

Come Follow Me Lesson 48
Moroni 7-9 Dec 7-13

Moroni 7

An invitation to enter into the rest of the Lord—Pray with real intent—The Spirit of Christ enables men to know good from evil—Satan persuades men to deny Christ and do evil—The prophets manifest the coming of Christ—By faith miracles are wrought and angels minister—Men should hope for eternal life and cleave unto charity. [Between A.D. 400 and 421] (Why is this chapter here? Faith, hope and charity were already mentioned in Ether 12. Moroni may not have been well educated. He says in Ether 12 that he is not a good writer, and so he includes the entire talk of his father because this topic is so very important that the words he wrote in Ether are not as good as those written by his father here. Here's another reason these teachings might be here. When the prophets were done teaching the people because they thought it wouldn't be effective anymore, because the prophets knew they weren't going to obey, or because it was too late to change anything, they then talked to the faithful about faith, hope and charity. Each time the civilizations are about to be destroyed in the Book of Mormon, the Jaredites and Nephites, they teach about faith, hope and charity. Also when the Prophet Joseph was about to be killed at Carthage, Hyrum had just read the passage in Ether about faith, hope and charity. Do you notice that the Brethren no longer teach us about preparation for events in the future, but lately their General Conference talk themes have been about faith, hope and charity. It may be getting too late for us to prepare, so we need to have faith in the Lord to get through the challenges that lie ahead.)

1 AND now I, Moroni, write a few of the words of my father Mormon, which he spake concerning ^afaith, hope, and charity; for after this manner did he speak unto the people, as he taught them in the ^bsynagogue which they had built for the place of worship. (Transcript of a talk:)

2 And now I, Mormon, speak unto you, my beloved brethren; and it is by the ^agrace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, and his holy will, because of the gift of his ^bcalling (Most likely an Apostle) unto me, that I am permitted to speak unto you at this time.

3 Wherefore, I would speak unto you that are of the ^achurch, (This talk was given to church members. It pertains to us today.) that are the ^bpeaceable followers of Christ, (Inner peace comes from Christ even though the world around us may be in turmoil and at war.) and that have obtained a sufficient ^chope by which ye can enter into the ^drest (fullness of God's glory) of the Lord, from this time henceforth until (in the celestial kingdom) ye shall rest with him in heaven. (President Joseph F. Smith taught that once the Saints of God have gained a testimony which is unshakeable and which will allow them to confront the antagonists of the faith with confidence, they have in this life entered into the rest of the Lord. There is a settled conviction of the truth which comes through their hope in Christ and the faith that he will in time bestow upon them the riches of eternity. (See Gospel Doctrine, pp. 58, 126.) DCBM, 4:333)

4 And now my brethren, I judge these things of you because of your peaceable ^awalk with the children of men. (Remember that this is occurring during the terrible wars between the Nephites and Lamanites)

5 For I remember the word of God which saith by their ^aworks ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also.

6 For behold, God hath said a man being ^aevil cannot do that which is good; for if he ^boffereth a gift, or ^cprayeth unto God, except he shall do it with **real** ^dintent it profiteth him nothing. (Dallin H. Oaks: Have you ever found yourself doing something you thought was right, but doing it because you "had" to? Did you ever keep a commandment of God with an attitude of resentment or self-righteousness, or even because you expected some immediate personal benefit? I suppose most of us have had this experience. Do you remember your feelings on such occasions? Do you think such feelings will be ignored by a Father in Heaven who gave us the willpower we call agency? Don't such feelings tell us something about the desires of our hearts? under the law of God we are accountable for our feelings and desires as

well as our acts. Evil thoughts and desires will be punished. Acts that seem to be good bring blessings only when they are done with real and righteous intent. On the positive side, we will be blessed for the righteous desires of our hearts even though some outside circumstance has made it impossible for us to carry those desires into action. 1985-86 Devotional and Fireside Speeches, 29, 31)

7 For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness.

8 For behold, if a man being ^aevil giveth a gift, he doeth it ^bgrudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God.

9 And likewise also is it counted evil unto a man, if he shall pray and not with ^areal intent of heart; yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God receiveth none such.

10 Wherefore, a man being evil cannot do that which is good; neither will he give a good gift. (Dallin H. Oaks: “People serve one another for different reasons, and some reasons are better than others. Perhaps none of us serves in every capacity all the time for only a single reason. Since we are imperfect beings, most of us probably serve for a combination of reasons, and the combinations may be different from time to time as we grow spiritually. But we should all strive to serve for the reasons that are highest and best. . . . “Some may serve for hope of earthly reward. . . . Others might serve in order to obtain worldly honors, prominence, or power. . . . “Another reason for service—probably more worthy than the first, but still in the category of service in search of earthly reward—is that motivated by a personal desire to obtain good companionship. . . . “These first two reasons for service are selfish and selfcentered and unworthy of Saints. . . . Reasons aimed at earthly rewards are distinctly lesser in character and reward than the other reasons I will discuss. “Some may serve out of fear of punishment. . . . Service out of fear of punishment is a lesser motive at best. “Other persons may serve out of a sense of duty or out of loyalty to friends or family or traditions. . . . Those who serve out of a sense of duty or loyalty to various wholesome causes are the good and honorable men and women of the earth. “Service of the character I have just described is worthy of praise and will surely qualify for blessings, especially if it is done willingly and joyfully. . . . “. . . There are still higher reasons for service. “One such higher reason for service is the hope of an eternal reward. This hope—the expectation of enjoying the fruits of our labors—is one of the most powerful sources of motivation. As a reason for service, it necessarily involves faith in God and in the fulfillment of his prophecies. . . . “The last motive I will discuss is, in my opinion, the highest reason of all. In its relationship to service, it is what the scriptures call ‘a more excellent way’ (1 Corinthians 12:31). “‘Charity is the pure love of Christ’ (Moroni 7:47). The Book of Mormon teaches us that this virtue is ‘the greatest of all’ (Moroni 7:46). . . . “If our service is to be most efficacious, it must be accomplished for the love of God and the love of his children. . . . “This principle—that our service should be for the love of God and the love of fellowmen rather than for personal advantage or any other lesser motive—is admittedly a high standard. . . . “Service with all of our heart and mind is a high challenge for all of us. Such service must be free of selfish ambition. It must be motivated only by the pure love of Christ” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1984, 14–16; or *Ensign*, Nov. 1984, 13–15).)

11 For behold, a bitter ^afountain cannot bring forth good water; neither can a good fountain bring forth bitter water; wherefore, a man being a servant of the devil cannot follow Christ; and if he ^bfollow Christ he cannot be a ^cservant of the devil.

PREACH MY GOSPEL: OUR LIFE ON EARTH: PROBATION OR TESTING PERIOD 2
Nephi 2:21; Alma 12:21-24; Abraham 3:25-26; 2 Nephi 9:27; Alma 34:31-35; Mosiah 3:19; Alma 42:2-10 CHOICE 2 Nephi 2:26-29; Joshua 24:15; GOOD AND EVIL Moroni 7:12-19; SIN
Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8-10; 1 John 3:4; THE UNCLEAN CANNOT BE WITH GOD 1 Nephi 10:20-21; 3 Nephi 27:19; Moses 6:57; Alma 41:10-11

