

# *That Ye May Be Healed*

*Confess your faults one to  
another and pray one for another  
that ye may be healed.  
The effectual fervent prayer  
of a righteous man availeth much.  
(James 5:16)*

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## PSALM 51

*Prayer for remission of sins.  
To the chief Musician: A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet came unto him after he had gone into Bath-sheba.*

- 1 *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions.*
- 2 *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*
- 3 *For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me.*
- 4 *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*
- 5 *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*
- 6 *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*
- 7 *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*
- 8 *Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*
- 9 *Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.*
- 10 *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*
- 11 *Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.*
- 12 *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free Spirit.*
- 13 *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*
- 14 *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.*
- 15 *O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.*
- 16 *For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering.*
- 17 *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.*
- 18 *Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*
- 19 *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.*

## **That They May Know to Prize the Good**

A number of years ago the Lord taught me a very important lesson about the lusts of my heart and how I must *cross myself in all these things*.<sup>1</sup> The encouragement to write about my *faults* in this particular area of my life comes in part from the admonition Adam received from the Lord after his transgression in the garden. He was told:

*Inasmuch as thy children are conceived in sin, even so, when they begin to grow up sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good.*  
(Genesis 6:57 IV)

As you will read, I have tasted of the *bitter* that came of sins conceived in my own heart. At the same time you will also read how God, through His marvelous and matchless grace, gave me the opportunity to *prize the good* and live in the confidence *that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose*.<sup>2</sup>

Lust is not a particularly popular topic of conversation in the church, especially as a personal problem. It involves intense personal tendencies to cast off restraint and indulge in the fleeting pleasures of passion so widely condemned in scripture.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, to acknowledge that lust has been a problem in one's own life can prove rather embarrassing, if not downright shameful.

Notwithstanding the awkwardness and inconvenience of this subject, I have been increasingly encouraged of the Lord to write about my own experience with lust and that which He has taught me for the benefit of others.

Lust is a temptation that is common to all of us and, as it is written, anyone who commits adultery, real or imagined, *destroyeth his own soul*.<sup>4</sup>

*But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding; he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul.* (Proverbs 6:32)

For men, the sin of adultery is facilitated and aggravated by pornography. Romance novels serve the same purpose for women. Tragically, there are many people who are indulging themselves in these things, including many individuals within the church and priesthood. What many either do not know (i.e. *they lack understanding*), or wish to ignore is that by doing so they are disqualifying themselves from entering into the kingdom of God.<sup>5</sup>

A big area of concern is the so-called *entertainment* industry, which provides daily episodes of various forms of sin to watch on network and cable television, in theaters, etc. What will befall those who *entertain* themselves with such programming? The Lord has said that those who take pleasure, i.e. entertain themselves with, these things (the sins of other) are worthy of the same judgment.<sup>6</sup>

Since Satan's objective is to bring all people into his condemnation and misery, this is an area in which he earnestly works and promotes.<sup>7</sup> And by doing so, he cunningly disqualifies many from receiving the blessings and benefits of abiding in God's presence.<sup>8</sup>

As our society degenerates deeper into a state of open and flagrant wantonness I believe lust and adultery are becoming an even more dangerous form of temptation because of the availability of pornography, etc., on the rapidly expanding international information network, the World Wide Web (or www), which is accessible through the Internet. These and other recent developments serve to reinforce the urgent need for us to keep ourselves *unspotted* from the destructive forces of the world by confessing our *faults* and *sins* one to another and before God, and by praying fervently for one another in righteousness.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> cf. Alma 19:13 with Matthew 16:25-31

<sup>2</sup> Romans 8:28

<sup>3</sup> e.g. James 1:14-16, Galatians 5:19-21, Philippians 3:18,19, etc.

<sup>4</sup> I Corinthians 10:13 & I Peter 5:8,9 with Matthew 5:29,30, D&C 42:7d,e, & D&C 63:5

<sup>5</sup> cf. Isaiah 33:14-17 & Psalm 15:1-5 & 24:3-5

<sup>6</sup> Romans 1:32-2:3

<sup>7</sup> cf. II Nephi 1:120,121

<sup>8</sup> cf. II Nephi 12:25-30

<sup>9</sup> cf. John 20:22,23 with Mosiah 11:138

*Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)*

*And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day; for verily this is a day appointed unto thee to rest from thy labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High; nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days, and at all times; but remember that on this, the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine oblations, and thy sacraments, unto the Most High, **confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.** (D&C 59:2f-h)*

Therefore, in keeping with the command of the Lord, I am confessing my faults and sins unto you, *my brethren, and before the Lord*, and I encourage you to do the same that the Lord might bring healing in our midst. All that I would ask of you as you read of my *faults* or *imperfections* is to please remember the words of Moroni:

*Condemn me not because of mine imperfections; neither my father, because of his imperfections; neither them who have written before him, but rather give thanks unto God that he hath made manifest unto you our imperfections, **that ye may learn to be more wise than we have been.** (Mormon 4:97)*

### **Casting Down Imaginations**

Though I had grown up in the church, it was not until after I graduated from high school in 1974 that I began to center my life on the gospel of Jesus Christ. I read the entire Book of Mormon for the first time the summer after my graduation. The testimony of Jesus Christ and the revelation of His ministry contained within the pages of this precious book were marvelous to me, and they caused me to want nothing more than to assist Him in His great work of redemption and restoration.

In response to what I had read, I set my heart upon following Jesus Christ and serving Him each day. I felt so excellent inside. And I wanted very much to share my newfound happiness with others. But because of this tremendous love I now felt, I found it hard to relate to those who were struggling under the weight of sin and its consequences. So I began to pray that somehow I might come to know how they felt in the hope that I also might know how to share with them the love of God which I had received. Little did I realize what the answer to this prayer would involve.<sup>10</sup>

The Lord granted me this desire in a very appropriate way.<sup>11</sup> As He has said, "*If men come unto me, I will shew unto them **their** weakness.*"<sup>12</sup> Soon many of my weaknesses became evident and I began to experience significant struggles of my own.

You see, I had a problem. I was not very wise in all my ways, and I often stumbled because of sin. Simply put, I was not careful to *cast down imaginations* and to *bring every **thought** into the captivity of Christ* as admonished by the apostle Paul.<sup>13</sup> I failed to heed the warning to *pray always, lest that wicked one have power in you, and remove you out of your place.*<sup>14</sup>

For example, a few years after graduating I found myself involved in a relationship with a young woman that eventually cost me the peace I had come to know while reading the Book of Mormon. To my amazement we became rather passionate at times. Although we did not actually cross the line, so to speak, general lustful thoughts that did started entering into my mind after our relationship ended.

Jesus had warned, "*Suffer none of these things to enter into your heart,*" such things as lust, anger, and unforgiveness.<sup>15</sup> Yet, before I knew it, I found myself starting to give place to lustful thoughts, especially when I was tired from a long day at work and college.

<sup>10</sup> cf. D&C 85:16 with Ether 5:27

<sup>11</sup> Hebrews 4:15

<sup>12</sup> Ether 5:27; cf. Jacob 3:8

<sup>13</sup> II Corinthians 10:3-6

<sup>14</sup> D&C 90:8d; cf. D&C 17:6d,e

<sup>15</sup> cf. Matthew 5:23-31 IV

At first these thoughts were rather simple and infrequent. As time passed, however, and I grew accustomed to them, they began to enter into my mind more often and became more involved. I was reminded of the scripture which stated that even our thoughts will condemn us.<sup>16</sup> Yet these thoughts seemed harmless enough – even though they left me without peace in my soul.

Up to this point everything in my life seemed to be going great, at least on the surface. My job was rewarding. I was doing well in my college courses. And most rewarding of all it seemed, I was busy ministering according to my priesthood responsibilities in the church. However, the peace I had previously known was substantially waning. Attending church and reading the scriptures no longer brought the enjoyment they once had. Instead, there was the growing dull ache of emptiness in my heart.

Life went on and in 1978 I decided to attend college full time. I became even busier and let time slip away without addressing this mounting problem. Friends and family alike often told me how proud they were of me for furthering my education. However, because of the way I felt inside, their words offered little consolation. Not even the many changes that took place in my life over the next several years, including marriage in 1980, proved to remedy the way I felt inside.

While dating the young woman mentioned above I had resumed listening to the music of several contemporary secular artists and groups instead of letting *the word of Christ dwell in me richly* through hymns and spiritual songs as I had upon reading the Book of Mormon.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, my thoughts began to be filled more and more with worldly notions and desires in place of the desire to *seek first the kingdom of God and to establish His righteousness*.<sup>18</sup>

On a number of occasions I attempted to take my troubles to God through fasting and prayer. He just seemed to remain silent. If only I had taken the words of the psalmist more seriously: *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord*

*will not hear me*.<sup>19</sup>

I was grateful to have my college course work to occupy my time. There were so many things to do in school that constantly challenged my thoughts. But, oh, how I desperately wanted this nagging ache of emptiness to leave me.

