

3 Nephi 14:1-2*Judge not*

1 “The more serious the work on our own imperfections, the less we are judgmental of the imperfections in others”

Neal A. Maxwell, *Not My Will, But Thine*, 95.

2 “When you do not worry or concern yourself too much with what other people do and believe and say, there will come to you a new freedom.”

Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball, p. 234.

3 “Aren’t we rather prone to see the limitations and the weaknesses of our neighbors? Yet that is contrary to the teachings of the gospel of Jesus Christ... If we have the spirit of fault finding, of pointing out the weaknesses and failings of others in a destructive manner, that never comes as the result of the companionship of the Spirit of our Heavenly Father and is always harmful.”

George Albert Smith, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1934, p. 50.

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

Joseph F. Smith, *Gospel Doctrine*, pp. 116-117.

5 “The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.”

William James

6 What I am suggesting is that each of us turn from the negativism that so permeates our society and look for the remarkable good among those with whom we associate, that we speak of one another’s virtues more than we speak of one another’s faults.

Gordon B. Hinckley, *Ensign*, Apr. 1986 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1986], 3-4

7 Most of us think we see the world as it is, but I believe this is not the case. Each person sees the world not as it is but as he or she is. When he opens his mouth to describe what he sees, he in effect describes himself, that is, his perception.

Stephen R. Covey, *The Divine Center* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982], 3.

8 The key is to understand that there are two kinds of judging: final judgment, which we are forbidden to make, and intermediate judgments, which we are directed to make, but upon righteous principles...

I believe that the scriptural command to “judge not” refers most clearly to this final judgment, as in the Book of Mormon declaration that “man shall not... judge, for judgment is mine, saith the Lord” (Mormon 8:20)... I believe this commandment was given because we presume to make final judgment whenever we proclaim that any particular act or at a particular time...

We must refrain from making final judgments on people because we lack the knowledge and the wisdom to do so... The world’s way is to judge competitively between winners and losers. The Lord’s way of final judgment will be to apply His perfect knowledge of the law a person has received and to judge on the basis of that person’s circumstances, motives, and actions throughout his or her entire life (Luke 12:47-48; John 15:22; 2 Nephi 9:25).

Even the Savior, during His mortal ministry, refrained from making final judgments. We see this in the account of the woman taken in adultery. After the crowd who intended to stone her had departed, Jesus asked her about her accusers. “Hath no man condemned thee?” When she answered no, Jesus declared, “Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more” (John 8:10, 11). In this context the word *condemn* apparently refers to the final judgment (John 8:17). The Lord obviously did not justify the woman’s sin. He simply told her that He did not condemn her—that is, He would not pass final judgment on her at that time. This interpretation is confirmed by what He then said to the Pharisees: “Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man” (John 8:15). The woman taken in adultery was granted time to repent, time that would have been denied by those who wanted to stone her...

In contrast to *forbidding* mortals to make final judgments, the scriptures *require* mortals to make what I will call “intermediate judgments”...

We all make judgments in choosing our friends, in choosing how we will spend our time and our money, and of course, in choosing our eternal companion...

Two hypotheticals illustrate this principle: (1) If a particular person has been arrested for child sexual abuse and is free on bail awaiting trial on his guilt or innocence, would you trust him to tend your children while you take a weekend trip? (2) If a person you have trusted with your property has been indicted for embezzlement, would you continue to leave him in charge of your life savings? In such circumstances we... refrain from judging people and only judge situations...

For example, I know of an LDS family with an older teenage son who has become addicted to smoking. The parents have insisted that he not smoke in their home or in front of his younger siblings. That is a wise judgment of a situation, not a person. Then, even as the parents take protective measures pertaining to a regrettable situation, they need to maintain loving relations and encourage improved conduct by the precious person.

Dallin H. Oaks, *With Full Purpose of Heart* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002], 191-199.

