us and what he has done for us: he has created us, has given us the breath

of life and is preserving us from day to day. (Mosiah 1:53) Through his sacrifice is provision to bring us into His presence. As we bow down before him, we are actually exalting him (not just literally as in kneeling, but also spiritually). We are giving him honor as our Creator and Lord and Savior. And this act of humility is the key that unlocks the door to a transforming experience of his great spiritual blessings.”

Shirley from March Week #3 Devotional: “A core ingredient in our journey into the depths of humility is that Jesus Christ is our EXAMPLE. And in our preparation for his coming, We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him...that we may be purified even as he is pure (1 John 3:2; Moroni 7:53). We are the ‘children of Christ’ through our covenant with him which brings us to the position of sitting (humbling ourselves) at his feet to learn of him and from him---to be like him. **Being humble means we are teachable** and what better place of learning is there than at the feet of Jesus!”



Alma 3: 11 Behold, he changed their hearts; yea, he awaked them out of a deep sleep, and they awoke unto God.

afflictions and weakness, and then respond to them in humility. Expect great joy as you embark on this transforming journey!

Shirley challenged us to: Respond as the Nephites did: *Helaman 2:30-31 Now this was a great evil, which did cause the more humble part of the people to suffer great persecutions, and to wade through much affliction; Nevertheless, they did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of yielding their hearts unto God.*

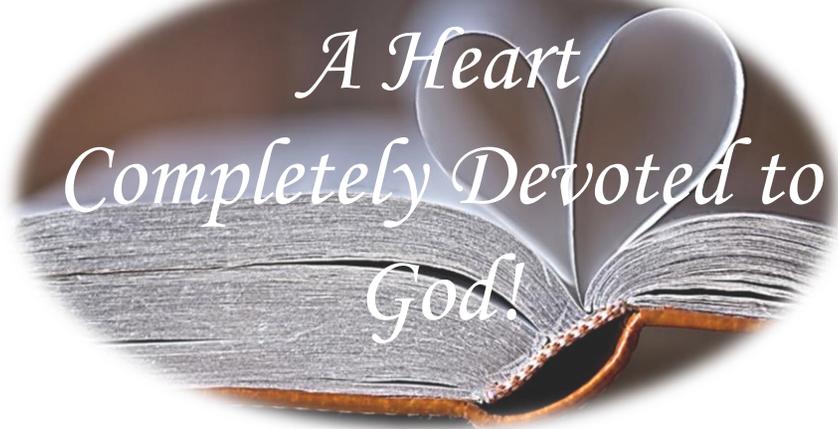
Action #3 = Shirley challenged us to become Christ-like in all we do: Christ humbled himself and he is our example in all that he did. As children of Christ, here are a few choice references that specifically deal with humility.

The Children of Christ:

- *Mosiah 1:39 Hearken to the words of Christ.*
- *Mosiah 1:120 Yield to the enticing of the Holy Spirit and puts off the natural man and humble themselves, and are submissive and meek, becoming as little children.*
- *Mosiah 2:21 Humble themselves, even to the depths of humility.*
- *Mosiah 2:19 Have exceeding great joy.*
- *Mosiah 2:2 and Mosiah 1:61 View their carnal state as even less than the dust of the earth.*
- *Mosiah 2:32 Recognize that you are all beggars before God.*
- *Mosiah 2:28-29 The children of Christ: give of their substance to those in need.*

There are many more such attributes of the children of Christ---a search of your scriptures will reward you with even greater understanding than just these few listed above—and they will enrich our journey of preparation for the coming of the bridegroom.

♡ Action Section ♡



Actions taken from Shirley Heaters Devotionals - March 2015

Action #1 = Shirley encouraged us to study about humility in the scriptures: A good way to study humility is to study all the verses with any form of the word, as well as synonyms. This week as you read the scriptures, let the words regarding humility “work in you”. Pray for better understanding of what “depths of humility” truly is as we humble ourselves before God and exalt him with praises!

Shirley suggested taking this action also: So, rejoice in God’s many blessings, and ask him to reveal to you specific ways to humble yourself. Write them down and do them! The word of God is significant in relationship to our humility. Immersing yourself in his Word is essential to understanding that relationship we have with him, and he with us = his lowly creation.

Action #2 = Shirley asked us to consider these questions and then make a list: Do we know where we lack humility? Do we recognize our afflictions and weaknesses as a means to bring us to a state of humility? We must identify the lack of humility in our lives, as well as afflictions and weaknesses. List these areas of lack of humility, as well as

Digging Deeper

Considering Shirley’s statement, that the act of humility is the key that unlocks the door to a transforming experience, let us consider: *Mosiah 2:21-22 And humble yourselves even in the depths of humility, calling on the name of the Lord daily, and standing steadfastly in the faith of that which is to come, which was spoken by the mouth of the angel; And behold, I say unto you, that if ye do this, ye shall always rejoice, and be filled with the love of God, and always retain a remission of your sins.* After teaching many words to the people about humility and love, King Benjamin reminded them of their position before God, as one of being beggars before God. Then he says: *Mosiah 2:32-35 And behold are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same God, for all our substance which we have... And behold, even at this time, ye have been calling on his name, and begging for a remission of your sins. And has he suffered that ye have begged in vain? Nay; he has poured out his Spirit upon you, and has caused that your hearts should be filled with joy.* Then King Benjamin reminds them to extend loving care to the poor and needy: *Mosiah 2:43 I would that ye should impart of your substance to the poor, every man according to that which he hath, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick, and administering to their relief, both spiritually and temporally, according to their wants.* While in this state of humility there was a great change wrought upon their hearts. Humility was a key to their transformation: *Mosiah 3:3 And also, we know of their surety and truth, because of the Spirit of the Lord Omnipotent, which has wrought a mighty change in us, or in our hearts, that we have no more disposition to do evil, but to do good continually.*

So, we see that a transformation of the heart must start with humility and our ability to acknowledge God’s proper place in our hearts. So it is, the June and July themes flow together. To be transformed by the power of God’s Holy Spirit we must be humble, meek, and lowly of

heart. See the June and July pages in your calendar and read those scriptures for a deeper understanding.

**Instruction to Assist Us in Developing a Humble Heart
A Heart Ready to Be Transformed = Full of the Love of God
For our Instruction**

I have chosen a prophetic message given by Brother Elbert A. Smith in 1917. It can be found in Church History Vol. 6, page 646. This message was given 6 months after the U.S.A. entered the 1st World War. I believe it is timeless instruction and actually fits our day and time, maybe more so than in 1917. We see today, the forces of hate now enveloping our world and even our own nation. May we heed this instruction about humility and the condition of our hearts.

Given by Elbert A Smith: “The feeling that is with me today is one of humility. As I reach forth to take the emblems, I said to myself, ‘I am not worthy to partake of this sacrament.’ I wonder who is worthy to eat with God. For this ordinance is not only to remind us of the sacrifice of Christ, it is also a prophecy that we shall presently eat with him in his kingdom.