“What had I done?” I wondered. “How had my relationship with my Lord been compromised?” “Why had this happened?” I just wanted this whole dilemma (drama) to go away so I could receive again the peace I had known while reading the Book of Mormon.

Little did I (want to) realize, I had been making decisions through the thoughts I entertained in my mind that were separating me from God. They were determining my eternal character and thus my eternal estate.<sup>20</sup>

Alma reminded the Zoramites that *every seed [word] bringeth forth unto its own kind*.<sup>21</sup> I understood this to include thoughts. Like *seeds*, thoughts *grow* into behavioral patterns and actions.<sup>22</sup> So, it should not have been a surprise to me that I was now reaping the corruption of the thoughts which I had been sowing to the pleasing of my carnal thoughts.

God gives us the desires of our hearts, *whether good or evil*, either unto *liberty and eternal life through the great mediation of Christ*, or *captivity and death according to the captivity and power of the devil*.<sup>23</sup> The apostle Paul warned:

*Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* (Galatians 6:7,8; cf. Jeremiah 6:19)

As time passed it was becoming more and more difficult to overlook the fact that something was desperately wrong in my spiritual life. The lack of peace in my heart was both undeniable and unbearable. In utter desperation I cried

<sup>16</sup> Alma 9:24

<sup>17</sup> Colossians 3:16

<sup>18</sup> Matthew 6:35-39 & Jacob 2:22-24

<sup>19</sup> Psalm 66:18; see also Isaiah 59:1,2

<sup>20</sup> Romans 6:16 & Alma 1:128,129

<sup>21</sup> Alma 16:158

<sup>22</sup> cf. Mark 7:20,21 & Matthew 12:29,30

<sup>23</sup> Alma 15:56 with II Nephi 1:120

out to the Lord; and in reply He convincingly led me to the following passage of scripture:

*And verily I say unto you, as I have said before, He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, or if any shall commit adultery in their hearts, 1) they shall not have the Spirit, but 2) shall deny the faith and 3) shall fear. (D&C 63:5a; cf. D&C 42:7d,e; Numbers added for emphasis.)<sup>24</sup>*

Adultery, imagined or real, is one of the most offensive and abominable sins we can commit against God and each other.<sup>25</sup> Why? It constitutes a major breach of the marriage covenant, which God established after the likeness of the covenant that is between Jesus Christ and His bride, the church.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, the Lord has commanded His people to be uncompromising in dealing with this matter.<sup>27</sup>

At first I could see how this scripture might apply to other people, but not to me. However, like a prodigal son, I eventually *came to myself* and stopped denying the fact that this scripture was being impressed upon my heart **for me!**<sup>28</sup> Through the influence of God's Spirit I came to plainly see that I was living in a *lost and fallen state* because of the thoughts I had allowed to enter into my mind.<sup>29</sup>

But now I had a reason to hope. God had **awakened** me *out of a deep sleep* like He had the Nephites of old, and *I awoke unto God!*<sup>30</sup> Why had He done so, I wondered, especially since I had sinned against Him after receiving

His love through the gift of His Holy Spirit?<sup>31</sup> Through this experience I came to know our God as a merciful God, One who in great compassion had shown me the cause of my distress. And now He was offering me the opportunity to both *prize the good* and abide in the goodness of His presence.<sup>32</sup>

So I began to *work out my salvation with fear and trembling* before Him, trusting that He was able to save me from all my sins.<sup>33</sup> As I did, He began to teach me how this verse from Section 63:5 of the Doctrine & Covenants related to my life and circumstance. Here are some of the things I was taught as I contemplated the relevance of this scripture to my desires and thoughts.

### **They shall not have the Spirit...**

First, I was reminded that our *body* is to be the temple of the Holy Ghost – the *Spirit of truth* whom Jesus called the *Comforter* – by whom we may receive *the peace of God which passes understanding*.<sup>34</sup> Further, it is only through this precious gift that we may be filled with *perfect love* and the *hope* of eternal life that is granted to us by faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>35</sup>

As I thought on these things, a startling truth pierced the dark cloud that had formed by the sinful thoughts I had allowed to enter my mind: **I did not have peace in my heart because the Comforter was not present in my life to comfort and assure me of my hopes and desires.**<sup>36</sup> Rather, He was convicting me of my sin, chastening me and correcting me.<sup>37</sup>

Though this truth should have been obvious to me, I had allowed my spiritual senses to be-

<sup>24</sup>Please note that this verse from D&C 63 is not limited to physical/sexual immorality. Those who commit spiritual adultery with *the great whore* of the earth by forsaking the Lord for the vanities of this world shall also not have the Spirit of God (cf. James 4:1-6 & I John 2:15-17 with II Peter 2:9-22; see also Revelation 17:1-19:3)

<sup>25</sup>e.g. Alma 19:5-7 & Luke 18:20 with Matthew 5:30 & Deuteronomy 5:18

<sup>26</sup>cf. Ephesians 5:25-33

<sup>27</sup>e.g. I Corinthians 5:1-13 & D&C 42:7e,20b with Leviticus 20:10

<sup>28</sup>cf. Luke 15:17

<sup>29</sup>cf. Mosiah 8:76 with D&C 76:3k-4f

<sup>30</sup>Alma 3:11

<sup>31</sup>I John 3:5-10 with Romans 5:5

<sup>32</sup>Genesis 6:57 IV with Romans 5:6-11

<sup>33</sup>Philippians 1:6 & 2:12 & Mormon 4:93; with Matthew 2:4 & Helaman 2:71-73

<sup>34</sup>I Corinthians 3:16 & 6:19 & John 14:16,26 with Romans 14:17

<sup>35</sup>cf. Philippians 4:4-8, Romans 5:5, Genesis 6:64,65, Moroni 8:29, Romans 15:13, etc.

<sup>36</sup>cf. Hebrews 11:1 & John 14:15-18 with Helaman 2:59, D&C 18:2k & II Chronicles 32:31b

<sup>37</sup>cf. John 16:7-11 & D&C 92:1 with Hebrews 12:7-13 & Revelation 3:19

come dulled through vain imaginings.<sup>38</sup> In the words of the apostle Paul, I was growingly becoming *past feeling* with my understanding being *darkened*.<sup>39</sup>

Now, however, the answer from God's word was coming in loud and clear: ***all those***, men and women alike, who give place to adulterous thoughts or actions *shall not have the Spirit*.<sup>40</sup> It was now evident that this included me.

Should I have expected the Spirit of the Holy One of Israel to dwell *richly* in me in spite of the fact that I was indulging in that which was in direct opposition to His holiness?<sup>41</sup> Again, it should have been obvious to me that He would not. Our Lord has said that He does not always strive with those who yield to the enticing of the devil.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, if anyone persists in his or her unrepentant ways until death, the Spirit of the Lord will withdraw from them such that He has no part or place in them. Consequently, they become subject to the devil.<sup>43</sup> For, as King Benjamin testified, *the Lord... dwelleth not in unholy temples*.<sup>44</sup>

The Lord does not act in a passive way about this matter through simply withdrawing His Spirit. Rather, He reproveth sin.<sup>45</sup> He chastens those who entertain such thoughts to bring them to repentance.<sup>46</sup> And if they repent, they are restored to His fellowship. If they continue to harden their hearts against Him until ripe in their iniquities they will be cut off from His presence.<sup>47</sup>

This is not all. The Lord went on to teach me that those who yield to sin become the servants of sin.<sup>48</sup> That is, they come under the

spiritual *bondage* of sin.<sup>49</sup> Consequently, they *continue* in sin as slaves, being ever compelled to perform the lusts of the devil.<sup>50</sup> Here is how Jesus put it to the wicked religious leaders of His day:

*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do...* (John 8:44a)

Why was Satan their father? They had rejected God as their father, i.e. as the source and strength of their lives, and refused to love each other as God commanded them.<sup>51</sup> God was not in all their thoughts<sup>52</sup> and so the devil became their father and they his servants of unrighteousness:<sup>53</sup>

*Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?* (Romans 6:16)

Sin starts out seemingly innocent enough, being a pleasurable yet fleeting thing. But it eventually leads to *an everlasting death as to things pertaining unto righteousness* if it is not forsaken through true repentance:<sup>54</sup>

*But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.* (James 1:14,15; cf. Moroni 7:10-18)

And so it is written, *to be carnally minded, is death, and to be spiritually minded, is life eternal*.<sup>55</sup>

