

3 Nephi 11-14

I. Would you know Him?

“Over a period of time three men, as each of us ultimately will, passed from mortal life to ongoing immortality. Each, as he made the transition, at once found himself in the presence of a gracious person who made him feel comfortable and calmed his apprehensions.

“Each man in turn found himself responding to questions which somehow formed in the mind and heart, vital above all other considerations. “What do you think of Christ? What is your relationship with him? Do you know him?”

“The first man answered reluctantly, with some chagrin. He had not been, he said, one who had participated in organized religious activity. There seemed to be too much formalism, too much hypocrisy, too little real religion. Neither had he on his own sought a personal relationship with the Lord. He had been a good husband and father, an active citizen, a man of integrity, but it now came to him very clearly that he had missed the central purpose of his life, that he had been distracted from what he should have been seeking. With gratitude, he was received into a circumstance where he could begin to learn what he needed to know.

“The second man had a briefer interview. Quickly perceiving the import of the questions, he quickly answered. He had, he said, been a soldier for Christ, a crusader for him in business, a spokesman for him in industry. He seemed crestfallen to be ushered after a time into a circumstance where he too could begin to learn what he needed to know.

“The third traveler came into the presence of his host with an overwhelming sense of warmth and wonder. Understanding the questions, looking tearfully into the loving eyes of him who stood at the gate, he fell to his knees at his feet and worshiped him” (Marion D. Hanks, “Willing to Receive,” *Ensign*, May 1980, 29).

“Let us follow the Son of God in all ways and in all walks of life. Let us make him our exemplar and our guide. We should at every opportunity ask ourselves, ‘What would Jesus do?’ and then be more courageous to act upon the answer. We must follow Christ, in the best sense of that word. We must be about his work as he was about his Father’s...*We must know Christ better than we know him; we must remember him more often than we remember him; we must serve him more valiantly than we serve him.* Then we will drink water springing up unto eternal life and will eat the bread of life” (Howard W. Hunter, *Conference Report*, 3 April 1994, p. 84).

II. 3 Nephi 11:

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, a member of the Quorum of the Twelve, wrote that the appearance of the resurrected Lord to the Nephites and His declaration of His messiahship “constituted the focal point, the supreme moment, in the entire history of the Book of Mormon. It was the manifestation and the decree that had informed and inspired every Nephite prophet for the previous six hundred years, to say nothing of their Israelite and Jaredite forefathers for thousands of years before that. Everyone had talked of him, sung of him, dreamed of him, and prayed for his appearance—but here he actually was. The day of days! The God who turns every dark night into morning light had arrived” (Jeffrey R. Holland, *Christ and the New Covenant: The Messianic Message of the Book of Mormon* [1997], 250–51).

“What a blessing it would be if every family would frequently read together 3 Nephi, discuss its sacred contents, and then determine how they can liken it unto themselves and apply its teachings in their lives! Third Nephi is a book that should be read and read again. Its testimony of the resurrected Christ in America is given in purity and beauty... I testify that 3 Nephi is a true account of the resurrected Christ’s visit to ancient America and contains His teachings in their pristine truth. I testify that Jesus is the Christ and that he stands at the head of His Church today, even the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I testify that He will come again in power and great glory and that He will leave nothing undone for our eternal welfare” (Ezra Taft Benson, *A Witness and a Warning*, pp. 43-45).

1-17 *The resurrected Christ appears at Bountiful* 1-2 Wandering around the Temple grounds

“No member of the Church has received the ultimate which this Church has to give until he or she has received his or her temple blessings in the house of the Lord” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, November 1997, p. 49).

“I invite the Latter-day Saints to look to the temple of the Lord as the great symbol of your membership. It is the deepest desire of my heart to have every member of the Church worthy to enter the temple. It would please the Lord if every adult member would be worthy of—and carry—a current temple recommend. The things that we must do and not do to be worthy of a temple recommend are the very things that ensure we will be happy as individuals and as families. Let us be a temple-attending people. Attend the temple as frequently as personal circumstances allow. Keep a picture of a temple in your home that your children may see it. Teach them about the purposes of the house of the Lord. Have them plan from their earliest years to go there and to remain worthy

of that blessing” (Howard W. Hunter, “Exceeding Great and Precious Promises,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 8).

This is the “Sermon on the Temple” or Mount (Isaiah 2:3)

This sermon is surrounded by “Covenant Making” Baptism, Sacrament, Priesthood

The purpose of the Sermon is to show the disciple of Christ how to be exalted

“Looking at the Sermon at the Temple in a covenant-making context dramatically enhances the meaning. For example, the prerequisite that no person should come unto Christ having any ill feelings toward a brother (3 Nephi 12:23-24) then has new meaning. The instruction that people should swear their oaths simply by saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’ (3 Nephi 12:37) makes eminent sense as covenantal promises are being made. The reciting of a group prayer (‘when ye pray’ in 3 Nephi 13:7-9) appears to call for a collective petition to the Lord. And the obligation of secrecy, that one ‘give not that which is holy unto the dogs,’ with its accompanying threat that violators will be trampled and torn (3 Nephi 14:6), fits a covenant making context exactly...” (John W. Welch, “The Sermon at the Temple,” *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, p. 254).

3-6 The voice

As students enter class, have music or a recorded speech playing very quietly. Stop the recording to have the opening prayer, and then ask students how many of them heard the recording. Discuss the following questions:

- Did you pay attention to the music or speech? Why or why not?
- What other sounds or noises did you focus on before class began?
- Would it have been possible to listen to the music or speech?
- What could have motivated you to pay special attention to it?

“The still small voice is so quiet you won’t hear it when your noisy inside” (Henry B. Eyring, *BYU Devotional*, 29 October 1989).

“Now, I testify it is a small voice. It whispers, not shouts. And so you must be very quiet inside. That is why you may wisely fast when you want to listen. And that is why you will listen best when you feel, ‘Father, thy will, not mine, be done.’ You will have a feeling of ‘I want what you want.’ Then, the still small voice will seem as if it pierces you. It may make your bones to quake. More often it will make your heart burn within which will lift and reassure” (Henry B. Eyring, *Ensign*, May 1991, p. 67).

“Dramatic and miraculous answers to prayer may come, but they are the exceptions. Even at the highest levels of responsibility in this kingdom of God, which is being built up upon the earth, the voice is still small...”

“My testimony is that the Lord is speaking to you! But with the deafening decibels of today’s environment, all too often we fail to hear him. I remember as a youth having the experience of being in company with an older man who had lost much of his hearing ability. He had no hearing aid and was continually asking that we speak louder so that he could be part of the conversation. He would say, “Talk louder; speak up; I can’t hear you.” That was before the days of television and CDs and boomers and blasters. I was interested in someone’s observation: “With TV, and radio, and tapes, what young person has time to listen to reason?” Listening is a challenge for us all today.

“Time to listen. The ability to listen. The desire to listen. On religious matters, too many of us are saying, “What did you say? Speak up; I can’t hear you.” And when he doesn’t shout back, or cause the bush to burn, or write us a message in stone with his finger, we are inclined to think he doesn’t listen, doesn’t care about us. Some even conclude there is no God.

“Elizabeth Barrett Browning wrote, “Every common bush [is] afire with God; but only he who sees, takes off his shoes.” (Aurora Leigh, book 7, lines 822–23.) (Graham W. Doxey, “The Voice Is Still Small,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1991, 25).

7-11 Jesus is the Christ

“This is the crowning spiritual event in the Book of Mormon. Words cannot adequately describe the thoughts and feelings that must have filled the minds and hearts of those present at the temple in Bountiful” (Millet & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, p. 52).