Yet God does give us the privilege to partake under certain conditions. And this is one of the most sacred and important of the sacraments. One that we do well to observe at this time.

The Spirit has opened to my vision to an extent and indicates to me that two forces are at work in the world. The one is the spirit of hate. That is the spirit which entered into Cain when he slew his brother. And many men today desire to slay their fellow men.

This spirit of hate increases as it is gratified. The more it is glutted with vengeance the greater its inordinate desires for vengeance.

The other force is the spirit of love. It too increases as it is gratified and becomes bigger and better upon the deeds of kindness and mercy.

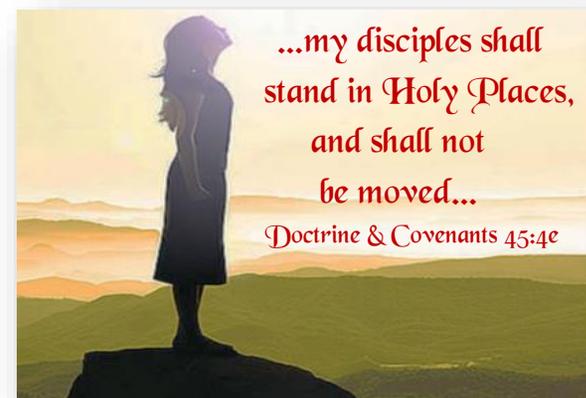
The apostle John most fully entered into this spirit. And standing in the midst of the people he uttered these words: ‘See to it, little children, that ye love one another.’

The Spirit of God, which bridges time, and to whom yesterday is as today, brings that junction to us also, and it is laid upon this people. ‘Yea,’ saith the Lord, ‘I desire many evangelists of love to preach the gospel of love, not only in word but also in deed. If there is any man here who has not been baptized with the spirit of love, he has not been baptized of me, saith the Lord.’

Again, at this time you are admonished that you be not unduly concerned because we are few in number as compared with the world. That is not your concern **but be concerned only that your righteousness shall be very great. For a few righteous men can accomplish very much, and a little leaven leaveneth a great lump.**

I have many forces at work in the world, saith the Lord. I have many spiritual forces at work that you know not of. You see but the smaller part of my work, and the world perceives it not at all.

Therefore, be not concerned because you are few in number, but let each one look to himself, and to the condition of his own heart and life. Be humble and righteous and full of love, casting out the spirit of hatred, that you may stand in holy places and receive the blessings of the Lord.”





August Bulletin Insert - 2020

Having A Servant's Heart

By Pat Chadwick

When we talk about things like, "Having a Servant Heart and Giving Service to God," which is required, if we are to Build his Kingdom, I am reminded of Matthew West's song, ***Do Something***, which says:

I woke up this morning, Saw a world full of trouble now
Thought, how'd we ever get so far down,
How's it ever gonna turn around,
So I turned my eyes to heaven, I thought,
God why don't you do something?
Well, I just couldn't bear the thought of people living in poverty,
Children sold into slavery, the thought disgusted me.
So, I shook my fist at Heaven and said,
"God, Why don't you do something?
He said, "I did, I created you!"

{Chorus} If not us, then who, If not me and you
Right now, it's time for us to do something.
If not now, then when will we see an end to all this pain?
It's not enough to do nothing,
It's time for us to do something.

I'm so tired of talking about how we are God's hands and feet,
But it's easier to say than to be,
Live like angels of apathy who tell ourselves,
"It's alright, somebody else will do something."



Well, I don't know about you
but I'm sick and tired of life with no desire.
I don't want a flame, I want a fire,
I wanna be the one who stands up and says,
"I'm gonna do something."

{Chorus} If not us, then who...

[Bridge] We are the salt of the earth,
We are a City on a Hill,
Shine, Shine, Shine!

But we're never gonna
change the world,
By standing still
No, we won't stand still,
No, we won't stand still,
No, we won't stand still.

I think the lyrics above say a lot about service and building God's Kingdom! We carry a huge responsibility. As people of God, we have been called to build the city on a hill and shine, shine, shine. We have been standing still for too long, just watching the world go by! Are we ready to step up to serve and shine? **Are we ready as a people to become the living church on fire for God, on fire to serve?**

It will take all of us serving and working together to accomplish this great task. God calls us to be of one heart and mind. I don't think that means we will all think exactly alike but rather we will all have a heart and mind to serve God, in our individual capacities, to build up his Zion and Shine, Shine, Shine. **We are called to be his Hands and Feet upon the earth. We are called to minister to others, to step up and make a difference. Zion is to be a blessing to the poor and the needy of this world. Will you offer your service today for this great cause?** *And the Lord called his people, Zion, because they were of one heart*

and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them (Genesis 7:23).



Apostle Clifford Cole, in his book, *The Revelation in Christ*, says about service: We are our brother's keeper. No person is without responsibility for another. Everyone of us is a creator of life, not only for those with whom we have contact, but for those who shall come in generations yet ahead...Jesus calls us to serve. Jesus came into the world to bring salvation. It was his purpose to bring health to the human race, and we can contribute, as did he, to the well-being of society.

Jesus speaks of the health of mankind as inherent in the keeping of the **Two Great Commandments**. *Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 22:36-39).* Out of love comes the motivations which develop personality and makes life rich, not only for ourselves but for others, for we are a part of mankind and the good health of the human race is to be found not in hate, distrust, and doubt, but rather in faith, love, and goodwill to all men. Here is social life which is not selfish. It does not ask what is in it for itself. Never could the true follower of Jesus separate himself from other people as though he could exist without them; rather like Jesus, he identifies himself with them...loving them, forgiving them, serving them, praying for them. He is his brother's keeper...Jesus himself healed the sick, he was concerned about poverty. He taught men to live uprightly with moral integrity. Jesus calls us in every generation to bring the benefits of his teaching to a society.

Jesus not only taught the gospel of the kingdom, he lived it by his every act and deed. Jesus wanted to make it clear that he was the way of the Kingdom. He was in their midst teaching them and living the way of the kingdom...He calls us to share this task in each generation. This is the call of the church. The church is commissioned with the task of building the Kingdom of God upon the earth...These are days when we recognize more clearly than ever **that the Kingdom must be if the world is to be saved from destruction. We join together in the church under the Spirit of God to achieve this work. He himself called us to build the Kingdom saying, "Wherefore, seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:38)."**

We do not see Jesus being great for what He received as for what He gave. Jesus said, "But it ought not to be so with you; but he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he who is chief, as he who doth serve. For whether is he greater, who sitteth at meat, or he who serveth? I am not as he who sitteth at meat, but I am among you as he who serveth (Luke 22:26-27)."

