

Marriage and Family

Denver Snuffer 7-26-14
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This is the ninth installment of a single talk, all of which is designed to remind us of what was once given in the Restoration through Joseph Smith. Much of what went on before is intended to be foundational to what comes today, and to what comes next when we finish in Phoenix. Today the topic is about marriage and the family, and as a consequence of that, I view everything before as foundational to today, because of all things that are necessary to understand before we qualify to be like God, it is having this subject understood and incorporated into how we live.

If you go to Genesis chapter 2 verse 18 it says: *"And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."* [If it is not good for man to be alone, we have to necessarily conclude that if you're going to be "good" in the sense that God desires for man to be good, you have to be with a woman. There has to be a union of the man and the woman. Otherwise no matter who you are, no matter what you are, no matter what virtues you may hold, you cannot be, in the eyes of God. Meaning "good" in the sense God uses the word "good" to describe the condition of man in his separate, single state.]

The work of God, after all, is to bring to pass *"the immortality and the eternal life of man."* That is not even a possibility if you do not have the man and the woman together. The condition of "eternal life" requires procreation. Therefore, it is not "good" for man to be alone.

In the creation, this is preceding chapter of Genesis chapter 1, the creation of man is described: *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it." (Genesis 1:27 - 28)* [You see, when it comes to the image of God, the image of God is both male and female. That is who the Eloheim are. When we talk about the "Eloheim" a singular verb is used. That is, the Eloheim "is." This singular verb is used despite the fact that the word "Eloheim" is plural. Why would you use a single verb with a plural noun? The reason you would do that is they two are one. It is because there is no difference between the Father and His Consort, the one about whom so little is said. This is because there is something about Her role, that at this point, has not been permitted to emerge into our plain view. That is wisdom in Them, because They know withholding information protects us.

In the scriptures the voice of God is described as the sound of waters, rushing waters, mighty waters.¹ If I were going to stage the endowment, the voice you would hear whenever Eloheim speaks would be the voice of a man and a woman speaking in unison. It would not be the voice of a man alone, nor would it be the voice of a man in an echo chamber, and I would not use sound effects. I would not make some effort to cause feedback, or make it sound like Charlton Heston's conversation on the mountain as depicted in Cecil B. De Mille's movie, *The Ten Commandments*. I wouldn't do that. I would have a man and a woman speaking in unison whenever Eloheim were to speak.

¹ Rev. 1: 15; D&C 110: 3.

If you want to know what the image of God is, the scriptures declare plainly: "...in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." [That is the image of God. That is what God, if you look at His image, should look like. This is the reason why, when you have the Father throughout Scripture on display, it is always with a Host. He appears with the heavenly Host because our God, in the end, is not the image of a single fellow standing about in a robe. It is this image, male and female. They two are together.]

You see this in scripture in a passage that has been read by Latter-day Saints perhaps more than any other denomination. It is in 1 Corinthians Chapter 11 beginning at verse 11: "*Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God.*" [The modifier here in the King James translation, works marvelously well. Because as you think about what is being said here, the woman is of the man, all things are of God, and the man is by the woman. Woman of man, all things of God, man by the woman. That's how men get into the world is by the woman. That is, incidentally, also how the first man got into the world, it is by the woman.]

Think of the image of God. Then think of what is said here about it "not being good for man to be alone." That is, the image of God includes the notion of companionship. That is what makes it "good."

Think about multiplying and replenishing. The image of God includes necessarily, offspring. As a separate and single individual you are finite, each of us is finite. But when you put together the man and the woman, it is in the image of God because they become potentially infinite. Despite the fact we are in mortality, we become infinite, meaning we have no end, by multiplying. Sitting in this room today, we are all descendents of Adam and Eve. They are present here today in you, because they continue, despite the fact they died. Until they come back from the grave, it still does not matter they are dead, they are yet present through the people who are their offspring.

They became in the image of God. This is at the core of redemption, this is at the core of the work of God, this is at the core of what it means for God to complete His work and to have the continuation of the seeds.² This is what God does. This is what Gods do.

Take a look at Doctrine and Covenants section 132. We brush up against this concept of the infinite in section 132 as well. (I intend to say a good deal about some of the mischief that has been introduced to us through section 132, but not now. We will return to this, but right now I want to focus on the language and the promises that are extended, because they duplicate what you are seeing in the account of Genesis.) This is in section 132, beginning at verse 19: "*And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise,*" [Then they are promised, about midway through that verse, that they will inherit,] "*thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions.*" [It goes on to say, "*they,*" notice it's not "he," and notice it's not "she," it is "they." Because if you're going to pass by, you're going to have to be "they" and not he or she.]"*...they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their*

² D&C 132: 19, 22.

exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. Then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye abide my law ye cannot attain to this glory."

The notion that you are going to succeed in acquiring the glory likened to God, as a separate and single individual, is nowhere found as a promise in scripture. It is not a reasonable expectation. It is a non-scriptural expectation. It is a foolish hope. Because it does not reckon according to the things God created as He created them. Understand, those verses that we read in Genesis? Those verses were before the Fall, and the condition in which Adam and Eve found themselves at the time those incidences took place included immortality, because they had not yet fallen from grace. The marriage and the union of the two of them was intended to last forever, because death has not entered yet into the world. As God put it, it was "good" for them to be together.

Consider the requirements: -Marry a wife,

-“sealed,”

-“Holy Spirit of Promise,”

-then “pass by the angels,”

-“enter into exaltation,”

-obtain “glory, fullness,”

all these words are applicable only to the man and the woman together as one. It is only applicable to the exalted state of a marriage worthy of preservation into eternity.

Instead of focusing on this as something you may receive in the great hereafter as a reward, change your view. Instead of some distant glory to be given in the afterlife, why not think about whether the conditions described in these verses are themselves a reward in this life. Think about this as something to be had now, not something to be postponed and hoped for in the afterlife. Not in eternity, but today.

Can it be said concerning your own marriage, that it is not good for the man to be alone? Are the two of you together, better than what each of you are alone? Is your marriage a source of joy, of happiness, of contentment, of companionship? The Lord told them to multiply and replenish the earth. Do you find within your family relationship there is joy, rejoicing and happiness as a consequence of the environment you and your wife have put together in your home?

As a woman, is your relationship in the image of God? Is there godliness about the way in which you and your husband interact? If you had to reckon whether or not someone, looking at the two of you, would see in you the image of God, would they? These are not just happy notions for the afterlife, these ought to be descriptions of what your marriage could and should look like. Can you sense the glory of God in your marriage? Remember, we looked at this in D&C 93:36. *"The glory of God is intelligence, or another words Light and Truth."* The glory of God being light, the glory of God being truth. Is that something present in the marriage that you now have? Is your marriage filled with life? With light? With truth? With understanding?

Turn back to D&C 121, there a couple verses there that I want to call to your attention, particularly if you view the man and the woman together as one. Read these verses as if they describe "the one," which is you and your wife. This is beginning at verse 40. *"Many are called, but few are chosen. No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned; By kindness, and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge the soul without hypocrisy, and without guile."*

Within your family, within your marriage, are you and your wife learning to use persuasion? Within your marriage, are you and your husband learning to use gentleness in dealing with one another? Are the two of you together, facing one another, in all the difficulties that come as a result of being married, are you facing that together in meekness? Do you find that, in all the relationship troubles, turmoil, and challenges, together you face it all with mutual kindness? Is there a search for understanding that results in pure knowledge, when it comes to any dilemma you two confront?

Look at verse 37: *"That they may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man."* [It has been my observation that as soon as the Spirit of the Lord withdraws, that quickly will another spirit step in to assure you that you right, that you should be vindicated, that you ought to proceed on in the arrogance of your heart to feel yourself justified and vindicated. There are false spirits that go about, but there is no better an audience to receive the whisperings of those false spirits, than the abusers of their authority. Those who, having grieved the Spirit and caused it to withdraw, then accept counsel from another spirit saying: "You are right, press on! Well done! You are good and you are doing good using this great authority from God! You will be vindicated. This is all God's work, and you're a great man because you are engaged in God's work! Do not back down, do not relent. Forget about persuasion, you should never be long-suffering, you should make those under your rule suffer if they resist your power. They should yield to your rule. There is no place for meekness. We believe in a God of strength, a God of power, a God whose work can be done despite the frailties of man! God's work cannot fail, and you are doing God's work! There is no need for men to be meek. And it's kind in the end, to punish, and to force, and coerce, because we have a good objective in mind." This false spirit influences much of what happens today among the Latter-day Saints. It grieves God, and leaves the Saints in a state of confusion.]

All the lies and all the deceit that led to Catholicism falling into the abyss it fell into are presently in play with the Latter-day Saints. Those same deceiving spirits who worked this deception out long ago, are now taking the Restoration of the Gospel as another opportunity for them. And so they once again whisper to the priests and the priests listen. As soon as the Spirit of God is withdrawn, another spirit convinces men they have God's power, and therefore cannot go astray.