Elder Holland: The Will of the Father in All Things

12-15 A literal witness of the Savior

“On this occasion I had sought the Lord, . . . and that night I received a wonderful manifestation and impression which has never left me. I was carried to this place [the Salt Lake Temple]—into this room. . . . I was told there was another privilege that was to be mine; and I was led into a room where I was informed I was to meet someone. As I entered the room I saw, seated on a raised platform, the most glorious being I have ever conceived of, and was taken forward to be introduced to Him. As I approached He smiled, called my name, and stretched out His hands toward me. If I live to be a million years old I shall never forget that smile. He put His arms around me and kissed me, as He took me into His bosom, and He blessed me until my whole being was thrilled. As He finished I fell at His feet, and there saw the marks of the nails; and as I kissed them, with deep joy swelling through my whole being, I felt that I was in heaven indeed. The feeling that came to my heart then was: Oh! if I could live worthy . . . so that in the end when I have finished I could go into His presence and receive the feeling that I then had in His presence, I would give everything that I am and ever hope to be!” (in Melvin J. Ballard, *Crusader for Righteousness* [1966], 66).

“Faithful servants nourish by focusing on the individual. *God loves us one by one*” (Alexander B. Morrison, *Ensign*, May 1992, p. 14).

“Despite trials, worldly confusion, and caustic voices, we can trust in the Lord and go forward with happy hearts, knowing that with every challenge or problem, there’s the strength to go on. Why? Because we know His promises are real, that He does know us by name and has a plan for each of us. He will help us learn what it is and give us joy in doing it” (Elaine L. Jack, “Charity Never Fails,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 91).

“One incident occurred in Santo Domingo that I did not have time to tell you about. I think I should like to relate it to you now.

“We held an evening general meeting in Santo Domingo, the capital city of the Dominican Republic. Nearly 1600 souls were present.

“About an hour after the close of the general meeting, a busload of one hundred members from the Puerto Plata Branch arrived at the meeting place. They had been delayed because their bus broke down. Under ordinary circumstances, they could have made the trip in about four hours, but they finally arrived after 10:00 P.M. to find the hall dark and empty. Many wept because they were so disappointed. All were converts, some for a few months and others only weeks or days.

“Sister Kimball and I had gone to bed after a long and tiring day. Upon learning of the plight of these faithful souls, my secretary knocked on the door of our hotel room and woke us up. He apologized for disturbing us but thought that I would want to know about the late arrivals and perhaps dictate a personal message to them. However, I felt that wouldn’t be good enough and not fair to those who had come so far under such trying circumstances—one hundred people jammed into one bus. I got out of bed and dressed and went downstairs to see the members who had made such an effort only to be disappointed because of engine trouble. The Saints were still weeping as we entered the hall, so I spent more than an hour visiting with them.

“They then seemed relieved and satisfied and got back on the bus for the long ride home. They had to get back by morning to go to work and to school. Those good people seemed so appreciative of a brief visit together that I felt we just couldn’t let them down. As I returned to my bed, I did so with a sense of peace and contentment in my soul.

“Brethren, we all have opportunities to render service to others. That is our calling and our privilege. In serving the needs of others, we are mindful of the words of the Savior: ‘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’ (Matt. 25:40).” (Spencer W. Kimball, “Rendering Service to Others,” *Ensign*, May 1981, 45–46).

“For the dedication page of the book *Cheaper by the Dozen*, the authors, Frank B. Gilbreth Jr. and Ernestine Gilbreth Carey, wrote simply, ‘To Dad, who only reared twelve children, and to Mother, who reared twelve only children’” (Scott and Angelle Anderson, “One by One,” in *Eternal Families*, Eds. Douglas E. Brinley & Daniel K. Judd [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1996], p. 56).

“I want that kind of open, casual atmosphere because it helps me to get to know the players. Getting to know them as individuals is essential to knowing how to best to treat them as individuals. No two are going to have the same needs. It just isn’t going to work if you treat them all the same. If your going to treat people fairly and equally, you have to treat them differently.

“Even with your own children you realize that. You need to treat them differently in their own areas. You can’t motivate them in exactly the same way; you can’t discipline them exactly the same way. Children need to be raised as individuals, not as a group. It’s the same for football players. They need to be treated—and coached—as individuals, not as a group” (Lavell Edwards, *LaVell: Airing It Out* [Salt Lake City: Shadow Mountain, 1995], pp. 111–112).

“This is the crowning spiritual event in the Book of Mormon. Words cannot adequately describe the thoughts

and feelings that must have filled the minds and hearts of those present at the temple in Bountiful. It is doctrinally significant to note what the Savior did as he appeared to the people and for what purposes he did it. He taught and testified of himself (see verses 10-11): he is the Christ, the Messiah who every prophet had testified would come into the world...Standing before the people was the glorious evidence that the promise of redemption was now realized. No object lesson or teaching method could teach these doctrinal truths more powerfully than seeing the resurrected Lord himself and hearing him declare with his own mouth these saving truths...The Savior next demonstrated his infinite love and compassion by inviting every person present to come forth and 'feel the prints of the nails.' This sacred procession must have taken several hours as each of the 2,500 people saw with their eyes and felt with their own hands the living Christ. Jesus lovingly, patiently, and tenderly stood there allowing so many to handle him and to praise his holy name, not because he desired or needed to be the focus of their worshipful adoration but rather because he desired them to gain an apostolic witness of his divinity. This unique witness, which was given to each person there present, becomes important in their reception of the subsequent teachings Jesus gave to them. With their spirits deeply touched and their hearts softened by such a spiritual experience, they were prepared to hear and embrace the words of their Master" (Millett & McConkie, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Volume IV, pp. 52-53).

"Although the multitude totaled 2,500 souls, the record states that 'all of them did see and hear, every man for himself' (3 Nephi 17:25). If each person were given 15 seconds to approach the resurrected Lord, thrust their hand into his side, and feel the prints of the nails, more than 10 hours would be required to complete the process...Suppose you had been in Bountiful that day and experienced a 'one by one' relationship with the Savior of the world. You would have fallen at his feet. You, too, would know that he had drunk out of the bitter cup. You would feel some responsibility for the print of the nails in his hands and feet and the wound in his side....On occasion, speakers note that the impact of his appearance produced a season of peace that lasted two hundred years. The truth is that his appearance and teachings had an eternal impact on the lives of those present and for generations to come" (Merrill J. Bateman, *Brigham Young University 1997-1998 Speeches*, p. 15).

See Vaughn J. Featherstone, "Man of Holiness," Chapter 1.

Elder Holland: Video Clip: Come Unto Christ - The Savior in America

18-30 *Jesus instructs Nephi concerning Baptism*

"I am one of his witnesses, and *in a coming day I shall feel the nail marks in his hands and in his feet and shall wet his feet with my tears.* But I shall not know any better then than I know now that he is God's Almighty Son, that he is our Savior and Redeemer, and that salvation comes in and through his atoning blood and in no other way" (Bruce R. McConkie, *CR*, April 1985, p. 12, emphasis added).

"Divine doctrine of the Church is the prime target of attack by the spiritually contentious. . . .Dissecting doctrine in a controversial way in order to draw attention to oneself is not pleasing to the Lord. . . .Contention fosters disunity. . . .What can we do to combat this canker of contention? What steps may each of us take to supplant the spirit of contention with a spirit of personal peace? To begin, show compassionate concern for others. Control the tongue, the pen, and the word processor. Whenever tempted to dispute, remember this proverb: 'He that is void of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of understanding holdeth his peace' (Proverbs 11:12; see also 17:28). . . .Through love of God, the pain caused by the fiery canker of contention will be extinguished from the soul. . . . This commitment will then spread to family and friends and will bring peace to neighborhoods and nations" (Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, May 1989, 70-71).

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"Quarrel not at all. No man resolved to make the most of himself can spare time for personal contention. Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him" (Abraham Lincoln, A letter to J.M. Cutts, 26 October 1863).

"Another face of pride is contention. Arguments, fights, unrighteous dominion, generation gaps, divorces, spouse abuse, riots, and disturbances all fall into this category of pride. Contention in our families drives the Spirit of the Lord away. It also drives many of our family members away. Contention ranges from a hostile spoken word to worldwide conflicts. The scriptures tell us that "only by pride cometh contention." (Prov. 13:10; see also Prov. 28:25.)" (Ezra Taft Benson, "Beware of Pride," *Ensign*, May 1989, 6).

