

3 Nephi 13*Introduction*

1 In March 1978, a prominent Lutheran minister participated in a symposium on the Brigham Young University campus. He had accepted the task of comparing the Savior's sermon in 3 Nephi with the Sermon on the Mount found in the book of Matthew. By the tools and procedures of textual criticism, he discovered several interesting differences between these two sermons. He gave an astute and perceptive analysis. He said that compared to the New Testament, 3 Nephi is much clearer, the Savior's teachings are more precise; they are stronger, bolder, and offer considerably more information than can be gained from the New Testament. He found also that the personality of Jesus is more commanding in 3 Nephi than in the New Testament. He noted that in the New Testament Jesus speaks as a teacher, but in 3 Nephi he speaks as a god.

Robert J. Matthews, *Jesus the Savior*

2 **3 Nephi 13: 1-4***Alms*

The word *alms* is mentioned in three of the standard works (see D&C 88:2; 112:1; 3 Nephi 13:1-4; Matt. 6:1-4). *Alms* comes the Greek word meaning righteousness, or acts of religious devotion. Almsgiving is the act of donating to the poor, whether through organized religion and community activity or through one's own personal efforts (Hoyt W. Brewster Jr., *Doctrine and Covenants Encyclopedia*, 13)

As quoted in *Latter-day Commentary on the New Testament*, Ed. J. Pinegar, K. Douglas Bassett, and Ted L. Earl [American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, 2002], 124.

3 Some years ago a priests quorum decided to gather food for the needy as a service project. Jim, one of the priests, was excited to participate and was determined to collect more food than anyone else. The time arrived when the priests met at the chapel. They all went out at the same time and returned at a specified time later in the evening. To everyone's surprise, Jim's cart was empty. He seemed rather sober, and some of the boys made fun of him. Seeing this and knowing that Jim had an interest in cars, the adviser said, "Come outside, Jim. I want you to look at my car. It's giving me some trouble."

When they got outside, the adviser asked Jim if he was upset. Jim said, "No, not really. But when I went out to collect the food, I really got a lot. My cart was full. As I was returning to the chapel, I stopped at the home of a nonmember woman who is divorced and lives within our ward boundaries. I knocked on the door and explained what we were doing, and she invited me in. She began to look for something to give me. She opened the refrigerator, and I could see there was hardly anything in it. The cupboards were bare. Finally, she found a small can of peaches.

"I could hardly believe it. There were all these little kids running around that needed to be fed, and she handed me this can of peaches. I took it and put it in my cart and went on up the street. I got about halfway up the block when I just felt warm all over and knew I needed to go back to that house. I gave her all the food."

The adviser said, “Jim, don’t you ever forget the way you feel tonight, because that’s what it is all about.” Jim had tasted the nutrient of selfless service.

James E. Faust, *Ensign*, Nov. 2006 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006], 54.

4 In every gospel dispensation the Lord has required his saints to care for the temporal well-being of the poor among them. Organized almsgiving was one of the accepted features of Jewish life in the days of Jesus. Much of the giving, however, was done in a spirit of ostentatious display, with the expectancy of gaining popularity and honor from men. Modern almsgivers often follow the same pattern, trumpeting their donations and contributions through the columns of the press, no doubt expecting to gain business or political rewards which will outweigh the cost of the contribution. Verily, they have their reward.

Bruce R. McConkie, *Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, 3 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966-1973], 1:232.

5 The care of the poor is high on the Lord’s priority list, but “it must needs be done in [the Lord’s] own way” (D&C 104:15-18). Those who give alms to be seen of men, or for the glory of men, will be rewarded by the plaudits of men in this life, not from their Father in Heaven (vv. 1-2). These may be good and honorable efforts, but it is only a terrestrial-type giving. Those who are hypocritical, or give alms to get men subjected to them, are operating on a telestial level. They are serving the devil. The celestial way is to “let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: (v.3) This means to anonymously help those in need. Those acts done secretly so as not to obtain the recognition of men, but to heal those in need, will be rewarded openly by our Father in Heaven (v.4). The Lord knows the thoughts and the intents of the heart, and knows our reasons for helping. The main reason should be out of love and concern for our fellowmen, not to obtain our Father in Heaven’s blessing.

Monte S. Nyman, *Divine Ministry, The First Gospel*, 194.

6 I approached the reception desk of a large hospital to learn the room number of a patient I had come to visit. This hospital, like almost every other in the land, was undergoing a massive expansion. Behind the desk where the receptionist sat was a magnificent plaque which bore an inscription of thanks to donors who had made possible the expansion. The name of each donor who had contributed \$100,000 appeared in a flowing script, etched on an individual brass placard suspended from the main plaque by a glittering chain.

The names of the benefactors were well known. Captains of commerce, giants of industry, professors of learning--all were there. I felt gratitude for their charitable benevolence. Then my eyes rested on a brass placard which was different—it contained no name. One word, and one word only, was inscribed: “Anonymous.” I smiled and wondered who the unnamed contributor could have been. Surely he or she experienced a quiet joy unknown to any other...