12 Wherefore, all things which are ^agood cometh of God; and that which is ^bevil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to ^csin, and to do that which is evil continually. (Then he explains what's going on in verses 12-13. Notice the balance here. They're perfectly balanced against each other here, using the same expressions exactly. You're thinking of a

person suspended in space, and two planets are trying to pull him in opposite directions to opposite orbits. "For the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually." There is no mention anywhere of God fighting against the devil. He doesn't have to. He could dismiss him like that. There's no issue there because the devil is phony. He can only react, but he's always fighting against God. You're not called upon to fight God's battles for him, as Mormon tells us here. He has not asked you to do that at all. He has asked you to do what's good. If you do righteously, that's the deadly weapon-not going out and attacking him [Satan] because he's evil. Remember, he's going to have to live with us forever, too, in eternity. We've got to get on with each other eventually. He's going to be forgiven, so there's nothing you can do by going out and trying to eliminate him. He says here, "The devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin [that's his method], and to do that which is evil continually." So it's like a gravitational force, a continual force exerting steady pressure or attraction to pull you over into an orbit where you'll be invited to sin and do evil continually. And with God the same thing: "That which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually." On the other hand, you're continually being pulled in the opposite direction. But the same way, inviting and enticing-the same test. "Wherefore, every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God." Between the two it's up to you, and the pull is equal. It has to be. Neither one is overwhelmingly powerful-not in this world. If God exerted irresistible force-which Joseph Smith says he will not do-then you would have no choice. I mean it wouldn't be a test at all. As Peter says in the famous Clementine Recognitions, if God forced us to be good, there'd be no merit in that at all. On the other hand, if the devil was absolutely overpowering and you couldn't resist him, we wouldn't be responsible for yielding to him. He'd be much too strong for us. So each of them has a mighty pull. The one is this direction, and the other is phony, but it's a mirror image of the other. There's a great early Christian literature in which the devil is an exact counterpart. He waits for God to act, and then he acts. He makes the same claims to dominion. He is the fisherman of men, too. He does all these other things. He sends out his missionaries. He has the same influence, and so it's up to you to make the choice. You're suspended in space between the two [and you decide] which direction you're going to move in here. Hugh Nibley, Teachings of the Book of Mormon, 4:278-79))

13 But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do ^agood continually; wherefore, every thing which inviteth and ^benticeth to do ^cgood, and to love God, and to serve him, (Once God is able to entice us to go good, then we are to be of service to him) is ^dinspired of God. (These verses could easily be misunderstood. It is not that evil persons- or persons with less than noble motives- cannot do good things. They certainly can. It is just that their deeds prove in the end to be a blessing neither to themselves nor to those they serve. That is, so long as good deeds are motivated by selfish or malicious desires they cannot transform and enrich either the giver or the receiver. Unfortunately, such doctrine has caused some members of the Church to conclude, "Well, given the way I feel about going to church right now [or doing my home teaching, or serving at the cannery], it would be better to just stay home!" No, it would not be better to stay home. Giving a gift is one thing. Performing my duties in the Church is another. It is almost always better to do the right thing for the wrong reason than to do the wrong thing- better to go to church or visit my families or show up for the welfare activity with a bad attitude than to remain at home. In most cases the very act of doing my duty (even with a less than celestial motive) results in good feelings and subsequent gratitude for having done the right thing. DCBM, 4:334)

14 Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is ^aevil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

15 For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to ^ajudge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night. (Joseph Smith: A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas.... Thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus. TPJS, 151.)

SCRIPTURE MASTERY 16 For behold, the ^aSpirit of Christ is given to every ^bman, that he may ^cknow good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. (Bruce R. McConkie: "Christ is 'the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world.' (D. & C. 93:2; John 1:9.) This enlightenment is administered to all men through the Spirit of Christ, or the Spirit of the Lord, or the Light of truth, or the light of Christ -- all of which expressions are synonymous. This Spirit fills the immensity of space, is in all things, and is not to be confused with the Personage of Spirit known as the Holy Ghost (or Spirit of the Lord). (Doctrines of Salvation, vol. 1, pp. 38-54.) "The light of Christ is the Spirit of the Lord which leads men to accept the gospel and join the Church so that they may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Men are commanded to 'live by every word that proceedeth forth from the mouth of God. For the word of the Lord is truth, and whatsoever is truth is light, and whatsoever is light is Spirit, even the Spirit of Jesus Christ. And the Spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world; and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.' (D. & C. 84:44-46.) Those who hearken to this Spirit come into the Church, receiving 'of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins.' (D. & C. 20:37; 84:47-48; 47 And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit ^acometh unto God, even the Father. 48 And the Father ^ateacheth him of the covenant which he has ^brenewed and confirmed upon you, which is confirmed upon you for your sakes, and not for your sakes only, but for the sake of the ^cwhole world. Alma 19:6; Now, seeing that I know these things, why should I desire more than to ^aperform the work to which I have been called? 26:3; Behold, I answer for you; for our brethren, the Lamanites, were in darkness, yea, even in the darkest abyss, but behold, how ^amany of them are brought to behold the marvelous light of God! And this is the blessing which hath been bestowed upon us, that we have been made ^binstruments in the hands of God to bring about this great work. 28:14 And thus we see the great call of ^adiligence of men to labor in the vineyards of the Lord; and thus we see the great reason of sorrow, and also of rejoicing—sorrow because of death and destruction among men, and joy because of the ^blight of Christ unto life. Men are born again by following the light of Christ to the point where they receive the actual enjoyment of the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Mosiah 27:24-31; Alma 36.) It is because of the light of Christ that all men know good from evil and enjoy the guidance of what is called conscience." (Mormon Doctrine, pp. 446-7))

17 But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do ^aevil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.

18 And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the ^alight by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same ^bjudgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged. (We do not find this doctrine so clearly defined in the New Testament as in the Doctrine and Covenants and the Book of Mormon. But we discover this: The Lord has not left men (when they are born into this world) helpless, groping to find the light and truth, but every man that is born into the world is born with the right to receive the guidance, the instruction, the counsel of the Spirit of Christ, or Light of Truth, sometimes called the Spirit of the Lord in our writings. If a man who has never heard the gospel will hearken to the teachings and manifestations of the Spirit of Christ, or the Light of Truth, which come to him, often spoken of as conscience—every man has a conscience and knows more or less when he does wrong, and the Spirit guides him if he will hearken to its whisperings—it will lead him eventually to the fulness of the gospel. That is, he is guided by the Light, and when the gospel comes he will be ready to receive it. This is what the Lord tells us in section 84 of the Doctrine and Covenants. This Spirit of Truth, or Light of Christ, also has other functions. We read this in the revelation: "This . . . glory is that of the church of the Firstborn, even of God, the holiest of all, through Jesus Christ, his

Son—He that ascended up on high, as also he descended below all things, in that he comprehended all things, that he might be in all and through all things, the light of truth; Which truth shineth. This is the light of Christ. As also he is in the sun, and the light of the sun, and the power thereof by which it was made. As also he is in the moon, and is the light of the moon, and the power thereof by which it was made; As also the light of the stars, and the power thereof by which they were made; And the earth also, and the power thereof, even the earth upon which you stand. And the light which shineth, which giveth you light, is through him who enlighteneth your eyes, which is the same light that quickeneth your understandings; Which light proceedeth forth, from the presence of God to fill the immensity of space. Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation 1:51)

19 Wherefore, I beseech of you, brethren, that ye should search diligently in the ^alight of Christ (This is an unusual phrase. It seems to mean something like, "Be diligent in following the Light of Christ," or "Search your hearts diligently and pay heed to the light with," or "Search diligently to know the truth and then hearken to the quiet voice within you." DCBM, 4:336. "Mormon's words indicate the need for effort on our part to obtain the real benefit of the Light of Christ. While this gift is given to everyone, we must be willing to let that light guide and direct our decisions or the light will grow dim. Speaking of this dwindling of the Light of Christ, President J. Reuben Clark explained, 'It is my hope and my belief that the Lord never permits the light of faith wholly to be extinguished in any human heart, however faint the light may glow. The Lord has provided that there shall still be a spark which, with teaching, with the spirit of righteousness, with love, with tenderness, with example, with living the Gospel, shall brighten and glow again, however darkened the mind may have been.' (Conference Report, October 1936, p. 114.)" (Clyde J. Williams, Church News, 11/30/96)) that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a ^bchild of Christ.

20 And now, my brethren, how is it possible that ye can lay hold upon every good thing?

21 And now I come to that faith, of which I said I would speak; and I will tell you the way whereby ye may lay hold on every good thing.