Simply comprehended, our minds are spiritual battlegrounds.<sup>56</sup> If we do not entrust our every thought unto the Lord through prayer, we will be overcome (overrun) by the enemy of our

<sup>38</sup> I Nephi 3:125 & II Corinthians 4:4

<sup>39</sup> cf. Ephesians 4:17-19; cf. Alma 9:15-20 & 16:229-238

<sup>40</sup> cf. D&C 63:5a with D&C 76:3k-4f

<sup>41</sup> cf. Ephesians 5:3-21 & Colossians 3:5-16 with John 6:63

<sup>42</sup> cf. D&C 1:5g & 43:3b,c with Romans 1:18-32; see also Genesis 8:5, Ether 1:41 & II Nephi 11:76

<sup>43</sup> Alma 16:229-238 & Helaman 2:161-163

<sup>44</sup> Mosiah 1:82

<sup>45</sup> D&C 1:5f & 92:1

<sup>46</sup> Hebrews 12:5-11 & Revelation 3:19 with II Peter 3:9 & Isaiah 63:9,10

<sup>47</sup> cf. I Nephi 7:42, II Nephi 12:20,21 & Ether 1:41,42 with D&C 94:5c

<sup>48</sup> John 8:34 with Romans 6:16-23

<sup>49</sup> cf. Matthew 12:38b with Alma 9:19-32

<sup>50</sup> cf. I John 3:8,10 with D&C 28:11a

<sup>51</sup> cf. Genesis 7:39-43 IV with Matthew 22:33-23:35

<sup>52</sup> Psalm 10:4

<sup>53</sup> Genesis 7:43 IV; cf. Alma 8:36,37 with D&C 28:11a

<sup>54</sup> Romans 6:23 & Alma 9:21-31,52

<sup>55</sup> Romans 8:6 & II Nephi 6:74

<sup>56</sup> cf. II Corinthians 10:3-6

souls to the committing of much evil through sin.<sup>57</sup>

What then must we do to avoid this spiritual death, the second death spoken of by the prophets?<sup>58</sup> We must repent unto the *renewing* of our *minds* through faith in Jesus Christ.<sup>59</sup> This involves *letting* the same mind be in us which was in Jesus Christ, i.e. the Holy Spirit of our God.<sup>60</sup>

How is this to be accomplished in our individual lives? We receive the Spirit through the prayer of faith.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, we must pray continually, unceasingly, spontaneously, fervently.<sup>62</sup> Otherwise, we cannot expect the Spirit of the Lord to abide with us – except for His striving with us for the purpose of leading us to believe in and receive Jesus Christ through repentance of our sins.<sup>63</sup>

My initial response to this instruction was that all of this was a personal matter, something that affected me and not others. The Lord soon convinced me otherwise, however.

Now an elder in His priesthood,<sup>64</sup> I was to perform the ordinances of His church by the Spirit which was in me.<sup>65</sup> Well, if I did not have the Holy Spirit of truth dwelling in me because of the impure thoughts I had allowed to come into my heart – which, incidentally, I did not view at the time as being excessive in the least – by what spirit was I ministering?<sup>66</sup> The gravity of this question began to weigh heavy upon my heart! How could I expect to minister to others when I, myself, was in *the gall of bitterness, in a state contrary to happiness* spoken of by the prophets?<sup>67</sup> I was fast coming to the conclusion that I could not – except for the abundant and merciful grace God grants for the sake of those

to whom I had been called to serve.<sup>68</sup>

Before I had time to pity myself, though, the Lord reminded me that the temptation to which I had fallen prey was not unique to me. Quite the contrary. This is a temptation that is *common to man*.<sup>69</sup> And it amounted to nothing less than covert, if not overt, *spiritual warfare!*<sup>70</sup>

You see, the devil knows very well what the Lord has said. Those who *look on a woman to lust after her, or if **any** (man or woman) shall commit adultery in their hearts, they shall **not** have the Spirit.*<sup>71</sup> Please think about this for a moment. If Satan, for example, can ensnare the priesthood of the church with this sin, according to God's word ***they shall not have the Spirit!*** How then shall they properly administer the ordinances according to the Lord's Spirit, which is to be in them?<sup>72</sup> They cannot – except God chooses to graciously provide ministry for His own name's sake.<sup>73</sup> Consequently, the devil would have ready access to their lives, their families, and to the members of the church at large. And would not this cause the church *to fail in its progress*, something for which Satan strives continuously?<sup>74</sup> Clearly it would, and it will continue to if all of us are not vigilant in keeping our minds stayed on Christ and His work of redemption through prayer and faithful devotion to the truth.

*For the Lord hath said, This is my church, and I will establish it; **and nothing shall overthrow it, save it is the transgression of my people.*** (Mosiah 11:166)

Therefore, like a corrupt prosecuting attorney, Satan (*the accuser*) vigorously labors to get each and every one of us condemned by tempting us to commit this sin and thereby deprive us of the Spirit of the Lord.<sup>75</sup> When he succeeds, the result is devastating.

<sup>57</sup> cf. D&C 76:3k-4f & I Thessalonians 5:16-24 with Proverbs 16:3

<sup>58</sup> Revelation 2:11, 20:6,14 & 21:8

<sup>59</sup> Helaman 5:73,74 & D&C 58:9c,d with Romans 12:1,2

<sup>60</sup> Philippians 2:1-5 with I Corinthians 2:9-16 & Ephesians 4:23

<sup>61</sup> cf. D&C 63:16 with Luke 3:28,29

<sup>62</sup> cf. Colossians 4:2, Alma 10:28, II Nephi 14:12, Mosiah 11:149, III Nephi 8:47-52, D&C 3:1e, 17:6e, 30:4c, 32:3e, 61:6e, 85:38c, 87:6e, 90:8d, etc.

<sup>63</sup> cf. Acts 17:27 with Alma 16:237,238

<sup>64</sup> December 12, 1982

<sup>65</sup> e.g. D&C 16:5e, D&C 17:12b, Moroni 3:3, etc.

<sup>66</sup> e.g. Luke 11:35,36

<sup>67</sup> Alma 19:75

<sup>68</sup> cf. Philippians 1:15-18 with I Corinthians 1:19-29

<sup>69</sup> cf. I Corinthians 10:13 with I Peter 5:8,9

<sup>70</sup> cf. Ephesians 6:12 with II Corinthians 10:3-6

<sup>71</sup> D&C 42:7d & 63:5; cf. D&C 17:6d,e

<sup>72</sup> cf. D&C 16:5e, D&C 17:12b & Moroni 3:3

<sup>73</sup> cf. Philippians 18 with I Corinthians 1:26-29

<sup>74</sup> cf. Alma 2:17 with I Thessalonians 2:18

<sup>75</sup> cf. Revelation 12:10,11 & Alma 8:19-37,68 with Moroni 7:10-18

**...and shall deny the faith** (D&C 63:5a)

The Lord went on to say in D&C 63:5a that those who yield to the devil in this area will not only not have His Spirit, but also that they *shall deny the faith*.<sup>76</sup> What faith do they deny? The *faith of the gospel, the faith once delivered to the saints* of God.<sup>77</sup>

The apostle wrote, *Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*.<sup>78</sup> The assurance spoken of here comes from the *Comforter*, and that which is hoped for is *the hope of glory*, which is *Christ in you*.<sup>79</sup> Therefore, without the assurance of the *Comforter* abiding in us because of our wayward hopes (lusts), can any of us expect our faith to remain intact when the storms of the devil rage against us?<sup>80</sup> Hardly. The devil roams this earth *as a roaring lion...seeking whom he may devour*.<sup>81</sup> *All we like sheep* are easy prey for him when we carelessly or purposefully allow ourselves to be led away from the Good Shepherd – Who, we must remember, guides us by His Spirit of truth.<sup>82</sup> In fine, if we abide in lust or commit adultery in our hearts, we forfeit His guidance and protection.<sup>83</sup>

The point? Faith is absent where lust resides. Why? Lust is a degenerate form of hope. Remember, faith involves the *Comforter's assurance* of our hope. Should we expect God, through His Holy Spirit, to assure us of that which is unholy? If He did, it could only be to our condemnation.<sup>84</sup> Thus it is written that not all men have faith.<sup>85</sup> Why? Not everyone pleases God with their hopes, i.e. the wicked or lustful thoughts they dwell upon in their minds.