So, does your marriage help you avoid covering your sins? You are never going to solve this problem in a community of Zion, until you first begin to solve it the walls within your own

home. You are never going to have Zion somewhere in a community, until first that community has been composed of those who have a marriage that is in the image of God.

Does your marriage help you to avoid “gratifying your pride?” Does it help hold down your “vain ambition?” Is your ambition to exalt the two of you, rather than the one of you? Does it bring you time and time again, to not exercise control, but to respect the freedom to choose?

Your children will make mistakes. It is not your job to force them to avoid the mistakes. It is your job to counsel them, and to let them have the experience through which your counsel then makes sense, and is vindicated. You hope the mistakes they make are not too serious, but even if they are serious and they involve lifelong struggles, it is their right to choose. It is your obligation to teach and to persuade, and then to rejoice when they return after they are tired of filling their bellies with the husks the pigs are fed.³ It is your job to go and greet them and put a robe on their shoulder and put a ring on their hand and to kill the fatted calf.⁴ It's not your job to beat them and chain them to the farm so that they cannot go away and behave foolishly. They need to know that your bonds of love towards them are stronger than death itself.⁵ They need to know that they will endure as an object of your love within your heart into eternity. Not only your children, but one another, because we all make mistakes. Do not exercise dominion, do not exercise compulsion; but exercise long-suffering, gentleness, meekness and kindness. Some of the biggest disasters come when you did not give people the right to choose freely, and you attempt to coerce them. Be wise, be prudent, be someone who they would respect and who they would gladly listen to. Your children will correctly measure you in the end, even if they do not do so at the beginning.

Look at Doctrine and Covenants section 130, starting with verse 18. We have looked at these verses in several contexts, but we need to look at them again today in this context: *"Whatever principle of intelligence (and understand that means Light and Truth) we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. And if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come. There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated— And when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."*

Think about those verses and as an invitation to work this out inside your marriage first. To work out, inside the relationship between you and your wife, the principle of intelligence that gives you the opportunity to be diligent, the opportunity to be obedient, the opportunity to gain experience that will make you more like God. Your marriage is a laboratory to prove you, and to let you become more intelligent.

After the creation itself, marriage was first ordinance. I want to take an opportunity to look at the sequence of events, because it is very interesting. Adam and Eve were sent down here as the first. Adam and Eve were then the first introduced into the world. Therefore they were the first of the human family to face these challenges. They were the first ones to begin the search to return

³ See Luke 15: 11-16.

⁴ *Id.* vs. 17-32.

⁵ D&C 121: 44.

to God. And the way in which their story is told in the scriptures is not chronological. To get the correct sequence, you have to go through Moses' record, and you have to carefully examine Enoch's record within *the Book of Moses*, in order to put together the chronology of these things. When you do that, the story is really rather fascinating. So I want to take a few moments and lay out the sequence.

Marriage was the first ordinance, it was introduced before the Fall, and it was introduced before man was instructed on sacrifice. Go back to *the Book of Moses* in chapter 4, verse 27. This is after they had transgressed, but before they had been sent out of the Garden: "*Unto Adam, and also unto his wife, did I, the Lord God, make coats of skins, and clothed them.*" [Now it's important that, while the account sometimes refers to Adam by meaning both Adam and Eve, in this case, it was necessary for a clarification to be made. The garment that was given unto them to clothe their nakedness, is also referred to in the temple, as the garment of the Holy Priesthood. God wants the record to be clear: "*Unto Adam, and also unto his wife, did I, the Lord God, make coats of skins, and clothed them.*" Therefore Adam was not clothed and then told, "You go and do this and clothe your wife," God clothed them both. God did not expect Adam to intercede when it comes to the clothing of the woman who had been given him. God treated her as if she too were about to embark upon the journey into mortality that would require her likewise to understand the principle of sacrifice. Think about it for one moment. You learn that they practiced sacrifice thereafter, but when were they taught the principle of sacrifice? They were taught about sacrifice at this moment, when they were clothed in the skins of an animal. The animal gave its life to cover them.]

There are legends about this event. They show up in a variety of ways, they even show up in mythical characters. These legends are about the animal chosen by God to be slain as the first sacrifice. A choice had to be made for the sacrifice, in order to clothe them with the skins of an animal. I rather like the theme of many of those, which is that when the animals were brought to Adam, and he named them, there were some he really liked more. But there was one particular animal he liked above all the rest. It was that animal, and that animal's consort, who were slain in order to provide the clothing for Adam and Eve. So Adam and his wife Eve could understand the principle of sacrifice came at an enormous price. So the animal was no longer left in this sphere, having been slain while yet in the Garden, to provide the coats. It was this great loss which was used to drive home the point about the sacrifice required in order to clothe the nakedness of the man and the woman. To "cover their shame" there was a great price to be paid.

If you turn over to Moses chapter 5, beginning at verse 5, this is talking about after they had been expelled from the Garden. "*And he gave unto them commandments, that they should worship the Lord their God, and should offer the firstlings of their flocks, for an offering unto the Lord. And Adam was obedient unto the commandments of the Lord. And after many days an angel of the Lord appeared unto Adam, saying: Why dost thou offer sacrifices unto the Lord? And Adam said unto him: I know not, save the Lord commanded me. And then the angel spake, saying: This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, which is full of grace and truth.*"

That first sacrifice was performed in the Garden, before they were driven out. It brought such sadness in verse 27 of chapter 4, that occurred before they were driven out of the Garden. But

sacrifice was simply a commandment to repeat the process. Adam and Eve then did as they were commanded. It was some time later, many days later –and "many days" is not defined—before this was explained. It appears to me from the context as we go further, that "many days" in this context means "many years." In fact, it means more than "many years," it means "generations." There are many generations of their descendants alive on the earth before the explanation of why they were offering sacrifices is finally provided. And you're impatient. And you want to know more, and you want to know it now. And you don't think that God tries the patience of all those to whom He will eventually come to comfort.

This occurs before the baptisms of Adam and Eve. Go to Moses chapter 6, starting at verse 50. This is Enoch now, and Enoch is talking about earlier events. Enoch in his record retells what went before. We still don't have the full record of Adam and Eve, but we have enough snippets that if you begin to gather them together you can reconstruct the picture. And so beginning at verse 50: *"God hath made known unto our fathers that all men must repent. And he called upon our father Adam by his own voice, saying: I am God; I made the world, and men before they were in the flesh. And he also said unto him: If thou wilt turn unto me, and hearken unto my voice, and believe, and repent of all thy transgressions, and be baptized, even in water, in the name of mine Only Begotten Son, who is full of grace and truth, which is Jesus Christ, the only name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men, ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all things in his name, and whatsoever ye shall ask, it shall be given you."*

This was what God said to Adam, preliminary to Adam being baptized, which was still later than when Adam learned about the purpose behind the sacrifice he had been offering.

And so he was told about it. Then look at when it happened, which again, this is not Enoch, this is going back to what Moses says about when it occurred. This is the voice of the Lord saying that it's going to happen. When it happened is in verse 64: *"And it came to pass, when the Lord had spoken with Adam, our father, that Adam cried unto the Lord."* [Understand that word "cried," after what we talked about yesterday, should mean something to you. The pattern is the same, and it doesn't matter what scripture you look at. Adam "cried" unto the Lord. What he "cried unto the Lord" is not recorded, but clearly when the Lord had told him about baptism, this is what Adam wanted, and therefore he cried unto the Lord for a purpose. And look what happens:] *"...he was caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and was carried down into the water, and was laid under the water, and was brought forth out of the water. And thus he was baptized, and the Spirit of God descended upon him, and thus he was born of the Spirit, and became quickened in the inner man. And he heard a voice out of heaven, saying: Thou art baptized with fire, and with the Holy Ghost. This is the record of the Father, and the Son, from henceforth and forever; And thou art after the order of him who was without beginning of days or end of years, from all eternity to all eternity."*

This was Adam's baptism, and confirmation. This was Adam's gift of the Holy Ghost, this is his baptism of fire, and this is his ordination by the voice of God out of heaven, ordaining him after the order of Him who is without beginning of days or end of years. This was all in one, at one moment. This is many years later. There are generations of descendents of Adam and Eve who existed at the time this took place.

The effect is then picked up in the narrative of Moses. This is a Moses chapter 5 verse 9: *"And in that day the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying: I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever, that as thou hast fallen thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will."*

These are the events that took place in that first generation of Adam and Eve among their descendents. If you want to have peace and harmony for a community, it has to begin inside strong marriages. Zion necessarily requires holy matrimony. Adam and Eve had sons and daughters at the time this took place.