22 For behold, God ^aknowing all things, being from ^beverlasting to everlasting, (Our God, the Almighty Elohim who is our Father in Heaven, is a man, a glorified man, an exalted Man, of Holiness. Joseph Smith explained in his famous King Follett sermon that that being whom we now worship was once a mortal man who dwelt on an earth, even as we do now (see Teachings, pp. 345-46). How, then, can he be "from everlasting to everlasting" or "from eternity to eternity"? Simply stated, this means "from the spirit existence through the probation which we are in, and then back again to the eternal existence which will follow." (Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation 1:12; see also Bruce R. McConkie, Promised Messiah, p. 166.) DCBM, 4:337) behold, he sent ^cangels to minister unto the children of men, to make manifest concerning the coming of Christ; and in Christ there should come every good thing. (God always sends angels to his prophets when he wants to restore priesthood authority.)

23 And God also declared unto prophets, by his own mouth, that Christ should come.

24 And behold, there were divers ways that he did manifest things unto the children of men, which were good; and all things which are good cometh of Christ; otherwise men were ^afallen, and there could no good thing come unto them. (Because we are fallen, we, by ourselves could not do good. It is by the help of Christ that we do good.)

25 Wherefore, by the ministering of ^aangels, (Isn't it interesting that Moroni is writing about angels when he is to be an angel himself in assisting with the restoration of the gospel in the last days?) and by every word which proceeded forth out of the mouth of God, men began to exercise faith in Christ; and thus by faith, they did lay hold upon every good thing; and thus it was until the coming of Christ.

26 And after that he came men also were ^asaved by faith in his name; (The pattern for salvation, the process of faith, was not different for those who lived in the meridian of time than for those who lived in the days of Adam some four thousand years before. Nor is it any different for those who live two thousand years after his coming in the flesh—men and women must exercise faith in his name, repent of their sins, be reborn and renewed through his blood and by the power of the Holy Ghost, and endure

faithfully to the end (see D&C 20:25-27: 25 That as many as would ^abelieve and be baptized in his holy name, and ^bendure in faith to the end, should be saved— 26 Not only those who believed after he came in the ^ameridian of time, in the ^bflesh, but all those from the beginning, even as many as were before he came, who believed in the words of the holy prophets, who ^cspake as they were inspired by the ^dgift of the Holy Ghost, who truly ^etestified of him in all things, should have eternal life, 27 As well as those who should come after, who should believe in the ^agifts and callings of God by the Holy Ghost, which ^bbearth record of the Father and of the Son;). In so doing they prepare themselves to enjoy "every good thing." DCBM, 4:338) and by faith, they become the ^bsons of God. And as surely as Christ liveth he spake these words unto our fathers, (Christ was taught to all the prophets starting with Adam) saying: ^cWhatsoever thing ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is good, ("And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is right, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you" (3 Nephi 18:20 DCBM, 4:338) in faith believing that ye shall receive, behold, it shall be done unto you. Paul taught that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). Joseph Smith elaborated on this principle when he taught "Faith comes by hearing the word of God through the testimony of the servants of God; that testimony is always attended by the Spirit of prophecy and revelation" (Teachings, p. 148). That testimony may be borne by mortals or by angels. In the earliest ages of the world, "the Gospel began to be preached, from the beginning, being declared by holy angels sent forth from the presence of God, and by his own voice, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Moses 5:58: And thus the ^aGospel began to be ^bpreached, from the beginning, being declared by ^choly ^dangels sent forth from the presence of God, and by his own voice, and by the gift of the Holy Ghost.; compare D&C 20:35: And we know that these things are true and according to the revelations of John, neither ^aadding to, nor diminishing from the prophecy of his book, the holy scriptures, or the revelations of God which shall come hereafter by the gift and power of the Holy Ghost, the ^bvoice of God, or the ministering of angels.). DCBM, 4:337)

PREACH MY GOSPEL: THE ATONEMENT: RESURRECTION 2 Nephi 9:6-7; D&C 88:27-32; JST, 1 Corinthians 15:40; Alma 11:42-45; Luke 24:1-10, 36-39; Topical Guide: Resurrection; Alma 40:23; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23; Bible Dictionary: Death, Resurrection; Helaman 14:15-19; 1 Corinthians 15:41-42 ATONEMENT 2 Nephi 2:6-8; D&C 19:15-19; 1 John 1:7; Alma 7:11-13; D&C 45:3-5; Bible Dictionary: Atonement; Alma 34:8-10; John 3:16-17 THE GOSPEL – THE WAY 2 Nephi 9:1-24; Alma 11:40; 3 Nephi 27; 2 Nephi 31; 3 Nephi 11:31-41; Moroni 7:27-28

27 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, have ^amiracles ceased because Christ hath ascended into heaven, and hath sat down on the right hand of God, to ^bclaim of the Father his rights of mercy which he hath upon the children of men?

28 For he hath answered the ends of the law, (See 2 Nephi 2:7 Behold, he offereth himself a ^asacrifice for sin, to answer the ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto ^bnone else can the ^cends of the law be answered. A person answers to the justice of God in one of two ways: (1) perfect obedience to the law, which leads to blessings and joy; (2) disobedience to the law, which leads to suffering and punishment and requires a payment or penalty. Christ answered on both counts. He kept the law perfectly. In addition, he pays the penalty for our sins, which payment becomes efficacious as we repent and trust in him.) and he claimeth all those who have faith in him; and they who have faith in him will ^acleave unto every good thing; wherefore he ^badvocateth the cause of the children of men; and he dwelleth eternally in the heavens. (Mormon is essentially asking, "Since the Atonement has been wrought, the greatest miracle in time or eternity, have miracles ceased, or has Jesus Ceased to minister to us?" DCBM, 4:339)

29 And because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased? Behold I say unto you, Nay; neither have ^aangels ceased to minister unto the children of men. (John Taylor: The angels are our watchmen... Angels ward off evil. One might as well undertake to throw the water out of this world into the moon with a teaspoon, as to do away with the supervision of angels upon the human mind. . . . They are the police of heaven and report whatever transpires on earth, and carry the petitions and

supplications of men, women, and children to the mansions of remembrance, where they are kept as tokens of obedience by the sanctified, in "golden vials" labeled "*the prayers of the saints.*"— *The Gospel Kingdom*, 31. [Regarding Zion's Camp,] Notwithstanding our enemies were continually breathing threats of violence, we did not fear, neither did we hesitate... God was with us, and his angels went before us, and the faith of our little band was unwavering. We know that angels were our companions, for we saw them. Joseph Smith, *History of the Church*, 2:73.)

30 For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of ^agodliness. (Angels are the servants of Christ. They are heavenly messengers sent by the Lord to minister to men and women on earth. Their ministry is not capricious, their service not haphazard. They labor under the Holy Priesthood after the Order of the Son of God. Their ministry- whether seen or unseen- is to those of strong faith. DCBM, 4:340. Joseph F. Smith: When messengers are sent to minister to the inhabitants of this earth, they are not strangers, but from the ranks of our kindred friends, and fellow-beings and fellow-servants. Our fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters and friends who have passed away from this earth, having been faithful, and worthy to enjoy these rights and privileges, may have a mission given them to visit their friends and relatives upon the earth again, bringing from the divine presence messages of love, of warning, of reproof or instruction, to those whom they had learned to love in the flesh. *Gospel Doctrine*, 435-436.)

31 And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the ^achosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.

32 And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the ^aresidue of men may have ^bfaith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.

PREACH MY GOSPEL: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST: FAITH, POWER AND SALVATION: 1 Nephi 7:12; 2 Nephi 9:23; 2 Nephi 25:23; Moroni 7:33-34; Moroni 10:7. THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH: Alma 32; Bible Dictionary: "Faith" Ephesians 2:8. EXAMPLES OF FAITH: Ether 12; Hebrews 11. WORKS AND OBEDIENCE: 1 Nephi 3:7; James 2:17-26; D&C 130:20-21. FAITH UNTO REPENTANCE: Alma 34. PREACH MY GOSPEL: FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST: WHAT IS FAITH? Alma 32:21; Ether 12:6; Hebrews 11:1; see footnote b; Topical Guide "Faith"; Bible Dictionary: "Faith"; HOW DO YOU OBTAIN FAITH, AND WHAT CAN YOU DO THROUGH FAITH? 2 Nephi 25:29; 2 Nephi 26:13; Mosiah 4:6-12; Alma 32; Helaman 15:7-8; Ether 12:7-22; Moroni 7:33; Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11. WHAT BLESSINGS COME THROUGH FAITH? Mosiah 3:17; Mosiah 5:1-15; Helaman 5:9-12; John 14:6

33 And Christ hath said: ^aIf ye will have ^bfaith in me ye shall have power to do whatsoever thing is ^cexpedient in me.