A year ago last winter [1981], a modern jetliner faltered after takeoff and plunged into the icy Potomac River. Acts of bravery and feats of heroism were in evidence that day, the most dramatic of which was one witnessed by the pilot of a rescue helicopter. The rescue rope was lowered to a struggling survivor. Rather than grasping the lifeline to safety, the man tied the line to another, who was then lifted to safety. The rope was lowered again, and yet another was

saved. Five were rescued from the icy waters. Among them was not found the anonymous hero. Unknown by name, “he left the vivid air signed with his honor” (Stephen Spender, “I think continually of those—“ in *Masterpieces of Religious Verse*, ed. James Dalton Morrison [New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers], p. 291.)...

May this truth [service] guide our lives. May we look upward as we press forward in the service of our God and our fellowmen. And may we incline an ear toward Galilee, that we might hear perhaps an echo of the Savior’s teachings: “Do not your alms before men, to be seen of them” (Matthew 6:1). “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth” (Matthew 6:3). And of our good deeds: “See thou tell no man” (Matthew 8:4). Our hearts will then be lighter, our lives brighter, and our souls richer.

Loving service anonymously given may be unknown to man—but the gift and the giver are known to God.

Thomas S. Monson, Conference Report, Apr. 1983, 73-74, 76; or *Ensign*, May 1983, 55-57.

3 Nephi 13:5-13

Prayer

7 Brigham Young noted that to pray always is to live as we pray: “I do not know any other way for the Latter-day Saints than for every breath to be virtually a prayer for God to guide and direct his people... Every breath should virtually be a prayer that God will preserve us from sin and from the effects of sin”

8 Our prayers should be simple, direct, and sincere. “... I am sure that our Heavenly Father, who loves all of his children, hears and answers all prayers, however phrased. If he is offended in connection with prayers, it is likely to be by their absence, not their phraseology.”

Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, May 1993, 17.

9 According to latter-day prophets and apostles, prayer consists of much more than directing “mere words” or thoughts towards deity, but represents “the pulsation of a yearning, loving heart in tune with the infinite.” Prayer is “a measure of the soul sent directly to a loving Father...[it is] spirit vibration” (McKay 308). Prayer is having “a consciousness that there is something within us which is divine, which is part of the Infinite, which is the offspring of God, and until we can feel that harmony with that Infinite, we have not sensed the power of prayer” (302). Prayer, accompanied by works, “is the invisible switch to tune us with the Infinite” (Kimball 62), it is placing ourselves “in harmony with divine forces” (Widtsoe, “The Articles of Faith” 288), it is attuning ourselves “with the spirit or light which ‘proceedeth forth from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space’ (D&C 88:12). In that light is to be found sure answers to all our needs” (Romney, “Prayer and Revelation” 50). Further, “prayer is the passport to spiritual power” (Kimball 115). To “live without prayer is to live a mere animal existence. It is to leave the best part of our natures in a starving condition; for without prayer the spirit is starved, and men dwindle in their feelings and die in their faith.”

Cannon 2:170

- Prayer is made up of heart throbs and the righteous yearnings of the soul (Talmage 238).
- 10 Taken from “Pray Always”: Learning to Pray as Jesus Prayed 138-9 by David W. Parry
- 11 The Prophet Joseph Smith understood this principle clearly. His petitions were fervent, his motives pure, and the blessings of heaven regular. Daniel Tyler, an associate of the Prophet, recalled an important occasion: “At the time William Smith and others rebelled against the Prophet at Kirtland, I attended a meeting... where Joseph presided. Entering the school house a little before the meeting opened and gazing upon the man of God, I perceived sadness in his countenance and tears trickling down his cheeks. A few moments later a hymn was sung and he opened the meeting by prayer. Instead of facing the audience, however, he turned his back and bowed upon his knees, facing the wall. This, I suppose, was done to hide his sorrow and tears.
- “I had heard men and women pray-especially the former-from the most ignorant, both as to letters and intellect, to the most learned and eloquent. But never until then had I heard a man address his Maker as though He was listening as a kind father would listen to the sorrows of a dutiful child. Joseph was at that time unlearned, but that prayer, which was to a considerable extent in behalf of those who accused him of having gone astray and fallen into sin, was that the Lord would forgive them and open their eyes that they might see aright. That prayer, I say, to my humble mind, partook of the learning and eloquence of heaven. There was no ostentation, no raising of the voice as by enthusiasm, but a plain conversational tone, as a man would address a present friend. It appeared to me as though, in case the veil were taken away, I could see the Lord standing facing His humblest of all servants I had ever seen. It was the crowning of all the prayers I ever heard. (In Hyrum and Helen Mae Andrus, *They Knew the Prophet*, pp. 51-52.) Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millett, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:80.
- 12 When we go to worship in a temple or a church, we put aside our working clothes and dress ourselves in something better. This change of clothing is a mark of respect. Similarly, when we address our Heavenly Father, we should put aside our working words and clothe our prayers in special language of reverence and respect... In our day the English words *thee*, *thou*, *thy*, and *thine* are suitable for the language of prayer, not because of how they were used anciently but because they are currently obsolete in common English discourse. Being unused in everyday communication, they are now available as a distinctive form of address in English, appropriate to symbolize respect, closeness, and reverence for the one being addressed. I hope this renewal of counsel that we use special language in our prayers will not be misunderstood. Literary excellence is not our desire. We do not advocate flowery and wordy prayers. We do not wish to be among those who “pray to be heard of men, and to be praised for their wisdom” (Alma 38:13). We wish to follow the Savior’s teaching. “When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (3 Nephi 13:7). Our prayers should be simple, direct, and sincere... I am sure that our Heavenly Father, who loves all

of his children, hears and answers all prayers, however phrased. If he is offended in connection with prayers, it is likely to be by their absence, not their phraseology.

Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, 1993, p. 17.

3 Nephi 13:7

Vain Repetitions

13 *Vain* means “empty; worthless; having no substance, value or importance” (Noah Webster’s *First Edition of an American Dictionary of the English Language*, 1828 [1967]).

14 Our prayers become hollow when we say similar words in similar ways over and over so often that the words become more of a recitation than a communication. This is what the Savior described as “vain repetitions” (see Matt 6:7).

Joseph B. Wirthlin, “Improving our Prayers”, *Ensign*, Mar. 2004, 24; see also Alma 34: 27-28.

15 My brethren and sisters, do not learn to pray with your lips only. Do not learn a prayer by heart, and say it every morning and evening. That is something I dislike very much. It is true that a great many people fall into the rut of saying over a ceremonious prayer. They begin at a certain point, and they touch at all the points along the road until they get to the winding up scene; and when they have done, I do not know whether the prayer has ascended beyond the ceiling of the room or not.

Teachings of Presidents of the Church—Joseph F. Smith [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998], 22.

16 Children’s prayers have also taught me that our Heavenly Father doesn’t expect each prayer to be long or for us to use big words. My granddaughter Lisa doesn’t pray very long, and she doesn’t use big words. But I know that her prayers are heard and answered because she loves her Heavenly Father and he loves her.

Robert L. Simpson, *Proven Paths* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974], 150.

17 Be wise in your public prayers. Keep them short, and remember to give a prayer, not a speech.

Short prayers are in order in any public meeting. The Savior taught that we should not use “vain repetitions” like the “heathen,” who “think that they shall be heard for their much speaking” (3 Nephi 13:7). The Lord knows what things we need before we ask Him (see vs. 8). To avoid vain repetitions we should limit our public prayers to the unique circumstances of that meeting and the people in it.

Also, remember not to accept an invitation to pray to the Lord and then twist that invitation into an opportunity to give a speech to the audience... Talks are addressed to an audience; prayers are addressed to the Lord.

Dallin H. Oaks, “Be wise,” *BYU—Idaho Devotional*, 7 Nov. 2006, 2-3.

3 Nephi 13:8

18 **Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.]** What purpose is served, we might inquire, by asking God for something when he already knows our needs? For one thing, the spiritual discipline associated with getting in tune with the Spirit, suppressing our own selfish desires, putting away our own agenda and opening our souls to the will of God—this method of prayer, of prayer in Spirit, exposes us to the realization of our true needs. The Lord will bless us in terms of our needs, not just our wants. When we are inspired by the Holy Ghost our prayers become instructive; we learn something from them, generally about ourselves. As we, through the Spirit, begin to gain the mind of Christ (see 1 Corinthians 2:16) we begin to think as God thinks and feel as he feels.

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millett, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:82.

3 Nephi 13:7-13*The Lord's Prayer*

19 The prayer begins with reverence for our Heavenly Father. Then the Lord speaks of the kingdom and its coming. The servant with a testimony that this is the true Church of Jesus Christ feels joy in its progress and a desire to give his or her all to build it up.

The Savior Himself exemplified the standard set by these next words of the prayer: “Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth” (Luke 11:2). That was His prayer in the extremity of offering the Atonement for all mankind and all the world (see Matthew 26:42). The faithful servant prays that even the apparently smallest task will be done as God would have it done. It makes all the difference to work and to pray for His success more than for our own.

Then the Savior set for us this standard of personal purity: “And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil” (Luke 11:4). The strengthening we are to give those we watch over comes from the Savior. We and they must forgive to be forgiven by Him (see Matthew 6:14). We and they can hope to remain clean only with His protection and with the change in our hearts that His Atonement makes possible. We need that change to have the constant companionship of the Holy Ghost...

You may have confidence in the Lord's service. The Savior will help you do what He has called you to do, be it for a time as a worker in the Church or forever as a parent. You may pray for help enough to do the work and know that it will come.

Henry B. Eyring, Conference Report, Apr. 2000, 83; or *Ensign*, May 2000, 67-68.

20 Praying for His will to be done and then not trying to live it, gives you a negative answer at once. You would not grant something to a child who showed that attitude towards a request he is making of you... It is the height of disloyalty to pray for God's will to be done, and then fail to conform our lives to that will.

Teachings of the Presidents of the Church—David O. McKay [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003], 74.

The Lord's Prayer = A Pattern of Prayer

- 21
1. Recognition of God's greatness vs 9
 2. A commitment to obey His will vs 10
 3. Seek forgiveness based on willingness to forgive vs 11
 4. A request to deliver us from evil vs 12
 5. Acknowledge His kingdom, power and glory vs 13
- Monte S. Nyman

3 Nephi 13:14-1522 *Forgiving Others*

"Blame keeps wounds open. Only forgiveness heals!" (O Pioneers! By Willa Cather). Recently I read where an elderly man disclosed at the funeral of his brother, with whom he had shared, from early manhood, a small, one room cabin near Canisteo, New York, that following a quarrel, they had divided the room in half with a chalk line and neither had crossed the line nor spoken a word to the other since that day—sixty-two years before! What a human tragedy—all for the want of mercy and forgiveness... He [who] cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he himself must pass if he would ever reach heaven for everyone has need to be forgiven. Thomas S. Monson, *Ensign*, May 1995, pp.59-60.