There is happiness in serving. It is a strange paradox of the Christian way that we must give to receive. When life's goals are directed at getting for ourselves there is no lasting joy; but when we live for others, every blessing received seems multiplied as it is given. Thanks be to God that he has given to each of us gifts which we may use in his service. *And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God (Mosiah 1:49).*

Jesus said, *"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; Even as the Son of Man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give his life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:26-28)."*





Instruction on Serving

And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me (Matthew 25:41).

Elbert A Smith, from his book, *Square Blocks*, presents: A Cup and Loaf for the Master. Elbert A says: “Jesus is not with us today, hungry, thirsty, weary, homeless, that we may administer to his needs. But through service to others he opens to us an avenue by which we may hand to him the cup and the loaf. **Jesus said, *Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me.***

Then shall the righteous answer him, saying Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in; or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me (Matthew 25:35-41).”

As I said, Jesus is not sick today that we may visit him. But thousands of poor human beings are sick. Jesus is not naked and hungry now. The seamless garment has given place to robes of glory. He is not homeless. He dwells on high. Yet he says, “I was a stranger and ye took me in.”

We cannot open our door to Jesus now and say to him, “Come in and lie in my bed.” But we can minister to others and in that way, Jesus will come in at our door and sleep in our bed.”



Action Section

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10).

ACTION: Find Ways to Serve

- 1. If you do not know your gifts and talents seek them out by prayer and fasting. God WILL reveal them to you.** *Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee (2 Timothy 1:6).* Read Matthew 25:15-30 on the Parable of the Talents.
- 2. Go Forth and Serve with all Your Heart** = Look for ways to serve. Be mindful of the needs of others. Ask God to give you a servant’s heart. Ask God who needs my ministry today? Be ready to move out of your comfort zone. *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, (with all your heart) as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance for ye serve the Lord Christ (Colossians 3:23-24).*
- 3. Make Yourself Available for Service** = We have enlisted in the army of Christ. Let us not be AWOL when our service is needed. *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a*

soldier (2 Timothy 2:3-4). It's never convenient to serve. If you wait till it's convenient, you will be AWOL.

- 4. Be Joyful in Your Service** = Ask God to help you move out in service with joy. *Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing (Psalms 100:2).*
- 5. Persevere** = Faithful servants fulfill their responsibilities. They do not leave a task half done. They don't quit when they get discouraged or hit troubled waters. As servants of Christ we must be faithful in our calling. *And whoso is found a faithful, a just, and a wise steward, shall enter into the joy of his Lord, and shall inherit eternal life (Doctrine & Covenants 51:5b).*



Helpful Tips on Serving:

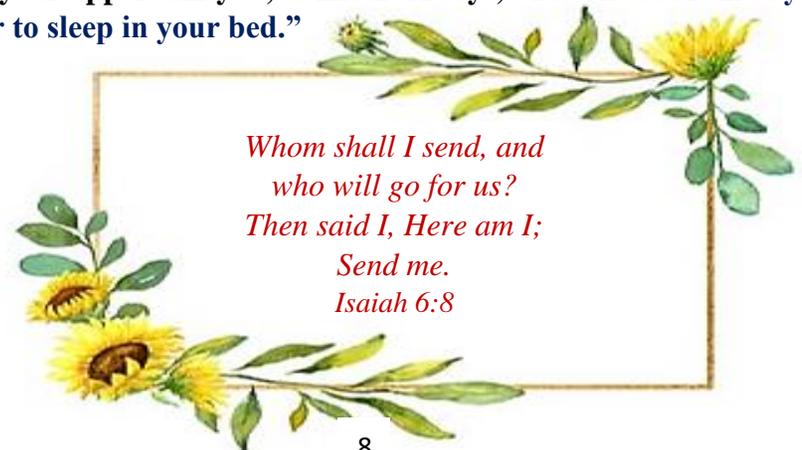
- Don't be surprised that when you pray for something or someone, if just like in the song, God calls you to be a part of the solution.
- Be prepared to Serve.
- Know it will take more sacrifice and be harder than you think.
- Know it will also be more fulfilling than you can ever imagine.
- Know that when in service to God, he is always there to help you.

I share these tips from experience. One morning while praying for my older sister, who was in an abusive marriage, the Lord spoke to my heart and said, **“Prepare your home, I’m going to send your sister to you.”** I thought, “Wow! That’s amazing!” And then I thought, “Wow! She still has 5 children at home! How is that going to work.” I told Hal, my husband, about the experience and asked him if he would be willing to assist her and the children. He said yes. Then we spoke to our daughters, as they too would have to sacrifice. They also said yes.

We thought we were prepared but a few months later, when I received a call from my sister, after she had been severely beaten, to come and get her, I realized we were not as prepared as we thought. We also quickly discovered it was much harder than we had ever imagined.

We had a small home with one bathroom and now it was serving 11 people. It was made harder because my sister had a special needs child who constantly threw and flushed items into the toilet, stopping it up. I learned to use the plumber snake to unstop it. Something I never imagined when God called us to serve my sister, nieces, and nephews. Many sacrifices were made, many issues had to be overcome, too numerous to mention here.

We found serving God is not always easy, but it is always worthwhile, and he is always there to assist us, strengthen us and guide us. **Service to God is our opportunity to be his hands and feet upon the earth. It is your opportunity to, as Elbert A says, “To take Jesus in at your door to sleep in your bed.”**



September Bulletin Insert - 2020

A Trusting Heart Responds Quickly When God Calls

By Pat Chadwick



Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Followers of Christ, who have a “Trusting Heart”, will acknowledge God in all that he or she does. In this month of September, it is my hope that all of us in the congregation and indeed the whole church will put their trust in God and acknowledge Him, as He calls us to this most important event, “The Solemn Assembly”.

The Call

The call has come as stated in the recent Tidings of Zion: “Dear Brothers and Sisters, members of the True and Living /church of Christ. **We beggars and simple servants, come now to share our collective testimony and assurance with you that the Lord of Hosts is calling His people to gather for a solemn assembly. It is our testimony that the call has been so directed by the Lord and confirmed by the Holy Spirit... We now invite each of you to prayerfully consider and prepare your hearts to gather in a solemn assembly this September.**”

The above statement was signed by Vim Horn, Richard Neill, Jack Hagenon, Steve Kropp, Tom Mitchell, Brian Mundy, Mark Nunn, Howard Parker. Vim goes on to say: **Since we met in December, we have continued to study, pray, and discuss together concerning the calling of a solemn assembly at this time, and we testify to you that our assurance that the Lord is calling for His people to come before Him in a solemn assembly has only increased.** (You may find the testimonies of all the above men listed in the recent *Tidings of Zion*.)