We seem to live in a society that is angry, armed, and dangerous.¹ News reports incessantly document incidents of rage, temper-tantrums, and even death. Do any of the following headlines sound familiar? Parents break out in brawl at little-league baseball game, one motorist shoots another in a dispute over a lane-change, a mother drowns her five children in a bathtub. Each time Americans hear of such tragedies, we begin to be lulled into a feeling that we cannot be shocked anymore. And then, something even more insane follows. For example, recently at a little league Hockey Practice in the Boston area, one father actually beat another father to death while several of the boys watched in horror. Ironically, the irate “Hockey Dad,” who was convicted of manslaughter was upset that the practice was getting too rough.² Consider another example that borders ludicrous. In 1988, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* reported on a new illness: *Vending Machine Madness*. The article reported that fifteen serious injuries and three deaths occurred when individuals became extremely irate because the vending machine they were using had taken their money without yielding their coveted “soda-pop.” Consequently, they took out their frustrations on a 500 pound metal box. Each of the “victims” who were killed had rocked the machine so hard trying to get their money back, that the machine fell on top of them and crushed them to death.³ Perhaps it would have been more rational to leave the money in the machine and walk away slowly.

Criticism, faultfinding, evil speaking—these are of the spirit of our day.... Everywhere is heard the snide remark, the sarcastic gibe, the cutting down of associates. Sadly, these are too often the essence of our conversation. In our homes, wives weep and children finally give up under the barrage of criticism leveled by husbands and fathers. Criticism is the forerunner of divorce, the cultivator of rebellion, sometimes a catalyst that leads to failure I am asking that we stop seeking out the storms and enjoy more fully the sunlight. I am suggesting that as we go through life we “accentuate the positive.” I am asking that we look a little deeper for the good, that we still voices of insult and sarcasm, that we more generously compliment virtue and effort. I am not asking that all criticism be silenced. Growth comes of correction. Strength comes of repentance. Wise is the man who can acknowledge mistakes pointed out by others and change his course.

What I am suggesting is that each of us turn from the negativism that so permeates our society and look for the remarkable good among those with whom we associate, that we speak of one another’s virtues more than we speak of one another’s faults, that optimism replace pessimism, that our faith exceed our fears. When I was a young man and was prone to speak critically, my father would say: “Cynics do not contribute, skeptics do not create, doubters do not achieve.” Looking at the dark side of things always leads to a spirit of pessimism which so often leads to defeat.”(Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Continuing Pursuit of Truth,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1986, 2-4).

“We learn in the proclamation on the family that “the family is central to the Creator’s plan” and that “husband and wife have a solemn responsibility to love and care for each other” and a “sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness” (“The Family: A Proclamation to the World,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 102).

The family is also Satan’s primary target. He is waging war on the family. One of his schemes is the subtle and cunning way he has of sneaking behind enemy lines and entering our very homes and lives.

He damages and often destroys families within the walls of their own homes. His strategy is to stir up anger between family members. Satan is the “father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another” (3 Ne. 11:29; emphasis added). The verb stir sounds like a recipe for disaster: Put tempers on medium heat, stir in a few choice words, and bring to a boil; continue stirring until thick; cool off; let feelings chill for several days; serve cold; lots of leftovers” (Lynn G. Robbins, “Agency and Anger,” *Ensign*, May 1998, 80).

31-41 *The Doctrine of Christ*

“What is the gospel? In the full and eternal sense, it is the plan of salvation, ordained and established by the Father, to enable his Spirit children (Christ included!) To advance and progress and become like him. Thus, it includes all things both temporal and spiritual and is as eternal as God himself. Every truth, every eternal verity, every law and power - whether on earth, in heaven, or throughout the boundless universe - all of these are part of the gospel of God” (Bruce R. McConkie, *New Witness*, p. 132).

“The Book of Mormon uses the terms *gospel* and *doctrine* to refer to the way by which individuals come to Christ. Three Book of Mormon passages in particular - 2 Nephi 31:2-32:6; 3 Nephi 11:23-39; 3 Nephi 27:13-21 - define the gospel of Jesus Christ, each in a distinctive six-point formula. This formula states that if people will (1) believe in Christ, (2) repent of their sins, and (3), submit to baptism in water as a witness of their willingness to take his name upon themselves and keep his commandments, he will (4) pour out his Spirit upon them and cleanse them of their sins. All who receive this baptism of fire and of the Holy Ghost and (5) endure to the end in faith, hope, and charity will be found guiltless at the last day and (6) enter God’s kingdom” (Noel B. Reynolds, “The Gospel as Taught by Nephite Prophets,” *Reexploring the Book of Mormon*, p. 257).

See Overhead: 3rd Nephi Theophany

3 Nephi 12:

1-2 *Jesus delivers a preface to the Beatitudes*

“In his Sermon on the Mount the Master has given us somewhat of a revelation of his own character, which was perfect, or what might be said to be ‘an autobiography, every syllable of which he had written down in deeds,’ and in so doing has given us a blueprint for our own lives. . . . Each of his declarations is begun by the word ‘Blessed.’ . . . ‘Blessedness is an inward fountain of joy in the soul itself, which no outward circumstances can seriously affect’ [in *A Commentary on the Holy Bible*, ed. J. R. Dummelow (1909), 639]. These declarations of the Master are known in the literature of the Christian world as the Beatitudes and have been referred to by Bible commentators as the preparation necessary for entrance into the kingdom of heaven. . . . May I speak of them as something more than that as they are applied to you and me. They embody in fact the constitution for a perfect life” (Harold B. Lee, *Decisions for Successful Living* [1973], 56–57).

“These choice, brief statements are not separate, disjointed platitudes; each has a relationship to the others. Let us look at them from the more complete list given in the Nephite sermon and in the Joseph Smith Translation. The Beatitudes deal first with a person’s relationship to God. They speak of such things as faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism, forgiveness of sins, and receiving the Holy Ghost. (These particular features are missing from the King James Version.) The emphasis then shifts to a person’s feelings about himself, or of those feelings that spring from within. For example: Blessed are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, those who are meek, and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. Then the emphasis shifts to a person’s attitude toward others. For example: Blessed are the peacemakers. And finally a fourth emphasis appears—how a person should handle other people’s attitudes toward himself. Thus, blessed are all they who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake or who are reviled and persecuted falsely” (Robert J. Matthews, *A Bible! A Bible!* [1990], 240).

3-12 *The Beatitudes: Constitution for a perfect life (H.B. Lee)*

“Meekness is a facilitator in the development of all the other Christian virtues. Combined with the other virtues, it supplies many human needs, including perspective. After cataloging various qualities, such as faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, kindness, and charity, Peter declared that if an individual lacks these qualities, he will not be able to ‘see afar off’...Furthermore, the metabolism of meekness requires very little praise or commendation, of which there is usually such a shortage anyway. Otherwise, the sponge of selfishness quickly soaks up everything in sight, including praise intended for others” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Meek and Lowly*, p. 4,6).

“After the true Saints receive and enjoy the gift of the Holy Ghost; after they know how to attune themselves to the voice of the Spirit; after they mature spiritually so that they see visions, work miracles, and entertain angels; after they make their calling and election sure and prove themselves worthy of every trust - after all of this and more - it becomes their right and privilege to see the Lord and commune with him face to face. Revelations, visions, angelic visitations, the rending of the heavens, and appearances among men of the Lord - all these things are for all of the faithful. They are not reserved for apostles and prophets only. God is no respecter of persons. They are not reserved for one age only, or for a select lineage of people. We are all our Father’s children. All are welcome” (Bruce R. McConkie, *Promised Messiah*, p. 575).