Chapter 5 of Moses, verse 2. *"And Adam knew his wife, and she bare unto him sons and daughters, and they began to multiply and to replenish the earth."* [This occurred because they were married, and they were commanded to, at that point, offer sacrifice, and also to multiply and replenish the earth. So they offered sacrifice, and they multiplied. They began to have children and the children began to multiply in verse 3.] *"And from that time forth, the sons and daughters of Adam began to divide two and two in the land, and to till the land, and to tend flocks, and they also begat sons and daughters."*

Notice that the image originally created of the image of God, the man and the woman, that is, Adam and Eve, is now replicated in the children of Adam and Eve. These children imitate the same pattern; two and two. They are necessarily male and female if they going to produce offspring. If they beget sons and daughters, they have to be male and female. It was not one on three, it was two by two. It was the man and the woman. That is the image of God, and no other image is offered to us in scripture, it simply isn't. There is no such thing as same-sex marriage in the scriptural model. There is no such thing as same-sex marriage because how else do they produce offspring? How can you obey the first commandment to multiply and replenish the earth if there is same sex marriage? If the commandment to multiply and replenish the earth arises within the context of marriage, necessarily it requires there be the man and the woman.

Adam and Eve had sons and daughters, their children likewise were married and they had sons and daughters. They were visited and they were instructed by the angel. They were baptized, then they received the Holy Ghost. Look what is provided by access to the Holy Ghost in verse 66 in chapter 6. They are baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost, this is the record of the Father and Son from henceforth and forever. It's also referred to and defined more in verse 61: *"It is given to abide in you; the record of heaven; the Comforter; the peaceable things of immortal glory; the truth of all things; that which quickeneth all things, which maketh alive all things; that which knoweth all things, and hath all power according to wisdom, mercy, truth, justice, and judgment."*

So that is what was within them. What happens when they are so endowed and they are equipped? This is Moses chapter 5, verses 10 and 11. I am so glad that these verses were restored to us, because contained in this is a much, much greater lesson if you have the eyes to see it: *"And in that day Adam blessed God and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth, saying: Blessed be the name of God, for because of my transgression my eyes are opened, and in this life I shall have joy, and again in the flesh I shall see God."*

That's Adam prophesying what is going to befall all the future generations. That was what Adam did. Now look at what Eve did: *"And Eve, his wife, heard all these things [the prophecy comes through Adam, Eve hears it] and was glad, saying: Were it not for our transgression we never should have had seed, and never should have known good and evil, and the joy of our redemption, and the eternal life which God giveth unto all the obedient."*

There is a profound difference between, the response to the power of the Spirit upon these two. With respect to its effect upon Adam on the one hand, and its effect upon Eve on the other, there was a fundamental difference. These were remarkably different reactions. To the man it is, that he prophesies, that is, he declares the truth. The "truth" being a knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come. That definition is given to us in the Doctrine and Covenants.⁶ This is the role of the man, and this is the role Adam fulfilled. But to Eve on the other hand, she obtains wisdom through the Spirit.

The role of the man is knowledge, the role of the woman is wisdom, and you see that on display right here in these verses. It is role of the woman to have the understanding, to take the prophecy that has been delivered by Adam, to process it and to say, here is what it means. This is the role of the woman. This is the gift of the woman. This is eternally the role of the woman. This is why there is a male and there is a female. In many respects the gift of wisdom eludes the male, and in many respects the gift of knowledge eludes the female. I'm not talking about "knowledge" in the sense that a woman can't have a PhD. Two of the brightest people I know are daughters of mine. It's not that I am referring to. I'm talking about knowledge in a godly sense. Knowledge in "the gift of God" sense, and I'm talking about wisdom in "the gift of God" sense, and the scriptural sense. This is an example.

Now look at verse 12. *"And Adam and Eve blessed the name of God."* [And how did they do that? They did that by a ritual. They did that by offering sacrifice. They did that by observing what they understood, but they did it together.] *"And they,"* [it is they, the two of them,] *"they made all things known unto their sons and their daughters."* [This was not Adam preaching repentance, this was not Eve preaching repentance. This was they, both together. This was the two of them. They are equally yoked. This is the two of them joined together to make the declaration. They together. The two of them however, beginning in verse 12, begin to make all things known unto their sons and daughters after they had been adequately prepared to understand and declare the truth. They were first prepared before they began to preach.

There was some eagerness on the part of father Hyrum (Joseph's older brother), before *the Book of Mormon* was even in print. He wanted to begin preaching repentance, because he believed in the work. But the Lord held Hyrum back. If you go to Doctrine and Covenants section 11 beginning at verse 13, this a revelation given to Hyrum: *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, I will impart unto you of my Spirit, which shall enlighten your mind, which shall fill your soul with joy; And then shall ye know, or by this shall you know, all things whatsoever you desire of me, which are pertaining unto things of righteousness, in faith believing in me that you shall receive. Behold, I command you that you need not suppose that you are called to preach until you are*

⁶ D&C 93: 24.

called. Wait a little longer, until you shall have my word, my rock, my church, and my gospel, that you may know of a surety my doctrine."

Hyrum was told, "it is good to be eager, but don't go out and try to preach something because you're not yet qualified. You don't have enough knowledge in order to do so." Likewise, Adam and Eve, were not qualified at first. The circumstances of their lives did not prepare them to do it, until there were generations already alive on the earth. Then they were given the gifts, the endowment necessary in order to begin preaching.

Hyrum was told in verse 21: *"Seek not to declare my word, but first seek to obtain my word, and then shall your tongue be loosed; then, if you desire, you shall have my Spirit and my word, yea, the power of God unto the convincing of men. But now hold your peace; study my word which hath gone forth among the children of men, and also study my word which shall come forth among the children of men, or that which is now translating, yea, until you have obtained all which I shall grant unto the children of men in this generation, and then shall all things be added thereto."*

Hyrum Smith would eventually become co-president with Joseph. Hyrum Smith whom the Lord would command to be ordained, not only to the office of the priesthood,⁷ but become the one possessing the sealing power over the Church.⁸ Hyrum Smith, who would be the successor to Joseph,⁹ though he was killed before Joseph. This same Hyrum Smith who was the prophet of the Church (and Joseph rebuked the Church because they weren't giving heed to Hyrum's words), Hyrum Smith who's letter to the Church ought to be in the Doctrine and Covenants because he was a President, and he issued a general epistle admonishing people, Hyrum Smith, whose name is omitted from the list of Church presidents, even though it should be there, Hyrum Smith was told by the Lord do not go out and start preaching yet. You need to learn some things first. You need to be qualified first, in the revelation to Hyrum given in 1829. Similarly, in the lives of Adam and Eve God was in no great hurry to get them preaching before they were qualified.

There was this comment Joseph Smith made *"I am learned, and know more than all the world put together. The Holy Ghost does, anyhow, and He is within me, and comprehends more than all the world: and I will associate myself with Him."* [That's from *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, page 350.] This was what qualified Adam and Eve to declare repentance to their children. This was what qualified them to know the truth of all things, and have the wisdom to impart it, so that they could persuade their children to believe in Christ. This is the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

You, to be competent in teaching your children, must first have the Holy Ghost as your guide. Then, once you have that, you ought to have familiarity with the scriptures, just as Hyrum was told to first learn what was in them before trying to teach others. Then you are qualified to go and teach your children, and you have an obligation to do that. Children are the means to preserve Zion. Without the conversion of children, Zion has no chance of surviving.

⁷ D&C 124: 91.

⁸ D&C 124: 93

⁹ D&C 124: 94.

Take a look at Doctrine and Covenants section 68, beginning at verse 25. *"And again, inasmuch as parents have children in Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized, that teach them not to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when eight years old, the sin be upon the heads of the parents. For this shall be a law unto the inhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized. And their children shall be baptized for the remission of their sins when eight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands. And they shall also teach their children to pray, and to walk uprightly before the Lord. And the inhabitants of Zion shall also observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy."*

Isn't it interesting that coupled with the obligation of the parents to do this for their children, it is immediately followed by the command to observe the Sabbath day to keep it holy. This is a nondelegable responsibility. You cannot take your children and drop them off to someone in an organization somewhere, and say, "There you are, see you in three hours." You cannot just hope that what comes out of your children's mouths at the end of that bears some remote resemblance to the content of scripture, and not merely some warmed over reiteration or regurgitation of a talk we all slept through when it was broadcast on TV every six months.

It is now the same talk, recycled over and over. Correlation has so reduced the content nothing varies. The content is reduced, the material becomes repetitive, and everything is predictable. I can cut-and-paste and give you all the talks coming in the next one. So do not tell me that is what you going to use to fulfill your responsibility to teach your children. Don't assume that will be an adequate basis upon which you discharge your responsibility to your children to teach them to understand the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. That cannot be what you're going to do to discharge your nondelegable responsibility.

You think that enduring to the end is all that needs to be done? If you've got your checklist, and you've got your little pamphlet, and you fulfilled that, you cannot believe that will be enough. Is that how you discharge your obligation to God? That's how you mirror what Adam and Eve did when they preach repentance? That's what you're going to do to take care of this? Well, good luck with that! Because I'm telling you, that is not the way in which Zion is going to be assembled. It's not going to work.