The Open Window

Richard Neill’s testimony is that the Lord has declared = “**The window is now open**”. Richard then says: In Malachi 3:10-11 there is the classic reference to the “**windows of heaven**” becoming open...talking about tithes, but it has a broader application of what happens to a people when they are obedient. **What are the promises that the Lord makes of this window being opened if we are obedient?**

1. The Lord will pour out his blessing,
2. There shall not be room enough to receive it,
3. I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,
4. He shall not destroy the fruits of your ground,
5. Neither shall your vine cast for her fruit before the time in the field.
6. And all nations shall call you blessed.
7. For ye shall be a delightsome land {people}, saith the Lord of hosts.

In order to claim a blessing, the people must be humble and full of love, diligent, and obedient to God. When the people see and know the window is open, they must be ready and prepared to carry out the Lord’s commands. Finally, they must commit themselves to the task they have been called to do.

Digging Deeper

What is a Solemn Assembly?

Elder Michael Brown: In simple terms, a solemn assembly is the gathering of the Lord’s people in humility and contrition to confess and repent of their sins, to soften their hearts, and to renew their faith and obedience toward God. A solemn assembly of the Lord’s people is not a focus on what we are doing—

but on laying everything down before the Lord. Solemn assemblies historically have been to draw the people's attention back to their God and to repent from severe moral and spiritual decline...God moves upon prophets and individuals by the Holy Ghost to address the people that they must needs repent or be destroyed.

Howard Parker's class: Another term for Solemn Assembly is Revival.

Historically we see 4 things that happen in a solemn assembly/revival.

1. It follows a moral and spiritual decline,
2. It follows righteous judgments from God, such things as earthquakes, fires, storms, disease/plagues etc.
3. God will raise up a leader to communicate His desires to the people.
4. The Solemn Assembly is followed by extraordinary movement by God.



Purpose for a Solemn Assembly

Michael Brown: The Lord's admonition given to the church in June 1833 in Doctrine & Covenants 92:1d-f rings very loud and clear to our ears today. They had

been disobedient and found themselves in difficulties in the land of Zion.

Doctrine & Covenants 92:1d But, behold, verily I say unto you, There are many who have been ordained among you, whom I have called, but few of them are chosen: e they who are not chosen have sinned a very grievous sin, in that they are walking in darkness at noonday; and for this cause, I gave unto you a commandment, that you should call your solemn assembly; that your fastings and your mourning might come up into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, which is, by interpretation, the Creator of the first day; the beginning and the end.

The words (fasting and mourning) can be interpreted to us as humility and prayers and repentance. Notice the strong warning that they had (sinned a very grievous sin) –hence the need for a (solemn) or serious and focused assembly to collectively repent as a people before the Lord. We, too, can honestly say we are (walking in darkness at noonday) because in the midst of the fullness of the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we know not what to do because of disobedience and carelessness. This is a grievous sin.

Who is to Assemble?

From the Conference of Restoration Elders: We believe the call to assemble is for all who are willing to repent and come unto Jesus Christ. We believe the call to assemble is for all who will share with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. (Doctrine & Covenants 17:7b) **We believe this call to assemble is for**

all who will seek God's purpose in their life and have a desire to (spread the gospel of the kingdom unto all nations) before the end shall come.

Michael Brown says in Jehoshaphat's day: All of Judah stood humbly before the Lord...including their wives and little children (II Chronicles 20:18). **In Joel 2:16 we see that even the bridegroom and bride had their honeymoon cancelled and the mother with an infant at her breast was gathered for the solemn assembly. Nothing was to be put ahead of repenting and seeking out the Lord. Joel 2:15-16 Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly; Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts; let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet.**

Instructions for the Solemn Assembly

Core Dates for the Assembly Are September 25-28

Michael Brown: The Lord gave instruction to Latter Day Israel in December 1832, as found in *Doctrine & Covenants 85:19b-20a Tarry ye, tarry ye in this place, and call a solemn assembly, even of those who are the first laborers in this last kingdom...Behold, I will hasten my work in its time; and I give unto you who are the first laborers in this last kingdom, a commandment, that you assemble yourselves together, and organize yourselves, and prepare yourselves; and sanctify yourselves.*

In Section 85 right after that call to the solemn assemble it says: Doctrine & Covenants 85:24b-25d For not many days hence and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro as a drunken man, and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light, and the moon shall be bathed in blood, and the stars shall become exceeding angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree. And after your testimony, cometh wrath and indignation upon the people; for after your testimony cometh the testimony of earthquakes, that shall cause groanings in the midst of her, and men shall fall upon the ground, and shall not be able to stand.

And also cometh the testimony of the voice of thunderings, and the voice of lightnings, and the voice of tempests, and the voice of the waves of the sea, heaving themselves beyond their bounds. And all things shall be in commotion; and surely men's hearts shall fail them; for fear shall come upon all people; and angels shall fly through the midst of heaven, crying with a loud voice, sounding the trump of God, saying, Prepare ye, prepare ye, O

inhabitants of the earth, for the judgment of our God is come: behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him.

Michael Brown: Compares us to ancient Israel/Judah who were also in crises, II Chronicles 20:1-20. If we are honest with ourselves, we do not know what to do today. We are witnessing prophecies of the Lord coming to pass before our eyes. Examples of the judgments of God include: desolating sickness = (corona virus), pestilence = (locust in Africa & Middle East, Asian murder hornets) burned out cities by wildfires = (California and Australia), tempest and tornadoes, (Joplin Mo.) earthquakes in diverse places = (Utah, Idaho, Oklahoma, and Kansas), waves heaving themselves beyond their bounds = (Hurricanes & rising oceans)...wars and rumors of wars. Do we not face a multitude of judgments like that of Judah?

Michael Brown: Continues his instruction in the recent Tidings of Zion as he quotes: *Doctrine & Covenants 85:36-38c Therefore, verily I say unto you, my friends, Call your solemn assembly, as I have commanded you; and as all have not faith, seek ye diligently and teach one another words of wisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best books words of wisdom; seek learning even by study, and also by faith.*

Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing, and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God; that your incomings may be in the name of the Lord; that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord; that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with uplifted hands unto the Most High. Therefore, cease from all your light speeches, from all laughter, from all your lustful desires, from all your pride and lightmindedness, and from all your wicked doings. Appoint among yourselves a teacher, and let not all be spokesmen at once, but let one speak at a time, and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken, that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege.

See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous; learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires; cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated; and above all things, clothe yourselves with the bonds of charity, as with a mantle, which is a bond of perfectness and peace;

pray always, that you may not faint until I come; behold, and lo, I will come quickly, and receive you unto myself. Amen.