“If you would see God, you must be pure. There is in Jewish writings the story of a man who saw an object in the distance, an object that he thought was a beast. As it drew nearer he could perceive it was a man and as it came still closer he saw it was his friend. You can see only that which you have eyes to see. Some of the associates of Jesus saw him only as a son of Joseph the carpenter. Others thought him to be a winebibber or a drunkard because of his words. Still others thought he was possessed of devils. Only the righteous saw him as the Son of God. Only if you are the pure in heart will you see God, and also in a lesser degree will you be able to see the ‘God’ or good in a man and love him because of the goodness you see in him. Mark well that person who criticizes and maligns the man of God or the Lord’s anointed leaders in his Church. Such a one speaks from an impure heart” (Harold B. Lee, *Decisions for Successful Living*, p. 59).

13-16 *The Saints are called to be the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World XR Alma 4:10*

“The Saints are asked to stand as a spice, a seasoning, a flavor among the bland and often tasteless elements of the world. Because they are there, things are better; like salt, the people of the Lord are empowered to bring out the best in others...In reality, we can only make a difference if we are different. Not necessarily strange. Different. Indeed, disciples of Christ are to stand in stark contrast to those who conform, concede, and thereby compromise” (Robert L. Millett, *An Eye Single to the Glory of God*, p. 43-44).

“Salt will not lose its savor with age. Savor is lost through mixture and contamination” (Carlos E. Asay, *CR*,

April 1980, p. 60).

“Letting my light shine before men is not like turning on a light when I go into a room and turning it off when I leave. Neither is it like putting on a white shirt and tie when I sit on the stand in my priesthood leader ‘uniform’ and then taking it off again when I am not ‘on display.’ I have come to realize that ‘a city set on a hill’ is seen all of the time, whether it wants to be or not; it can’t just drop down into the valley whenever it so desires. A disciple of Christ reflects that light as much when he is cut off in rush hour traffic, when he is in his grubbies working in the yard, or even when he is tired and irritable at home after a hard day at work, as when he is sitting on the stand in Church or sharing the gospel with his nonmember friends” (Brent L. Top, *Lord, I Would Follow Thee*, p. 4).

“Jesus was not asking us to put on a show to impress others by our actions. Neither was he charging us to be overly concerned about what others think of *us*. The light we are to let shine before men is not intended to draw the gaze and attention of others to ourselves, but rather to Christ. ‘It is not that I care what others think of me,’ I explained to my students, ‘as much as I care deeply about what others may think of the Savior and Heavenly Father *because of me*’” (Brent L. Top, *Lord, I Will Follow Thee*, p. 5).

Story: Burger King, Texarkana, TX. “Are you Mormon’s?” “Your Dad Sure is Nice” “That would be neat to have a *nice Dad*.”

Story: You can’t judge the Church by its people. Oh yes you can! Brent Top, *Lord, I will Follow Thee*, p. 6-7. “You must judge the Church by its people. What good is the Church if it doesn’t affect the lives of its members?”

Story: Brent Top, “I didn’t even know you were a Mormon!” p. 11

Story: Brent Top, “These are the most remarkable young people I have ever seen” p. 14.

“If you be converted and are true Latter-day Saints, we want you to convert your neighbors - and convert them by your living. No stronger testimony can be borne in regard to the principles of honesty, temperance, justice, mercy, truth, and morality, than for a man to live those principles and doctrines. No testimony is stronger. People may question what we say and what testimony we bear, but they cannot question our lives” (Francis M. Lyman, *CR* April 1908, pp 18-19).

“Be careful how you act, because you may be the only standard Church work some people may ever read” (As quoted by President Harold B. Lee, *The Teachings of Harold B. Lee*, p. 588).

“But how much easier it is to understand and accept if the seeker after truth can also see the principles of the gospel at work in the lives of other believers. No greater service can be given to the missionary calling of this Church than to be exemplary in positive Christian virtues in our lives” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 555).

“In the final analysis, the gospel of God is written, not in the dead letters of scriptural records, but in the lives of the Saints. It is not written with pen and ink on paper of man’s making, but with acts and deeds in the book of life of each believing and obedient person. It is engraved in the flesh and bones and sinews of those who live a celestial law, which is the law of the gospel. It is there to be read by others, first, by those who, seeing the good works of the Saints, shall respond by glorifying our Father in Heaven, and finally by the Great Judge to whom every man’s life is an open book” (Bruce R. McConkie, *CR*, October 1968, p. 135).

17-48 *Jesus fulfills the Law*

(22) “Be true to yourselves, my dear friends. Be true to one another, your friends and associates. Look for the good in those about you, and emphasize that good. Never go around gossiping about your associates or speaking unkind words concerning them. Such words will only backfire to hurt you. Jehovah has commanded, “Thou shalt not bear false witness” (Ex. 20:16). Reach out to help one another. All of us need help from time to time. We need encouragement. We need friends who will stand by us through thick and thin. I ask each of you to be that kind of a friend” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “Stand True and Faithful,” *Ensign*, May 1996, 92).

(31-32) ““There may be now and again a legitimate cause for divorce. I am not one to say that it is never justified. But I say without hesitation that this plague among us, which seems to be growing everywhere, is not of God, but rather is the work of the adversary of righteousness and peace and truth. You need not be its victims” (Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, May 1991, 74).

“What, then, might be “just cause” for breaking the covenants of marriage? Over a lifetime of dealing with human problems, I have struggled to understand what might be considered “just cause” for breaking of covenants. I confess I do not claim the wisdom or authority to definitively state what is “just cause.” Only the parties to the marriage can determine this. They must bear the responsibility for the train of consequences which inevitably follow if these covenants are not honored. In my opinion, “just cause” should be nothing less serious than a prolonged and apparently irredeemable relationship which is destructive of a person’s dignity as a human being. At the same time, I have strong feelings about what is not provocation for breaking the sacred covenants of marriage. Surely it is not simply “mental distress,” nor “personality differences,” nor having “grown apart,” nor having “fallen out of love.” This is especially so where there are children” (James E. Faust, “Father, Come Home,” *Ensign*, May 1993, 36–37).

(43-45) “The true greatness of a person, in my view, is evident in the way he or she treats those where courtesy and kindness are not required....Serving others should become a natural part of the life of every follower of our Savior. When we subordinate personal interests out of love and give of ourselves with no thought of receiving in return, we are moving toward becoming true disciples” (Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Seeking the Good,” *Ensign*, May 1992, 87).

“Consider, for example, this instruction from Christ to his disciples. He said, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matt. 5:44.) Think what this admonition alone would do in your neighborhood and mine, in the communities in which you and your children live, in the nations which make up our great global family. I realize this doctrine poses a significant challenge, but surely it is a more agreeable challenge than the terrible tasks posed for us by the war and poverty and pain the world continues to face. How are we supposed to act when we are offended, misunderstood, unfairly or unkindly treated, or sinned against? What are we supposed to do if we are hurt by those we love, or are passed over for promotion, or are falsely accused, or have our motives unfairly assailed? Do we fight back? Do we send in an ever-larger battalion? Do we revert to an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, or, as Tevye says in *Fiddler on the Roof*, do we come to the realization that this finally leaves us blind and toothless?... We can all be a little more forgiving” (Howard W. Hunter, “The Beacon in the Harbor of Peace,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, 18).

“But for me there is no greater amazement and no more difficult personal challenge than when, after the anguish in Gethsemane, after being mocked, beaten, and scourged, Jesus staggers under his load to the crest of Calvary and says, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34.)...How could he forgive his tormenters at that moment? With all that pain, with blood having fallen from every pore, surely he doesn’t need to be thinking of others now, does he? Surely he doesn’t need to think of others every minute all the time, and especially not with this pack of jackals who are laughing and spitting, stripping him of his clothing and his rights and his dignity? Or is this yet one more amazing evidence that he really was perfect and intends us to be also? Is it only coincidental—or absolutely intentional—that in the Sermon on the Mount, as something of a last requirement before stating perfection as our goal, he reminds us, “love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.” (Matt. 5:44.)