9 Soon after arriving home from World War II, I had “promises to keep” (Robert Frost, “Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening,” in *The Poetry of Robert Frost*, ed. Edward Connery Lathem [1969], 225—meaning going on a mission *now*. I grew tired of waiting for the bishop. And in some early ark-steadying, I went to the bishop’s home and said I had saved money and wanted to go, so let’s “get this show on the road.” The good bishop hesitated, and then said he’s been meaning to ask me about going.

Years later, I would learn from the bishop’s devoted ward clerk that the bishop had felt I needed a little more time with my family after having been away so far and for a tenth of my life. Hearing this, I chastised myself for having been too judgmental (see Bruce C. Hafen, *A Disciple’s Life: The Biography of Neal A. Maxwell* [2002], 129-130).

No wonder the wise father of Elder Henry B. Eyring observed once how the Lord had a perfect Church until He let all of us inside!
Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 2004 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. 2004], 44-45

10 I have heard it said that “the pain we inflict on others is equal to the pain we feel inside ourselves.” I believe this applies to the positive emotions such as joy and peace as well. This is also true of the negative emotions, which bring the kind of inner pain that cries out for some type of relief. Often our negative verbal expressions, then, become nonproductive attempts to relieve our own inner suffering. In this context, what we say about others often reveals more about ourselves than it does about those we are referring to.

K. Douglas Bassett, *The Barber’s Song* [Springville, Utah: Cedar Fort, 2005], 32.

11 It has always struck me as being sad that those among us who would not think of reprimanding our neighbor, much less a total stranger, for mistakes that have been made or weaknesses that might be evident, will nevertheless be cruel and unforgiving to themselves. When the scriptures say to judge righteously, that means with fairness and compassion and charity. That’s how we must judge ourselves. We need to be patient and forgiving of ourselves, just as we must be patient and forgiving of others.

The teachings of Howard W. Hunter, ed. by Clyde J. Williams [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 2002], 34.

12 Whenever we tell of others’ sins or mistakes, we are in effect passing judgment on them. I heard a man tell his son that an individual would never work for him again because he felt the individual had charged him unfairly. The boy responded, “I’m surprised to hear you say that, Dad, for you have taught us differently.”...

What should [the father] have done? If he had questions about the charges for the work, he should have discussed them with the man, resolved their differences, and laid it to rest without grousing to others. The Savior taught: “Judge not, that ye be not judged.”...

What should we do when we have knowledge of others’ problems?

1. Don’t judge. Leave judgment to the Lord, the perfect judge...

2. We must forgive. Although we may have been personally wounded, the Lord said, “I, the Lord, will forgive whom I will forgive, but of you it is required to forgive all men” (D&C 64:10).

3. Forget. A relentless memory can canker the most resilient spirit. Leave it alone; lay it down; put it away.

If the wave of temptation to reveal others’ sins comes over you, don’t tell your neighbor Or even your best friend. Go to your bishop. Leave the burden with him. If it is required, report it to the civil or criminal authorities and then leave it alone.

Lynn A. Mickelsen, Conference Report, Oct. 2003 [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2003], 10.

13 It had been a good meeting. The people crowded around to shake hands with the visitors. A grey-haired, pleasant-faced sister stood quietly by, waiting her turn, which at last came....

“One day a young man came to my door and gave me a tract purporting to tell of the restoration in that day of the Church of Christ in its original form and purity ... My conversion was almost instantaneous. All my life I had prepared myself for the message brought by the young ‘Mormon’ elder. I was baptized, and the warmth of the Spirit filled me, body and soul.

“As I lived the life of the Church and learned more of its teachings, my testimony of its truth burned more brightly within me... But, as I associated with elders and members, I soon discovered that they were not perfect. I wondered why truth did not produce a faultless people... I became a fault-finder. At last, I could see good only in the gospel, none in the membership of the Church.