What about our goodly desires? Should not

God prosper these in spite of our sinful desires? It is a matter of intent. *We cannot serve two masters*.<sup>86</sup> If our intent is to serve our flesh, God will not be with us to prosper us in our hopes.<sup>87</sup> If, on the other hand, we desire to come out of sin and to live in righteousness before Him, God has promised to hear us and lead us (by faith) in the Way of everlasting life.<sup>88</sup>

*Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword; fro the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. (Isaiah 1:16-20)*

*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, reconcile yourselves to the will of God, and not the will of the devil and the flesh; and remember after ye are reconciled unto God, that it is only in and through the grace of God that ye are saved. (II Nephi 7:41,42)*

What are the signs that someone has denied *the faith* because of this sin? The Lord taught me that one of the first is a discounting of the authority, relevance, and authenticity of scripture.<sup>89</sup> Anyone who has denied the faith will not only stop studying the scriptures to learn of God's will for them, they will also begin to challenge the veracity of God's word contained in them. Why? The scriptures stand as a tangible witness against them, testifying that their actions are wrong and must be forsaken. Unless they are willing to repent, the scriptures only serve as a bold antagonist, reminding them that they are living in sin.

Another sign I was shown that priesthood

<sup>76</sup> cf. D&C 76:3k-4f & 85:36a with D&C 28:11a & Romans 6:16

<sup>77</sup> Philippians 1:27 & Jude 1:3

<sup>78</sup> Hebrews 11:1a

<sup>79</sup> John 14:15-18,26, Colossians 1:27, I John 3:1-3 & I Timothy 1:1 with D&C 42:12e & Jacob 2:22-24

<sup>80</sup> e.g. Helaman 2:74,75 & Matthew 7:34,35

<sup>81</sup> I Peter 5:8 with I John 5:4 & Isaiah 43:11

<sup>82</sup> cf. D&C 76:3k-4f, John 10:1-18 & John 16:13,14

<sup>83</sup> Isaiah 59:2 & 63:9,10

<sup>84</sup> cf. D&C 85:16f with Jacob 3:22-25

<sup>85</sup> cf. II Thessalonians 3:2 & D&C 85:36a with Romans 8:8 & Hebrews 11:6

<sup>86</sup> Matthew 6:19-24

<sup>87</sup> Psalm 66:18 with Hebrews 4:12

<sup>88</sup> cf. II Chronicles 7:14,15

<sup>89</sup> cf. Alma 9:17-25 & Luke 8:12,18

members in particular have denied the faith because of this sin is that they no longer call others to repentance according to the gospel.<sup>90</sup> Instead, they begin to practice priestcraft by teaching their opinions and the more popular themes of the day.<sup>91</sup> Sin, they argue, is not the critical issue, acceptance and tolerance is. Thus, contrary to the wisdom of the Lord, they insist that we must not judge.<sup>92</sup> On the surface this seems charitable enough. However, the sins they attempt to hide or justify are far from charitable and can only lead to disillusionment and suffering.

Is it any wonder, then, that the Lord has told His priesthood that, *if ye receive not the Spirit ye shall not teach?*<sup>93</sup> Again, we receive the Spirit of the Lord through *the prayer of faith*.<sup>94</sup> Consequently, thoughts which exclude *the prayer of faith* exclude also the reception of the Holy Ghost.<sup>95</sup>

Our calling in Christ is to forsake our *natural* thoughts and to receive God's thoughts for us through the prayer of faith.<sup>96</sup> This involves keeping our eyes single to God's glory by living according to His hope for us in all holiness and godliness by faith.<sup>97</sup>

We were created in God's image.<sup>98</sup> And it was to this end that He grants us life, to be like Him *in this world*.<sup>99</sup> But do we want to be like Him? This is where agency enters the picture.

**Through this present life each one of us are presented with the all important question: "Do I want to be reborn and become like my Lord through *faith, hope and charity*, or do I want to remain *carnal, sensual and devilish* like Satan who is in a fallen state?" The thoughts we choose to entertain each day**

**are our answer to this question.**<sup>100</sup>

The third sign I would like to mention is that those who deny the faith because of this sin begin to question, and eventually deny, the existence of the devil.<sup>101</sup> Without the light of truth, meaning the everlasting light of Christ shining in their souls, they must unavoidably fall prey to the deception of the enemy of their souls. And little wonder the devil would lie to them about his existence. If they sensed the danger of his captivity, they might repent and be saved from his treachery.<sup>102</sup>

While other signs could be cited, in the end the result is the same. Those once zealous for the faith soon begin to deny the truths of the gospel.<sup>103</sup> And, eventually, they even question the truth itself. I should say they eventually come to question the *Truth Himself*. For Jesus is *the Way, the Truth and the Life*.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, except they soon repent of their sins unto calling on His name, they will eventually join Pilate in condemning our Savior before the world while asking *what is truth*.<sup>105</sup>

Though I personally did not succumb to all these denials and sins, through the Lord's instruction I could see that I had begun to sink deep into an apathy concerning reading the scriptures and the call to repent of our sins. When I asked the Lord what I should do, I was reminded of the apostle Paul's words, *put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to gratify the lusts thereof*.<sup>106</sup>

When I asked why this was so important, I was reminded of the words of the apostle John:

*Love not the world, neither the things that are of the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all in the world that is of the lusts of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And*

<sup>90</sup> cf. Mark 1:13 IV with D&C 18:21 & Mosiah 11:101

<sup>91</sup> cf. II Nephi 11:106-108 & 12:5-17

<sup>92</sup> cf. Matthew 7:1-5 & John 7:24 with Mormon 7:13-18

<sup>93</sup> D&C 42:5b

<sup>94</sup> D&C 42:5b & 63:16

<sup>95</sup> II Nephi 14:11,12

<sup>96</sup> cf. Isaiah 55:7-11 with Philippians 2:1-5

<sup>97</sup> D&C 22:23b & 83:18, Matthew 6:22 & III Nephi 13:5 with Romans 1:16-17

<sup>98</sup> Genesis 1:27 IV

<sup>99</sup> cf. Matthew 5:50 IV & I John 4:16,17

<sup>100</sup> cf. Psalm 139:17,23,24 & Ether 5:29 versus Genesis 4:13 & 8:8-10 IV

<sup>101</sup> II Nephi 12:27,28

<sup>102</sup> cf. Alma 9:3-9

<sup>103</sup> cf. D&C 76:3:k-4f

<sup>104</sup> John 14:6

<sup>105</sup> John 18:37,38

<sup>106</sup> Romans 13:14

*the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. (I John 2:15-17)*

I believed that to *put on* the Lord Jesus Christ meant to *receive* His Spirit and then live according to *the power of His might*.<sup>107</sup> My problem, as I was finding out, was that I had *not* been doing so each and every day. To follow Christ I would have to take up my cross *daily* by *casting down imaginations* and *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*.<sup>108</sup>

As I contemplated what I was being taught, I remembered a private conversation I had had many years before with a man newly ordained to the office of elder. He told me that soon after he had been ordained, he began to be tempted with infidelity. Images of nude figures began to barrage his mind like he had never before experienced which greatly puzzled and concerned him.

Through this man's testimony, in light of what the Lord was teaching me, the correlation was now more than evident: Those called and those ordained to priesthood responsibilities have been, are, and will continue to be strategically attacked with the temptation of lust and infidelity.<sup>109</sup> Why? The priesthood holds the keys to spiritual blessings and angelic ministry for the church.<sup>110</sup> Therefore, if permitted, Satan will do anything he can to hinder, if not halt, the passage of the Lord's Spirit to His church through the administration of those ordained of the Lord to minister to His flock.<sup>111</sup> Remember Jesus' words to Peter the night He was betrayed?

*...Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired you, that he may sift **the children of the kingdom** as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your **faith** fail not; and when you are converted strengthen your brethren. (Luke*

<sup>107</sup> John 1:12 with Ephesians 6:10-18 & Revelation 3:20

<sup>108</sup> Matthew 16:25-30 with II Corinthians 10:5

<sup>109</sup> cf. I Corinthians 10:13 with I Timothy 3:1-7

<sup>110</sup> cf. D&C 83:3 & 104:9,10 with Ephesians 4:11-16 & Acts 19:2-6

<sup>111</sup> cf. II Thessalonians 2:7 IV

22:31,32 IV)

Peter had been promised the keys of the kingdom by his Lord to bring ministry from above to His body, the church.<sup>112</sup> Though he had his difficulties, I thank God that he, like the apostle Paul, *kept the faith* by fighting *the good fight of faith* and was thereby victorious in strengthening his brethren.<sup>113</sup>

What about us? Jesus said that Satan seeks to sift each one of us, just as he sought Peter.<sup>114</sup> Will we be faithful?

Oh, that all of us would be found faithful even as chief captain Moroni was found faithful! For it is written:

*Yea, verily, verily I say unto you, if all men had been, and were, and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold, the very powers of hell would have been shaken for ever; yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men. (Alma 21:140)*

Moroni was one who labored to prepare the *minds* of his people to be *faithful* unto the Lord their God, a man whose heart did *swell* with thanksgiving to his God, *a man who was firm in the faith of Christ*.<sup>115</sup> Therefore, our being like this man would insure that *the devil would never have power* over our hearts.