You put your children at risk whenever they are inadequately educated about the events of this dispensation. When they become adults, they begin to see all the holes in the traditional narrative about what happened when God began to work through Joseph Smith. You will have children that are going to leave in droves. You going to have children who are going to say, "I reject you, I reject the Gospel, I reject your *Book of Mormon*, I reject your Church, and I reject all the notions that you present to me, because I have found enough material on the Internet to raise serious doubts about all of this.

Do you, as parents, really think you have discharged your responsibility when you've let your children grow up in ignorance, hearing a story that is put together to make the Church look good, without any regard for the salvation of the souls of your children? That's what you're going to do?

Do you think you can come to God and say, "Look, they were regular Primary attenders when they are in my house! Look, we did *For the Strength of Youth*, we went out and we did the Trek thing, we drug a bunch of carts around, and mirrored carrying the girls cross the creek. We did all that stuff. We praised our ancestry, blessed noble pioneers. We did all that stuff! We sang *Praise to the man*. We stood when one your anointed entered the room." Do you think this will discharge your scriptural duties to your children? Do you think this will save them?

My God people!¹⁰ What are you thinking!? What on earth are you thinking? Do you read these scriptures? Do you recognize that the salvation and eternal life of your children hangs in the balance by the ignorance you visit upon them? Do you understand that their salvation may be lost entirely because the responsibility devolving upon you to teach, preach, exhort and expound, both the man and the woman, both mother and father, has been imposed upon you by God?

You have to take time on Sunday, if you spend your Sabbath at a regular three-hour block, thereafter educating your children about the foolishness they just heard, and about the vanity and the pride that is just been taught to them. You need to inoculate them against the errors of our day, and you need to ensure that they understand the truth. Because if you simply turn them loose to hear what they hear there, I don't care if you go to an LDS Church, Lutheran Church, Catholic Church, or a Baptist Church, you're not going get anything more redemptive out of what now is taught in the Primary programs of the LDS Church, than what you can get in these others. In fact, some of these other congregations may even do a better job, because they preach and focus upon Jesus, they don't have a hierarchy to point to and say, "Look at that man! He'll get you somewhere! He has a key, and all you have to be is some keyhole."

Children need to be taught. Children need to be challenged. Children are the most inquisitive creatures on the planet. Children are eager to learn. They not only don't know a lot, they know they don't know a lot. They are sponges. They want to learn. Boring a child about the Gospel of Jesus Christ is an offense to the child and an offense to God! Preach the gospel to them. Tell them the truth. Take the material and challenge them to see that this Gospel is infinite in scope. That Joseph Smith did not, indeed, could not, have written *the Book of Mormon*. That there are at least two voices in the dialogue that we looked at yesterday in *the Book of Ether*. That one of them never uses the word "prayer," and the other one never the uses the word "cry."

Show them from the scriptures what it means to be saved. You will be astonished at how much children are capable of understanding! But I have to warn you, when you begin to teach your children, if you do decide to discharge your obligation to them, you are going to make them strangers and foreigners and sojourners. You are going to have to find other people who are like-minded and willing to teach their children and discharge their responsibility, so your kids know that there are more than just your family that is interested in comprehending the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

¹⁰ This expression is not "taking the name of God in vain" because: First, I am not using God's name. Second, I am not advancing an untruth, vainly attempting to empower a falsehood by attributing it to God. Third, it dramatically calls attention to the importance of this sequence of statements and, hopefully, makes it all the more memorable. These are serious matters deserving your complete attention.

Look, go to D&C section 88. I want to read this and take a slightly different view of it. Beginning at verse 119: *"Organize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a house, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God; That your incomings may be in the name of the Lord; that your outgoings may be in the name of the Lord; that all your salutations may be in the name of the Lord, with uplifted hands unto the Most High. Therefore, cease from all your light speeches, from all laughter, from all your lustful desires, from all your pride and light-mindedness, and from all your wicked doings. Appoint among yourselves a teacher, and let not all be spokesmen at once; but let one speak at a time and let all listen unto his sayings, that when all have spoken that all may be edified of all, and that every man may have an equal privilege. See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous; learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires. Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another; cease to sleep longer than is needful; retire to thy bed early, that ye may not be weary; arise early, that your bodies and your minds may be invigorated. And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace. Pray always, that ye may not faint, until I come. Behold, and lo, I will come quickly, and receive you unto myself. Amen."*

Think of this as a description of you, as husband, you, as wife, and your children. And make your house this house. Make this your family, a family of prayer, a family of fasting, a family of faith, a family of learning, therefore a family of glory, which will bring about a family of order, and therefore, a house of God.

These are seven things. Seven is a symbolic number used to signify the completion, or the perfection of something. Finish your house. It has yet to be built, if you haven't built upon that foundation. Let this description not be of some multimillion dollar building that is built using the funds you donate to the organization. Instead, make this you. Make this your people. You should be the temple of God.

The organization's building involves a ritual designed to depict coming back into the presence of God. Make that ritual a reality in the lives of you and your children. *"Where two or three are gathered in my name,"¹¹* makes it possible for Him to come and be with you. Make it possible for Him and the angels to take note and to say, "Look! It's beginning again! There is faith again on the earth, and the children are being taught. We must act! Let us go down and gather them." Make yourselves worthy of preservation. Get your own houses in order.

Now, I want to change subjects and talk about something for a moment. I've been asked over and over and over, why I don't talk about some subjects, and therefore, I'm going to talk about this subject only because it fits within the context of what I'm challenging you to do.

I've been asked, "Why don't you speak about 'One Mighty and Strong,' and why don't you talk about the Davidic servant?" There's plenty of nonsense going on about that, and I do not want to contribute yet more to the fire. But I also don't want to take good, honest, earnest people and criticize them one whit for their best efforts in trying to parse through this subject. I don't blame them for resorting to all kinds of tools, and making an effort, and I don't want anything I'm about

¹¹ Matt. 18: 20.

to say to be viewed as criticism of anyone. I don't care to do that. I think there's some very good people making an effort at least to raise the level of consciousness. And I don't think there's anything wrong with trying to figure this stuff out, and preliminarily, in good faith, reaching what you think is a correct conclusion, even when it happens to be wrong. As long as you want to hold onto that tentatively, as long as you're willing ultimately to be taught by the Spirit, I say all those folks that make this their primary thrust, good for them! I've avoided it, but in this context on this day, I want to talk about those verses because they fit.

This is talking about the One who is Mighty and Strong. In Doctrine and Covenants 85, beginning at verse 7. First of all, I want to say, if this is a role to be occupied by a single individual, then no one can claim the role until after he has done the required work. Only fools, knaves, imposters and pseudo-strongmen who have accomplished nothing run about proclaiming themselves as possessing the "button." I am referring to the game, "button, button, who's got the button?" These various claims remind me of that children's game. These various knaves proclaim: "I do! I'm mightier and stronger than you!" What a load of crap!

Beginning at verse 7: *"And it shall come to pass that I, the Lord God, will send one mighty and strong, holding the scepter of power in his hand, clothed with light for a covering, whose mouth shall utter words, eternal words; while his bowels shall be a fountain of truth, to set in order the house of God, and to arrange by lot the inheritances of the saints whose names are found, and the names of their fathers, and of their children, enrolled in the book of the law of God; While that man, who was called of God and appointed, that putteth forth his hand to steady the ark of God, shall fall by the shaft of death, like as a tree that is smitten by the vivid shaft of lightning. And all they who are not found written in the book of remembrance shall find none inheritance in that day, but they shall be cut asunder, and their portion shall be appointed them among unbelievers, where are wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

So this is work yet to be done, according to some. According to others, this was fulfilled by Joseph Smith. The narrative the Church would offer to you is that Joseph Smith, or an early church bishop fulfilled this prophecy. As a result of the Church urging that as the interpretation, I'm very suspicious that that is, of course, wrong. If this has not yet been fulfilled, then what is coming will upset the church's apple cart. So the possibility that this is yet to be fulfilled I think is the greater probability.

But, if this person wants to step forth, then they need to hold the scepter of power in their hand. They need to have light for their covering. Their mouth needs to utter eternal words, and their bowels need to be a fountain of truth. These are the works to be done. So if someone wants to say, "I'm the guy," then go ahead and do these things. If you want to accomplish these things, once you have, then maybe this was a description of you.