34 And he hath said: ^aRepent all ye ends of the earth, and come unto me, and be baptized in my name, and have faith in me, that ye may be saved.

35 And now, my beloved brethren, if this be the case that these things are true which I have spoken unto you, and God will show unto you, with ^apower and great glory at the last ^bday, that they are true, and if they are true has the day of miracles ceased?

36 Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he ^awithheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved?**(Christ would have suffered all he did, even for just one of us.)**

37 Behold I say unto you, Nay; for it is by faith that ^amiracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of ^bunbelief, and all is vain.

38 For no man can be saved, according to the words of Christ, save they shall have faith in his name; wherefore, if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man, for they

are as though there had been no redemption made.

39 But behold, my beloved brethren, I judge better things of you, for I judge that ye have faith in Christ because of your meekness; for if ye have not faith in him then ye are not ^afit to be numbered among the people of his church.

PREACH MY GOSPEL: PREACH MY GOSPEL: HOPE: WHAT IS HOPE AND WHAT DO WE HOPE FOR? 2 Nephi 31:20; Alma 58:10-11; Ether 12:4, 32; Moroni 7:40-48; D&C 59:23; D&C 138:14; Romans 8:24-25; Hebrews 6:10-20; Topical Guide "Hope". 40 And again, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning ^ahope. How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope?

41 And what is it that ye shall ^ahope for? Behold I say unto you that ye shall have ^bhope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life ^ceternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise.

42 Wherefore, if a man have ^afaith he ^bmust needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope. (Faith and hope are closely tied. In one sense, a type of hope, what Alma called "a desire to believe" (Alma 32:27), precedes faith. That is to say, before faith in Christ can be firmly established one must begin with some kind of desire to believe. Then as a person gains the quiet assurance that there is a God, gains a correct understanding of the nature and perfections of God, and gains the assurance from the Lord that his course in life is approved, he is on the pathway of faith. When one has faith in Christ- trusts in his almighty power to forgive and lift and lighten and transform the soul- one begins to gain that hope which comes only as a result of believing in and relying upon the merits and mercy of Christ. Hope in this sense is not a weak and whimpering yearning that lacks even the beginning of assurance. It is not expressed in such thoughts as "I hope I can get to heaven one day," or "I hope the Lord will forgive my sins," or "I hope there's a place for people like me in the celestial kingdom." Rather, to have hope in Christ is to have the peaceful assurance that one is on course, the quiet confidence that in general terms the Lord is pleased with one's efforts, the anticipation of happiness here and glory and honor hereafter. Alma encouraged his people to live in such a way as to allow the Spirit of the Lord to cleanse and direct them, "and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering; having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life" (Alma 13:28-29, italics added). DCBM, 4:342)

PREACH MY GOSPEL: SERVICE: CHARITY: Moroni 7:43-48; D&C 88:125; Matthew 22:36-40; 1 Corinthians 13:1-8; CARE FOR THE POOR: Mosiah 4:26; Alma 34:28-29; D&C 52:40; Matthew 25:40. WE ARE TO SERVE: Mosiah 2:17; Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 42:29; D&C 107:99-100. 43 And again, behold I say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be ^ameek, and lowly of heart.

44 If so, his ^afaith and hope is vain, for none is ^bacceptable before God, save the ^cmeek and lowly in heart; and if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and ^dconfesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for **if he have not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.**

PREACH MY GOSPEL: CHARITY AND LOVE: WHAT IS CHARITY? Moroni 7:45-48; 1 Corinthians 13; Bible Dictionary "Charity". HOW DID JESUS CHRIST DEMONSTRATE CHARITY: 1 Nephi 19:9; Alma 7:11-13; Ether 12:33-34; Luke 7:12-15. WHAT DO THESE VERSES TEACH YOU ABOUT CHARITY? 2 Nephi 26:30; Mosiah 2:17; Mosiah 28:3; Alma 7:24; Ether 12:28; D&C 88:125; 1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Peter 4:8 see footnote a. **SCRIPTURE**

MASTERY 45 And ^acharity suffereth long, and is ^bkind, and ^cenvieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily ^dprovoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but **rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.**

(Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: "Both Paul and Mormon expounded with great inspiration about faith, hope, and charity, in many verses using the same words and phrases. If there is any difference between them it is that Mormon expounds the doctrines more perfectly and persuasively than does Paul. It does

not take much insight to know that Mormon and Paul both had before them the writings of some Old Testament prophet on the same subjects." ("The Doctrinal Restoration," in The Joseph Smith Translation: The Restoration of Plain and Precious Things, p. 18.) DCBM, 4:343)

46 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail—

47 But ^acharity is the pure ^blove of Christ, (Hugh Nibley: "Charity gives to those who don't deserve and expects nothing in return: It is the love God has for us, and the love we have for little children, of whom we expect nothing but for whom we would give everything." (Latter-day Commentary on the Book of Mormon compiled by K. Douglas Bassett, p. 524))and it endureth ^cforever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him. (Above all the attributes of godliness and perfection, charity is the one most devoutly to be desired. Charity is more than love, far more; it is everlasting love, perfect love, the pure love of Christ which endureth forever. It is love so centered in righteousness that the possessor has no aim or desire except for the eternal welfare of his own soul and for the souls of those around him. Bruce R. McConkie, Mormon Doctrine, p. 121)

48 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, ^apray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, (His love for us) which he hath bestowed upon all who are true ^bfollowers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall ^cbe like him, (Christ carries the scars and wounds from his crucifixion. Maybe we too will carry our scars that were necessary to keep the commandments. Maybe we will be like him in our small versions of suffering) for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be ^dpurified even as he is pure. Amen.

BIBLE DICTIONARY LIGHT OF CHRIST

The phrase "light of Christ" does not appear in the Bible, although the principles that apply to it are frequently mentioned therein. The precise phrase is found in Alma 28: 14, Moro. 7: 18, and D&C 88: 7. Biblical phrases that are sometimes synonymous to the term "light of Christ" are "spirit of the Lord" and "light of life" (see, for example, John 1: 4; John 8: 12). The "spirit of the Lord," however, sometimes is used with reference to the Holy Ghost, and so must not be taken in every case as having reference to the light of Christ.

The light of Christ is just what the words imply: enlightenment, knowledge, and an uplifting, ennobling, persevering influence that comes upon mankind because of Jesus Christ. For instance, Christ is "the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (D&C 93: 2; John 1: 9). The light of Christ fills the "immensity of space" and is the means by which Christ is able to be "in all things, and is through all things, and is round about all things." It "giveth life to all things" and is "the law by which all things are governed." It is also "the light that quickeneth" man's understanding (see D&C 88: 6-13, 41). In this manner, the light of Christ is related to man's conscience and tells him right from wrong (cf. Moro. 7: 12-19).

The light of Christ should not be confused with the personage of the Holy Ghost, for the light of Christ is not a personage at all. Its influence is preliminary to and preparatory to one's receiving the Holy Ghost. The light of Christ will lead the honest soul who "hearkeneth to the voice" to find the true gospel and the true Church and thereby receive the Holy Ghost (see D&C 84: 46-48). Additional references are Alma 19: 6; Alma 26: 3; D&C 20: 27.

Moroni 8

Infant baptism is an evil abomination—Little children are alive in Christ because of the atonement—Faith, repentance, meekness and lowliness of heart, receiving the Holy Ghost, and enduring to the end lead to salvation. [Between A.D. 400 and 421] (Why is this chapter in the Book of Mormon? Moroni knew that his time was soon to end. He looked back over the materials he had to see what may have been missing from the plates, so the subject of infant baptism he knew would be necessary for our day. But more importantly, this chapter is about the fall and the atonement.)