“I’d rather raise the dead! I’d rather restore sight and steady a palsied hand. I’d rather do anything than to love my enemies and forgive those who hurt me or my children or my children’s children, and especially those who laugh and delight in the brutality of it” Surely the reason Christ said “Father, forgive them” was because even in the weakened and terribly trying hour he faced, he knew that this was the message he had come through all eternity to deliver. All of the meaning and all of the majesty of all those dispensations—indeed the entire plan of salvation—would have been lost had he forgotten that not in spite of injustice and brutality and unkindness and disobedience but precisely because of them had he come to extend forgiveness to the family of man. Anyone can be pleasant and patient and forgiving on a good day. A Christian has to be pleasant and patient and forgiving on all days. It is the quintessential moment of his ministry, and as perfect in its example as it was difficult to endure.

“Is there someone in your life who perhaps needs forgiveness? Is there someone in your home, someone in your family, someone in your neighborhood who has done an unjust or an unkind or an unchristian thing? All of us are guilty of such transgressions, so there surely must be someone who yet needs your forgiveness.

“And please don’t ask if that’s fair—that the injured should have to bear the burden of forgiveness for the offender. Don’t ask if “justice” doesn’t demand that it be the other way around. No, whatever you do, don’t ask for justice. You and I know that what we plead for is mercy—and that is what we must be willing to give.

“Can we see the tragic and ultimate irony of not granting to others what we need so badly ourselves? Perhaps the highest and holiest and purest act of cleansing—inasmuch as we speak from first to last in the temple of cleansing and purification—would be to say in the face of unkindness and injustice that you do yet more truly “love your enemies and bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you.” That is the demanding pathway of perfection. (Jeffrey R. Holland, “I Stand All Amazed,” *Ensign*, Aug. 1986, 69-72).

“Let us love the Lord, yes, with all our strength and power. And let us also love our neighbors. Let us banish from our lives any elements of self-righteousness. Many regard us with suspicion, as having only one interest and that is to convert them. Conversion is more likely to come as a consequence of love. Let us be friendly. Let us be helpful. Let us live the Golden Rule. Let us be neighbors of whom it might be said, “He or she was the best neighbor I ever had.” (Gordon B. Hinckley, “Look to the Future,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 69).

“Much of the comfort I am speaking of comes from the Savior’s power to heal—to heal the wounds of life or of sorrow or, where necessary, of transgression. I would ask you now to help with this healing, healing for others, healing for those you love and, yes, perhaps especially for those you don’t. The people around us need a lot of help, and I think the Lord expects us to join in that effort. I think that is what he meant when he said, in essence, Come see what I do and watch how I spend my time.

“Following my call to the Quorum of the Twelve, I read all of the standard works again, with special concentration on anything said or done by the Savior. Inasmuch as I couldn’t sleep, I seemed to have more than the usual amount of time and privacy to consider these great teachings. As I put somewhat new and often tear-filled eyes to the scriptures, I saw perhaps for the first time the majesty of Christ’s healing influence—probably because I was needing so much of that myself.

“Of the beginning of the Savior’s ministry in the New Testament, Matthew records: “And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them” (Matt. 4:23–24).

“Then, following the Sermon on the Mount, in rapid succession he heals a leper, the servant of a centurion, Peter’s mother-in-law, and “many that were possessed with devils . . . , and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses” (Matt. 8:16–17).

“This is then followed in equally rapid fashion by the casting out of the devils near Gergesa, the healing [page 21] of a man with palsy, the miracle of the woman diseased 12 years with an issue of blood, the raising of a young woman from the dead, the sight returned to the eyes of two blind men, and speech returned to one who was dumb.

“With all of this work lying behind him, Jesus caps off this almost nonstop scriptural sequence with these verses, which every missionary has heard in responding to his or her call: “But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Matt. 9:36–38).

“We all know that that call for more laborers into the work of the harvest refers primarily to teaching and testifying. It is a wonderful missionary scripture. But I wish to suggest that in context it surely is a call to heal one another as well. Jesus certainly did his missionary work, and he did that first. But as he went about preaching and teaching, he bound up all manner of wounds in the process. The verse summarizing all of this, coming just before the calling of the Twelve Apostles and their charge to do likewise, says: “And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people” (Matt. 9:35).

“Most of the healing I am speaking of is not necessarily that of administering to the physically sick, though we surely should be ready and worthy to either request or give such a blessing at a moment’s notice according to the order of the priesthood. No, what I refer to are those rending, wrenching illnesses of the soul that need to be healed but may be quite personal—some burden held deep inside, some weariness that is not always particularly obvious to the rest of the world. Here in the shadow of the 21st century we are more often to face slightly more metaphysical sicknesses than those biblical ills of old such as leprosy and consumption.

“On the example of the Savior himself and his call to his Apostles, and with the need for peace and comfort ringing in our ears, I ask you to be a healer, be a helper, be someone who joins in the work of Christ in lifting burdens, in making the load lighter, in making things better. As children, when we had a bump or a bruise, didn’t we say to Mom or Dad, “Make it better”? Well, lots of people on your right hand and on your left are carrying bumps and bruises that they hope will be healed and made whole. Someone you know is carrying a spiritual or physical or emotional burden of some sort, or some other affliction drawn from life’s catalog of a thousand kinds of sorrow. In the spirit of Christ’s first invitation to his twelve Apostles, jump into this work. Help people. Heal old wounds and try to make things better.

“Often we can, usually unwittingly, be quite insensitive to the circumstances and difficulties of those around us. We all have problems, and ultimately each individual has to take responsibility for his or her own happiness. None of us is so free of difficulty ourselves or so endowed with time and money that we can do nothing but tend “the wounded and the weary” (“Lord, I Would Follow Thee,” Hymns, no. 220). Nevertheless, in looking to the Savior’s life for an example, I suspect we can probably find a way to do more of that than we do.

“Since I have mentioned repentance, let me repent a bit myself—or at least do the confessing part and hope even now there is a way for me to make some restitution.

“My confession is that I wish I could go back to my youth and there have another chance to reach out to those who, at the time, didn’t fall very solidly onto my radar scope. Youth want to feel included and important, to have the feeling they matter to others. Young people deserve to have true friendships—the real value of which, like our health, may never be realized until we face life without them. I think that my problem was not that I had too few friends but almost too many. But it is the associations I didn’t have, the friends I didn’t reach, that cause me some pain now all these years later.

“Let me cite just one case, which will be guilt enough for now. In 1979 we held in St. George, Utah, our 20-year class reunion for Dixie High School. We had great high school years filled with state football and basketball championships and a host of other “hometown, USA” memories. An effort was made to find current addresses for the entire class and get everyone to the reunion.

“In the midst of all that fun, I remember the terribly painful letter written by one very bright—but, in her childhood, somewhat less popular—young woman who wrote something like this:

“Congratulations to all of us for having survived long enough to have a 20-year class reunion. I hope everyone has a wonderful time. But don’t reserve a place for me. I have, in fact, spent most of those 20 years trying to forget the painful moments of our school days together. Now that I am nearly over those feelings of loneliness and shattered self-esteem, I cannot bring myself to see all of the class and run the risk of remembering all of that again. Have a good time and forgive me. It is my problem, not yours. Maybe I can come at the 30-year mark.”

“Which, I am very happy to report, she did. But she was terribly wrong about one thing—it was our problem, and we knew it.

“I have wept for her—my friend—and other friends like her in my youth for whom I and a lot of others obviously were not masters of “the healer’s art” (Hymns, no. 220). We simply were not the Savior’s agents or disciples that he intends people to be. I cannot help but wonder what I might have done to watch out a little more for the ones not included, to make sure the gesture of a friendly word or a listening ear or a little low-cost casual talk and shared time might have reached far enough to include those hanging on the outer edge of the social circle, and in some cases barely hanging on at all.

“Jesus said in his most remarkable sermon ever: “For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?” (Matt. 5:46–47).

“I make an appeal for us to reach beyond our own contentment, to move out of our own comfort and companion zone, to reach those who may not always be so easy to reach.