Michael Brown ends by saying: Perhaps because of the disruption to our otherwise self-directed lives, we are currently more willing to ask the Lord for help. We have great need to humble ourselves before the Lord and repent of our sins. How would we respond if the Lord heard our supplications and forgave us and spoke?...Would we be humble enough to accept His direction...especially if it is not what we expect? The world desperately needs an ensign (standard) among the nations...even Zion. We must humble ourselves before almighty God...This is the (angel message) of this last dispensation of time. None of us knows the answers but God will perform His (strange act). Pray in humility and weep for Zion, turn from wickedness and carelessness. God will forgive if we are humble, repentant, and full of love for Him in our hearts. (To Clarify: The information quoted from Michael Brown is from an article he wrote for the Tidings of Zion: **While he is not opposed to a solemn assembly, or to those who support this one, he does not** have a personal testimony of the call for this solemn assembly.)

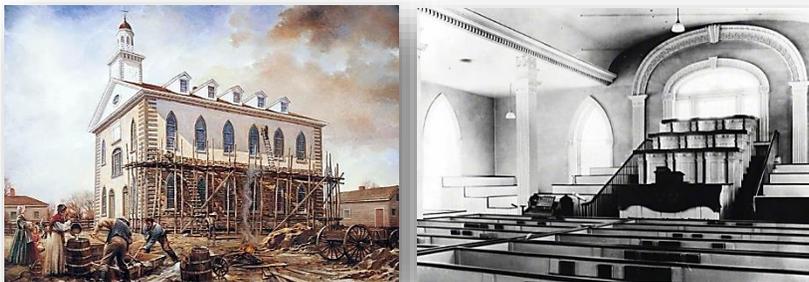


Action Section: Preparing for the Solemn Assembly

Action = Please be Reading the articles and publications concerning the solemn assembly to help you understand it and be prepared. I know at this time, the Conference of Restoration Elders will put out a 60-day preparation guide, starting July 27th. I hope you have received it and are working individually and as a congregation towards coming into **“God’s Presence” at the solemn assembly, for He has called us into “His Presence”. What an invitation!!! This is the most important invitation anyone can receive. This is a serious matter. We must make daily preparation.**

In considering preparing for the Solemn Assembly my mind was drawn to the building of the Kirtland Temple and the dedication service that followed. Inez Smith Davis in her History of the Church says: “Sunday March 27, 1836 was the time set apart for the dedication of the Temple. At a time when they were

few in number and poor...these people built a great testimony of their faith. It was a tribute of love to their maker, and they called it, *The House of the Lord.*”



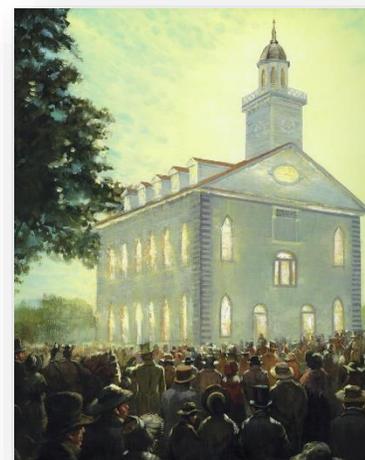
Inez goes on to say how hard everyone worked. “The women were busy spinning wool to make clothing for the workmen. Joseph the prophet and the Presidency, high priests and elders all went into the quarry to prepare stones for the Temple. Everyone worked hard and long hours to keep the work going forward.” She says, “Heber C. Kimball looking at the poverty and suffering of the church, frequently went upon the wall of the building, both by night and day and wept, crying aloud to the almighty to send means that the building could be completed... The women brought their jewelry and gave it to be sold for the building to the temple and their best china and glass were crushed and added to the mortar that covered the outside of the building.”

In considering the early church’s sacrifice to build the Temple, what are you willing to sacrifice for this upcoming Solemn Assembly? Although we are wealthy beyond measure in the material things of this world, we are depleted spiritually. Zion needs to be built but we can’t do it the way we are right now. Are you prepared to weep, cry and repent over our depleted spiritual condition? Will we lay ourselves before the Lord and admit our great need for forgiveness, pleading our cause before Him? We need Zion and we need Spiritual Renewal to build it. Only with God’s power and assistance can Zion come forth. God is calling; it is in your hands how this will turn out. I think everyone knows what needs to be done. Our priesthood is providing guidance and direction. The question is, are we willing to come down into the depths of humility and prepare ourselves for this “Great Event God has Called Us to Participate In”?

The rewards will indeed be great. The dedication service was a powerful service because the people had sacrificed and prepared. Inez says, “It is estimated that over a thousand were present. Every seat and aisle filled. No one who took part in the service ever forgot it. Even the children

remembered...babies in arms were not to be admitted because of possible disturbance, but one mother concealed her babe under her shawl and that child who had not yet spoken shouted, ‘Hosanna to God’, and the congregation sat without moving for the 3-4 hours of that session. There was a short intermission and then the services were continued in the afternoon, and many wonderful things were related of the spiritual blessings that came to the congregation on that day. In all, the services continued over 8 hours.”

Inez then says, “In the days that followed, the people received a spiritual endowment, which was never forgotten. They went out to the world with new strength, a strength which they were to stand sorely in need of in the trying days that were before them.”

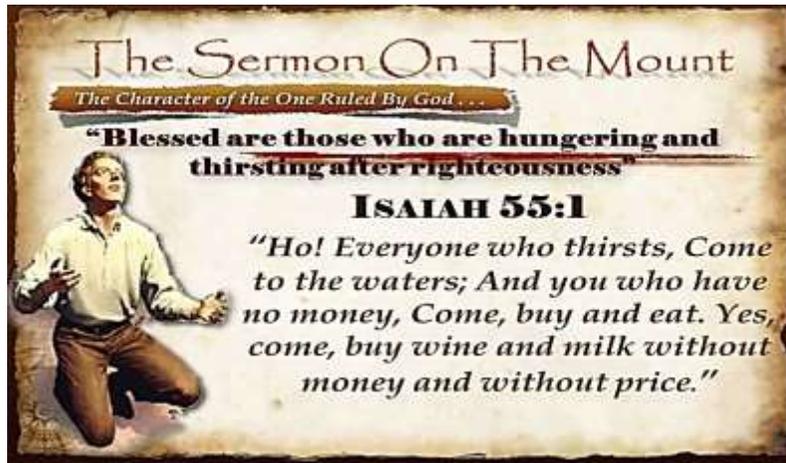


GOD IS CALLING US INTO HIS PRESENCE = WILL YOU BE READY?

I Chronicles 16:23-29 Sing unto the Lord, all the earth; show forth from day to day his salvation. Declare his glory among the heathen; his marvelous works among all nations. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised; he also is to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the people are idols; but the Lord made the heavens. Glory and honor are in his presence; strength and gladness are in his place. Give unto the Lord, ye kindreds of the people, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; bring an offering and come before him; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

October Bulletin Insert - 2020
A Heart Hungry and Thirsty for God

By Pat Chadwick



Hunger for God is the longing we have to encounter Him. It is obvious that the imagery of hungering and thirsting after God is a scriptural concept.