### **...and shall fear**

This last phrase in D&C 63:5a, *and shall fear*, was perhaps the most difficult of the three for me to deny. The apostle John wrote, *perfect love casteth out fear, because fear has torment*.<sup>116</sup> The *perfect love* of which John is referring is the Lord Himself.<sup>117</sup> As John wrote earlier in his epistle, *God is love*.<sup>118</sup> Hence, we are

<sup>112</sup> Matthew 16:20 & John 21:15-19 with Ephesians 4:8-16

<sup>113</sup> cf. II Peter 1:12-14 & II Timothy 4:7 with I John 5:4

<sup>114</sup> cf. III Nephi 8:50-52 with Luke 22:31,32 IV

<sup>115</sup> Alma 21:128-139

<sup>116</sup> I John 4:18

<sup>117</sup> cf. Romans 5:5 with Matthew 12:23 & II Corinthians 3:17

<sup>118</sup> I John 4:8,16

made perfect in love by the Spirit of the Lord driving out the darkness of our souls and filling us with God's own presence, i.e. with God's own *light and perfect love*.<sup>119</sup>

Evidence that someone has been *made perfect in love* is that they *have a love of God and of all men, especially little children, and do not fear what man can do*.<sup>120</sup> In other words, they have charity, *the pure love of Christ*.<sup>121</sup>

The reverse is also true. Those who fail to receive the Spirit of the Lord, and thus His love – because they continue in the ways of the natural man in pursuing the carnal desires of the flesh – are filled with fears, suspicions, despair, hate, and the like.<sup>122</sup>

This is no small matter, and there is no compromising this reality. Simply comprehended, without faith, i.e. without the sustaining and abiding presence of the Comforter's assurance, we must of necessity have fear. Why? We either receive *the same spirit of faith* or *the spirit of bondage again to fear*.<sup>123</sup> Not both. Remember, *perfect love casteth out fear*. Therefore, to **not** be made *perfect in love* is to *fail the grace of God* extended to us for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer.<sup>124</sup>

What becomes of those in whom the *spirit of bondage* has come *again* to cause *fear*?<sup>125</sup> The Lord concluded His warning to the church in D&C 63:5 with these words:

*...wherefore, I, the Lord, have said that **the fearful**, and the unbelieving, and all liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, and the whoremonger, and the sorcerer, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is **the second death**. Verily I say, that they shall **not** have part in the first resurrection. (D&C 63:5b,c)*<sup>126</sup>

<sup>119</sup> Romans 5:5, James 1:21, I John 1:5 & I John 4:16-18 with Moroni 8:29

<sup>120</sup> Moroni 8:18 & II Nephi 13:29 with Matthew 5:50

<sup>121</sup> Moroni 7:49-53

<sup>122</sup> cf. Hebrews 10:26,27 & Moroni 10:16 with Jude 8,10

<sup>123</sup> cf. II Corinthians 4:13 & Romans 8:15

<sup>124</sup> cf. Hebrews 12:14-17 & Moroni 10:29,30 with Matthew 5:40-50 & Hebrews 6:3; cf. James 2:19

<sup>125</sup> cf. Hebrews 10:26,27

<sup>126</sup> cf. Revelation 21:8

## Quickened Together with Christ

The message in the above verses from Section 63:5b,c is truly a hard word. When I finally realized that it was being applied to me, I was devastated. Though once filled with perfect peace, I now had to admit I was filled with many fears. Like Alma of old, my soul was *racked with inexpressible horror* because of my sin.<sup>127</sup>

Amazingly enough, however, this scripture refocused my fears. I began to fear God, the only One who is able to cast my soul into hell.<sup>128</sup> As I did, also like Alma of old, *my mind caught hold upon this thought* that Jesus had come to atone for the sins of the world.<sup>129</sup> So I began to cry out to Him for mercy and forgiveness.

His call to repent and embrace the truth soon became the most important thought in my mind.<sup>130</sup> This caused me to further *experiment* upon God's word and to repent of all my sins by confessing them and forsaking my desire for them. In doing so I found that God is truly faithful to all He has said in the gospel, that if we confess our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness through the blood of the Lamb of God.<sup>131</sup>

One particular instance stands out in my mind in this regard. Upon leaving university life I looked forward very much to enjoying my evenings without the intrusions of class assignments or the need to prepare for tests. It had been a long, hard 15 years of post-high school studies and now I was looking forward to some time of relaxation. Surely life after graduate and postgraduate school would be much simpler, I thought.

Not long after my wife and I had established our home in Wichita, Kansas in 1989 I looked forward to watching a particular football game one evening. But when I went to turn on the television set I heard these words in my soul,

<sup>127</sup> cf. Alma 17:11,12

<sup>128</sup> D&C 63:1 & Matthew 10:25 with Acts 17:26

<sup>129</sup> Alma 17:15,16

<sup>130</sup> cf. Mosiah 1:118-120 with D&C 66:1,2 & Hebrews 6:1-7

<sup>131</sup> I John 1:7-9 with James 5:16 & D&C 59:2h

“Lovest thou me more than this?” While these words startled me, I shrugged them off and tried to start watching the game. Still, this question would not leave my thoughts. Finally, I complained, “Please, Lord, I just want to rest for awhile!” Still the question persisted, “Lovest thou me more than this?” Being a bit amazed but irritated, I shut the set off and prayed, “Lord, what do you want me to do?”

Immediately I felt led to get my Bible. Once seated in our new easy chair I wondered to myself, “Now what?” The urging came to open the Bible, which I did. It opened to the eighth chapter of John. So I began reading there about the woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. The religious leaders brought her to Jesus asking Him to judge her and, thereby, *tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.*<sup>132</sup> When I came to verse 11, where Jesus told the woman to go and sin no more, I shut my Bible and I objected:

“That is what really bothers me, Lord! You gave her such an impossible task. ***How could she keep from sinning?*** She was a sinner, one who had been publicly humiliated. And everyone knew it.”

I was upset – upset about my own sins and my apparent inability to do anything about them (to stop sinning, that is). But right then, in the middle of the flare of my resentment and frustration, I heard:

“Dwight, you do not understand. That is when I healed her! By my saying to her, ‘Go and sin no more,’ I made her whole. My words went forth to heal and to strengthen her just as when I said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light, or when I said to the lame man, ‘Take up your bed and walk,’ and he walked. Dwight, I healed her! And I can do the same for you.”

I just sat there in stunned silence, both marveling and puzzling over what had just happened. I could sense that my Savior was near

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<sup>132</sup> John 8:5,6

and was assuring me that I could rest in the confidence that God does not give to us any commandment except He provides a way for us to accomplish it.<sup>133</sup> I was growing confident in the thought that if I would trust and obey His Word, my Lord would prosper me in the Way.<sup>134</sup>

Nothing dramatic seemed to happen right away, except that I started being awakened early each morning to study about *taking root downward and bearing fruit upward (faith) and the love of the truth (charity).*<sup>135</sup> I had grown accustomed to working at night in college, and getting up early each morning was quite a challenge to me. One morning when I resisted getting up, I heard these words,

“Do you not understand that if you cannot abide the presence of the Holy Spirit in this life, you cannot abide the presence of the Father in the life to come?”

All I could do was to cry out for mercy. It was not easy, but like a child learning to walk I kept trying.

On Sunday May 27, 1990 the Lord brought one of His servants into my life to minister to me in a special way. Through this brother I came to understand that I had been living under a spiritual oppression all these years from which I needed deliverance.<sup>136</sup>

Through the prayer of deliverance which he offered for me I received the liberty and healing I so longed for and needed. I experienced firsthand the truthfulness of the scriptures describing Jesus Christ’s ministry on earth: that He had come *to heal the brokenhearted and set at liberty them that are bruised.*<sup>137</sup> Gone were the fears. According to His promise, I was now *far from oppression* through the restoration of His Spirit.<sup>138</sup> Oh, how beautiful are the promises and works of our Savior.