“... The spirit of faultfinding became so strong within me that I separated myself from the Church. For twelve long years I had no association with the Church or its members... All the time I knew the gospel was true, and I hungered for the blessing of active membership in the Church. Then I took counsel within myself; upon my knees I pleaded for humility; for the eyes to see the good in my fellow men. Thank the Lord! He gave me strength to conquer myself.

“One day I came back into the Church, humbly... I have found my brethren and sisters to be more wonderful people. I can no longer see their faults. How the world has changed for me! It is now over twelve years since I came back—the twelve happiest years of my life. And if you do not know it, I can tell you that the people you have shaken hands with tonight are the best people in the world. I wish I could be as good as they are...

And, brother, please tell the Saints, wherever you go, not to look for weaknesses in others, but to seek for virtues;... virtue-hunting brings the keenest joy, and banishes evil from our hearts. Tell them not to be fault-finders.”

John A. Widtsoe, *Man and the Dragon*, [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945], 212-215.

3 Nephi 114:3-5*Mote & Beam*

14 “Mote: A small particle; anything proverbially small; a spot.”

“Beam: The largest, or a principal piece in a building, that lies across the walls, and serves to support the principal rafters. Any large piece of timber.”

Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. “Mote; s.v. “Beam”

15 Great truths are given to us here. First, there is a strong almost universal tendency to find the fault in another; that is, the mote that is in our brother’s eye.

Second, when we focus on this mote, his fault, we don’t focus on the beam or fault in our own life.

Third, in this spirit we often try to correct another. It doesn’t work. We may have a correct opinion but our spirit is wrong. Then we hurt, reject, offend, and threaten. Spirit, or attitude, communicates far more powerfully than opinions or gilded words.

Fourth, because of the beam in our own eye, we are unable to see clearly. Our judgment, or opinion, may be entirely wrong. We may be merely projecting our own weakness and calling it his or hers...

To improve a situation, *you* must improve. To change your wife, *you* must change. To change the attitude of your husband, *you* must change your attitude. To win freedom, *you* must be more responsible, must exercise more discipline. To raise obedient children, *you* and I must be more obedient to certain laws and principles.

This is not to say that we should altogether ignore the faults and weaknesses of others or that we should be blind to injustices in a situation. But it is to say that the very first step we take in improving any situation is to work on the injustice or fault in our own personal life, which helps remove the beam from our eye.

Stephen R. Covey, *Spiritual Roots of Human Relations*, [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1970], 134-135.

16 The unequalness of the beam and the mote is telling. A mote is a tiny sliver like a small portion from a toothpick, while the beam is usually a great, strong timber or metal which runs from wall to wall to support the heavy roof of the building. When one is loaded down with beam-sized weaknesses and sins, it is certainly wrong to forget his own difficult position while he makes mountains of the molehill-size errors of his brother.

Our vision is completely obscured when we have no mirror to hold up to our faults and look only for the foibles of others. When we follow the instructions of the Lord, we are kept so busy perfecting ourselves that we come to realize that the faults of others are small in comparison.

We are usually guilty of the same transgressions and errors of which we accuse and condemn our fellowmen.

Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969], 269-270.

17 I have frequently wanted to know how my apostasy began, and I have come to the conclusion that I must have lost the Spirit of the Lord out of my heart.

The next question is, “How and when did you lose the Spirit?” I became jealous of the Prophet [Joseph Smith], and then I saw double, and overlooked everything that was right, and spent all my time in looking for the evil; and then, when the Devil began to lead me... I could feel it within me; I felt angry and wrathful; and the Spirit of the Lord being gone, as the Scriptures say, I was blind, and I thought I saw a beam in brother Joseph’s eye, but it was nothing but a mote, and my own eye was filled with the beam; but I thought I saw a beam in his, and I wanted to get it out...

Well, this is about the amount of my hypocrisy—I meddled with that which was not my business. But let me tell you, my brethren and friends, if you do not want to suffer in body and mind, as I have done—if there are any of you that have the seeds of apostasy in you, do not let them make their appearance, but nip that spirit in the bud; for it is misery and affliction in this world, and destruction in the world to come.