1 AN epistle of my ^afather Mormon, written to me, Moroni; and it was written unto me soon after my calling to the ministry. And on this wise did he write unto me, saying: (This epistle was probably written to clarify doctrinal disputes. Moroni must have held some church position where he was in a position to clarify the doctrine.)

2 My beloved son, Moroni, I rejoice exceedingly that your Lord Jesus Christ hath been mindful of you, and hath called you to his ministry, and to his holy work.

3 I am mindful of you always in my prayers, continually praying unto God the Father in the name of his Holy Child, Jesus, that he, through his infinite ^agoodness and ^bgrace, will keep you through the endurance of faith on his name to the end.

4 And now, my son, I speak unto you concerning that which grieveth me exceedingly; for it grieveth me that there should ^adisputations rise among you.

5 For, if I have learned the truth, there have been disputations among you concerning the baptism of your little children.

6 And now, my son, I desire that ye should labor diligently, that this gross error should be removed from among you; for, for this intent I have written this epistle.

7 For immediately after I had learned these things of you I inquired of the Lord concerning the matter. And the ^aword of the Lord came to me by the power of the Holy Ghost, saying: (This is a quote from Christ in a direct revelation to Mormon, similar to the language in the Doctrine and Covenants.)

8 ^aListen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the ^bwhole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little ^cchildren are ^dwhole, for they are not capable of committing ^esin; ("The revelations state that little children 'cannot sin, for power is not given unto Satan to tempt little children, until they begin to become accountable before me' (D&C 29:47). All of us know of deeds performed by little children that may only be described as evil. I am aware of a seven-year-old who in an act of rage killed his brother. The act of murder is a heinous sin. But in this case the child's action is not accounted as sin. Why? Because, in the words of God, 'little children are redeemed from the foundation of the world through mine Only Begotten' (D&C 29:46). Christ explained through Mormon that 'the curse of Adam is taken from [children] in me, that it hath no power over them' (Moroni 8:8). Little children are subject to the pull and effects of the Fall, just as everyone is. They are not, however, held accountable for their act. In summary, little children are saved without any preconditions-without faith, repentance, or baptism. Their innocence is decreed and declared by and through the tender mercies of an all-loving Lord. They are innocent through the Atonement, not because there is no sin in their nature." (Robert L. Millet, *Life in Christ* pp. 32-33). DCBM, 4:351-52) wherefore the curse of ^fAdam is taken from them in me, (Even though children have fallen, the atonement covers them) that it hath no power over them; and the law of ^gcircumcision is done away in me. (These verses give the historical context for one of the most significant doctrinal discourses in the Book of Mormon. In the verses that follow, Mormon discusses the doctrine of accountability and the false notion of infant baptism. It appears from this introduction that Moroni had previously been called to an important priesthood position of responsibility. Moroni, in that new stewardship probably wrote to his father concerning an important matter of concern and conflict. In response Mormon gave him some fatherly, as well as some ecclesiastical, counsel concerning a very

important doctrinal dispute that had arisen among the Nephites. The record is silent as to what prompted this doctrinal dispute or how the notion of infant baptism had crept in among the people. Mormon's epistle to Moroni is designed to correct any error that has been made or false doctrines that have been taught and to plainly teach the truth of the matter. DCBM, 4:349-50)

9 And after this manner did the Holy Ghost manifest the word of God unto me; wherefore, my beloved son, I know that it is solemn ^amockery (This is a mockery of the atonement) before God, that ye should baptize little children. (The washing of little children was a false doctrine instituted in the days of Abraham and refuted by the Lord in a revelation. (JST Gen. 17:3-6. 3 ^aAnd (it came to pass, that) Abram fell on his face: (and called upon the name of the Lord.) And God talked with him, saying, (My people have gone astray from my precepts, and have not kept mine ordinances, which I gave unto their fathers; And they have not observed mine anointing, and the burial, or baptism wherewith I commanded them; But have turned from the commandment, and taken unto themselves the washing of children, and the blood of sprinkling; And have said that the blood of the righteous Abel was shed for sins; and have not known wherein they are accountable before me.) 4 (But) As for ~~me~~ (thee), behold, (I will make) my ^acovenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a ^bfather of many ^cnations. 5 (And this covenant I make, that thy children may be known among all nations.) Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be ^aAbraham; (Conversion to Judaism is always accompanied by giving a new name. for men, it is usually Abraham or Ben Avraham (son of Abraham). When blessings are given for health, at marriages, and at other festive occasions, often the “new” or “special” name is used. Old Testament Supplementary Study Materials, p. 13) for a father of many nations have I made thee. 6 And I will make thee exceeding ^afruitful, and I will make ^bnations of thee, and ^ckings shall come ~~out~~ of thee(, and of thy seed.) The Lord on this same occasion made the covenant with Abraham that every male child should be circumcised when eight days old. (Gen. 17:9-12. 9 ¶ And God said unto Abraham, (Therefore) Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. (On April 3, 1836, as part of a magnificent sequence of heavenly manifestations in the newly completed Kirtland Temple, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery experienced a visitation by Elias, who committed the dispensation of the gospel of Abraham, saying that in us and our seed all generations after us should be blessed. Thus the continuity of the Lord's ancient covenant program was assured in the latter days. The Lord delights in blessing his children. He gives them places of refuge in this world (lands and gathering places, such as the stakes of Zion). He gives them hope for eternal mansions on high. He makes them fruitful in their posterity and gives them the hope of eternal increase through the blessings of temple marriage. He provides the fullness of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ and the priesthood of God, with its ennobling and redeeming power to grant immortality and eternal life for the valiant who endure to the end. For all of these extraordinary blessings, he asks only that we walk in righteousness and obey his commandments, sharing our witness to the world through his missionary program. Latter-Day Commentary of the Old Testament, p. 78) 10 (And) This is (shall be) my ^acovenant, which ye shall keep, between me and ~~you~~ (thee) and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be ^bcircumcised. 11 And ye shall ^acircumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a ^btoken of the ^ccovenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is ^aeight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or ^bbought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed.) The circumcision being performed at eight days was symbolic of the child becoming accountable at eight years. (see also D&C 68:25-27. 25 And again, inasmuch as ^aparents have children in Zion, or in any of her ^bstakes which are organized, that ^cteach them not to understand the ^ddoctrine of repentance, faith in Christ the Son of the living God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of the hands, when ^eeight years old, the ^fsin be upon the heads of the parents. 26 For this shall be a law unto the ^ainhabitants of Zion, or in any of her stakes which are organized. 27 And their children shall be ^abaptized for the ^bremission of their sins when ^ceight years old, and receive the laying on of the hands.) Monte S. Nyman, Studies in Scripture, 8:302-03)

10 Behold I say unto you that this thing shall ye teach—repentance and baptism unto those who are

^aaccountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little ^bchildren, and they shall all be saved with their little children.

11 And their little ^achildren need no repentance, (They are incapable of repentance) neither baptism. (Joseph Fielding Smith has taught, "Children who die in infancy do not have to be endowed. So far as the ordinance of [marriage] sealing is concerned, this may wait until the millennium." (Doctrines of Salvation, 2:55)) Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the ^bremission of sins.