*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in*

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<sup>133</sup> cf. I Nephi 1:65

<sup>134</sup> I Nephi 5:59

<sup>135</sup> e.g. Isaiah 37:31 & John 3:21

<sup>136</sup> cf. I Nephi 3:82-85

<sup>137</sup> Luke 4:18 with Mosiah 1:99 & I Nephi 3:82-85

<sup>138</sup> Isaiah 54:14 & Psalm 51:7-17 with Matthew 12:23

*trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of our flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:1-7)*

### **Take Heed**

For some time now I have felt the need to encourage and strengthen others who are struggling under the influence of *the lusts of our flesh*. As the apostle Paul states in the above scripture, *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind* is something *we all* have done.<sup>139</sup> This is why I have made an effort to expound at length about the seriousness of this matter while relating my own experience. Even if you may not view this as a personal area of concern, I would encourage you to please remember the admonition penned by the apostle Paul:

*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (I Corinthians 10:12)*

Lust is a powerful force which Satan seeks to tap into as often as he can and in whatever way that he can to deprive us of the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit and, ultimately, eternal life.<sup>140</sup> He will attempt to do so in whatever circumstance or place we may be in to bring misery into our lives and the lives of those around us.<sup>141</sup> Simply put, any one of us can be

<sup>139</sup> cf. Romans 3:23

<sup>140</sup> D&C 63:5

<sup>141</sup> cf. II Nephi 1:121

destroyed by it.<sup>142</sup>

As I have tried to show, this is hardly a private concern, or one that will readily disappear by wishing it away or by ignoring it. We must be vigilant in heeding the command to *watch and pray continually*, that we may not be tempted above that which we are able to bear.<sup>143</sup>

The ministry of the Holy Spirit within the church is directly affected by our individual decisions and discipline in this matter, especially among the priesthood.<sup>144</sup> As discussed above, when members of the priesthood do not have the Spirit because of this sin, the Lord has said that they shall not teach but be reproved through the call to repent.<sup>145</sup>

What about the membership of the church in general? Can we expect to receive the rich blessings of the Lord if we persist in straying outside the law of His protection?<sup>146</sup> To answer this question we must consider the fact that our God is both merciful and just.

Although our Lord has blessed us and continues to bless us notwithstanding our sinful condition, we must never misunderstand His motivation for doing so.<sup>147</sup> His hope in shedding His loving kindness upon us while we are yet under the condemnation of sin is to provide us with both the opportunity and encouragement to repent and thereby *be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*.<sup>148</sup> If we reject His overtures of love and continue in sin, He will eventually cease striving to save us.<sup>149</sup>

### **The Conditions of Repentance**

Eternal salvation is God's *free gift* to mankind, and it is the greatest of all His gifts.<sup>150</sup> Though freely offered to us, it cost our Lord a

<sup>142</sup> cf. D&C 17:6d,e with D&C 2:2b

<sup>143</sup> Alma 10:27-30

<sup>144</sup> cf. Isaiah 63:9,10 & Ephesians 4:30 with Ephesians 4:11-16

<sup>145</sup> D&C 42:5-7 & 63:5 with D&C 16:5e

<sup>146</sup> D&C 85:8

<sup>147</sup> cf. II Peter 3:9b with Romans 5:8-10 with Matthew 5:40-50

<sup>148</sup> cf. Romans 8:20,21

<sup>149</sup> e.g. Helaman 5:10 with D&C 1:5f,g

<sup>150</sup> Romans 5:12-19 & D&C 6:5e

tremendous price:

*...for, behold, the Lord your Redeemer suffered death in the flesh; wherefore he suffered the pain of all men, that all men might repent and come to him. And he hath risen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him **on the conditions of repentance*** (D&C 16:3c,d)

As explained in this verse, special provisions or *conditions* have been made to allow us to come to our Savior and receive the free gift of salvation He offers to us. They are *the conditions of repentance*, which are based upon the sufferings of Jesus Christ on the cross.<sup>151</sup>

What specifically are the conditions of repentance? Omni shows us that they involve offering our *whole souls as an offering unto Christ*, which is our *reasonable service* according to the apostle Paul.<sup>152</sup> What could possibly motivate anyone to offer themselves unreservedly and completely to Jesus Christ? And what does this have to do with repentance?

Jesus died upon the cross to pay the price for our sins, to suffer in the stead of each of us so that we might be redeemed and brought back into the kingdom of heaven.<sup>153</sup> Did He do so just to let us off scot-free, so we can live as we please? Not in the least!<sup>154</sup>

Jesus Christ came to *take away* our sinful nature and to lift us up into the presence of our heavenly Father from our fallen state. He came to give us a new nature, a new birth, *a disposition to do good continually*.<sup>155</sup>

But is this the desire of our hearts, to live no longer according to our fallen, carnal nature? If it is, we will come to Christ repentant of our sins, willing to forsake our old nature, and anxious to receive a completely new one through grace. And we will do so with all thanksgiving and joy for the new life He offers to instill in us. After all, it is a free gift. So won't you come and offer your whole soul to Him today?

<sup>151</sup> cf. Mosiah 2:9-12 & Helaman 2:72,73

<sup>152</sup> Omni 1:47 with Romans 12:1

<sup>153</sup> D&C 18:2

<sup>154</sup> cf. Romans 6:1-23 & Galatians 2:17,18

<sup>155</sup> Mosiah 3:3,9

How do you and I know that we have met *the conditions of repentance*? This is an important question because, as it is written, *the Lord covenanteth with none, save it be with them that repent and believe in His Son*.<sup>156</sup> How can we know, then, that the Lord will accept us if we come to Him to receive the newness of life He offers freely? The answer was given by the apostle Peter who declared, *he that 1) feareth [God], and 2) worketh righteousness, is accepted of him*.<sup>157</sup>

What does it mean to *fear* God in this context? Malachi tells us that those who *fear* Him think upon His name, implying that they believe in the meaning of His name.<sup>158</sup>

Therefore, to know that Jesus Christ will accept us when we come to Him and partake of His salvation we must: 1) believe on His name, giving thought and prayerful consideration to what His name means,<sup>159</sup> and 2) be willing to do the works of righteousness, i.e. to do works *meet for* or *worthy of* repentance, including baptism and the other ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ.<sup>160</sup>

Why are we to believe and think upon our Lord's name? Samuel the Lamanite explains:

*And ye shall hear my words, for, for this intent I have come...that ye might hear and know of the judgments of God which do await you because of your iniquities, and also that ye might know **the conditions of repentance**; and also that ye might know of the coming of Jesus Christ...to the intent that ye might believe on his name. **And if ye believe on his name, ye will repent of all your sins, that thereby ye may have a remission of them through his merits.*** (Helaman 5:65-67)

The name **Jesus** means *He shall save His people from their sins* – as opposed to saving them **in**

<sup>156</sup> II Nephi 12:78

<sup>157</sup> Acts 10:35

<sup>158</sup> Malachi 3:16 & III Nephi 11:19

<sup>159</sup> I John 5:13

<sup>160</sup> Matthew 3:35,38, Luke 3:13, Ephesians 2:10 & Acts 26:20; cf. Matthew 23:20 & Alma 16:223-226 with Mosiah 2:18-44

their sins.<sup>161</sup>

*O remember, remember, my sons, the words which King Benjamin spake unto his people; yea, remember that there is no other way nor means whereby man can be saved, only through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, who shall come; yea, remember that he cometh to redeem the world. And remember also, the words which Amulek spake unto Zeezrom, in the City of Ammonihah; for he said unto him that the Lord surely should come to redeem his people; but that he should not come to redeem them **in** their sins, but to redeem them **from** their sins. And **he hath power given unto him from the Father, to redeem them from their sins, because of repentance**; therefore he hath sent his angels to declare the tidings of the conditions of repentance, which bringeth unto the power of the Redeemer, unto the salvation of their souls. (Helaman 2:71-73)<sup>162</sup>*

To believe on His precious name, then, we must hold unto two things: 1) a confidence that He is able to **take away all** of our sins by washing us spotless and guiltless of sin, and 2) a willingness, like king Lamoni's father, to **give away all** our sins that we might know Him and thus have eternal life.<sup>163</sup>

Those who believe on the name of Jesus Christ will receive the *object* of their faith, the salvation of their souls.<sup>164</sup> Those who do not? They will remain in their sins and reap the corruption thereof because there is no savior other than Jesus Christ, and He alone has power to redeem us *from* our sins on the conditions of repentance.<sup>165</sup>

Again, through the shedding of His blood, Jesus paid for all our sins, each and every one.<sup>166</sup> They are His, and He died to take them

away.<sup>167</sup> To believe on His name, then, we must be willing to give all our sins to Him through: 1) repentance, i.e. confessing and forsaking our sins in the light of truth, and 2) receiving His righteousness in their place through the gift of the Holy Ghost.<sup>168</sup>

### **Knowing Therefore the Terror of the Lord**

We will not always have the opportunity to repent and partake of His salvation, however. As it is written, *he limiteth a certain day, saying... Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.*<sup>169</sup> Those who refuse or put off the call to repent and who die in their sins, will be as if no redemption had been made on their behalf.<sup>170</sup> That is, they will remain in a lost and fallen state, *in a state contrary to the nature of happiness*, being in subjection to the devil forever.<sup>171</sup>

Therefore, we must not procrastinate the day of our salvation, but we must prepare ourselves now for our Lord's return.<sup>172</sup> For in that day He will reward each of us for the *deeds* we have performed in the flesh.<sup>173</sup> If we have done wickedly with our bodies and the bodies of others by filling ourselves with all manner of lustful thoughts and expression, God will destroy us as by fire.