But, in our context, in this day, on the subject, I want to invite all of you to set in order your own house. I want to invite all of you, after putting it in order, and making that house of order worthy to be God's house, for you, all of you, to be this one who is mighty and strong. To have everyone of you have the scepter of power, or in other words priesthood, in your hand. I want all of you to be clothed with light for a covering, that is, to have the knowledge of Truth and Light, the knowledge of God. I want all of you to be that. I want your mouths to utter eternal words within

your families. And I want your bowels to be a fountain of truth. And that as a consequence of that, you are able to set in order your house to make it the house of God. Let this begin with you. Whoever you are, male or female, sitting today. Let it begin with you, then let it extend to your spouse, then to your children. And when your house is in order, look at your extended family, and then others who are likewise inclined to believe. These are the kinds of preparations that need to precede Zion. We are not going to get there in one step. We are only going to get there incrementally through repenting and remembering.

There are a great number of increments yet to be accomplished. It's not going to happen through fairy dust. There's not going to be someone who comes along and says to you, "*Spiritu Sancto, Ave Maria*, get the holy water, get the incense, voodoo, voila, now you're Zion!" It's not going to happen. It doesn't matter if it's a Dominican in a brown robe, or a Mormon Elder with a name tag, you, you must become holy. You must receive the guidance, blessing, benefit and baptism of the Spirit. You must become the house of God. You are going to have to be the one that God visits with, in order to have the preparations necessary to take place. This is not something to be accomplished in a single step. Indeed, all of it must precede the gathering.

We looked a while back, in Grand Junction, at how dangerous it would be for an unworthy person to attempt to be in Zion. Because when it finally is acceptable to the Lord, and when His presence does finally dwell there, it is unsafe for anyone unprepared to face His glory to be in that location. Therefore, when the gathering takes place and you would like to join in, you do so at your peril if you have not accomplished the things required beforehand.

We read those verses in Alma yesterday about Melchizedek's people in chapter 13, about how the people Melchizedek gathered had waxed strong in iniquity and abomination, and had all gone astray. It doesn't matter if you look about and see the tattered ruins of the restoration. It doesn't matter that we are filled with all kinds of false notions, inadequate and incomplete teachings. It doesn't matter that we are a vain and a proud people. It's even worse when, recognizing that we live among a vain and a proud latter-day people, we gather together to think of ourselves as somehow even better than the Latter-day Saints. Because if we do that, we immediately import the same failing culture of arrogance and pride. We immediately take what is offered, and instead of becoming, as we talked about yesterday, humbled by the greatness of the steps remaining in front of us, we view ourselves comparatively. We think if we are slightly better than them, we please God. But the standard is absolute! It does not matter if you are kinda, sorta, a little bit better. The standard is absolute! It is an on-off switch. And if it's on, it's on, and if it's off, it's off. There is no dimmer. It doesn't happen that way. We aren't better than them. In some respects we have greater reason to fall into the folly of our own pride. We have greater reason to think ourselves better, than the people who think that they are better than the rest of the people. So we foolishly move along incrementally, to become yet further away from God. If we think we're better than them, and they think they're better than the world, then we ought to become a fool for Christ's sake.¹²

We should go and serve among them. We ought to do like the missionary who went out and did everything that the king didn't do, and did it with such exactness and with such fidelity, because

¹² 1 Cor. 3: 18.

he wasn't trying to serve the king, he was trying to serve the King of Heaven.¹³ He was trying to show in the integrity of his heart and in the integrity of his soul, what was true. Maybe the way to fix some of the problems with your own children would be for you to go and ask your Bishop to be a Primary teacher. And then you're not only teaching and ministering to your own children, but you are teaching and ministering to others as well.

Hearts of people get hard the older they get, although there is at least one exception, because I ran into a man in my office who was like 85 years old, and he was still as young and as nimble minded and as open and as flexible as a child. That is why we have to become childlike, because we have to be willing to consider these things. We must be willing to still learn.

Well, in Alma chapter 13, beginning verse 14 it says: *"Yea, humble yourselves even as the people in the days of Melchizedek, who was also a high priest after this same order which I have spoken, who also took upon him the high priesthood forever. And it was this same Melchizedek to whom Abraham paid tithes; yea, even our father Abraham paid tithes of one-tenth part of all he possessed. Now these ordinances were given after this manner, that thereby the people might look forward on the Son of God, it being a type of his order, or it being his order, and this that they might look forward to him for a remission of their sins, that they might enter into the rest of the Lord."*

What are these ordinances spoken of here? That was what we looked at in the Orem talk concerning chapter 13 and we are not going to repeat it here. That is the material explaining everything God does, He does by an ordinance. Everything that He does, every blessing that He confers, He confers by a covenant. One of the good things about the absence of a binding covenant is that you can't damn yourself by taking upon yourself an obligation you will never honor.

One of the good things about the Restoration is that there are covenantal examples we were given, that give us an idea of the kind of behavior that God would want. I wish everyone would go to the LDS temples and take on covenants and then try to live them. But if you fail, unlike the stuff that comes into play with this Melchizedek character, there is no severe penalty, because it is for your good, and for your practice, and for your instruction. If you were to honor those commitments, there is no reason why God and the angels cannot ratify whatever it is you do, if you qualify for it. The Holy Spirit of Promise is embedded within the architecture of the Church's teachings. It was as recent as the General Conference before last, when President Eyring talked about how they had the sealing power, and then he threw in that caveat that everything has to be sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. I put that up on my blog, I quoted it and said, "That's good doctrine." And that was good doctrine.

Go to the temple, get your ordinances, and then work to have the Holy Spirit of Promise, because the Keeper of that Gate is the Holy One of Israel, and there is no employee there. It is the Holy One of Israel, and you qualify to receive that directly with heaven. There is no other gatekeeper opening and closing doors. There is only the Holy One of Israel, He employeth no servant

¹³ See Alma 18: 8-11.

there.¹⁴ Therefore, this scripture is talking about the very things that I have been talking about since we began in Boise. Now we have reached this point.

We need to respond when repentance is preached, by repenting. Righteousness only comes after that. And this is the only way out of our similarly bleak, current condition. This! It is by remembering, it is by returning, it is by finding yourselves, no matter who you live among, being someone God has accepted. You must be someone God has spoken to from heaven. You must take the Holy Spirit as your guide, and not be taken off this task. You set in order the house of God, beginning with your own marriage. You do that.

Now, we are going to change subjects, and go back to Doctrine and Covenants section 132. The next part of this needs to focus on what is said in section 132. By way of background, section 132 has an uncertain beginning. There are lots of debates about how, when and where. I have taken the position this was first given during the translation of the *Book of Mormon*. This makes sense because Joseph and Oliver prayed to know concerning baptism when they got to those passages in *the Book of Mormon*. Therefore it is likely they would have likewise prayed to know about the subject of plural wives when they got to the translation of Jacob chapter 2.

The way in which the translation took place, was that the Jacob chapter 2 materials were part of *the Small Plates of Nephi*, translated at the very last. So it would have been very late in the translation of *the Book of Mormon* when they got to Jacob chapter 2, almost at the end of the translation process. I think they would've made an inquiry as a result of that. Other people believe it was later and as a result of the translation of the Bible. These people believe it was during the time Joseph and Sidney were going through what is now call *the Inspired Version* of the Bible, that provoked the inquiry.

However, even though it is not well known history, those first four missionaries that were sent out included Oliver Cowdrey. Oliver expected to be able take a plural wife among the Indians. There is reason to believe Oliver, rather than Sidney, was involved and had knowledge about it. Oliver would have gained that knowledge at the time the revelation came.

There is also a comment from Brigham Young, in which he said knowledge of this came during the translation of *the Book of Mormon*. Therefore, it would have been in the 1829 time frame, when the beginning of section 132 was first revealed.

The fact of the matter is that because of the content of section 132, the content was suppressed and not reduced to written form for many years. We know when it finally got put into writing. The headnote on section 132 says it got reduced to writing July 12, 1843. William Clayton's journal confirms that that was the date it was finally written down. Then the subsequent events in the diary, about what happened as the section 132 transcript was taken to Emma and her reaction, confirms the July 1843 date. Shortly afterwards Joseph deeded to Emma unsold lots in Nauvoo in order to make sure Joseph's legal and property affairs were not intertwined with other women claiming rights, and all of that. There seems to be a pretty good historical basis for saying that section 132 was a document created by Joseph Smith, dictating it to his scribe in July 1843, just

¹⁴ 2 Ne. 9: 41.

as the head note says here. And if you look at William Clayton's Journal, you will see that there's other contemporary evidence on that date for this happening, but it did not get made public.

The content of section 132 does not appear to be a single revelation. It appears to be, in my view, at least five different revelations that go back in the beginning verses to 1829. When you get to the end it speaks about events occurring in July 1843. So it is really a series of revelations which, for convenience, were dictated at one time by Joseph, in one document. Therefore, when you look at it, it is really not clear where the divisions take place. I tried to parse through it and give you what I think is a reasonable way to break the chronology apart to see what happened in *Passing the Heavenly Gift*. But you don't have to have read that. Today I am going to talk about this revelation just generally.