“If we do less, what distinguishes us from the biblical publican? I might not have been able to heal all the wounds of those I met in my young adult years, but I can’t help thinking that if I had tried even harder to be more of a healer, more of a helper, a little less focused on myself and a little more centered on others, some days in the lives of those God placed in my path would have been much better. “I have called you friends,” the Savior said in one of his highest compliments to his disciples (John 15:15). Therefore, “love one another, as I have loved you” (John 15:12). That harvest is great and the laborers are few” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “Come unto Me,” *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 20-22).

“I make an appeal for us to reach beyond our own contentment, to move out of our own comfort and companion zone, to reach those who may not always be so easy to reach” (Jeffrey R. Holland, “Come Unto Me,” *BYU 1996-97 Speeches*, p. 194).

“...we all occupy diversified stations in the world and in the kingdom of God. Those who do right, and seek the glory of the Father in heaven, whether they can do little or much, *if they do the very best they know how, they are perfect*... ‘Be ye as perfect as ye can,’ for that is all we can do...” (Brigham Young, *Deseret News Weekly*, 31 August 1854, p. 37).

“To begin with, the journey must not seem so intimidating that it remains unattempted! In the Greek from which it was translated, the term *perfect* in Matthew 5:48 of our Bible means, ‘fully developed,’ to become ‘finished’ as to our individual potential and to have ‘completed’ the course God has set forth for us to follow (see Matthew 5:48, LDS Edition of the Bible, page 1195, footnote 48b). All of the godly attributes, to the degree developed through our ‘diligence and obedience,’ will actually rise with us in the resurrection, giving us, ‘so much advantage in the world to come’ (D&C 130:19). After we leave this life there will be no sudden setting apart that will, for instance, make us instantly perfect in the attribute of patience. Instead, we are to ‘work out’ this diminution of our exaltation now and subsequently. Hence it is best to aim for steady progression rather than to be intimidated and immobilized by the concept of being perfect or ‘finished or completed.’ ...Paced progress not only is acceptable to the Lord but also is recommended by Him” (Neal A. Maxwell, *Men and Women of Christ*, pp. 21-23).

See Millett: “Within Reach”

“In both His Old and New World ministries, the Savior commanded, ‘Be ye therefore perfect’ [Matthew 5:48; see also 3 Nephi 12:48]. A footnote explains that the Greek word translated as perfect means ‘complete,

finished, fully developed' [Matthew 5:48, footnote b]. Our Heavenly Father wants us to use this mortal probation to 'fully develop' ourselves, to make the most of our talents and abilities. If we do so, when final judgment comes we will experience the joy of standing before our Father in Heaven as 'complete' and 'finished' sons and daughters, polished by obedience and worthy of the inheritance that He has promised to the faithful" (Joseph B. Wirthlin, *Ensign*, May 1998, 14).

"Everyone in the Church who is on the straight and narrow path, who is striving and struggling and desiring to do what is right, though is far from perfect in this life; if he passes out of this life while he's on the straight and narrow, he's going to go on to eternal reward in his Father's kingdom. We don't need to get a complex or get a feeling that you have to be perfect to be saved. You don't. There's only been one perfect person, and that's the Lord Jesus, but in order to be saved in the Kingdom of God and in order to pass the test of mortality, what you have to do is get on the straight and narrow path—thus charting a course leading to eternal life—and then, being on that path, pass out of this life in full fellowship. I'm not saying that you don't have to keep the commandments. I'm saying you don't have to be perfect to be saved" (Bruce R. McConkie, *The Probationary Test of Mortality* [address delivered at University of Utah institute of religion, 10 Jan. 1982], 12).

"When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave" (Joseph Smith, in *History of the Church*, 6:306–7).

"... Perfection is pending. It can come in full only after the Resurrection and only through the Lord. It awaits all who love Him and keep His commandments" (Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 87–88).

"In this life certain actions can be perfected. A baseball pitcher can throw a no-hit, no-run ball game. A surgeon can perform an operation without an error. A musician can render a selection without a mistake. One can likewise achieve perfection in being punctual, paying tithing, keeping the Word of Wisdom, and so on. . . .

"Scriptures have described Noah, Seth, and Job as perfect men. . . .

"This does not mean that these people never made mistakes or never had need of correction. The process of perfection includes challenges to overcome and steps to repentance that may be very painful. . . .

"Mortal perfection can be achieved as we try to perform every duty, keep every law, and strive to be as perfect in our sphere as our Heavenly Father is in His. If we do the best we can, the Lord will bless us according to our deeds and the desires of our hearts.

"But Jesus asked for more than mortal perfection. The moment He uttered the words 'even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' He raised our sights beyond the bounds of mortality. Our Heavenly Father has eternal perfection. . . .

"The perfection that the Savior envisions for us is much more than errorless performance. It is the eternal expectation as expressed by the Lord in His great intercessory prayer to His Father—that we might be made perfect and be able to dwell with them in the eternities ahead. . . .

"Resurrection is requisite for eternal perfection. Thanks to the atonement of Jesus Christ, our bodies, corruptible in mortality, will become incorruptible. Our physical frames, now subject to disease, death, and decay, will acquire immortal glory. Presently sustained by the blood of life and ever aging, our bodies will be sustained by spirit and become changeless and beyond the bounds of death.

"Eternal perfection is reserved for those who overcome all things and inherit the fulness of the Father in His heavenly mansions. Perfection consists in gaining eternal life—the kind of life that God lives" (Russell M. Nelson, *Ensign*, Nov. 1995, 86–87).

3 Nephi 13:

"If a person performs a seemingly righteous act but does so for the wrong reasons, such as to achieve a selfish purpose, his hands may be clean but his heart is not 'pure.' His act will not be counted for righteousness. . . .

"We must not only do what is right. We must act for the right reasons. The modern term is good motive. The scriptures often signify this appropriate mental attitude with the words full purpose of heart or real intent.

"The scriptures make clear that God understands our motives and will judge our actions accordingly" (Dallin H. Oaks, *Pure in Heart* [1988], 13, 15).

The Motives Test

1. Are my comments in church meetings motivated out of a sincere hungering and thirsting after gospel knowledge and a humble desire to contribute to others understanding, or are they more to show off how much I

know or to set straight the comments of someone else?

2. Do I seek to outdo others in my Church calling? Do I feel some sense of competition or comparison with others?
3. When I share personal spiritual experiences, am I doing so under the influence and prompting of the Spirit for the edification of others, or am I trying to impress people with how “spiritual” I am?
4. Do I bear my testimony in testimony meeting out of a spiritual desire to praise God and testify of those sacred truths that have been revealed, or am I using it as a forum to impress others?
5. Is my service in the Church dependent upon being in ‘high-profile’ positions, or would I still faithfully magnify my calling if I was serving where no one else would see or notice my efforts?
6. Do I feel a pang of envy when others receive certain callings or receive awards or recognitions?
7. Do I need and am I motivated more by the praises of men than by the quiet assurance that the Lord is mindful and accepting of my efforts?
8. Do I find myself concerned about maintaining my public image or Church callings. Do I seek to control my children because their behavior may adversely affect my image?
9. Is my service more anonymous and unheralded than mere involvement in organized ward and quorum service projects? (Brent L. Top, *Lord, I Would Follow Thee*, p. 37-38).

1-8 *Alms and prayers are to be performed for the right reasons*

Are we more motivated by private devotion or public worship?

“At the time William Smith and others rebelled against the Prophet at Kirtland, I attended a meeting ‘on the flats’ where Joseph presided. Entering the school house a little before the meeting opened and gazing upon the man of God, I perceived sadness in his countenance and tears trickling down his cheeks. A few moments later a hymn was sung and he opened the meeting by prayer. Instead of facing the audience, however, he turned his back and bowed upon his knees, facing the wall. This, I suppose, was done to hide his sorrow and tears.