12 But little ^achildren are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world; if not so, God is a partial God, and also a changeable God, and a ^brespector to persons; for how many little children have died without baptism! ("All little children who die before they arrive at the years of accountability are saved in the celestial kingdom of heaven." (D&C 137:10.) We have again the warning voice sounded in our midst, which shows the uncertainty of human life; and in my leisure moments I have meditated upon the subject, and asked the question, why it is that infants, innocent children, are taken away from us, especially those that seem to be the most intelligent and interesting. The strongest reasons that present themselves to my mind are these: This world is a very wicked world; and it is a proverb that the "world grows weaker and wiser"; if that is the case, the world grows more wicked and corrupt. In the earlier ages of the world a righteous man, and a man of God and of intelligence, had a better chance to do good, to be believed and received than at the present day; but in these days such a man is much opposed and persecuted by most of the inhabitants of the earth, and he has much sorrow to pass through here. The Lord takes many away even in infancy, that they may escape the envy of man, and the sorrows and evils of this present world; they were too pure, too lovely, to live on earth; therefore, if rightly considered, instead of mourning we have reason to rejoice as they are delivered from evil, and we shall soon have them again. TPJS, p. 196-97. The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "We came to this earth that we might have a body and present it pure before God in the celestial kingdom. The great principle of happiness consists in having a body. The devil has no body, and herein is his punishment. He is pleased when he can obtain the tabernacle of man, and when cast out by the Savior he asked to go into the herd of swine, showing that he would prefer a swine's body to having none." (Teachings, p. 181.) These little children, being pure, did not need to be tested further. Their gaining of earthly experience, another purpose for coming to mortality, will be provided for them in the millennium. (See Gospel Doctrine, pp. 453-54.) See also Joseph Fielding Smith, Doctrines of Salvation, 3 vols., comp. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1954-56), 2:56-57; Bruce R. McConkie, "The Salvation of Little Children," Ensign, April 1977, p. 6. Elder Bruce R. McConkie said: There are certain spirits who come into this life only to receive bodies; for reasons that we do not know, but which are known in the infinite wisdom of the Eternal Father, they do not need the testing, probationary experiences of mortality. We come here for two great reasons—the first, to get a body; the second, to be tried, examined, schooled, and tested under mortal circumstances, to take a different type of probationary test than we underwent in the pre-mortal life. There are some of the children of our Father, however, who come to earth to get a body—for that reason solely. They do not need the testings of this mortality. (Funeral address) The Book of Mormon: Fourth Nephi through Moroni, from Zion to Destruction, 11-12)

13 Wherefore, if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an endless hell.

14 Behold I say unto you, that he that supposeth that little children need baptism is in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; for he hath neither ^afaith, hope, nor charity; wherefore, should he be cut off while in the thought, he must go down to hell. (If you deny the atonement, you cannot have faith, hope and charity, and you are therefore denying the power of Christ.)

15 For awful is the wickedness to suppose that God saveth one child because of baptism, and the other must perish because he hath no baptism. (Joseph Smith declared that the mother who laid down her little child, being deprived of the privilege, the joy, and the satisfaction of bringing it up to manhood or womanhood in this world, would, after the resurrection, have all the joy, satisfaction and pleasure, and

even more than it would have been possible to have had in mortality, in seeing her child grow to the full measure of the stature of its spirit.” (Gospel Doctrine, p. 453) Joseph Fielding Smith: “Children who die in childhood will not be deprived of any blessing. When they grow, after the resurrection, to the full maturity of the spirit, they will be entitled to all the blessings which they would have been entitled to had they been privileged to tarry here and receive them. “The Lord has arranged for that, so that justice will be given to every soul.” (Doctrines of Salvation, 2:55)

16 Wo be unto them that shall pervert the ways of the Lord after this manner, for they shall perish except they repent. Behold, I speak with boldness, having ^aauthority from God; and I fear not what man can do; for ^bperfect ^clove ^dcasteth out all fear.

17 And I am filled with ^acharity, which is everlasting love; wherefore, all children are alike unto me; wherefore, I love little children with a perfect love; and they are all alike and ^bpartakers of salvation.

18 For I know that God is not a partial God, neither a changeable being; but he is ^aunchangeable from ^ball eternity to all eternity.

19 Little ^achildren cannot repent; wherefore, it is awful wickedness to deny the pure mercies of God unto them, for they are all alive in him because of his ^bmercy.

20 And he that saith that little children need baptism denieth the mercies of Christ, and setteth at naught the ^aatonement of him and the power of his redemption.

21 Wo unto such, for they are in danger of death, ^ahell, and an ^bendless torment. I speak it boldly; God hath commanded me. Listen unto them and give heed, or they stand against you at the ^cjudgment-seat of Christ. (It appears that what Mormon is condemning and characterizing as "damning belief" is the rejection of the merciful workings of the Atonement after one understands the role of accountability, the effects of the fall of Adam, and the necessity of the Savior's redemption. When one understands these doctrines and knows the nature of God, yet continues to hold to a view of God as capricious and arbitrary and continues to deny the unconditional aspects of the atonement of Jesus Christ in overcoming both the spiritual and physical deaths that resulted from the Fall, then one will experience a temporary hell until he can repent and acknowledge the saving power and mercy of Christ. DCBM, 4:352)

22 For behold that all little children are ^aalive in Christ, and also all they that are without the ^blaw. (The Lord has made it known by revelation that children born with retarded minds shall receive blessings just like little children who die in infancy. They are free from sin, because their minds are not capable of a correct understanding of right and wrong. Mormon, when writing to his son Moroni on the subject of baptism places deficient children in the same category with little children who are under the age of accountability, they do not require baptism, for the atonement of Jesus Christ takes care of them equally with little children who die before the age of accountability, as follows: For behold that all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all them that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing. (Moroni 8:22.) Again the Lord has stated: And again, I say unto you, that whoso having knowledge, have I not commanded to repent? And he that hath no understanding, it remaineth in me to do according as it is written. . . . (D. & C. 29:49-50.) Therefore The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints considers all deficient children with retarded capacity to understand, just the same as little children under the age of accountability. They are redeemed without baptism and will go to the celestial kingdom of God, there, we believe, to have their faculties or other deficiencies restored according to the Father's mercy and justice. Joseph Fielding Smith, Answers to Gospel Questions, 3: 20-21. Sometimes the questions are raised: Do all little children who die before achieving the age of accountability inherit the celestial kingdom? Will some have to be tested in order to achieve ultimate exaltation? Mormon stresses that all little children and all that "are without the law" are alive in Christ because of His mercy. It is clear from Mormon's words and modern prophetic commentary that all who die without accountability are incapable of sin and repentance and are "redeemed" and "alive in Christ"-meaning they inherit the celestial kingdom. Little children are innocent and pure in this existence and will be pure and innocent in the world to come, and will come forth in the

resurrection of the pure in heart at the appropriate time. At the time of the second coming of Christ, wickedness will be cleansed from the face of the earth. The great Millennium will be ushered in with power and then Satan and his hosts will be bound by the righteousness of the people (see 1 Nephi 22:26 And because of the ^arighteousness of his people, ^bSatan has no power; wherefore, he cannot be loosed for the space of ^cmany years; for he hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel ^dreigneth.). During this glorious era of enlightenment the earth shall be given to the righteous "for an inheritance; and they shall multiply and wax strong, and their children shall grow up without sin unto salvation" (D&C 45:58, italics added) But will not the devil be loosed at the end of the Millennium, some may ask? Could not those who had left mortality without trial be tested during that "little season"? Certainly not, for these children will have already come forth from the graves as resurrected and immortal beings. How could such persons-whose salvation is already assured-possibly be tested? To reason otherwise is to place God and all exalted beings in peril of apostasy. In the words of President Joseph Fielding Smith: "Satan will be loosed to gather his forces after the millennium. The people who will be tempted, will be people living on this earth, and they will have every opportunity to accept the gospel or reject it. Satan will have nothing to do whatever with little children, or grown people who have received their resurrection and entered into the celestial kingdom. Satan cannot tempt little children in this life, nor in the spirit world, nor after their resurrection. Little children who die before reaching the years of accountability will not be tempted." (Doctrines of Salvation 2:56-57.) DCBM, 4:353) For the power of ^credemption cometh on all them that have ^dno law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing—

23 But it is mockery before God, denying the mercies of Christ, and the power of his Holy Spirit, and putting trust in ^adead works.