The brother of Jared, as we saw yesterday, went to the Lord to inquire about a practical matter. And the Lord in response to the inquiry about the lighting, first of all, asks the brother of Jared if he will believe Him. The Lord asked the brother of Jared if he would accept the words, (in other words, the covenant) which the Lord would then offer to this man. Once he agreed to the conditions, the Lord gives him a revelation containing all of God's revelations a mortal is permitted to receive.

What the brother of Jared received in the revelation had nothing to do with the original problem that brought him in prayer to the Lord. He wanted to solve a lighting problem inside a barge. The revelation has nothing to do with the lighting problem inside the barge. It contained instead all of God's revelations.

Similarly, when Joseph Smith went into the Sacred Grove he was trying to find out which church to join. In answer to the inquiry about which church to join, he was told to join none of them, and that they were all corrupt, and he would be the means of bringing something else about.

Later, when Joseph prayed to find out what his state and standing was before the Lord, and the angel Moroni came and disposed of Joseph's inquiry very perfunctorily, telling him to "fear not" and then went on to tell him about everything the Lord had as an agenda, including the plates of *the Book of Mormon*.

The subject someone asks about when they go to the Lord does not necessarily then control the content of what the Lord will reveal. Likewise, when Joseph made the inquiry about the plurality of wives, the Lord took it as an opportunity to talk about something more important. The Lord wanted to talk about eternal marriage. The Lord's priority is what you read first in section 132.

He talks about the eternal duration of the marriage covenant. He answers the question about plural wives very late, in the original revelation, almost as an afterthought. But it is first and foremost a revelation about the eternity of the marriage covenant. You do not read an answer about Joseph's inquiry concerning plural marriage until verse 34. Beginning at verse 1 and going through verse 33, all of that is about the eternity of the marriage covenant. All of that is about marriage of a man and a woman, like the marriage of Adam to Eve, and like the children of Adam and Eve who went off two by two to create their families.

The blessings of exaltation you hope to inherit in eternity are tied to the first 33 verses of section 132 dealing with the marriage of a man and a woman. Therefore, when you read section 132, don't leap to verse 34 and then read retrospectively back the statements beginning there into the earlier text. Nothing in the earlier text addresses anything other than the marriage of a man and a woman. The subject matter changes, and the question that was asked is answered beginning with verse 34.

What was on the Lord's mind, and what the Lord inspired Joseph's inquiry to allow Him to reveal, is in the beginning of section 132. Look at verse 7. *"The conditions of this law are these: All covenants, contracts, bonds, obligations, oaths, vows, performances, connections, associations, or expectations, that are not made and entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, of him who is anointed, both as well for time and for all eternity, and that too most holy, by revelation and commandment...(and I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days, and there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred), are of no efficacy, virtue, or force in and after the resurrection from the dead; for all contracts that are not made unto this end have an end when men are dead."*

So everything that you hope to receive into the next life, even your "expectations," all of that has to be obtained from God by covenant. I mentioned in an answer to a question in Ephraim, that the role of the woman was significant, even in the life of Christ. I mentioned that she anointed Him preliminary to His death and burial. One of the things that gave Him the expectation of coming forth out of the grave, was the anointing that promised Him. Why do you think in the temple the rites of washing and anointing include preserving some of the functions of the body through the resurrection?

The temple anointings are not to make you healthy here and now. They are given so that you can lay claim upon this as an "expectation" in the eternities. Because if you do not have the expectation conferred upon you by the Holy Spirit of Promise, you will be left to obtain it in some other cycle. The only things you will be able to take with you into eternity must be obtained in this manner. Everything has to be obtained by covenant.

Look at verse 13. *"Everything that is in the world, whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities,..."* [It doesn't matter if it is ordained by man, and it does not even matter if someone, sitting in eternity on a throne, who has authority in the presence of God, ordains it. It does not matter if it is given to you by "...principalities..." That is talking about angels. It is talking about people from the other side, even if they are in a position of authority in the presence of God, it doesn't matter. *Everything that is in the world,*] *"whether it be ordained of men, by thrones, or principalities, or powers, or things of name, whatsoever they may be, that are not by me or by my word, saith the Lord, shall be thrown down, and shall not remain after men are dead, neither in nor after the resurrection, saith the Lord your God."*

The Keeper of the Gate is the Holy One of Israel indeed!¹⁵ These words should mean something to you if you have listen to, or read the text, we discussed in Orem on priesthood. You should understand what God is saying here. You should understand that when it comes to some things

¹⁵ 2 Ne. 9: 41.

you hope to have continue into eternity, it is not enough to have even one of the noble and great, even one of those who would we regard as an Archangel, promise it to you, it doesn't matter. God and God alone holds the keys of death and hell.¹⁶ Christ paid that price. Christ has to be the one, because He is the only one qualified to do this. He has to be the one. This is a nondelegable responsibility by Him who provides you with a return to life thereby becomes your Father in heaven. If Christ is going to become your Father in heaven, He's got that same responsibility to you that He imposed upon you as a parent in Zion that we looked at before the break. He does not spare Himself from bearing the same burden He asks of us.

"For whatsoever things remain are by me; and whatsoever things are not by me shall be shaken and destroyed." [That's Christ's word. That is what He says is going to happen.] "Therefore, if a man marry him a wife in the world, and he marry her not by me nor by my word, and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world."

Although God is talking about the eternity of the marriage covenant, He extends this into everything. Everything, even your associations, are controlled by His covenant-making. All of your expectations in the afterlife are obtained by a covenant from Him, because His word and His word alone will endure.

"Therefore, when they are out of the world they neither marry nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory." [Partners in such marriages become angels that are ministering servants. Angels look to receive the things God has offered to men, but unless they come down and participate here, they cannot obtain them, for they are only to be had by the rigors of life experienced while here.]

Verse 19: *"And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, [...skipping down] shall inherit thrones, kingdoms, principalities, and powers, dominions, all heights and depths—[...skipping down] and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fulness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever."*

You cannot receive these things unless you enter in by the Gate, the Keeper of which is the Holy One of Israel, who employs no servant. If you do that however, *"then shall they be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power, and the angels are subject unto them."*

These are people who have qualified for trust by God. God knows they will honor the condition required for eternal life. This insures that eternity will not be infected by the kind of abuse, neglect, unworthiness, and ambition which God wants to throw down. All evil and excess God wants to have come to an end. This is not because He is mean, but for the protection of yourself,

¹⁶ 2 Ne. 9: 10-11.

for the protection of eternity, for the protection of the potential offspring that would result of the continuation of the seed. This is so that, in the beginning when life comes into existence as an organized spirit, that spirit is introduced into an environment that is perfect, pure, holy, and like God.

Therefore, when we finally come to this topic, we are talking about something which, even if it exists only with you and your spouse, it is Zion. It is eternal. It bears the hallmarks of God's hand and covenant. It is what this topic is all about. These people have no end, they are everlasting, they have all power, and all of this is a discussion about a marriage, between a man and a woman.

Plural wives do not get mentioned until verse 34 for the first time. Lay aside all the issues that are thundering into your minds right now. Ask yourself this, if you're a man, do you have a wife, if you're a woman, do you have a husband, with whom you are one? Ask yourself, do you and your spouse reflect the image of God? Ask yourself that soberly.

Now, just to rule out what I think needs to be ruled out. It is in this place this needed to be declared, because we are now in close proximity to those who have taken what starts at verse 34, and they've gone on, believing that it is appropriate to take a plural wife. I want to ask you, since *"there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred,"* and since in verse 64, *"...verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man have a wife, who holds the keys of this power,"* This "power" being the power to seal; do you hold those keys? Are you that one individual? Before you answer that question, I hope you're aware that every single one of the polygamist sects claims that their particular leader is the one described in verse 7, *"there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred."* Every one of them make this same claim.

Here is the bad news for you. They cannot all be right, but they can all be wrong. If no one has told you this before I'll declare to you today, no man holds that authority among the various polygamists sects, period. I don't care what priesthood line of authority they choose to claim, they don't have it.

If you are wrong, and you engage in this behavior, D&C section 132, verses 41 and 42 address the woman, and says if she does this without this authority, she has committed adultery. And verse 43 addresses the man, and says if he does it without this authority, he commits adultery. It is interesting in this context (just like when the Lord clothed both Adam and then clothed Eve), He does not leave it with one or the other, but speaks to both. This is an important enough subject that He talks to them each, and warns them both.

Adultery is one of the things so threatening to the foundation of society that it is forbidden in the 10 Commandments. (Exodus chapter 20 verse 14.) In Moses' day those who committed adultery were put to death (in Leviticus 20:10). In our day we're told if you do this, and let me read this, D&C section 63, beginning at verse 14. *"There were among you adulterers and adulteresses;..."* [Again, don't think that God has one standard for men and another for women. It doesn't work that way. He's always on this subject, treating the man and the woman the same.] *"...some of whom have turned away from you, and others remain with you that hereafter shall be revealed.*

Let such beware and repent speedily, lest judgment shall come upon them as a snare, and their folly shall be made manifest, and their works shall follow them in the eyes of the people. 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, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith and shall fear."