- 23 Consider this lesson taught to me many years ago by a patriarch... He married his sweetheart... They were deeply in love, and she was expecting their first child. The night the baby was to be born, there were complications... After many hours of labor, the condition of the mother-to-be became desperate. Finally the doctor was located. In the emergency, he acted quickly and soon had things in order. The baby was born and the crisis, it appeared, was over. Some days later, the young mother died from the very infection that the doctor had been treating at another home that night. John's world was shattered... As the weeks wore on, his grief festered. "That doctor should not be allowed to practice," he would say. "He brought that infection to my wife. If he had been careful, she would be alive today." He thought of little else, and in his bitterness, he became threatening. Today, no doubt, he would have been pressed by many others to file a malpractice suit. And there are lawyers who would see in his pitiable condition only one ingredient... money!... One night a knock came at his door. A little girl said simply, "Daddy wants you to come over. He wants to talk to you." Daddy was the stake president. A grieving, heartbroken young man went to see his spiritual leader... The counsel from that wise servant was simply, "John, leave it alone. Nothing you do about it will bring her back. Anything you do will make it worse, John, leave it alone." My friend told me then that this had been his trial... his Gethsemane. How could he leave it alone? Right was right! A terrible wrong had been committed and somebody must pay for it... He determined to follow the counsel of that wise spiritual leader. He would leave it alone. Then he told me... "It was not until I was an old man that I could finally see a poor country doctor—overworked, underpaid, run ragged from patient to patient, with little medicine, no hospital, few instruments, struggling to save lives, and succeeding for the most part. He had come in a moment of crisis, when two lives hung in the balance, and had acted without delay... And that is the counsel I bring again to

you. If you have a festering grudge, if you are involved in an acrimonious dispute, [Mormon 8:20] I say, therefore, John leave it alone. Mary, Leave it alone.

Boyd K. Packer, Conference Report, Oct. 1987, p. 19

24 The nearer we get to our Heavenly Father, the more we are disposed to look with compassion on perishing souls... If you would have God have mercy on you, have mercy on one another. *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 241.

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

Spencer W. Kimball, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1949, pp. 132-133.

26 The chain of evil is broken for good when a pure and loving heart absorbs a hurt and forbears to hurt in return. The forgiveness of Christ bears no grudge. The love of Christ allows no offense to endure.

Mary Ellen Smoot, "Everything Money Cannot Buy," Satellite Broadcast, 3 Feb. 2002, Brigham Young University [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2002], 7.

27 I am a survivor of childhood physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. I no longer view myself as a victim. The change has come from inside me—my attitude. I do not need to destroy myself with anger and hate. I don't need to entertain thoughts of revenge. My Savior knows what happened. He knows the truth. He can make the judgements and the punishments. He will be just. I will leave it in his hands. I will not be judged for what happened to me, but I will be judged by how I let it affect my life. I am responsible for my actions and what I do with my knowledge. I am not to blame for what happened to me as a child. I cannot change the past. But I can change the future. I have chosen to heal myself and pass on to my children what I have learned. The ripples in my pond will spread through future generations.

"The Journey to Healing," *Ensign*, Sept. 1997 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997], 19

28 I would like to make it clear that forgiveness of sins should not be confused with tolerating evil. In fact, in the Joseph Smith Translation the Lord said, "Judge righteous judgment" (JST, Matthew 7:1)...

Although we must forgive a neighbor who injures us, we should still work constructively to prevent that injury from be repeated. A woman who is abused should not seek revenge, but neither should she feel that she cannot take steps to prevent further abuse. A businessperson treated unfairly in a transaction should not hate the person who was dishonest but could take

appropriate steps to remedy the wrong. Forgiveness does not require us to accept or tolerate evil... But as we fight against sin, we must not allow hatred or anger to control our thoughts or actions.

David E. Sorensen, *Conference Report*, Apr. 2003 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003], 10-11.

29 When the Savior visited the Nephites he taught them that the degree of mercy he extends to each of us at our own judgment day has a great deal to do with the level of mercy we have extended to our fellowman here in mortality... (3 Nephi 13:14-15).

Notice how often on the very first day of his visit to the Nephites he reinforced this doctrine:

“Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (3 Nephi 13:11). “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged” (3 Nephi 14:1-2). “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy” (3 Nephi 12:7). Many people see these verses as indicating that the way we treat others is an invitation for them to treat us in like manner. However, by looking at the Savior’s teachings in a broader perspective, it becomes apparent that the mercy we give others in this life has a direct effect on the level of mercy we will obtain at the judgment. Therefore, we may rightfully assume that to separate ourselves from our fellow beings in terms of our giving service and compassion is to distance ourselves from the Savior and his mercy.

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Savior echoed the same testimony: that not only will he judge us according to our works generally in this life but he will also specifically “measure to every man according to the measure which he has measured to his fellow man” (D&C 1:10).

He said, “Inasmuch as you have forgiven one another your trespasses, even so I, the Lord, forgive you” (D&C 82:1). In the same section he admonished, “Leave judgment alone with me, for it is mine and I will repay” (D&C 82:23).