Thomas B. Marsh, *Journal of Discourses* [London: Latter-day Saints’ Book Depot, 1858], 206-207.

3 Nephi 14:6

JST Matthew 7:9-11

18 9 Go ye into the world, saying unto all, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come nigh unto you.

10 And the mysteries of the kingdom ye shall keep within yourselves; for it is not meet to give that which is holy unto the dogs; neither cast ye your pearls unto swine, lest they trample them under their feet.

11 For the world cannot receive that which ye, yourselves, are not able to bear; wherefore ye shall not give your pearls unto them, lest they turn again and rend you.

19 “The fact that something is true is not always a justification for communicating it.”
Dallin H. Oaks, *Ensign*, Feb. 1987, 68.

20 “Strive not about the mysteries of the kingdom; cast not your pearls before swine, give not the bread of the children to the dogs, lest you and the children suffer, and you thereby offend your righteous Judge.”
TPJS 77

3 Nephi 14:7-8

Prayer

21 God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known to the Twelve, and even the least saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them.

Joseph Smith, Instructions to the brethren at a conference of the Twelve, June 27, 1839 in Commerce, Ill. HC 3:380.

22 Access to our Creator through our Savior is surely one of the great privileges and blessings of our lives... No earthly authority can separate us from direct access to our Creator. There can never be a mechanical or electronic failure when we pray. There is no limit on the number of times or how long we can pray each day. There is no quota of how many needs we wish to pray

for in each prayer. We do not need to go through secretaries or make an appointment to reach the throne of grace. He is reachable at any time and any place.

James E. Faust, *Conference Report*, Apr. 2002, 67; or *Ensign*, May 2002, 59

3 Nephi 14:9

Bread, Stone

23 The point of the question will be most apparent when it is remembered that the loaves of bread bore some resemblance in general appearance to round, flat stone. A similar allusion may be noticed in the narrative of our Lord's temptation, where the devil suggests that Jesus change the stones into bread. See Matt. iv, 4; Luke iv, 4.

Some of the bread used in the East at the present time resembles stones in other respects than in mere appearance. Palmer represents the bread, which is daily doled out to the Arabs by the monks of St. Catherine's on Mount Sinai, as of decidedly stony character. He playfully says: "One of these loaves I brought back with me; an eminent geologist, to whom I submitted it, pronounced it 'a piece of metamorphic rock, containing fragments of quartz embedded in an amorphous paste.' No decently brought-up ostrich could swallow one without endangering his digestion for the term of his natural life." (*The Desert of the Exodus*, 61).

James M. Freeman, *Manners and Customs of the Bible* [Plainfield, New Jersey: Logos International, 1972], 341.

3 Nephi 14:12

Golden Rule

24 [Jesus] taught the Golden Rule, saying "All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" [Matthew 7:12]. This principle is found in nearly every major religion. Other such as Confucius and Aristotle have also taught it. After all, the gospel did not begin with the birth of the Babe in Bethlehem. It is everlasting. It was proclaimed in the beginning to Adam and Eve. Portions of the gospel have been preserved in many cultures. Even heathen mythologies have been enriched by fragments of truth from earlier dispensations.

Wherever it is found and however it is expressed, the Golden Rule encompasses the moral code of the kingdom of God. It forbids interference by one with the rights of another. It is equally binding upon nations, associations, and individuals. With compassion and forbearance, it replaces the retaliatory reactions of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth' [Matthew 5:38]. If we were to stay on that old and unproductive path, we would be but blind and toothless.

Russell M. Nelson, *Conference Report*, Oct. 2002, 41-42; or *Ensign*, Nov. 2002, 39.