You ought to fear. Because you should ask yourself, is this who you are? Is this what you are? Joseph Smith said, *"If a man commit adultery he cannot receive the celestial kingdom of God. Even if he is saved in any kingdom, it cannot be the celestial kingdom."*¹⁷ We are supposed to hearken to the commandments.

Look at Jacob chapter 2, verses 27 and 28. *"Wherefore, my brethren, hear me, and hearken to the word of the Lord: For there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none; For I, the Lord God, delight in the chastity of women. And whoredoms are an abomination before me; thus saith the Lord of Hosts."* [One wife!]

Jacob chapter 3, beginning at verse 5. This is a remarkable, remarkable passage. *"Behold, the Lamanites your brethren, whom ye hate because of their filthiness and the cursing which hath come upon their skins, are more righteous than you; for they have not forgotten the commandment of the Lord, which was given unto our father—that they should have save it were one wife, and concubines they should have none, and there should not be whoredoms committed among them. And now, this commandment they observe to keep; wherefore, because of this observance, in keeping this commandment, the Lord God will not destroy them, but will be merciful unto them; and one day they shall become a blessed people."* [It was the fidelity of the Lamanites to their one wife. They rejected the prophets, they rejected Nephi, they rejected the Gospel, they turned to their loathsomeness, they were a wild and a ferocious people, but this preserved them in the eyes of God. This was important enough that they deserved to continue on, unlike the Nephites who had the Gospel, unlike the Nephites who had the prophets.] *"Behold, their husbands love their wives, and their wives love their husbands; and their husbands and their wives love their children; and their unbelief and their hatred towards you is because of the iniquity of their fathers; wherefore, how much better are you than they, in the sight of your great Creator?"*

God does not judge righteousness the way we do. If you've read the 10th parable,¹⁸ what was it that attracted the attention of the angels? They looked at the marriage, and they said, "This! This looks like what we come from! This relationship, this marriage, the man and the woman, this is what heaven itself consists of. And look! It's on the earth!" And the angels went and they brought the Lord to behold. They said to Him, "Behold the man and the woman!" Then the Lord set in motion everything that was needed.

What more do you need to see from the theme of *the Book Mormon* than this passage, in order to realize when it comes to the relationship of marriage, this is the image of God. This is what God would like to preserve into eternity. It is so much easier to take people who have this kind of a

¹⁷ DHC Vol. 6, p. 81.

¹⁸ *The Missing Virtue*, found in *Ten Parables*.

marriage and to preserve them into eternity than it is to take someone who may know all mysteries, but whose marriage is a tattered ruin, and attempt to preserve them.

Look at the example of your first parents. Moses 3: 22-25. *"And Adam said: This I know now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh."*

You may have a spouse who is Catholic, Lutheran, Presbyterian or Mormon. You may have a spouse who is Community of Christ Mormon. You may have a spouse who believes in dancing naked at Wiccan ceremonies while high on peyote. You and your spouse need to love one another. You and your spouse have something far, far greater, potentially, between you and your children, than all the distractions of this world. You and your spouse face the challenge of becoming one. And if you are one, remember that the Lamanites were condemned, consistently in the *Book of Mormon*, BUT they were praised and ultimately preserved because of their marriages, because of the love of the spouses.

Now, if you claim you have enough love for two or more women, then I'd ask you, can you not love your one wife enough to give her your full attention?

Every day my wife and I get up and we have a 4 mile hike that we do every morning before we get ready for work and the day. We spent about an hour doing that. That hour is filled with conversation, every day, about what's going on in my life, what's going on in her life, what's going on with this big problem, or what is going on with our children. Every day.

I come home for lunch very frequently and we spend the noon hour talking. We probably call each other, I don't know, four or five times during the day. I drive down to Utah County a couple of times a week. Driving down I am on the phone talking to my wife, driving back I am on the phone talking with my wife. We have a lot to talk about.

I do think marriage can be something that is godlike, and two people can in fact, become one. It requires effort. You should make that effort.

Although Moses permitted a man to take another wife, the law propounded through Moses protected the first wife's rights. Exodus 21:10 *"If he take him another wife; her food, [the first wife] her raiment, [the first wife] and her duty of marriage, [that is all the rights of association] shall he not diminish."*

The first wife is referred to in scripture throughout, as "the wife of thy youth."

I want to look at Malachi. Malachi was quoted by the Lord, and quoted by the angel Moroni. Go to Malachi chapter 2, beginning at verse 14. This is talking about "the wife of thy youth." *"Yet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal*

treacherously against the wife of his youth. For the LORD, the God of Israel, saith that he hateth putting away."

Take heed to your spirit that you deal not treacherously. Only a fool will practice plural marriage. There is only one, if that, on the earth who can have the required keys. If you err, it is an offense and adultery and an abomination. Your first wife, the wife of your youth, must be unaffected in all her rights.

That having been said, it is possible some of you are already in such a marriage. If that is the case, do not tear your family apart. That would be worse still. Do not take another wife, and do not abandon any wife you presently have, but teach your children to come out of this system. Teach your children. And if you have a friend, or if you have a neighbor, or if you have someone in your own extended family who is in this predicament, don't judge them, help them. Help them teach their children to come out of the system. Don't destroy the lives of children that are already in such a community, but let it come to an end in this generation. It would be wrong to destroy families, even if they are peculiarly situated.

Zion is going to require strong, happy and noble marriages, worthy of enduring beyond the grave. I suspect that if someone repents, even if they keep their marriages intact, but teach their children to forsake this system of multiple wives, that Zion is going to include them. Some who have awakened and decided the practice, and the continuation of taking yet more wives, needs to end, will be accepted by the Lord. It would not surprise me to find out there will be those who have plural wives within Zion. But it will not include those who still believe in continuing the practice, perpetuating the practice, or adding additional wives, it will be those who have awakened. Once awakened, stop it in the children. But do not destroy the families.

Look, the practice of plural wives is an abomination. Everyone that said they had the keys to do that, they reckon their authority somewhere downriver from Brigham Young. I want you to think about all that has been said, and all the scriptures that have been read today, while I read to you a General Conference talk, given by Brigham Young, in the October General Conference on October 8th of 1861. I want you to consider the folly of these words, and measure it against the standard of a marriage worthy of the perpetuation into eternity.

"The second way in which a wife can be separated from her husband, while he continues to be faithful to his God and his priesthood, I have not revealed except to a few persons in this Church, and a few have received it from Joseph the Prophet as well as myself. This other path a woman may take, if she can get a chance, and do it in accordance with the order of heaven, if a woman can find a man holding the keys of the priesthood with higher power and authority than her husband, and he is disposed to take her, he can do so, otherwise she has got to remain where she is. This is a second way in which a woman can leave her husband to whom she has been sealed for time and eternity. In either of these ways of separation you can discover there is no need for a bill of divorcement."

He goes on to say, without a bill of divorcement a new marriage could be arranged under the system taught by Brigham Young.

Are you kidding me!? Are you kidding me!? This was doctrine? I'm inclined to now engage in a string of obscenities. You believe this crap? You think Brigham Young knew what the hell he was talking about when he spoke about these important matters? Keep in mind he just happened to be the guy who had the most keys. Therefore if this were true, he could be the one at the top of the "food chain" or chain of women. Therefore he could take for himself the most women, assuming they wanted some higher "key holder"—because there was none higher within his organization. Do you believe this to be true? Any woman, married to any man, anywhere, at any time, if he could get her to come aboard, he can take her? This is the tenuous thread upon which eternal marriage is to be based? Yet this was what Brigham Young proclaimed in General Conference as how marriage operated.

Here is a section of the Doctrine and Covenants taken from the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants when Joseph was still alive. It is an article on marriage. *"One man should have one wife, and one woman one husband, except in the case of death, when either is at liberty to marry again. It's not right to persuade a woman to be baptized contrary to the will of her husband, neither is it lawful to influence her to leave her husband."*

I mentioned Hyrum Smith's *General Epistle to the Church*. Do you know what Hyrum Smith said in the *General Epistle to the Church*? The President we don't recognize? No one does. President Hyrum Smith's letter said:

To our well beloved brother Parley P. Pratt, and to the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in England, and scattered abroad throughout all Europe, and to the Saints—Greeting:

Whereas, in times past persons have been permitted to gather with the Saints at Nauvoo, in North America—such as husbands leaving their wives and children behind; also, such as wives leaving their husbands, and such as husbands leaving their wives who have no children, and some because their companions are unbelievers. All this kind of proceedings we consider to be erroneous and for want of proper information. And the same should be taught to all the Saints, and not suffer families to be broken up on any account whatever if it be possible to avoid it. Suffer no man to leave his wife because she is an unbeliever. These things are an evil and must be forbidden by the authorities of the church or they will come under condemnation; for the gathering is not in hast nor by flight, but to prepare all things before you, and you know not but the unbeliever may be converted and the Lord heal him; but let the believers exercise faith in God, and the unbelieving husband shall be sanctified by the believing wife; and the unbelieving wife by the believing husband, and families are preserved and saved from a great evil which we have seen verified before our eyes. Behold this is a wicked generation, full of lyings, and deceit, and craftiness; and the children of the wicked are wiser than the children of light; that is, they are more crafty; and it seems that it has been the case in all ages of the world.