*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. (I Corinthians 3:16,17)*

On the other hand, if we have given place to the Holy Spirit and born Him the fruit of the same, we will be eternally blessed with a glorified,

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<sup>161</sup> Matthew 2:4

<sup>162</sup> cf. D&C 16:3d,e

<sup>163</sup> Alma 13:53 & John 17:3; cf. Alma 17:39

<sup>164</sup> I Peter 1:3-9

<sup>165</sup> Acts 4:12, II Nephi 11:39 & D&C 16:4f with Helaman 2:72,73

<sup>166</sup> I John 2:1,2

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<sup>167</sup> e.g. Alma 3:84 with I John 3:8b

<sup>168</sup> Helaman 2:72 & D&C 58:9d with John 1:12,16 & Acts 2:38

<sup>169</sup> Hebrews 4:7

<sup>170</sup> Alma 9:28-32

<sup>171</sup> II Nephi 6:36-50 & Alma 19:75-77

<sup>172</sup> Alma 16:227-238

<sup>173</sup> Matthew 16:30 & D&C 43:5e

immortal body of holiness.<sup>174</sup>

The importance of *preparing* ourselves through repentance and faith on our Savior's name cannot be overstated.<sup>175</sup> In the day when Jesus Christ comes in His glory we shall all know as we are known.<sup>176</sup>

Perhaps this may not seem like something to be overly concerned about. Consider this, however. Our Savior is the Truth and in His presence all things are revealed as they were, as they are, and as they are to come.<sup>177</sup> This means that if we have not repented of our sins by confessing and forsaking them,<sup>178</sup> our sins will be made manifest perfectly in His Light, causing us to shrink away from His presence in terror.<sup>179</sup>

*For behold, the day cometh that all shall rise from the dead and stand before God, and be judged according to their works. (Alma 8:98)*

*Whereof, they shall be judged, every man, according to his works, whether they be good, or whether they be evil; and if they be evil, they are consigned to **an awful view** of their own guilt and abominations, which doth cause them to shrink from the presence of the Lord, into a state of misery and endless torment, from whence they can no more return: therefore, they have drunk damnation to their own souls. Therefore, they have drunk out of the cup of the wrath of God...therefore, mercy could have claim on them no more for ever. (Mosiah 1:126-128)*

*Wherefore we labor, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive a reward of the deeds done in the body; things according to what he hath done, whether good or bad. **Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we***

<sup>174</sup> Matthew 25:32-47 & D&C 76:3-7 with Galatians 5:22-25 & Moroni 10:29,30

<sup>175</sup> cf. Luke 12:56

<sup>176</sup> cf. I Corinthians 13:12 with D&C 1:1 & 85:2b,3

<sup>177</sup> Luke 2:35, John 14:6 & D&C 1:1 with Hebrews 13:8 & D&C 90:1a,4b

<sup>178</sup> D&C 58:9d

<sup>179</sup> cf. Alma 9:21-32 with Mormon 4:61-64 & Zephaniah 1:12-18

*persuade men...* (II Corinthians 5:9-11)

As the prophets have written:

*Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light. (Amos 5:18)*

*For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen; as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee; thy reward shall return upon thine own head. (Obadiah 1:15)*

*That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of wasteness and desolation, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness. (Zephaniah 1:15)*

*Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound the alarm in my holy mountain; let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand; a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness... And the Lord shall utter his voice... for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; **and who can abide it?** (Joel 2:1,2,11)*

*For the day of the Lord of hosts soon cometh upon all nations; yea, upon everyone; yea, upon the proud and lofty, and upon everyone who is lifted up, and he shall be brought low. (Isaiah 2:12)*

*Howl ye; for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate; and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. (Isaiah 13:6,9)*

Based upon my personal experience, I am confident that the words of the prophets are true. When the repentant adulterous woman, described in the eighth chapter of John, left Jesus Christ's presence, she left Him freed from sin while her accusers left Him convicted of their sins. This woman had been brought before the

Lord broken in her sin. Her accuser, on the other hand, came before Him in pride. In the presence of the Truth, however, their thoughts soon condemned them and they went their way into their own place.<sup>180</sup> If we, like them, are not stripped of pride we are not prepared to meet the Truth.<sup>181</sup> Only when we are broken can we hope to approach our Lord and receive His mercy and find deliverance from sin and its consequences.

### **Walk in the Light**

Earlier I wrote of how the Lord delivered me from my sins. Just prior to delivering me the Lord allowed me to view myself in the light of His truth.

In a vision I was shown a sickly-looking bluish-gray creature hiding in the shadow cast by a great stone pillar. Around this slab-shaped pillar and outside its shadow there was a most wonderful light from which this cowering creature was hiding. To my astonishment, I soon realized that I was that creature! And when I wondered about the many sores and pock marks which covered my spirit, I had an immediate recollection of what had caused each of them. I also knew that the brilliance of the light from which I was hiding would sear my diseased soul if I were to venture into it without a covering.

As I looked on in silence, stunned by my pathetic state of being, two individuals dressed in clean white robes appeared just outside the shadowy region in which I hid, offering me a basket of what appeared to be bread or a fruit-like food. Somehow I knew it was the light-filled love of God. But to my further astonishment, I rejected them and the gift of love they had brought for me. After looking up to the Lord for direction, they left the basket of food in the light just outside the shadow. I still would not come into the light to partake of it.

“Why?” I wondered, “Why was I like that?” I knew very well why. I was a sinner, one who had come to enjoy his sins. In some warped way, the sinful thoughts which had invaded my

mind had somehow come to mean more to me than the love of God. Jesus described this very thing to Nicodemus:

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. For everyone who doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he who loveth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest. And he who obeyeth the truth, the works which he doeth they are of God.* (John 3:19-22)

After reading the Book of Mormon that summer after I graduated from high school, my favorite hymn had been “Walk in the Light” by Bernard Barton. Now the message of its lyrics held no appeal to me, only a sad reminder that I had strayed from the Light.<sup>182</sup> Why had I let this marvelous desire for righteousness slip away? And for what had I given it up? All that I had left from the lustful thoughts I had allowed myself to indulge in were the sores they had left etched into my soul. Oh, how foolish I had been.

As a result of this experience, I longed more than ever to be someone who loved the Light, to come to Christ and partake of His love in righteousness according to the plea of Amaleki:

*And now, my beloved brethren, I would that ye should come unto Christ, who is the Holy One of Israel, and partake of his salvation, and the power of His redemption.* (Omni 1:46)

As I shared previously, the Lord provided the means for this to be accomplished in my life.<sup>183</sup> He can do the same for you, if you are willing to *give away* all your sins through His name and receive, with thanksgiving, His Spirit of truth in their place. And if you do, He will fill you with the *solemnities of eternity, the peaceable things of immortal glory* through the *visitation* of the Comforter.<sup>184</sup>

<sup>180</sup> cf. Alma 9:22-25 with Jacob 4:4,5 & Acts 1:25b

<sup>181</sup> Alma 3:50

<sup>182</sup> I Nephi 2:62-83, 4:38-64

<sup>183</sup> I John 1:3-2:3

<sup>184</sup> cf. Genesis 6:57-65 with Moroni 8:29

## The Way Prepared

Each of us will ultimately choose either of two roads in this life.<sup>185</sup> One is very broad and accommodating. This is the way of pride and vanity. Its travelers are enticed to travel down it by the many *vain imaginations* it offers along the way which keep or shield them from the truth. Since nothing in this path is exactly true, those who travel it are left unsure of their circumstances and their relationship with others. Nonetheless, many people press on in its allure of fleeting pleasure until they are completely disillusioned with life itself.<sup>186</sup>

The other road is very narrow. It is the path of truth, the path along which the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of truth, has been sent to lead us.<sup>187</sup> It is a *strait and narrow course* which leads us into *all truth*, i.e. into the presence of the fullness of our heavenly Father.<sup>188</sup>

Briefly comprehended, to walk in the path of truth we must walk *in* Jesus Christ, who is *the Way, the Truth and the Life*.<sup>189</sup> Only those who have faith will walk *in* Him, i.e. abide or remain in Him.<sup>190</sup> Why? If we have real faith we *hope for things which are true*.<sup>191</sup>