25 How can we show love of God without also showing love of man? It is conceivable that some persons, motivated by a rather extreme and restricted ethical or moral sense, might love their fellow men without feeling any real love for Deity. But it is inconceivable that one who loves God would not love his neighbor.

To be interested in our neighbor to the extent of being willing to help him is not doctrine initiated in New Testament times. The Old Testament is replete with that type of teaching, Moses, Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Jeremiah, and others advocated such concern for our fellow man.

Moreover, other than the Jewish and Christian religions included love for a brother in their doctrines.

It was Jesus, however, who put new emphasis on the old law and showed that men had not fully understood the import of it, nor gone deep enough in its practical interpretation. He insisted that we are to love our neighbors *as ourselves*. Most persons who quote this great fundamental commandment fail to note the quantitative direction that comes with it; we are to love our neighbor *as much as we love ourselves*. Even today many persons interpret loving one's neighbor as being synonymous with not being antagonistic to him. Jesus taught, however, that loving one's neighbor did not consist in merely refraining from doing harm or being obstructive, but in being helpful and doing positive good.

Gerrit DeJong Jr. *Living the Gospel* [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1956], 131.

3 Nephi 14:13-14

Strait Gate

26 These are scriptural passages [D&C 132:22-25; Matthew 7:13-14; 3 Nephi: 13-14] which must be viewed in proper perspective. In the long run, we must keep in mind that our God and Father is a successful parent, one who will save far more of his children than he will lose! If these words seem startling at first, let us reason for a moment. In comparison to the number of wicked souls at any given time, perhaps the numbers of faithful followers seem small. But ye must keep in mind how many of our spirit brothers and sisters—almost an infinite number—will be saved. What of the children who died before the age of accountability—billions of little ones from the days of Adam to the time of the Millennium? What of the billions of those who never had opportunity to hear the gospel message in mortality, but who afterwards received the glad tidings, this because of a disposition which hungered and thirsted after righteousness? And, might we ask, what of the innumerable hosts who qualified for exaltation from Enoch's city, from Melchizedek's Salem, or from the golden era of the Nephites? What of the countless billions of those children to be born during the great millennial era—during a time when disease and death have no sting nor victory over mankind? This is that time... when 'children shall grow up without sin unto salvation' (D&C 45:58). Given the renewed and paradisiacal state of the earth, it may well be that more persons will live on the earth during the thousand years of our Lord's reign—persons who are of at least a terrestrial nature—than the combined total of all who have lived during the previous six thousand years of the earth's temporal continuance. Indeed, who can count the number of saved beings in eternity? Our God, who is triumphant in all battles against the forces of evil, will surely be victorious in the numbers of his children who will be saved. (Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Life Beyond*, pp. 136-37.)

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:95.

3 Nephi 14: 15-20*False Prophets*

27 “What are false prophets? They are teachers and preachers who profess to speak for the Lord when, in fact, they have received no such appointment... False prophets are false teachers; they teach false doctrine; they neither know nor teach the doctrines of salvation. Rather, they have followed cunningly devised fables that they suppose make up the gospel of Christ, and they preach them as such.”

Bruce R. McConkie, *Millennial Messiah*, pp. 70-781.

28 Jesus here sets forth the preeminent test for prophets: the fruits. That is, we may judge and discern a prophet by what comes of the work he sets in motion. Does it bless lives? Is its doctrines sound, consistent, lifting edifying, and expansive? Is the way of life of the religion clean and virtuous and stable? Does it produce citizens who stream the laws of the land, lead upright lives, and mirror the message of their Master, Jesus Christ? Does this prophet teach a gospel which requires the sacrifice of all things, with the attendant promise that those who lay their all on the altar and continue labor in Christlike fashion shall eventually inherit all that the Father has? Does the religion produce people who are holy, in whom dwell the Spirit of the living God, and in whose midst the gifts and signs and wonders abound—chose ancient miracles which have always attended the true Church? Truly, “by their fruits ye shall know them.”