And the man who leaves his wife and travels to a foreign nation, has his mind overpowered with darkness, and Satan deceived him and flatters him with the graces of the harlot, and before he is aware he is disgraced forever; and greater is the danger for the woman that leaves her husband. The evils resulting from

such proceedings are of such a nature as to oblige us to cut them off from the church.

And we also forbid that a woman leave her husband because he is an unbeliever. We also forbid that a man shall leave his wife because she is an unbeliever. If he be a bad man (i.e., the believer) there is a law to remedy that evil. And if the law divorce them, then they are at liberty; otherwise they are bound as long as they two shall live, and it is not our prerogative to go beyond this; if we do it, it will be at the expense of our reputation.

These things we have written in plainness and we desire that they should be publicly known, and request this to be published in the STAR.

May the Lord bestow his blessings upon all the Saints richly, and hasten the gathering, and bring about the fullness of the everlasting covenant are the prayers of your brethren.

Written by Hyrum Smith, patriarch. (Underlining added.)

Well, I guess we did not interfere with marriages, and preserved them even if the husband was an unbeliever, until the “mighty prophet” Brigham Young came along on October 8th of 1861 and said, "Hey there is another way you can get a woman, without a bill of divorcement from her husband, you can just take her if you've got the keys. And damn! I'm just loaded with keys!"

So that this topic becomes clear, I'm not going to take the time today to address the many foolish things that have been said by the LDS Church, and by break-off groups in an attempt to win a lawsuit. That was what happened. I have prepared a paper that am going to present at the Sunstone Conference in Salt Lake City on August 2. On the evening of August 2, I'm going to put that paper up on the blog, and you can download it and you can read it. You will see there a discussion that fits right in with this series of talks, right here, at this moment in the content. It deals with this subject, and it's going to be put up and you can read it.

When it comes to the subject of marriage, as if all I have said, and all that is in scripture is not clear enough, Revelation chapter 19 has a description of the culmination of all the Lord's great work in this cycle of creation. This is talking about when it all wraps up. In the prophecy God cannot think of anything better to put into the mouth of John his Beloved who wrote this prophecy than the analogy of a marriage used here. Revelation chapter 19, beginning at verse 6. *"And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, [male and female] and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."*

Not only does He likened the final triumph of the Lord's atonement to a wedding feast, but it is in fact a wedding feast. For all those who come through the tribulation, male and female, in the image of God, He will put on for them a wedding banquet, because they are like Him. They will see as they are seen, because they are like Him. *"Male and female created he them, in the image of God created he them."*

When our Lord's ministry began, John's Gospel has in chapter 1, Christ's baptism. John's Gospel has in chapter two, the wedding at Cana. When Christ prepared for His death and burial, it was by a woman anointing Him. And when Christ was resurrected, the first, and at the moment only witness, was a woman. When Christ finally got around to seeing His disciples, He upbraided them for not believing the testimony of the woman.

Well, Zion is a distant accomplishment yet to be achieved, but it is before us. The next talk is going to be in Phoenix on September 9, in the morning. I hope before you come, or those who do come and are hearing this, that they review the first nine talks. This is all one talk. This is all one subject. We have been reconstructing the Restoration.

I don't care who copies this material. It would please me if General Conference began to quote this stuff and began to use it. I think that is a fool's bargain. I don't think that's going to happen. But if you believe the scriptures, and if you believe in Joseph, and if you believe in the Restoration, then you believe the work is still incomplete. You believe that the challenges lie in front of us. And one of the most remarkable challenges we face is the topic we addressed today. All of that other stuff is foundational to bring us to this point, to talk about this subject. So that in this subject you can see how great the challenge is we all face.

Now, I know that there are a lot of broken homes. I know there are a lot of broken families, and I know there's a lot of broken hearts. But we are not given any trouble in this world that we are not equal to. We don't get tempted above our ability to withstand.¹⁹ God has something in mind for every single one of us. God has something in mind for each one of you whose marriages may presently be troubled. Each one of you who may now find yourself in a broken home will be cared for in His due time. Trust in Him. Trust in His desire for you. Take your problems to Him and weary Him.

Remember yesterday when we talked about crying unto the Lord? When I consider all of the people about whom I care, and the problems they face, I want to cry to the Lord. If your circumstances trouble you, cry to Him. Maybe all of that is one of those weaknesses given unto you that you may be humble, so that you might come and cry unto Him.

By the time that Adam and Eve knew enough to declare repentance unto their children, their children were already suffering from the ravages of the Fall. As soon as they began to declare repentance unto their children, and teach them some things about covenant making, one of their sons took the information and turned it into a combination to create inordinate wickedness. And you wonder why God withholds some things from the view of the public? It is because some things, if abused, can bring to pass such wretched wickedness in the lives of men that you are better off if God does not reveal them. You are better off if heaven does not disclose them.

Adam and Eve declared and cried repentance together, they labored side-by-side, they received the garment at the same moment, they were instructed on sacrifice at the same time, they were taught and received the Holy Ghost at the same moment, they experienced the baptism of fire, and Adam prophesied at the same moment that Eve was overcome by the Spirit, and in the Spirit

¹⁹ 1 Cor. 10: 13.

of Wisdom, was able to interpret and define what was going on. All of this was suitable and appropriate in the lives of our first parents, for they two were one.

Don't think that the heartache you feel is any less poignant than the heartache of our first parents. This is a place to be proven, and it's rough stuff down here. You came here full of enthusiasm and confident in your ability to withstand the day, and now the day is upon us. It really doesn't look the same down here as it did up there. But if you be noble, and if you are faithful, and if you are true, and if you leave witnesses here among us, it just may be that in some other day, when some other rough challenge like this, is put to the test, and we are all asked, "Whom should the Lord send?" That some of us will look at one of you and say. "I trust him! I trust her! I know that she will remain true and faithful. I know that he will do so likewise." Because it will be a great while after we have departed this life, before we will have attained to everything that is necessary in order to rise up.

This was what we talked about in Ephraim. You need to hear all of these, and you need to hear all of them in one continuous discussion, because it's all one. This isn't my material, it's the Lord's. All we have been doing is looking at these scriptures. My volume of scripture is actually color-coded. These are the scriptures. My scriptures are color-coded with orange in Boise, and yellow in Idaho Falls, and pink in Logan, and light green in Centerville, and dark green yesterday, and purple today. You can see the Scriptures have become rather littered with markers. These talks are to help you remember. We cannot go forward until first we remember what has been already given.

This is the Gospel of Christ. This is the power of God unto redemption. This is the revelation Joseph Smith was attempting to lay out when he was taken. There is a lot left to yet be done. There is more left to be done than has been started. There is more that has not been revealed than what Joseph was able to get on the ground here before he was killed.

As we have gone forward we have preserved less and less. Now with the engines of Correlation, we are managing to trim yet further. The Gospel of Christ is not about, "Have a nice day." The Gospel of Christ is not about being a keyhole. The Gospel of Christ is about awakening and arising. It is about you becoming redeemed from the fall and coming back to God's presence. Thank God, that before Joseph died, he was able to lay out something in the red brick store, through ritual and through ceremony, that described walking back into the presence of God, conversing with Him through the veil, and then entering into His presence. Thank God that in addition to the scriptures, Joseph left us a ritual testimony.

But do you know why ancient Israel had their temple? It was to have ceremonies to point them to the coming of Christ in the flesh. The Latter-day Saints have been given a ritual ceremony to point them to also receive Christ in the flesh. The Israelites thought their temple was an end in itself. The Latter-day Saints seem to do likewise. But do not you do this. See the ritual for what it is: merely an invitation.

There needs yet to be another temple built. But it will be in Zion, and those who go there will meet with their Lord, because that will be His house indeed. You can build that only if you qualify to do so.

There is so much left to be done! Right now the only thing that can be done is to remind you of the Restoration, and that is available to all. Everyone is invited. Everyone. But don't expect the Lord to give us anything further, or permit us to move one inch further, until we first remember what we've been given. Even if you are in a fallen world, among a fallen people, who are proud and who are arrogant to think themselves more than they really are, if you will love your wife, and if your wife will love you, you are in the image of God and that will be preserved unto all eternity. No matter what else you may have to go through between now and then, that's what He's trying to preserve. That is the image of God.

I bear testimony of that and hope these words will be allowed to sink into your heart. They come from scripture, and they come from the Lord, they don't come from me.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.