24 Behold, my son, this thing ought not to be; for ^arepentance is unto them that are under condemnation and under the curse of a broken law. (Several important aspects of the doctrine of the Atonement and the ordinance of baptism are emphasized and clarified by Mormon in this epistle. Baptism is for the remission of sins. In order for baptism to be of efficacy there must also be faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and complete repentance. Since little children and those who because of mental or physical deficiencies never mature in the moral or spiritual sense are not accountable (see D&C 20:71 No one can be received into the church of Christ unless he has arrived unto the years of ^aaccountability before God, and is capable of ^brepentance.; D&C 29:49-50; 49 And, again, I say unto you, that whoso having knowledge, have I not commanded to ^arepent? 50 And he that hath no ^aunderstanding, it remaineth in me to do according as it is written. And now I declare no more unto you at this time. Amen.), it is impossible for them to sin. Without accountability there is no sin. Without sin there is no need for repentance and baptism. Because little children cannot sin they cannot bring about their own spiritual "fall" or estrangement from God. The only spiritual death they experience, therefore, is that which comes upon all mankind by reason of the fall of Adam. Thus they are "alive in Christ" because the atonement of Jesus Christ has redeemed all, including little children, from the effects-both temporal and spiritual-of the fall of Adam. Those, then, who die without achieving personal accountability are redeemed and saved by the mercy, goodness, and pure love of Christ as evidenced by his atoning sacrifice. They become heirs of the celestial kingdom. (For an extensive doctrinal discussion of this concept see Elder Bruce R. McConkie, "The Salvation of Little Children," Ensign, April 1977, pp. 3-7) DCBM, 4:350-51) **PREACH MY GOSPEL: BAPTISM, OUR FIRST COVENANT: CHRIST'S EXAMPLE: 2 Nephi 31:4-18; Matthew 3:13-17. THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT: Mosiah 5:8-10; Mosiah 18:8-10; D&C 20:37. QUALIFICATIONS FOR BAPTISM: 2 Nephi 9:23; Mosiah 18:8-10; Alma 7:14-15; 3 Nephi 11:23-27; Moroni 6:1-4; D&C 20:37; Acts 2:37-39. THE LORD INSTITUTES THE SACRAMENT: 3 Nephi 18:1-18; Luke 22:15-20. PROMISED BLESSINGS OF BAPTISM: Mosiah 4:11-12, 26; Moroni 8:25-26; John 3:5; Romans 6:4. THE SACRAMENTAL PRAYERS: Moroni 4 and 5; D&C 20:75-79. PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT: D&C 27:2; 1**

Corinthians 11:23-29. NECESSITY FOR AUTHORITY: D&C 22; Hebrews 5:4. PREACH MY GOSPEL: HOW DO I DEVELOP CHRISTLIKE ATTRIBUTES? WHAT DO THESE SCRIPTURES SAY ABOUT FOLLOWING JESUS CHRIST'S EXAMPLE? 3 Nephi 12:48; 3 Nephi 27:21,27; John 13:1-16; 1 Peter 2:21. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE GOSPEL AND CHRISTLIKE ATTRIBUTES? Moroni 8:25-26

25 And the first fruits of ^arepentance is ^bbaptism; (Baptism is evidence of our repentance, and partaking of the sacrament is evidence of our continued repentance.) and baptism cometh by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth ^cremission of sins; (President Spencer W. Kimball taught that there is no true repentance if we forsake only some selected sins but continue to embrace sinfulness. "That transgressor is not fully repentant who neglects his tithing, misses his meetings, breaks the Sabbath, fails in his family prayers, does not sustain the authorities of the Church, breaks the Word of Wisdom, does not love the Lord nor his fellowmen. A reforming adulterer who drinks or curses is not repentant. The repenting burglar who has sex play is not ready for forgiveness. God cannot forgive unless the transgressor shows a true repentance which spreads to all areas of his life." (The Miracle of Forgiveness, p 203.) DCBM, 4:355)

26 And the remission of sins bringeth ^ameekness, and lowliness of heart; ("To renew the mind of man is the work of the Holy Ghost," Elder Orson Pratt explained. "The Holy Ghost [changes us] more thoroughly by renewing the inner man, and by purifying the affections and desires, and thoughts which have so long been habituated in the impure ways of sin. Without the aid of the Holy Ghost, a person who has long been accustomed to love sin, and whose affections and desires have long run with delight in the degraded channel of vice, would have but very little power to change his mind, at once, from its habituated course and walk, and to walk in newness of life. Though his sins may have been cleansed away yet so great is the force of habit that he would, "without being renewed by the Holy Ghost, be easily overcome, and contaminated again by sin. Hence, it is infinitely important that the affections and desires should be in a measure changed and renewed, so as to cause him to hate that which he before loved, and to love that which he before hated: to renew the mind of man is the work of the Holy Ghost." ("The Holy Spirit," in Orson Pratt: Writings, of an Apostle, p. 57.) DCBM, 4:356) and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the ^bHoly Ghost, which ^cComforter ^dfilleteth with hope and perfect ^elove, (Charity and love of others is a gift of the spirit.) which love endureth by ^fdiligence unto ^gprayer, (Charity is a gift that comes by prayer.) until the end shall come, when all the ^hsaints shall dwell with God.

27 Behold, my son, I will write unto you again if I go not out soon against the Lamanites. Behold, the ^apride of this nation, or the people of the Nephites, hath proven their destruction except they should repent.

28 Pray for them, my son, that repentance may come unto them. But behold, I fear lest the Spirit hath ^aceased ^bstriving with them (Chapter 9 shows the result of the spirit ceasing to strive with the people.); and in this part of the land they are also seeking to put down all power and authority which cometh from God; and they are ^cdenying the Holy Ghost.

29 And after rejecting so great a knowledge, my son, they must perish soon, unto the fulfilling of the prophecies which were spoken by the prophets, as well as the words of our Savior himself.

30 Farewell, my son, until I shall write unto you, or shall meet you again. Amen.

Moroni 9

The second epistle of Mormon to his son Moroni.

Both the Nephites and the Lamanites are depraved and degenerate—They torture and murder each other—Mormon prays that grace and goodness may rest upon Moroni forever. [Between A.D. 400 and 421]

1 MY beloved son, I write unto you again that ye may know that I am yet alive; but I write somewhat of that which is grievous.

2 For behold, I have had a sore battle with the Lamanites, in which we did not conquer; and Archeantus has fallen by the sword, and also Luram and Emron; yea, and we have lost a great number of our choice men.

3 And now behold, my son, I fear lest the Lamanites shall destroy this people; for they do not repent, and Satan stirreth them up continually to ^aanger one with another.

4 Behold, I am laboring with them continually; and when I speak the word of God with ^asharpness they tremble and anger against me; and when I use no sharpness (It means direct and to the point. It means not couched in soft, comfortable language but focused on what needs to be said more than on how to say it. DCBM, 4:359) they ^bharden their hearts against it; wherefore, I fear lest the Spirit of the Lord hath ceased ^cstriving with them. (Hugh Nibley: “Their awful guilt leaps out in their instant resentment of any criticism of themselves: ‘When I speak the word of God with sharpness they tremble and anger against me’ (Moroni 9:4). They have reached that point of suicidal defiance which the Greeks called Ate, the point of no return, when the sinner with a sort of fatal fascination does everything that is most calculated to hasten his own removal from the scene—he is finished, and now all that remains is to get him out of the way: ‘O my beloved son, how can a people like this, that are without civilization . . . expect that God will stay his hand?’ (Moroni 9:11, 14). Nephite civilization was thus not extinguished at Cumorah. It had already ceased to exist for some time before the final house-cleaning. War had become the order of the day, ‘and every heart was hardened’ (Mormon 4:11), with the military requisitioning the necessities of life and leaving the noncombatants ‘to faint by the way and die’ (Moroni 9:16).” (Since Cumorah, p. 400))

5 For so exceedingly do they **anger** that it seemeth me that they have no fear of death; and they have lost their love, one towards another; and they ^athirst after blood and revenge continually. (Hugh Nibley: “Mormon and Moroni supply the epilogue to the Book of Mormon, the son drawing freely on his father's notes and letters. The picture that these two paint of their world, which in their minds has a significant resemblance to our own, is one of unrelieved gloom. The situation is unbelievably bad and, in view of the way things are going, quite without hope. The scenes of horror and violence, culminating in the sickening escalation of atrocities by Lamanites and Nephites in the 9th chapter of Mormon, need no news-photographs to make their message convincing to the modern world. The Nephites, like the great heroes of tragedy--Oedipus, Macbeth, Achilles--as they approach their end, are hopelessly trapped by a desperate mentality in which the suppressed awareness of their own sins finds paranoid expression in a mad, ungovernable hatred of others: ‘They have lost their love, one towards another; and they thirst after blood and revenge continually’ (Moroni 9:5).” (Since Cumorah, p. 399))