Joseph Fielding McConkie and Robert L. Millet, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, 4 vols. [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1987-1992], 4:95.

29 Let us beware of false prophets and false teachers, both men and women, who are self-appointed declarers of the doctrines of the Church and who seek to spread their false gospel and attract followers by sponsoring symposia, books, and journals whose contents challenge fundamental doctrines of the Church. Beware of those who speak and publish in opposition to God’s true prophets and who actively proselyte others with reckless disregard for eternal well-being of those whom they seduce... They ‘set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world, but they seek not the welfare of Zion’ (2 Nephi 26:29).

M Russell Ballard, *Conference Report*, Oct. 1999, 78; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 63

3 Nephi 14:21*Doing*

30 “There are many people in the Church today who have failed to do, and continue to argue against doing, the things that are requested and suggested...”... We talk about it, we listen to it, but sometimes we do not do the things which the Lord says.”

Spencer W. Kimball, *Ensign*, May, 1976, 124; emphasis in original.

31 David O. McKay said, “The rich rewards come only to the strenuous strugglers.” In other words, to those who not only have faith but are willing to work and sacrifice in order to achieve their goals.

O. Leslie Stone, “The Constant Exercise of Our Faith,” *Ensign*, July 1973, p. 60.

32 “Brethren, it is in doing—not just dreaming—that lives are blessed, others are guided, and souls are saved. ‘Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves,’ added James (James 1:22).”

Thomas S. Monson, “Priesthood Power” *Ensign*, November 1999, p. 51.

3 Nephi 14:21-27

Doing

33 I remember as a missionary in Scotland... I was homesick...

I saw an unfinished building standing back from the sidewalk several yards. Over the front door was a stone arch... I could see from the sidewalk that there was an inscription chiseled in that arch.

I said to my companion: “That’s unusual! I am going to see what the inscription is.” When I approached near enough, this message came to me, not only in stone, but as if it came from One in whose service we were engaged: “Whate’er Thou Art, Act Well Thy Part.”

I turned and walked thoughtfully away, and when I reached my companion I repeated the message to him.

That was a message to me that morning to act my part well as a missionary of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. It is merely another way of saying—what is more precious because it comes from the words of the Savior—“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21).

David O. McKay, *Cherished Experiences*, Comp. by Clare Middlemiss [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1955], 74-75.

34 I know by all the proofs that it is possible for me to grasp that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Savior of mankind.

Yet with all this... if I stop here, what good will it do me?... Received in my soul the witness of the spirit of the living God, that Jesus is the Christ, and I stop there and go not any further, that very witness in my soul will add to my eternal damnation. Why? Because it is not only our duty to know that Jesus is the Christ but to keep the influence of his spirit in our souls. It is not only necessary that we should do the things that he has commanded....

I will not do for you to assume that you are Latter-day Saints while in your practices... you are imitating... the unbelievers in God... It will not do.

Teachings of the Presidents of the Church—Joseph F. Smith [Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1998], 206-207.

35 There are many people in the Church today who have failed to do, and continue to argue against doing, the things that are requested and suggested by this great organization.

The Lord said also, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven...” (Matt. 7:21.) And I was thinking that there are as many wards and branches in the Church as there are people in this room, one for one. And what a great accomplishment would be accomplished if every bishop and every branch president in all the world, wherever it’s possible (of course there are a few places where this is not permitted), had a

storage such as has been suggested here this morning—and took to their three or four or five hundred members the same message, quoting scripture and insisting that the people of their wards and branches do the things the Lord has requested, for we know that there are many who are failing.

And then I hear them argue, “Well, suppose we do put away a lot and then someone comes and takes it from us, our neighbors who do not believe.” That’s been answered this morning.

And so my feeling is today that we emphasize these two scriptures: “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” And the other: “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”

Think of the number of people represented here this day by the stake presidents, mission presidents, and others who are directors, who have many people under them. Our 750 stakes—all of them including hundreds, sometimes thousands, or members—show the power that we have, if we go to work and actually push this matter until it is done. We talk about it, we listen to it, but sometimes we do not *do* the things which the Lord says.