The Lord admonished the Nephites, “Love you enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you” (3 Nephi 12:44). When a person is able to achieve this level of spirituality, the Savior taught all of us that we “may be the children of your Father who is in heaven” (3 Nephi 12:45). It is amazing that he accepts personally our treatments of others—even those who hate us. In this context, it may take more than singing “I am a child of God” to qualify as being one.

Jack R. Christianson and K. Douglas Bassett, *Life Lessons from the Book of Mormon* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2003], 191-192.

Nephi 13:16-18

Fasting

30 The Saints are to fast for the right reasons. That fasting may be at a time of tragedy or sorrow; when we need spiritual guidance or direction; when we seek for a remission of sins; when we are struggling with a particularly difficult problem or challenge in life; or generally when we feel the need to draw near to God. But fasting is an individual matter. Though during

the regular monthly fast we come together at church to teach and testify, and we enjoy social relations-all during the time of a fast-yet our fastings and our prayers are private. Fasting is something to be participated in, not something to be observed. A member of the Church need not “look the part” of one who is fasting. In fact, our obedience and our observance of the fast need be hidden behind a pleasing appearance and a modest manner which would in no way draw attention to that which needs no attention.

In general, then, our Redeemer calls us to a higher righteousness, to a higher motivation for righteousness, to a higher and more elevated perspective on why we do what we do. In addressing an apparent paradox in the Sermon on the Mount-the command to “let your light so shine before men” (Matthew 5:16) versus the command to “take heed that ye do not your alms before men” (Matthew 6:1)-Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: “How is this paradox to be resolved?... From whom are we to hide the visibility of our discipleship?... We are to hide it from ourselves... We must be unaware of our own righteousness, and see it only insofar as we look unto Jesus... The Christian is a light unto the world, not because of any quality of his own, but only because he follows Christ and looks solely to him...”

“All that the follower of Jesus has to do is to make sure that his obedience, following, and love are entirely, spontaneous and unpremeditated. If you do good, you must not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing... Christ’s virtue, the virtue of discipleship, can only be accompanied so long as you are entirely unconscious of what you are doing. The genuine work of love is always a hidden work...”

“Thus hiddenness has its counterpart in manifestation. For there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed... God will show us the hidden and make it visible. Manifestation is the appointed reward for hiddenness, and the only question is where we shall receive it and who will give it us. If we want publicity in the eyes of men we have our reward... If the left hand knows what the right hand is doing, if we become conscious of our hidden virtue, we are forging our own reward, instead of that which God had intended to give us in his own good time.” (The Cost of Discipleship, pp. 176-78, italics added.)

How do we do this? What do we do if our motives are not always the purest? Do we sit back and avoid deeds of service because our desires are not yet sanctified? Do we refrain from home or visiting teaching, for example, because our motivation is presently clouded more by the spirit of inspection than of expectation and covenant? Certainly not. We have duties to perform, work to do in order to bear off the kingdom of God triumphant. And Zion-as well as its municipalities, its citizenry-is being established “in process of time” (Moses 7:21). Simply stated, disciples do not wait to be transformed before they proceed in the work of the ministry... We are never justified in doing the wrong thing or ignoring the work to be done simply because we are not properly motivated. Rather, the Saints are instructed again and again to seek the Spirit, to ask for, live for, and qualify for the gifts and fruits of the Spirit, which characterize the sons and daughters of Jesus Christ (see Galatians 5:22-23; D&C 46). As the Spirit begins to live in us, to remake us, we come to love the things we before hated and to hate the things we before loved. Because the Spirit is his Spirit, the works likewise become his works... Our service thereby is

centered in Christ, our eye single to his glory.” (Robert L. Millet, *An Eye Single to the glory of God*, pp. 58-60.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:85.

- 31 The telestial people seek to subject men to themselves, the terrestrial people receive the rewards of those other men whom they serve, and the celestial people receive rewards of their Heavenly Father because they turn to him in secret in their fasting.
Monte S. Nyman

3 Nephi 13:19-21

Treasure

- 32 The Savior taught that we should not lay up treasures on earth but should lay up treasures in heaven (see Matthew 6:19-21). In light of the ultimate purpose of the great plan of happiness, I believe that the ultimate treasures on earth and in heaven are our children and our posterity.
Dallin H. Oaks, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1993, 100; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1993, 75.

3 Nephi 13:22-23

Light, eye

- 33 [Speaking of Joseph Smith] Those who were acquainted with him knew the Spirit of revelation was upon him, for his countenance wore an expression peculiar to himself while under the influence. He preached by the Spirit of revelation, and taught in his council by it, and those who were acquainted with him could discover it at once, for at such times there was a peculiar clearness and transparency in his face.
Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses* [London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1862], 9:89.

- 34 When it comes to controlling a child or a class, the eyes have more power than a club has. Expressive, friendly, demanding, appealing, forgiving, commanding—the eyes have it... The alert and sensitive teacher can discipline a student more effectively with his eyes than the clumsy teacher can ever do with accusations or ultimatums or pressure of any kind...

Just as the conductor of a symphony orchestra controls a complicated and magnificent organization and yet himself is silent, so the master teacher directs the workings of the class by gesture, inflection, expression, and most of all, the use of his eyes.

Much of our communication takes place with the eyes. You can look at a person and convey meaning without a word being said.

Boyd K. Packer, *Teach Ye Diligently* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1975], 138-139.