Christ said, *“And blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (Matthew 5:8).”* One of the main physical drives we have is for food and water but we also find within each person a strong desire to know God, for God has place within mankind a hunger & thirst that is only satisfied by Him, although men try to fill their hunger with many different things. Notice that Jesus did not say those who seek for power, riches or fame etc. would find fulfillment but those who seek after righteousness, or in other words “God”. Let’s face it. We have a hole in our hearts that only God can fill.

Centuries before Christ, Jeremiah understood this longing among men and brought the word of God to men saying, *“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart (Jeremiah 29:13).”* From the beginning of time God has always

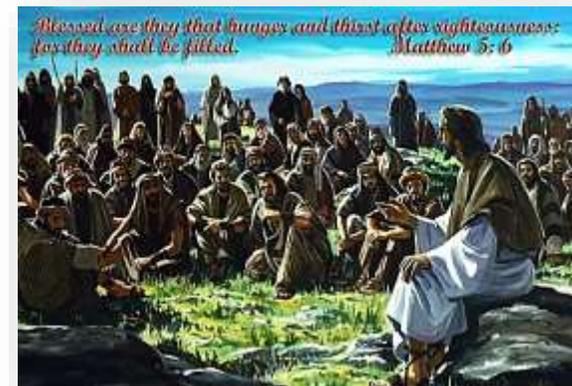
assured his children that He loves them and responds to those who sincerely seek Him and cry out for His help.

David on the run, hiding from Saul, called out to God and said, *“O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee; my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is (Psalms 63:1).”*

He was in a desolate, hot dry area, running and hiding for his life. Water was essential to his survival, yet he realized even more essential was his relationship with God. For in that relationship he received strength, hope and even joy, despite his circumstances. David’s thirst for God was greater than even his thirst for water.

David went on to say, *“Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus, will I bless thee while I live; I will lift up my hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips (Psalms 63:3-5).”* The fulfillment and joy he found in knowing God superseded even His physical desires.

Enos felt this hungering and sought God. *And my soul hungered; and I kneeled down before my Maker, and I cried unto him in mighty prayer and supplication, for mine own soul; And all the day long did I cry unto him; yea, and when the night came, I did still raise my voice high, that it reached the heavens. And there came a voice unto me saying, Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou shalt be blessed (Enos 1:5-7).* Do our souls hunger for God? If not, why not?



Digging Deeper

Apostle Clifford Cole in his book, "The Revelation of Christ" p. 193-194, said about Hungering and Thirsting after Righteousness: "The person engaged in satisfying his whims by achieving the values of the world chases a mirage. Whatever he seeks has no lasting value. He is like the man who dreamed that he ate, only to awake and find that he was still famished. He is burdened by anxieties which drive him on to achieve goals that in the long run turn out to be very much like a phantom that always eludes him, or having grasped it, he finds it has no substance. He cannot succeed by his own power, and though he may for a time deceive himself, arrogantly thinking that he is achieving success, he inevitably comes to the day when all his achievements fade and he, as a person, faces the stark reality of personal unimportance and even death.

When one turns his eyes to the Christ, however, he is reminded again that these things which burden people really need not be feared. They are less important than the eternal things of life.

When our concerns turn toward the enduring things of life and we find ourselves hungering and thirsting after righteousness as Jesus commanded us to do, life takes on whole new dimensions. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is a consuming passion.

Most of us seldom know what it is to be hungry or athirst. We have three good meals every day, snack between times, and a drink of water is as close as the nearest faucet or well. In the days of Jesus when people trod on foot across the hot barren desert roads, the experience of thirst gave meaning to the words which the Master spoke. The dozing well-fed lion is quite a different animal from the famished gaunt beast that steals through the jungle in search of his prey. So, it is the mildly interested Christian is quite a different man from one who actually hungers after righteousness."

Instructions and Helps for Hungering and Thirsting After God



To more fully understand the importance of seeking out God and partaking of *His Bread of Life and His Living Water*, let's look at God's word on the subject.

Jesus spoke truth when he said, "*It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God (Matthew 4:4).*" The bread of this world will never be able to fill man's hunger and thirst.

As a prophetic people, a people who are called to build Zion in this the last days, we must hunger and thirst for God. We need to seek Him first and often. From the prophets of the Old Testament to Jesus and on through to the book of Revelation, the people of God are depicted as those who have developed a hunger and thirst for God. ***And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Revelation 22:17-18).***



Might it be that the missing component in the Church today, the thing that keeps us from building Zion, is our lack of hunger and thirst for God? In the psalms David tells us what happens when we lose our hunger for God. ***Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them (Psalms 107:5). Have our souls fainted within us? Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger (Proverbs 19:15).*** Has our slothfulness in seeking God caused us to fall asleep, not even waking to eat or get oil in our lamps?

Jesus told the woman at the well a great truth when He said, ***“Whosoever drinketh of the water which I give him shall never thirst (John 4:16).”*** We find why that is true when we read: ***And blessed are all they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled with the Holy Ghost (Matthew 5:8).*** Note, in the king James Version it just says “shall be filled” but in the Inspired Version, Joseph was inspired to add “shall be filled with the Holy Ghost”.



If daily we feast at the “Table of God” eating His food and drinking His water, we truly will never be hungry or thirsty, for the Holy Spirit will dwell within us. If we stay in covenant with God and daily seek Him we will be filled. ***And he said unto them, He that eateth this bread, eateth of my body to his soul, and he that drinketh of this wine, drinketh of my blood to his soul, and his soul shall never hunger nor thirst, but shall be filled (3 Nephi 9:44).***



Action Section

Let's Evaluate Our Selves,
Are you Hungering and Thirsting?



Action = Consider the following and then evaluate what place God holds in your life.

1. **Are You Missing God?** = Have you lost the ability to hunger for God? A starving person eventually stops feeling hunger. What is your condition? On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you rate your thirst & hunger for God? Everyone is driven by something and if our priorities get out of kilter so does our desire for God and then God takes second place in our lives. ***The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him; but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him (Ezra 8:22).*** Do you daily desire God? Are you hungry for Him? Is He first in your life? **Evaluate yourself!**
2. **Your Emotions can be a Thirst Indicator** = Negative emotions such as anger, depression, despair, frustration and irritation etc. can often come from “Spiritual Dehydration”. Just as starving people get past feeling hunger, people who do not drink water, lose a desire for the very water they need. Your emotions can

often be a warning to you that your spiritual body is dehydrated and in need of “God’s Living Water”. *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me (Psalms 51:10)*. We often forget to drink enough physically because we are busy. Same is true spiritually. We just get busy and forget to partake of the Living Water. Sometimes we have conditioned our taste so we prefer soda or tea to water. We can do the same spiritually. *For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:13)*. Are you thirsty for God? **Evaluate Yourself.**