Spencer W. Kimball, Conference Report, Apr. 1976, pp. 169-70; or *Ensign*, May 1976, p. 124.

36 [An] example from Church history portrays the spiritual power that attends one who follows the counsel of prophets. Ephraim Hanks had known Brigham Young since the Nauvoo days. Eph’s loyalty to the Brethren and his willingness to obey strictly the counsel of the prophet on any matter caused him to be much beloved and trusted by President Young, by whom Eph had been tested on more than one occasion.

On a fall morning in 1848, President Young drove to where Eph was building an adobe house inside the Old Fort. Looking over the completed foundation, he inquired as to the thickness of the rock wall. “Eight inches.” Replied Eph. “Tear it down and build it twice that thick,” suggested Brigham, who then promptly drove away before Eph could answer. To rebuild meant hauling more rock and doing twice the work they thought was necessary... Nevertheless, they widened the foundation to sixteen inches according to the leader’s instructions. Eph was fitting the rafters on the house a month later when a heavy rain began falling, ultimately causing widespread flooding and considerable damage in parts of the valley. Eph’s reinforced walls stood firm against the resulting deluge, however, thus preventing a possible collapse of the entire structure. Others were not so fortunate. From then on when Brigham talked, Eph listened.

Richard K. Hanks, Eph Hanks, Pioneer Scout, unpublished master’s thesis, BYU, 1973, pp.26-27; cited in Brent L. Top, Larry Dahl, and Walter D. Bowen, *Follow the Living Prophets*, p. 157.

Conclusion 3 Nephi 11-14

37 He who has greater strength than Lucifer, her who is our fortress and our strength, can sustain us in times of great temptation. While the Lord will never forcibly take anyone out of sin or out of the arms of the tempters, he exerts his Spirit to induce the sinner to do it with divine

assistance. And the man who yields to the sweet influence and pleadings of the Spirit and does all in his power to stay in a repentant attitude is guaranteed protection, power, freedom and joy. Spencer W. Kimball, *Miracle of Forgiveness*, p. 176

38 The cleansing process that occurs in our lives comes because we receive the cleansing power of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is a revelator and the Holy Ghost is a sanctifier. The Holy Ghost reveals truth to every human soul that obeys the law. Obedience qualifies us to know the truth. And then the Holy Ghost sanctifies the human soul, so that we become clean and spotless and eventually are qualified to go where God and Christ are. McConkie, *Jesus Christ and Him Crucified* p. 403.

39 To be *sanctified* is to become clean, pure, and spotless; to be free from the blood and sins of the world; to become a new creature of the Holy Ghost, one whose body has been renewed by the rebirth of the Spirit. *Sanctification* is a state of saintliness, a state attained only by conformity to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. The plan of salvation is the system and means provided whereby men may sanctify their souls and thereby become worthy of a celestial inheritance. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine*, p. 675.

A Profile of a Christlike Character

- 40
- Seeks to understand others-does not have the spirit of contention (see 3 Nephi 11:28-30)
 - Believes in Christ (see vs. 33)
 - Is striving to repent (see vs. 38)
 - Has been baptized (see vs. 38)
 - Has received the gift of the Holy Ghost (see vs. 35)
 - Gives heed to the words of God's chosen leaders (see 3 Nephi 12:1)
 - Mourns for personal sins (see vs. 4)
 - Hungers and thirsts after righteousness (see vs. 6)
 - Is merciful to others (see vs. 7)
 - Is pure in heart (see vs. 8)
 - Is a peacemaker (see vs. 9)
 - Endures persecution patiently (see vss. 10-12)
 - Controls temper (vss. 21,22)
 - Keeps thoughts pure-does not lust (see vss. 27-29)
 - Is honest-has absolute integrity (see vss. 33-37)
 - Seeks to bless and love enemies (see vss. 39-45)
 - Gives financial contributions without desiring praise of man (see 3 Nephi 13:1-4)
 - Prays and fasts in secret (see vss. 5-18)
 - Does not judge his fellowman harshly (see 3 Nephi 14:1-5)