PREACH MY GOSPEL: DILIGENCE: WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE DILIGENT? Moroni 9:6; D&C 10:4; D&C 107:99-100. WHY DOES THE LORD EXPECT YOU TO BE DILIGENT? D&C 75:2-5; D&C 123:12-14; D&C 127:4; D&C 130:20-21; HOW DOES DILIGENCE RELATE TO AGENCY? Mosiah 4:26-27; D&C 58:26-29. 6 And now, my beloved son, **notwithstanding their hardness, let us labor ^adiligently; for if we should cease to ^blabor, we should be brought under condemnation;** for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay, that we may conquer the enemy of all righteousness, and rest our souls in the kingdom of God. (“This one verse contains an entire discourse on the importance of enduring to the end and always being found doing one's duty. Both Mormon and Moroni could have easily given up hope on their people, lost the motivation to continue in their prophetic callings, and become fatalistic. Instead, Mormon exhorts Moroni to continue to labor in his divinely inspired duty. From their examples we learn that diligence in doing one's duty is not to be dependent upon the receptiveness of others. We must do our duty, be diligent in fulfilling the Lord's commands, regardless of how others choose to conduct their lives or how they respond to our efforts. To do otherwise is to let go of the iron rod, to cease enduring to the end, which brings one under condemnation (compare 2 Corinthians 5:9; Jacob 1:19).” (McConkie, Millet, and Top, Doctrinal

Commentary on the Book of Mormon, vol. 4, p. 360) Hugh Nibley: “In this crucible of wickedness the true greatness of Mormon shines like a star as he calls his son to action, telling him that no matter how bad things are, we must never stop trying to do what we can to improve matters, ‘for if we should cease to labor, we should be brought under condemnation; for we have a labor to perform whilst in this tabernacle of clay’ (Moroni 9:6). In this spirit Mormon took over command of the army even when he knew that all was lost, ‘for they looked upon me as though I could deliver them from their afflictions. But behold, I was without hope’ (Mormon 5:1-2). His is the predicament of the true tragic hero.” (Since Cumorah, p. 401))

7 And now I write somewhat concerning the sufferings of this people. For according to the knowledge which I have received from Amoron, behold, the Lamanites have many prisoners, which they took from the tower of Sherrizah; and there were men, women, and children.

8 And the husbands and fathers of those women and children they have slain; and they feed the women upon the ^aflesh of their husbands, and the children upon the flesh of their fathers; and no water, save a little, do they give unto them.

9 And notwithstanding this great ^aabomination of the Lamanites, it doth not exceed that of our people in Moriantum. For behold, many of the daughters of the Lamanites have they taken prisoners; and after ^bdepriving them of that which was most dear and precious above all things, which is ^cchastity and ^dvirtue—

10 And after they had done this thing, they did murder them in a most ^acruel manner, torturing their bodies even unto death; and after they have done this, they devour their flesh like unto wild beasts, because of the hardness of their hearts; and they do it for a token of bravery.

11 O my beloved son, how can a people like this, that are without civilization—

12 (And only a few years have passed away, and they were a civil and a delightsome people)

13 But O my son, how can a people like this, whose ^adelight is in so much abomination—

14 How can we expect that God will ^astay his hand in judgment against us?

15 Behold, my heart cries: Wo unto this people. Come out in judgment, O God, and hide their sins, and wickedness, and abominations from before thy face!

16 And again, my son, there are many ^awidows and their daughters who remain in Sherrizah; and that part of the provisions which the Lamanites did not carry away, behold, the army of Zenephi has carried away, and left them to wander whithersoever they can for food; and many old women do faint by the way and die. (Hugh Nibley: “Revenge, [Mormon] said, was the one thing God absolutely would not tolerate (Mormon 3:9-16). For once that starts, there is no ending. Mormon shows us the military power completely out of control, practicing the usual atrocities, requisitioning everything for themselves while ‘many old women do faint by the way and die’ (Moroni 9:16). (Prophetic Book of Mormon, p. 524))

17 And the army which is with me is weak; and the armies of the Lamanites are betwixt Sherrizah and me; and as many as have fled to the army of ^aAaron have fallen victims to their awful brutality.

18 O the depravity of my people! They are without ^aorder and without mercy. Behold, I am but a man, and I have but the ^bstrength of a man, and I cannot any longer enforce my commands.

19 And they have become strong in their perversion; and they are alike brutal, sparing none, neither old nor young; and they delight in everything save that which is good; and the suffering of our women and our children upon all the face of this land doth exceed everything; yea, tongue cannot tell, neither can it be written.

20 And now, my son, I dwell no longer upon this horrible scene. Behold, thou knowest the wickedness of this people; thou knowest that they are without principle, and past feeling; and their wickedness doth ^aexceed that of the Lamanites. (“Righteousness and truth result in order, while evil and wickedness lead to confusion and disorder. In describing the depraved state of things at the close of the Nephite narrative, Mormon spoke of his people as ‘without civilization,’ ‘without principle,’ ‘past feeling,’ and, interestingly enough, ‘without order and without mercy’ (Moroni 9:11, 18, 20). Whereas faithfulness and adherence to the light of Christ and to moral codes and standards bring forth peace and decency and

enhanced organization among the sons and daughters of God, indifference towards or defiance of divine law bring forth chaos and division. Nephi explained that ‘the Spirit of the Lord will not always strive with man. And when the Spirit ceaseth to strive with man then cometh speedy destruction.’ (2 Nephi 26:11.) Those who no longer enjoy the influence of the Spirit ‘are without Christ and God in the world; and they are driven about as chaff before the wind’ (Mormon 5:16). When the Spirit ceases to strive with men and women, Satan has ‘full power over the hearts of the people’ and they are ‘given up unto the hardness of their hearts, and the blindness of their minds’ (Ether 15:19). The Holy Spirit is an organizing principle, and the nearer we approach our Heavenly Father the greater will be our grasp of reality, our ability to see things as they really are and to value our true relationship to man and God.” (Millet and McConkie, Joseph Smith: The Choice Seer, chapter 17) Hugh Nibley: “Here then is the real calamity that befell the Nephites in all its tragic horror—and there is no mention whatever of enemy action or of anyone belonging to the wrong party: the ultimate catastrophe is not that people are struck down, but that they should be found in any circumstances whatever ‘without order and without mercy, . . . without principle and past feeling.’” (Since Cumorah, p. 400))

21 Behold, my son, I cannot recommend them unto God lest he should smite me.

22 But behold, my son, I recommend thee unto God, and I trust in Christ that thou wilt be saved; and I ^apray unto God that he will ^bspare thy life, to witness the return of his people unto him, or their utter destruction; for I know that they must perish except they ^crepent and return unto him.

23 And if they perish it will be like unto the ^aJaredites, because of the wilfulness of their hearts, ^bseeking for blood and ^crevenge.

24 And if it so be that they perish, we know that many of our brethren have ^adeserted over unto the Lamanites, and many more will also desert over unto them; wherefore, write somewhat a few things, if thou art spared and I shall perish and not see thee; but I trust that I may see thee soon; for I have sacred records that I would ^bdeliver up unto thee.

25 My son, be faithful in Christ; (In spite of all the horrors of war and the depravity of the people, be faithful in Christ.) and may not the things which I have written grieve thee, to weigh thee down unto ^adeath; but may Christ lift thee up, (Be optimistic with the hope that Christ will save you in the Celestial Kingdom. Be happy in spite of the troubles that surround us.) and may his sufferings and death, and the showing his body unto our fathers, and his mercy and ^blong-suffering, and the hope of his glory and of eternal life, rest in your ^cmind forever.

26 And may the grace of God the Father, whose throne is high in the heavens, and our Lord Jesus Christ, who sitteth on the ^aright hand of his power, until all things shall become subject unto him, be, and abide with you forever. Amen.