3. **Pray to Be Hungry and Thirsty for God = Pray to feel that deep desire to be with God and seek heavenly treasures that have eternal value.** *Pray always and I will pour out my Spirit upon you, and great shall be your blessing; yea, even more than if you should obtain treasures of earth and corruptibleness to the extent there of (Doctrine and Covenants 18:6a)*. Are you hungry and thirsty for God? What kind of treasure is your heart hungry for? **Evaluate Yourself.**

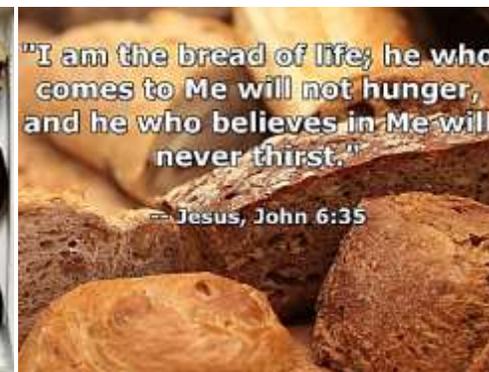
4. **Recall what it was Like to Be With God =** *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou are fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent (Revelation 2:4-5)*. Have you left your first love? **Evaluate Yourself.**

5. **Hunger can be caught = What does that mean? Well, if you go into a home and someone is baking bread, and the aroma fills your senses, you will start to feel hunger. Your mouth may even start to water. The same is true spiritually if we are around people who are true Disciples of Christ, we can catch their enthusiasm & hunger for God. So, catch the hunger = Attend church often and don’t miss prayer service.** *Moroni 6:6 And the church did meet together oft, to fast and to pray, and to speak one with another concerning the welfare of*

their souls. Are you spending quality time with the body of Christ? **Evaluate Yourself.**

6. **Seek out Spiritual Food = Are you reading the word of God, attending study classes, learning of Him? And feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted, and let your soul delight in fatness (2 Nephi 6:102). Wherefore, I said unto you, Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do (2 Nephi 14:4).** Do you spend more time watching TV or Movies than the study of God’s word? Evaluate Yourself.

7. **Choose the Bread of Life and the Living Water = Check yourself & your habits, what are you filling your soul with? Are you filling up on soda pop & junk food from the world? Oh taste and see that the Lord is good (Psalms 34:8).** Don’t just evaluate yourself = **Make a Change. Choose to partake of the Bread of Life and the Living Water.**

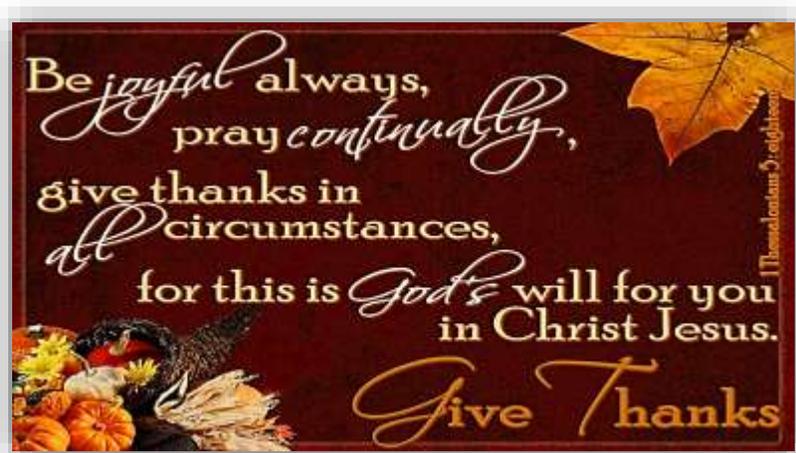


What Will You Choose?

November Bulletin Insert - 2020

A Thankful Heart

By Pat Chadwick



Doctrine & Covenants 95:1a Verily I say unto you, my friends, Fear not, let your hearts be comforted, yea, rejoice evermore, and in everything give thanks, waiting patiently on the Lord;

When we look at all that has transpired in 2020, we may find it difficult to be thankful even when we know the Lord has instructed us to “be thankful in all circumstances”. Indeed, being thankful in all circumstances seems almost impossible as sometimes the circumstances of life can be very terrible. I want to share with you a true story, to assist you in being thankful in all circumstances. You may know this story, but I want to re-call it to your mind because we often forget the power of God to turn all things to our good.

Corey Ten Boom and her sister Betsie were arrested and sentenced for hiding Jews and helping them escape the Nazis. Now they stood in a concentration camp in a filthy barracks, looking at the wooden sleeping platforms stacked 3 high with hardly any head room, and to make it worse the place was crawling with flees.

Corey said to Betsie, “**Betsie how can we live in such a place?**” Betsie recalled a scripture they had read early that morning in the little bible she had smuggled in beneath her clothing. She turned to it and read from **1 Thessalonians 5:14-18** “**Comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**” Betsie stated that it seemed to especially apply to the concentration camp.

Corey questioned Betsie’s statement to be thankful for everything by asking, “**Such As?**” Betsie answered, “**For being assigned here together, for the bible we were able to smuggle in, for the crowding**



because we can reach more people as we read the bible to them. But when she added fleas,” Corey revolted and declared, “There is no way God can make me thankful for the fleas.”

Betsie and Corey were indeed in horrible conditions, but they found much to be thankful for. They had great freedom in their barracks because the guards would never come into the actual barracks. Each evening they had group bible study. Because the platforms were crowded together many had an opportunity to hear the word of God.

Betsie was spared outdoor labor because she was ill. She was part of a knitting group in the barracks. They were knitting socks for the German Army. One evening when Corey returned Betsy seemed very pleased with herself. When Corey questioned her, she said, “**Well, I found out something today. The reason the guards won’t come into this barracks is because of the fleas.**” Then Corey’s mind rushed back to that first day in the barracks when Betsy thanked God for fleas and Corey could not see any reason to do so.

Corey's work was changed and she was able to join Betsy in knitting socks in the barracks. She said, **"And thus began the closest most joyous weeks in Ravensbruck. Side by side, in the sanctuary of God's fleas, Betsie and I ministered the word of God to all the women in the room. We sat by deathbeds that became doorways of heaven. We watched women who had lost everything grow rich in hope. The knitters of Barracks 28 became the praying heart of the vast diseased body that was Ravensbruck, interceding for all in the camp—even guards, under Betsie's prodding, as well as prisoners. We prayed beyond the concrete walls for the healing of Germany, Europe, of the world...And as we prayed God spoke to us."** All of this ministry possible because of fleas!

Hopefully, this true story of God's ability to turn the worse things that happen to us, into things that work for good, will assist you in your own journey of being thankful in all circumstances.