Therefore, if our desire to hide our sins outweighs our hope for truth, the path of truth will look foreboding to us and Jesus and His words of truth will offend us and cause us to betray Him as did Judas.<sup>192</sup> If, on the other hand, our desire for the Truth holds out no matter what circumstances befall us, and we confess the truth concerning our circumstances, the Lord will prosper us in the way of truth through His mercy. For, it is written:

*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. (Proverbs 28:13)*

Tragically, many of us think that we are walking in *the Way* when, in fact, we are actually walking in the vain imaginations of our own heart, and thus a false faith. How do we know when we are actually walking in Christ? If we are following Jesus, we will repent of our sins *unto the acknowledging of the truth*.<sup>193</sup> Simply put, we will confess and forsake our sins.<sup>194</sup>

It should not be surprising to find that this precious path of truth is fraught with chastening and *fiery trials* which are to try our faith, i.e. our sincere hope for truth.<sup>195</sup> As explained in this next verse, everything we encounter along the way of truth is designed to give us victory over the sins *which so easily beset us*:<sup>196</sup>

*Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, whom I love; and whom I love I also chasten, that their sins may be forgiven; for with the chastisement I prepare a way for their deliverance, in all things, out of temptation; and I have loved you: Wherefore, ye must needs be chastened and stand rebuked before my face, for ye have sinned against me a very grievous sin... (D&C 92:1a,b)*

The key to victory in our journey in the truth is to remember that Jesus Himself is the Way which has been prepared for our deliverance out of every temptation *and sin*.<sup>197</sup> If we love Him (i.e. embrace Him) as The Truth, we will follow Him into the truth by giving heed to His words rather than to the temptations which assail us while we walk in *the Way*.<sup>198</sup> Only in this way can we hold fast to Him as God's Word, as a rod of iron which leads to the tree of life.<sup>199</sup>

*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him; rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanks-*

<sup>185</sup> Matthew 7:22,23 with Jeremiah 21:8

<sup>186</sup> cf. James 4:1-5

<sup>187</sup> John 14:15-18,26 & 16:13,14

<sup>188</sup> Helaman 2:26 & John 1:14, 14:6, 16:13,14 with D&C 90:4

<sup>189</sup> John 14:6 with Colossians 2:6

<sup>190</sup> cf. John 15:1-17

<sup>191</sup> Alma 16:143

<sup>192</sup> cf. Mark 14:31

<sup>193</sup> cf. II Timothy 2:25

<sup>194</sup> D&C 58:9d

<sup>195</sup> I Peter 1:3-9 & 4:12,13

<sup>196</sup> I John 5:4 with James 1:2-4 & Romans 5:1-5

<sup>197</sup> John 14:6 & D&C 16:4f with Hebrews 4:15,16

<sup>198</sup> D&C 17:5b & Hebrews 12:1-3

<sup>199</sup> cf. I Nephi 2:67-69, 3:125, & 4:38-40 with John 1:14-16

*giving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him...* (Colossians 2:6-10a)

To thrive in Jesus, who is the **True Vine**, we must be willing to submit to whatever He sees fit to *inflict* upon us and endure to the end through faith in His name.<sup>200</sup> Most importantly, as branches of the True Vine, we must be willing to bear Him the fruit of His own countenance, including truth, light and charity, His pure and perfect love.<sup>201</sup> For remember only charity endures all things.<sup>202</sup> Therefore, unless we have charity, the precious love of our Lord and Savior, we will inevitably fall by the way-side.<sup>203</sup>

### **Those Overtaken in a Fault**

When someone is overtaken in a fault of the flesh, what should be done? Each member of Christ's body is an integral part of the whole.<sup>204</sup> And when one member of the body suffers, whether for sin or otherwise, it affects the whole body of Christ.<sup>205</sup> Therefore, instead of ignoring such sins or conveniently forgetting about them, those who have *the spirit of meekness*, i.e. the Spirit of Christ,<sup>206</sup> are called to *restore* those who have been *overtaken*:

*Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:1,2)*

<sup>200</sup> Mosiah 1:118-120 & 11:23-27 with John 15:1,2

<sup>201</sup> John 15 & Galatians 5:13-18,22-26 with John 12:35,36 & Moroni 7:49-53

<sup>202</sup> I Corinthians 13:4-8

<sup>203</sup> Mark 13:13 with Moroni 7:49-53

<sup>204</sup> I Corinthians 12:12-31

<sup>205</sup> cf. I Corinthians 12:26 & I Peter 3:17,4:1-5

<sup>206</sup> Matthew 11:29,30

Please note that, as this scripture shows, there is hope for restoring those who have been overtaken in a fault – as long as it is not a sin which is unto death.<sup>207</sup> But please note also that restoring someone from such sins as lust and adultery is chiefly a spiritual matter. Therefore, it must be dealt with by those who are *spiritual*, i.e. those in whom the Spirit of Christ resides because only the Spirit of the Lord can bring true conviction of sin and therefore true repentance.<sup>208</sup>

### **Begin as in Times of Old**

You may be asking, “Where do I begin in restoring someone else or in being restored myself?” The following scripture has served as a guide to me during my own recovery in faith, and I am confident it can be for you as you pass through the many trials which are to try your own faith.<sup>209</sup>

*Oh then despise not, and wonder not, but hearken unto the words of the Lord, and ask the Father in the name of Jesus for what things soever ye shall stand in need. Doubt not, but be believing, and begin as in times of old, and come unto the Lord with all your heart, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling before him. Be wise in the days of your probation; strip yourselves of all uncleanness; ask not, that ye may consume it on your lusts, but ask with a firmness unshaken, that ye will yield to no temptation, but that ye will serve the true and living God. See that ye are not baptized unworthily; see that ye partake not of the sacrament of Christ unworthily; but see that ye do all things in worthiness, and do it in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God: and if ye do this, and endure to the end, ye will in no wise be cast out. (Mormon 4:92-95)*

The gospel of Jesus Christ is true and effectual. He came into this world to save sinners

<sup>207</sup> cf. I John 5:16-21

<sup>208</sup> cf. John 16:7-11 with Colossians 3:16, John 6:63, 14:6; see also D&C 28:9a & James 3:17,18

<sup>209</sup> I Peter 1:3-9

like me and like you *from* our sins.<sup>210</sup> If the gospel is to be effectual in our lives, however, we must learn to **bridle** all our passions in order that we might be filled with our Lord's pure and perfect love.<sup>211</sup>

Why is being filled with God's perfect love, *the love of the truth*, so important? Again, it is the only thing that endures forever.<sup>212</sup> It is God's eternal and abiding Word, Jesus Christ, His Only begotten Son, and thus it is His love made manifest among us.<sup>213</sup> Therefore, if we are to have boldness in the day of the Lord, we must forsake all our sins by praying with all the energies of our souls to be filled with this love, the love of the Truth, charity, the pure love of Christ.<sup>214</sup>

Zion awaits the day when we all will *embrace* Jesus Christ as *the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, by looking upward towards the heavens for His return as our wisdom and salvation.<sup>215</sup> Please do not let Zion wait any longer. Come to Christ now. Embrace Him and offer to Him your whole soul as a sacrifice in truth. Trust in Him as The Truth. He is able to save your soul. Do not condemn others for their faults, for has He not said, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay?*<sup>216</sup> Rather, learn to prize the good from the bitterness you and others have tasted and be ever ready, by abiding light and grace of Christ, to assist others who have been overtaken in a fault.<sup>217</sup> For it is written:

*Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. (I Corinthians 10:6)*

And remember, there is hope. Jesus Christ Himself is our hope and He is calling to you today.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> I Timothy 1:15

<sup>211</sup> Alma 18:15 with Romans 5:1-5, James 1:2-4 & I John 4:16-18

<sup>212</sup> I Corinthians 13:4-8 & Moroni 7:49-53

<sup>213</sup> Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 2:6, 3:45,46, John 1:14-16, 3:16, 17:17 & I John 4:8,16 with I Peter 1:25 & Genesis 7:40

<sup>214</sup> Moroni 7:53

<sup>215</sup> cf. Genesis 9:22,23 with James 1:5 & 3:17,18

<sup>216</sup> cf. Luke 6:32-38 & Romans 12:9-21

<sup>217</sup> Genesis 6:57

<sup>218</sup> I Timothy 1:1

*Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart, and not your garments, and repent, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and he will turn away the evil from you. **Therefore repent, and who knoweth but he will return and leave a blessing behind him...**? (Joel 2:12-14)*

*Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. (Proverbs 16:3)*

*And we will go on unto perfection if God permit. (Hebrews 6:3)*

To this end may God richly bless and prosper you as you exercise faith in the Way, the Truth, and the Life, Jesus Christ.

*O be wise: what can I say more? (Jacob 4:17)*