- 35 The heart is the equivalent of the spirit. Our eyes influence our spirit. Therefore, if our “eye be single to the glory of God” (JST Matthew 6:22), our whole bodies will be full of light (vv. 22-23). This is the state of being “sanctified, even them of the celestial world, and is also the prerequisite to “see: Christ, for he will unveil his face unto you” (D&C 88:2, 67-68).
Monte S. Nyman

36 If our eye or mind or soul is single to the glory of God; if our desires, our ambitions, our hopes and dreams are centered in the things of righteousness; if our greatest reason for serving is to build up the kingdom of God and establish in the earth the righteousness of God-if we are thus centered, then we will be spiritually transparent, the light of the Spirit of Almighty God will shine through us and we shall be a light to the world. If our will is subject to the will of heaven, then there is in us no hindrance to the power and glory, the light, of the Father; others will see him in our countenances. Those who have and maintain an eye single to the glory of God are on that path which allows them now to see and understand things that are mysterious to the worldly and that will lead them, in the Lord's due time, to that highest of spiritual rewards-the privilege of seeing him face to face. "And if your eye be single to my glory," the Savior declared in 1832, "your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things. Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and it shall be in his own time, and in his own way, according to his own will." (D&C 88:67-68.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:87.

3 Nephi 13:24

37 *Two Masters*

"Now there are those among us who are trying to serve the Lord without offending the devil." Marion G. Romney, in James E. Faust, *Ensign*, September, 1992, 2.

38 Holding back or giving less than is required always produces divided loyalties. We need not have our membership records in the great and abominable church in order to be disloyal to the kingdom of God; the issue is not where our records are but rather where our hearts are... Our hearts cannot be weeded to another endeavor. Our might or strength cannot be spent in secondary causes. Our minds cannot be committed to another enterprise. In the words of the early brethren of this dispensation, it must be the kingdom of God or nothing! (Millet, *An Eye Single to the Glory of God*, pp. 7,9.) {"There neither are nor can be any neutrals in this in this war," Elder Bruce R. McConkie taught. "Every member of the Church is on one side or the other... In this war all who do not stand forth courageously and valiantly are by that fact alone aiding the cause of the enemy. 'They who are not for me are against me, saith our God.' (2 Nephi 10:16.) We are either for the Church or we are against it. We either take its part or we take the consequences. We cannot survive spiritually with one foot in the Church and the other in the world. We must make the choice. It is either the Church or the world. There is no middle ground." (CR, October, 1974, p. 44.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:88.

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

David O. McKay, *Conference Report*, Apr. 1964, p. 5.

40 One man I know of was called to a position of service in the Church, but he felt that he couldn't accept because his investments required more attention and more of his time than he could spare for the Lord's work. He left the service of the Lord in search of Mammon, and he is a millionaire today. But I recently learned an interesting fact: if a man owns a million dollars worth of gold at today's prices, he possesses approximately one 27-billionth of all the gold that is present in the earth's thin crust... The Lord who created and has power over all the earth created many other earths as well, even 'worlds without number' (Moses 1:33); and when this man received the oath and covenant of the priesthood (D&C 84:33-44), he received a promise from the Lord of 'all that my Father hath' (v.38). To set aside all these great promises in favor of a chest of gold and a sense of carnal security is a mistake in perspective of colossal proportions. To think that he has settled for so little is a saddening and pitiful prospect indeed...

Spencer W. Kimball, *Ensign*, June 1976, p.5.

41 Our affections are often too highly placed upon the paltry perishable objects. Material treasures of earth are merely to provide us, as it were, room and board while we are here at school. It is for us to place gold, silver, houses, stocks, lands, cattle, and other earthly possessions in their proper place. Yes, this is but a place of temporary duration. We are here to learn the first lesson toward exaltation—obedience to the Lord's gospel plan.

Teachings of Ezra Taft Benson, p. 26.

42 We each have exactly 24 hours in a day and 168 hours in a week. If we use the bulk of those hours in the pursuit... of material things, there is little time left for relationships, ideas, service, observation, peaceful rest, true religion, and other non-materialism things... The only way we know to fight [materialism] is to try to understand it and to realize what it can do to you. You must then adopt an attitude that is opposite of materialism, an attitude that you actually own nothing, that everything belongs to God and that you are only a steward over anything that you might have, even over your children and over your talents and potential. You will be judged by your stewardship, by how well you take care of and use the things that are loaned to you.

Linda and Richard Eyre (*Home Base*, Nov. 1984, pp. 16-17).

43 In quiet moments when you think about it, you recognize what is critically important in life and what isn't. Be wise and don't let good things crowd out those that are essential... Whether you intend to or not, when you live as though the Savior and His teaching are only one of many

other important priorities in your life, you are clearly on the road to disappointment and likely on the path to tragedy... If you have been enticed by the things of the world to forget the things of God, correct your priorities.

Richard G. Scott, *Ensign*, May 1997, pp. 54, 59.

44 Some would never sell Jesus for thirty pieces, but they would not give Him their all either! Unfortunately, we tend to think of consecration only in terms of property and money. But there are so many ways of keeping back part. One might be giving of money and time yet hold back a significant portion of himself.