Digging Deeper

F. Henry Edwards in his book "For Such a Time as This" says: "Many years ago Paul wrote to the Roman saints that, ***'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28).'*** Christian's experience confirms the testimony of the apostle. But Paul's wonderful optimism is vindicated not in the tempering of circumstances to the advantage of the faithful, **but in the strength of the faithful to meet all circumstances.** All things work together for good to those who

love God because they accept his purpose as a dominant in their lives and this gives them a new point of view, a new approach, a new courage, a new expectancy. There is in the heart of every happening the possibility of new vision of God and new approach to things divine. And since this is true, we can wish each other all the best greeting of the season with happy confidence."

Instructions and Helps for Having a Thankful Heart

F. Henry was right when he said, "Having confidence in God's ability to temper the circumstances to the advantage of the faithful gives us a new point of view." When we trust God, we can have a new **"Attitude of Gratitude"** even in the worst circumstances.

As history shows, Christians are not immune to the trials and difficulties of life. Jesus even told us to expect tribulation. ***John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*** But in this statement, He also promises us that because of Him and His power to overcome all things, we can rejoice even in our trials. God does not bring evil upon His children. The trials of life come upon us because of the fall of mankind:

1. They come from the natural man living in a fallen world.
2. Sometimes through disobedience we bring storm/trials upon ourselves.
3. Sometimes others cause them.

However they come, **we can be thankful in them.** For we know God can use them for good in our life. Look at Joseph, sold into slavery by his brothers, enduring many trials but in the end what did he say to his brothers when they were reunited? **"Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."** We see

by this statement that God can take anything and turn it and use it for our good.

It's just amazing to see how He works in our lives in this manner. Just as the individual ingredients in a cake are by themselves not something we would want to eat. Who loves raw eggs, vanilla or a spoon full of flour by itself? But when stirred together by a master chef, they become a delicious cake. So it is with our trials. When God steps in and turns them to our good, they become something **good, even delicious to our souls.**



That is how we can be thankful, even in our trials, because we know God will use them for good. Sometimes it takes a while, but in due time, we will see His hand at work in all our circumstances.

Now one thing I want to make note of is that, in His instruction to us to “Be Thankful”, it does not say **be thankful for the trials** but rather **be thankful in them.**

Mosiah 11:149 Being commanded of God to pray without ceasing, and to give thanks **in all things.**

Doctrine & Covenants 95:1a Verily I say unto you, my friends, Fear not, let your hearts be comforted, yea, rejoice evermore, and **in everything give thanks, waiting patiently on the Lord.**

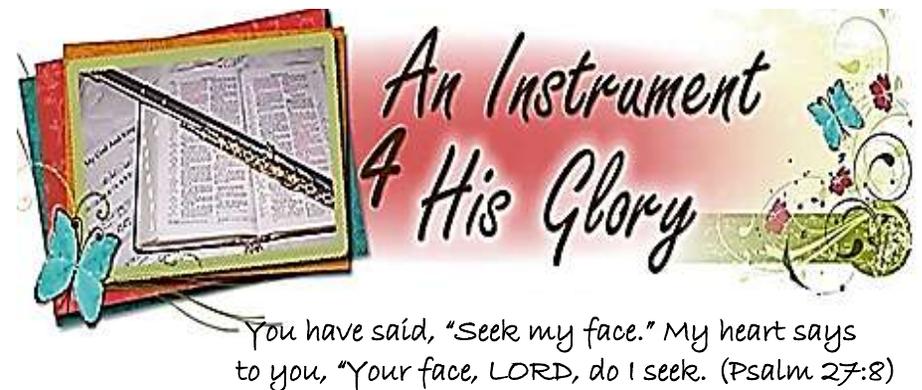
1 Thessalonians 5:18 **In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.**”

So, we see a key here. We don't have to be thankful for the trial itself but rather **in the trial.** For we know God will at some point turn it to our good. **It's a matter of faith you see, believing that God has the power to turn all things to our good and waiting on Him to do so. In our trials we must keep our eyes on Jesus, trusting Him and waiting patiently for Him to move on our behalf.**

Actually, I believe God is much more concerned about us growing spiritually than about us always being happy. Just as gold must be put into the fire, to become pure, we too must suffer through the fiery trials of this life, to be made pure and in His image. **Through our trials He makes us instruments in His hands.**

Alma 14:82 **And this is the blessing which hath been bestowed upon us, that we have been made instruments in the hands of God, to bring about this great work .**

Paul said it this way: **2 Corinthians 1:2-4** **Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.**



Actions to Help Us Live in Thanksgiving Daily

1. Grow Your Faith by Prayer, Fasting, Study, and Church Attendance:

The stronger your faith the easier it will be for you to endure the trials of life in a triumphant manor, with the assurance that God will turn all your trials into something good!

2. The second thing we can do is open our hearts to God:

We must let go of the negative emotions that bind our hearts and instead fill our souls with love, faith, and thanksgiving. Anger, resentment, bitterness and fear stunt our spiritual growth. Would you bathe in impure water? Then why do we bathe our spirits with negative and bitter thoughts and feelings? Be joyful even in your trials, trusting God to turn it all to your good. *Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice;*

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

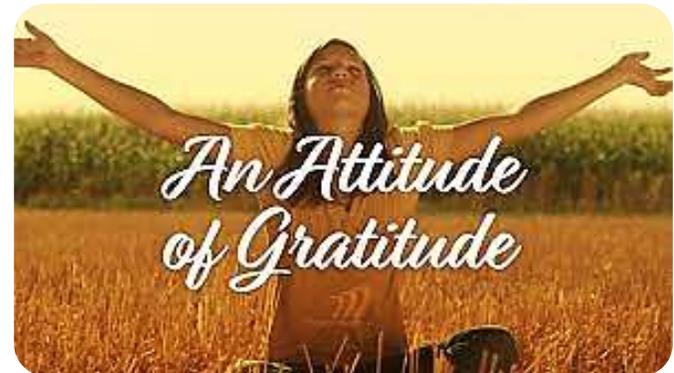
3. The third thing we can do to live in thanksgiving daily is

Open Our Arms to Others: One of the best ways we show our gratitude is by blessing the lives of those around us. The great King Benjamin taught his people: *Mosiah 1:49 And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings, ye are only in the service of your God.*

We can live in thanksgiving daily by opening our arms to those around us. When was the last time you told someone you love how much they mean to you? When was the last time you expressed your gratitude to someone who has always been there for you, someone who has sacrificed for you? Someone whose heart has always been filled with hopes and dreams for you? **When was the last time you unselfishly reached out to help another in need?**

Every time we cheer another's heart, every time we ease another's burden, every time we lift a weary hand, we show our gratitude to that God to whom we owe all that we have and all that we are. Be an instrument in His hands.

4. **Be Thankful every day for your Abundant Blessings:** Every day count your blessings. This will help you to have a daily attitude of gratitude. Everyday God blesses you. Look around you at all the daily blessings of life. Make a list of your everyday blessings. You will be surprised at how many you have on a daily basis.



And that ye live in thanksgiving daily, for the many mercies and blessings which he doth bestow upon you (Alma 16:238).