“I had heard men and women pray—especially the former—from the most ignorant, both as to letters and intellect, to the most learned and eloquent. But never until then had I heard a man address his Maker as though He was present listening as a kind father would listen to the sorrows of a dutiful child. Joseph was at that time unlearned, but that prayer, which was to a considerable extent in behalf of those who accused him of having gone astray and fallen into sin, was that the Lord would forgive them and open their eyes that they might see aright. That prayer, I say, to my humble mind, partook of the learning and eloquence of heaven. There was no ostentation, no raising of the voice as by enthusiasm, but a plain conversational tone, as a man would address a present friend. It appeared to me as though, in case the veil were taken away, I could see the Lord standing facing His humblest of all servants I had ever seen. It was the crowning of all prayers I ever heard” (Hyrum & Helen Mae Andrus, *They Knew The Prophet*, p. 51 - 52).

See Alma 33:6-8 for a good XR

“We must examine our motives. A good check and balance in decision making is to look at our motives for making our decisions. We should ask ourselves, ‘Are my motives selfish, or is there charity in the decision I am about to make? Is this decision in keeping with the commandments, both in the spirit and the letter of the law? Is my decision basically right, honorable, and compatible with the golden rule? Have I considered the impact of my decision on others?’

“‘Let all your [decisions] be done with charity’ (1 Corinthians 16:14).

“Beware of fear and greed. Be aware of your true motives” (Robert D. Hales, *Ensign*, Nov. 1988, 11).

9-15 *Jesus provides a pattern for prayer*

“In all our prayers, it is well to use the pronouns thee, thou, thy, and thine instead of you, your, and yours inasmuch as they have come to indicate respect” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Faith Precedes the Miracle*, p 201).

“We do not have to cry unto him with many words. We do not have to weary him with long prayers. What we do need, and what we should do as Latter-day Saints, for our own good, is to go before him often, to witness unto him that we remember him and that we are willing to take upon us his name, keep his commandments,

work righteousness; and that we desire his spirit to help us. Then, if we are in trouble, let us go to the Lord and ask him directly and specifically to help us out of the trouble that we are in; and *let the prayer come from the heart, let it not be in words that are worn into ruts in the beaten tracks of common use, without thought or feeling in the use of those words.* Let us speak the simple words, expressing our need, that will appeal most truly to the Giver of every good and perfect gift” (Joseph F Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, p. 221).

“Do not learn a prayer by heart, and say it every morning and evening. That is something I dislike very much. It is true that a great many people fall into the rut of saying over a ceremonious prayer. They begin at a certain point, and they touch at all the points along the road until they get to the winding up scene; and when they have done, I do not know whether the prayer has ascended beyond the ceiling of the room or not” (Joseph F. Smith, *CR*, October 1899, pp. 71-72).

(14-15) “Remember that we must forgive even if our offender did not repent and ask forgiveness.... It frequently happens that offenses are committed when the offender is not aware of it. Something has been said or done [which] is misconstrued or misunderstood. The offended one treasures in his heart the offense, adding to it such other things as might give fuel to the fire and justify his conclusions.... Do we [forgive] or do we sulk in our bitterness, waiting for our offender to learn of it and to kneel in remorse? And this reconciliation suggests also forgetting. Unless you forget, have you forgiven?... No bitterness of past frictions can be held in memory if we forgive with all our hearts” (Spencer W. Kimball, *CR*, October 1949, pp. 132-133).

“If you suffer from worry, from grief or shame or jealousy or disappointment or envy, from self-recrimination or self-justification, consider this lesson taught to me many years ago by a patriarch. He was as saintly a man as I have ever known. He was steady and serene, with a deep spiritual strength that many drew upon.

“He knew just how to minister to others who were suffering. On a number of occasions I was present when he gave blessings to those who were sick or who were otherwise afflicted. His was a life of service, both to the Church and to his community.

“He had presided over one of the missions of the Church and always looked forward to the missionary reunions. When he was older, he was not able to drive at night, and I offered to take him to the reunions. That modest gesture was repaid a thousandfold.

“On one occasion, when the Spirit was right, he gave me a lesson for my life from an experience in his own. Although I thought I had known him, he told me things about his life I would not have supposed.

“He grew up in a little community with a desire to make something of himself. He struggled to get an education.

“He married his sweetheart, and presently everything was just right. He was well employed, with a bright future. They were deeply in love, and she was expecting their first child.

“The night the baby was to be born, there were complications. The only doctor was somewhere in the countryside tending to the sick.

“After many hours of labor, the condition of the mother-to-be became desperate.

“Finally the doctor was located. In the emergency, he acted quickly and soon had things in order. The baby was born and the crisis, it appeared, was over.

“Some days later, the young mother died from the very infection that the doctor had been treating at another home that night.

“John’s world was shattered. Everything was not right now; everything was all wrong. He had lost his wife. He had no way to tend both the baby and his work.

“As the weeks wore on, his grief festered. “That doctor should not be allowed to practice,” he would say. “He brought that infection to my wife. If he had been careful, she would be alive today.”

“He thought of little else, and in his bitterness, he became threatening. Today, no doubt, he would have been pressed by many others to file a malpractice suit. And there are lawyers who would see in his pitiable condition only one ingredient—money!

“But that was another day, and one night a knock came at his door. A little girl said simply, “Daddy wants you to come over. He wants to talk to you.”

“Daddy” was the stake president. A grieving, heartbroken young man went to see his spiritual leader.

“This spiritual shepherd had been watching his flock and had something to say to him.

“The counsel from that wise [page 18] servant was simply, “John, leave it alone. Nothing you do about it will bring her back. Anything you do will make it worse. John, leave it alone.”

“My friend told me then that this had been his trial—his Gethsemane. How could he leave it alone? Right was right! A terrible wrong had been committed and somebody must pay for it. It was a clear case.

“But he struggled in agony to get hold of himself. And finally, he determined that whatever else the issues were, he should be obedient.

“Obedience is powerful spiritual medicine. It comes close to being a cure-all.

“He determined to follow the counsel of that wise spiritual leader. He would leave it alone.

“Then he told me, “I was an old man before I understood! It was not until I was an old man that I

could finally see a poor country doctor—overworked, underpaid, run ragged from patient to patient, with little medicine, no hospital, few instruments, struggling to save lives, and succeeding for the most part.

“He had come in a moment of crisis, when two lives hung in the balance, and had acted without delay.

“I was an old man,” he repeated, “before I finally understood! I would have ruined my life,” he said, “and the lives of others.”

“Many times he had thanked the Lord on his knees for a wise spiritual leader who counseled simply, “John, leave it alone.”

“And that is the counsel I bring again to you. If you have a festering grudge, if you are involved in an acrimonious dispute, “Behold what the scripture says [and it says it fifty times and more]—man shall not smite, neither shall he judge; for judgment is mine, saith the Lord, and vengeance is mine also, and I will repay” (Morm. 8:20).

“I say therefore, “John, leave it alone. Mary, leave it alone.”

“If you need a transfusion of spiritual strength, then just ask for it. We call that prayer. Prayer is powerful spiritual medicine. The instructions for its use are found in the scriptures” (Boyd K. Packer, “Balm of Gilead,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1987, 17-18).

16-18 *Fasting is to be done for the right reasons*

“To make a fast most fruitful, it should be coupled with prayer and meditation; physical work should be held to a minimum, and it’s a blessing if one can ponder on the scriptures and the reason for the fast” (Ezra Taft Benson, *CR*, October 1974, p. 92).

Story: Thomas S. Monson: 5 Non-members who fast for Missionary

“A few years ago I was afforded the privilege to serve as a mission president and became intimately acquainted with almost 500 missionaries. We had one young missionary who was very ill. After weeks of hospitalization, as the surgeon [page 8] prepared to undertake extremely serious and complicated surgery, he asked that we send for the missionary’s mother and father. He said that there was a great likelihood that Elder Davidson could not survive the surgery. The parents came; and late that evening, his father and I, in the hospital room in Toronto, Canada, placed our hands upon the head of that young missionary and gave him a blessing. What happened following that blessing was a testimony to me.