...One might accept a Church calling but have his heart more set on maintaining a certain role in the world... Each of us is an innkeeper who decides if there is room of Jesus! Consecration is the only surrender which is also a victory. It brings release from... selfishness and emancipation from the dark prison of pride... But is being consecrated and 'swallowed up' a threat to our individuality? No! Heavenly Father is only asking us to lose the old self in order to find the new and the real self. It is not a question of losing our identity, but of finding our true identity!... Consecration may not require giving up worldly possessions so much as being less possessed by them... Brothers and sisters, whatever we embrace instead of Jesus and His work will keep us from qualifying to enter His kingdom and therefore from being embraced by Him. Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, Nov. 1992, pp. 66-67.

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

Hugh Nibley, *Approaching Zion*, p.37

46 Shouldn't we expect the journey towards eternal glory to stretch us? We sometimes rationalize our pre-occupation with this world and our casual attempts to grow spiritually by trying to console each other with the notion that living the gospel really shouldn't require all that much of us...

We seek Him not only by studying and searching, by pleading and praying and watching always lest we enter into temptation, but by giving up worldly indulgences that straddle the line between God and mammon. Otherwise we risk being called but not chosen because our "hearts are set so much upon the things of this world" (D&C 121:35)....

What the Lord requires first is our hearts. Imagine how our choices would be affected if we loved the Savior above all else. How we would spend our time and money, or dress on a hot summer day, or respond to the call to visit teach and take care of one another, or react to media that offend the Spirit.

Sheri L. Dew, *Ensign*, Nov. 1999 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1999], 98-99.

47 I wonder if we who have made sacred covenants in sacred places fully understand the power of rising above our personal ownership agenda to recognize that all that we have—all of our toys, houses, cars, boats, money, and even our bodies—belong to that God who gave us life. If we capture this vision, then our own interpretation of the physical world around us is more likely to take on the concept of consecration.

K. Douglas Bassett, *The Barber's Song* [Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 2005], 57.

48 In our priesthood leadership session of a regional conference, we sang a hymn, "Ye Elders of Israel." The chorus contains a line "O Babylon, O Babylon, we bid thee farewell." Following the singing, Elder Neal A. Maxwell spoke and expressed the thought that bidding Babylon farewell is actually one of our challenges, that too many of us like to keep a summer cottage there (see *The Neal A. Maxwell Quote Book*, ed. Cory H. Maxwell (1997), 25).

We cannot keep one foot in the Church and one foot in the world. One reason is the world and the Church are rapidly diverging. We will lose our balance.

We know that "no man can serve two masters." Some, I fear, are attempting to do what President Marion G. Romney described as trying to "serve the Lord without offending the devil" ("The Price of Peace," *Tambuli*, Feb. 1984, 6; *Ensign*, Oct. 1983, 6)....

Now, I am not suggesting, of course, that we move to the wilderness and lock our doors. We can be in the world, go to school, go to work join worthwhile community organizations, and so forth....

I have a dear friend who is a respected physician. He writes a regular national article on health. Often his subject concerns nutrition. He has a problem. He loves doughnuts—delicious but not usually considered one of the world's most nutritious foods.

To resolve this dilemma, he has come up with what he calls his 80:20 theory of nutrition. This theory says if you are very good 80 percent of the time, you can eat what you want the other 20 percent of the time.

Now, this may be all right in nutrition, but the 80:20 principle is not acceptable in such things as gambling, pornography, or honesty. Brothers and sisters, are we sometimes 80:20 members of the Church?

Consider the woman who keeps the Sabbath day holy, unless she needs something from the store. Or the man who is honest in all his dealings until he cannot resist the urge to exaggerate his tax deduction because it saves him over \$1000. Or the father who is kind and gentle with his wife and children except when he has had a difficult day at the office....

Brothers and sisters, stay on the straight and narrow path. No, stay in the *middle* of the straight and narrow path. Don't drift; don't wander; don't dabble; be careful.

Remember, do not flirt with evil. Stay out of the devil's territory. Do not give Satan any home-field advantage. Living the commandments will bring you the happiness that too many look for in other places.

Larry W. Gibbons, *Ensign*, Nov. 2006 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2006], 102-104.

3 Nephi 13:2449 *Mammon*

“[‘Mammon’ is] an Aramaic word for riches or money”

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary*, 4:88.

3 Nephi 13:25-3450 *Take no Thought*

As Dr. Herbert Popence points out in his handbook *Now You’re in College*, “Worry involves no reason, no judgment, no plannings for future contingencies. It is just plain worry and it is as pernicious as it is widespread—and unnecessary.”

“There are only two reasons for worry:

“Either you are successful or you are not successful. If you are successful there is nothing to worry about; if you are not successful; there are only two things to worry about. Your health is either good or you’re sick; if your health is good there is nothing to worry about; if you are sick there are only two things to worry about. You are either going to get well or you are going to die; if you are going to get well there is nothing to worry about; if you are going to die there are two things to worry about. You are either going to heaven or you are going to the other place; and if you are going to heaven there is nothing to worry about; if you are going to the other place you will be so busy shaking hands with old friends you won’t have time to worry—so why worry?”

Habitual worrying makes a person miserable in the midst of happiness... Worry is 90% fear, which is the opposite of faith...

The worrier is self-centered, preoccupied, and gloomy... He seems to enjoy being miserable and insists on others sharing his despair. He refuses to be comforted as that would rob him of his cherished pastime. Worry is a daytime nightmare and often has no more substance than a dream...