Taken from “Within Reach” by Robert L. Millet pp. 14-17

...Elder McConkie said: "As members of the Church, if we chart a course leading to eternal life; if we begin the processes of spiritual rebirth, and are going in the right direction; if we chart a course of sanctifying our souls, and degree by degree are going in that direction; and if we chart a course of becoming perfect, and step by step and phase by phase, are perfecting our souls by overcoming the world, then it is absolutely guaranteed—there is no question whatever about it—we shall gain eternal life. Even though we have spiritual rebirth ahead of us, perfection ahead of us, the full degree of sanctification ahead of us, if we chart a course and follow it to the best of our ability in this life, then when we go out of this life we'll continue in exactly the same course. We'll no longer be subject to the passions and appetites of the flesh. We will have passed successfully the tests of this mortal probation and in due course we'll get the fullness of our Father's kingdom—and that means eternal life in his everlasting presence" ("Jesus Christ and Him Crucified," 1976 Devotional Speeches of the Year, pp. 400-401).

Again I was touched and found myself pondering the implications of these things for my own life, as well as that of my wife and family, and I wondered how I should change my approach to teaching the gospel.

When the October 1976 general conference came, Elder McConkie spoke on death, life beyond the grave, and the need for us to endure faithfully to the end. Among other things, he said: "All the faithful Saints, all those who have endured to the end, depart this life with the absolute guarantee of eternal life.

"There is no equivocation, no doubt, no uncertainty in our minds. Those who have been true and faithful in this life will not fall by the wayside in the life to come. If they keep their covenants here and now and depart this life firm and true in the testimony of our blessed Lord, they shall come forth with an inheritance of eternal life.

We do not mean to say that those who die in the Lord, and who are true and faithful in this life, must be perfect in all things when they go into the next sphere of existence. There was only one perfect man—the Lord Jesus whose Father was God...

But what we are saying is that when the saints of God chart a course of righteousness, when they gain sure testimonies of the truth and divinity of the Lord's work, when they keep the commandments, when they overcome the world, when they put first in their lives the things of God's kingdom: when they do all these things, and then depart this life—though they have not yet become perfect—they shall nonetheless gain eternal life in our Father's kingdom; and eventually they shall be perfect in God their Father and Christ His Son are perfect" (in Conference Report, October 1976, pp. 158-59).

Less than four years later, Elder McConkie delivered an address at Brigham Young University in which he identified as one of the "seven deadly heresies" the idea that we must be perfect in order to be saved. "If we keep two principles in mind," he observed, "We will thereby know that good and faithful members of the Church will be saved even though they are far from perfect in this life. These two principles are (1) that this life is the appointed time for men to prepare to meet God—this life is the day of our probation; and (2) that the same spirit which

possesses our bodies at the time we go out of this mortal life shall have power to possess our bodies in that eternal world.

“What we are doing as members of the Church is charting a course leading to eternal life. There was only one perfect being, the Lord Jesus. If men had to be perfect and live all of the law strictly, wholly, and completely, there would be only one saved person in eternity. The prophet [Joseph Smith] taught that there are many things to be done, even beyond the grave, in working out our salvation.

“And so what we do in this life is chart a course leading to eternal life. That course begins here and now and continues in the realms ahead. We must determine in our hearts and in our souls, with all the power and ability we have, that from this time forward we will press on in righteousness; by so doing we can go where God and Christ are. If we make that firm determination and are in the course of our duty when this life is over, we will continue in that course in eternity” (“The Seven Deadly Heresies,” 1980 Devotional Speeches of the Year, pp. 78-79).