“Elder Davidson was in a six-bed ward in the hospital. The other beds were occupied by five men with a variety of illnesses. The morning of Elder Davidson’s surgery, his bed was empty. The nurse came into the room with the breakfast these husky men normally ate. She brought a tray over to bed number one and said, “Fried eggs this morning, and I have an extra portion for you.” Bed number one was occupied by a man who was lying on his bed with his toe wrapped up in a bandage. He had suffered an accident with his lawn mower. Other than his injured toe, he was well physically. He said to the nurse, “I’ll not be eating this morning.”

“All right, we’ll give your breakfast to your partner in bed number two!” As she went over to him, he said, “No, I think I’ll not eat this morning.”

She said, “That’s two in a row. I don’t understand you men, and there is no one this morning in bed three.” She went on to bed four, bed five, and bed six; and the answer was the same. “No, this morning we’re not hungry.”

“The young lady put her hands on her hips and said, “Every other morning you eat us out of house and home, and today not one of you wants to eat. What is the reason?”

“And then the man who occupied bed number six came forth with the answer.

He said, “You see, bed number three is empty. Our friend Davidson is in the operating room under the surgeon’s hands. He needs all the help he can get. He is a missionary for his church; and while he has been lying on that bed while we have been patients in this ward, he has talked to us about the principles of his church—principles of prayer, of faith, of fasting wherein we call upon the Lord for blessings.” He said, “We don’t know much about the Mormon church, but we have learned a great deal about Davidson; and we are fasting for him today.”

“I might tell you that the operation was a success. In fact, when I attempted to pay the surgeon, he countered, “Why, that would be dishonest for me to accept a fee. I have never before performed surgery when my hands seemed to be guided by a power which was other than my own. No,” he said, “I wouldn’t take a fee for the surgery which Someone on high helped me to perform.” (Thomas S. Monson, “Crisis at the Crossroads,” *New Era*, Nov. 1983, 8).

19-34 *An Eye single to the Glory of God*

“We each have exactly 24 hours in a day and 168 hours in a week. If we use the bulk of those hours in the pursuit ... of material things, there is little time left for relationships, ideas, service, observation, peaceful rest, true religion, and for other non-material things. They only way we know to fight [materialism] is to try to understand it and to realize what it can do to you. You must then adopt an attitude that is opposite of materialism, an attitude that you actually own nothing, that everything belongs to God and that you are only a

steward over anything that you might have, even over your children and over your own talents and potential. You will be judged by your stewardship, by how well you take care of and use the things that are loaned to you” (Linda and Richard Eyre, *Home Base*, November 1984, pp. 16-17).

“Every step in the direction of increasing one’s personal holdings is a step away from Zion, which is another way of saying, as the Lord has proclaimed in various ways, that one cannot serve two masters: to the degree in which he loves the one he will hate the other, and so it is with God and business, mammon is simply the Hebrew word for any kind of financial dealing” (Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion*, p. 37).

“When one puts business or pleasure above his home, he that moment starts on the downgrade to soul-weakness. When the club becomes more attractive to any man than his home, it is time for him to confess in bitter shame that he has failed to measure up to the supreme opportunity of his life and flunked in the final test of true manhood. No other success can compensate for failure in the home. The poorest shack in which love prevails over a united family is of greater value to God and future humanity than any other riches. In such a home God can work miracles and will work miracles” (David O. McKay, *CR*, April 1964, p. 5).

“One man I know of was called to a position of service in the Church, but he felt that he couldn’t accept because his investments required more attention and more of his time than he could spare for the Lord’s work. He left the service of the Lord in search of Mammon, and he is a millionaire today.

“But I recently learned an interesting fact: If a man owns a million dollars worth of gold at today’s prices, he possesses approximately one 27-billionth of all the gold that is present in the earth’s thin crust alone. This is an amount so small in proportion as to be inconceivable to the mind of man. But there is more to this: The Lord who created and has power over all the earth created many other earths as well, even “worlds without number” (Moses 1:33); and when this man received the oath and covenant of the priesthood (D&C 84:33–44), he received a promise from the Lord of “all that my Father hath” (D&C 84:38). To set aside all these great promises in favor of a chest of gold and a sense of carnal security is a mistake in perspective of colossal proportions. To think that he has settled for so little is a saddening and pitiful prospect indeed; the souls of men are far more precious than this” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Ensign*, June 1976, p. 5).

“Holding back or giving less than is required always produces divided loyalties. We need not have our membership records in the great and abominable church in order to be disloyal to the kingdom of God; the issue is not where our records are but rather where our hearts are...Our hearts cannot be wedded to another endeavor. Our might or strength cannot be spent in secondary causes. Our minds cannot be committed to another enterprise. In the words of the early brethren of this dispensation, it must be the kingdom of God or nothing!” (Robert L. Millett, *An Eye Single to the Glory of God*, p. 7,9).

“I will promise the Latter-day Saints that if they will go into these things allowing God to dictate in the interests of Israel and the building up of His Zion on the earth, and take themselves and their individual interests out of the question, feeling they are acting for him and his kingdom, they will become the wealthiest of all people, and God will bless them and pour out wealth and intelligence and all the blessings that earth can afford” (John Taylor, 2 March 1979, *Journal of Discourses* 20:164).

Clip: Romancing the Stone

“If you have not chosen the kingdom of God, then in the end it will not matter what you have chosen instead” (Neal A. Maxwell).

3 Nephi 14:

1-5 *Saints are to judge righteously*

“I have been puzzled that some scriptures command us not to judge and others instruct us that we should judge and even tell us how to do it. I am convinced that these seemingly contradictory directions are consistent when we view them with the perspective of eternity. The key is to understand that there are two kinds of judging: final judgments, which we are forbidden to make, and intermediate judgments, which we are directed to make, but upon righteous principles” (Dallin H. Oaks, Judge Not and Judging [CES fireside for young adults, 1 Mar. 1998], 1).

“When you do not worry or concern yourself too much with what other people do and believe and say, there will come to you a new freedom” (Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p. 236).

Story: Steven R. Covey, New York Subway, 7 Habits

“Aren’t we rather prone to see the limitations and the weaknesses of our neighbors? Yet that is contrary to the

teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ... If we have the spirit of fault finding, of pointing out the weaknesses and failings of others in a destructive manner, that never comes as the result of the companionship of the Spirit of our Heavenly Father and is always harmful” (George Albert Smith, *CR*, October 1934, p. 50).

“Perhaps a supreme form of charity may be exhibited by one who withholds judgement of another’s acts or conduct, remembering that there is only one who can look into the heart and know the intent - and know the honest desires found therein” (H. Burke Peterson, *Ensign*, May 1981, p. 81).

“Don’t have Religious Hobbies... They are dangerous because they give undue prominence to certain principles or ideas to the detriment and dwarfing of others just as important.... We have noticed this difficulty: that Saints with hobbies are prone to judge and condemn their brethren and sisters who are not so zealous in the one particular direction of their pet theory as they are. The man with the Word of Wisdom only in his brain, is apt to find unmeasured fault with every other member of the Church who entertains liberal ideas as to the importance of other doctrines of the gospel.... The man with a hobby is apt to assume an ‘I am holier than thou’ position, to feel puffed up and conceited, and to look with distrust... on his brethren and sisters who do not so perfectly live that one particular law. This feeling hurts his fellow-servants and offends the Lord” (Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 116-117).

- 6 *Mysteries are to be kept sacred*
- 7-11 *God grants to those who ask*
- 12 *The Golden Rule; The Platinum Rule*
- 13-14 *Followers of Christ enter in at the strait gate*
- 15-20 *Warning against false prophets*
- 21-23 *A Warning against dead works*
- 24-27 *The Wise build upon the rock of revelation*
- III. **Closing:** **Maxwell, “Oh Divine Redeemer”**
 Song: “You Can Believe in Christ”