Worry and discontent, fretting and stewing, ceaseless anxiety, unhappy dispositions, all tend to obscure the sun of happiness and like the fog and smog in some cities, shut out the sunlight and change daytime into night.

Let us throw open the windows of the soul, let in the sunshine of faith, take a deep breath, and tell all about us it is good to be alive. Truly “A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.”...

Worry is more exhausting than work... The best antidote for worry is hard work, which is invigorating and health-giving.

Hugh B. Brown, *You and Your Marriage* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1960], 175-179

51 In these verses the Lord used the phrase “take no thought for,” a bland translation of the Greek word *merimnesete*, which means to be very anxious about something. He used the word six times in this passage. In effect he invited us to *sacrifice our anxiety* over the many elements of our lives that are beyond our control (such as adding a cubit to our stature—v. 27)... However, he implied that this sacrifice of fear is possible only if we first give up anger, lust, vengeance, and glory seeking, which in themselves produce fear. He pointed out that if we make the single aim of our lives the will of God and the promotion of the cause of Zion, those uncontrollable elements of life will, one day at a time, take care of themselves... The verse (34)

could be accurately translated, “Do not be unduly anxious about the morrow, for the morrow will take thought for the things of itself; sufficient to the day are the *problems* (or *troubles*) thereof.” Catherine Thomas, *Studies in Scripture*, ed. by Kent Jackson and Robert L. Millet [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1986], 5:245-246.

52 In a recent meeting I listened to a young girl’s heart-warming testimony. Her father was afflicted with what the doctors had pronounced was an incurable malady. To his wife one morning, this stricken father, after a night of pain and suffering, had said with great feeling, “I am so thankful today.” “For what?” she asked. He replied, “For God’s giving me the privilege of one more day with you.”

Today I could desire with all my heart that all within the sound of this broadcast would likewise thank God for one more day! For what? For the opportunity to take care of some unfinished business. To repent: to right some wrongs; to influence for good some wayward child; to reach out to someone who cries for help—in short, to thank God for one more day to prepare to meet God.

Don’t try to live too many days ahead. Seek for strength to attend to the problems of today. In his Sermon on the Mount, the Master admonished: “Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the morrow shall take though for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof” (Matt. 6:34).

Do all that you can do and leave the rest to God, the Father of us all. It is not enough to say I will do my best, but rather, I will do everything which is within my power; I will do all that is necessary.

Teachings of the Presidents of the Church—Harold B. Lee [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000], 7-8.

53 Sir William Osley... crossed the Atlantic on a great ocean liner where the captain, standing on the bridge, could press a button and—presto!—there was a clanging of machinery and various parts of the ship were immediately shut off from one another—shut off into watertight compartments. “Now each one of you,” Dr. Osler said... “is a much more marvelous organization that the great liner, and bound on a longer voyage. What I urge is that you so learn to control the machinery as to live with ‘day-tight compartments’ as the most certain way to ensure safety on the voyage... Touch a button and hear, at every level of your life, the iron doors shutting out the Past—the dead yesterdays. Touch another and shut off, with a metal curtain, the Future—the unborn tomorrows. Then you are safe—safe for today!... The load of tomorrow, added to that of yesterday, carried today, makes the strongest falter. Shut off the future as tightly as the past... The future is today... There is no tomorrow. The day of man’s salvation is now. Waste of energy, mental distress, nervous worries dog the steps of a man who is anxious about the future... Prepare to cultivate the habit of a life of ‘day-tight compartments.’

Did Dr. Osler mean to say that we should not make any effort to prepare for tomorrow? No. Not at all. But he did... say that the best possible way to prepare for tomorrow is to concentrate with all your intelligence, all your enthusiasm, on doing today’s work superbly today...

Many men have rejected those words of Jesus: “Take no thought for the morrow”... They say, “I *must* take out insurance to protect my family. I *must* lay aside money for my old age. I *must* plan and prepare to get ahead.”

Right! Of course you must. The truth is that those words of Jesus, translated over three hundred years ago, don’t mean today what they meant during the reign of King James. Three hundred years ago the word *thought* frequently meant anxiety...

By all means take thought for the tomorrow, yes, careful thought and planning and preparation. But have no anxiety.

Dale Carnegie, *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living* {New York: Simon and Schuster, 1944}, 2-3.

54 One challenge we face on earth is to remember why we do what we do. It is not easy in a world with distractions, many of which seem to be good and noble and upright, to remain focused on fundamentals and riveted on matters of everlasting consequence. The duty of disciples is to discern and, where necessary, discard. Knowing that we cannot do everything, the follower of the Nazarene chooses to do that which is of greatest worth. (Millet, *An Eye Single to the Glory of God*, p. 97.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:89.

3 Nephi 13:33-34

55 *Seek Kingdom of God*

The men and women, who desire to obtain seats in the celestial kingdom, will find that they must battle with the enemy of all righteousness every day.

Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, 11:15.

56 Someday, when we look back on mortality, we will see that so many of the things that seemed to matter so much at the moment will be seen not to have mattered at all. And the eternal things will be seen to have mattered even more than the most faithful of the Saints imagined.

Neal A. Maxwell, *Even As I Am*, p. 104.

57 “If you have not chosen the Kingdom of God first, it will in the end make no difference what you have chosen instead.”

William Law, cited in James E. Faust, “A message to my Granddaughters: Becoming ‘Great Women,’” *Ensign*, September 1986, p. 20.