

Sep 30-Oct 13
Ephesians
“For the Perfecting of the Saints”

OVERVIEW:

Do you see any connections between the messages in general conference and Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians?

Record your impressions:

SCRIPTURES:

Ephesians 1

The dispensation of the fullness of times. Jesus Christ is our cornerstone. Unity between husband and wife and between parents and children. Putting on the new man and the whole armor of God.

Audience: Ephesus is located at an intersection of major trade routes and was a center of commercial trade. Paul spent about three years in Ephesus. The Book of Ephesians was written to gentile converts who were baptized members of the Church, not people who were converts from Judaism and who had once lived under the law of Moses. The Epistle is written in a general manner and lacks personal references, so it was probably sent to several congregations in the area.

Historical Background: During Paul’s third missionary journey, he spent about three years in Ephesus. This city was the site of a famous temple for the fertility goddess Diana. Paul’s mission had been so successful at turning people from idol worship to the worship of Jesus Christ that the craftsmen of the city who sold pagan statues created an uproar about the threat to their trade. Paul probably wrote the book of Ephesians during his first Roman imprisonment around A.D. 60-62.

Unique Features: The book of Ephesians addresses vital gospel principles. Among these are foreordination, the latter-day Restoration, and the Holy Spirit of Promise. Ephesians also addresses the importance of prophets and apostles, Church organization, and family relationships.

Theme: Much like today, the Church members of Paul’s day came from a variety of backgrounds. Paul reminded them of the uniting force of the gospel organization built on prophets and apostles, with Jesus Christ as the foundation. He counseled the members to be one in doctrine, righteousness, and family life.

Paul had labored about 30 years and was under house arrest. Nero was Caesar. Ephesians is one of the letters of imprisonment, probably about 61-62AD. It is Paul’s summation of the plan of salvation, encompassing the premortal, mortal, and postmortal estates of man. Some Bible scholars believe that Ephesians is the lost epistle to Laodicea (Col 4:16).

“Perhaps no other New Testament book contains so many doctrines that today are thought of as being distinctively Latter-day Saint as does Ephesians. In it we find reference to the doctrine of

foreordination, the dispensation of the fullness of times, the importance of apostles and prophets in the church, the idea that there is only one true and unified church, and the doctrine that the organization of the church is essential. In this letter we find some of the most sublime teachings on the role of the family and the importance of proper family life that are found anywhere in scripture.” (Institute Manual, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, 2nd ed., p. 350)

Saints foreordained to receive the gospel—Gospel to be restored in latter-days—Saints sealed by Holy Spirit of Promise—They know God and Christ by revelation. (Paul was three years in Ephesus.)

1 PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the ^asaints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 **Grace** *be* to you, and **peace**, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all ^aspiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

4 **According as he hath ^achosen us in him ^bbefore the foundation of the world, that we should be ^choly and without blame before him in love:** (Neal A. Maxwell said: “The foreseeing of those who will accept the gospel in mortality, gladly and with alacrity, is based upon their parallel responsiveness in the premortal world...The Lord, who was able to say to his disciples, ‘Cast the net on the right side of the ship’ (John 21:6), knew beforehand that there was a multitude of fishes there. If he knew beforehand the movements and whereabouts of fishes in the little Sea of Tiberias, should it offend us that he knows beforehand which mortals will come into the gospel net? It does no violence even to our frail human logic to observe that there cannot be a grand plan of salvation for all mankind, unless there is also a plan for each individual. The salvational sum will reflect all its parts. Once the believer acknowledges that the past, present, and future are before God simultaneously—even though we do not understand how—then the doctrine of foreordination may be seen somewhat more clearly. For instance, it was necessary for God to know how the economic difficulties and crop failures of the Joseph Smith, Sr. family in New England would move this special family to the Cumorah vicinity where the Book of Mormon plates were buried. God’s plans could scarcely have so unfolded if—willy-nilly—the Smiths had been born Manchurians and if, meanwhile, the plates had been buried in Belgium!” (“A More Determined Discipleship,” *Ensign*, Feb. 1979, 71) In this great hall and listening this evening are thousands of future leaders of the Church who have been called out of the world and chosen by the Lord before the foundations of the world, as described by Abraham... I believe the Lord has brought forth special spirits who were reserved from before the world was to be strong and valiant in this difficult time of the world’s history... With all my heart I urge you to be worthy and true. CR, Sep-Oct 1995, 63-64.)

5 **Having ^apredestinated (foreordained) us unto the ^badoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (We were foreordained to be members of the Church. D&C 50:41-42 – You are of them that my Father hath given me; and none of them that my Father hath given me shall be lost. (Bruce R. McConkie said: “...it is clear that people do not all have the same talent for recognizing truth and believing the doctrines of salvation. Some heed the warning voice and believe the gospel; others do not. Some would give all they possess if they could but touch the hem of the garment of him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; others find fault with every word that falls from prophetic lips. Some forsake lands and riches, friends and families, to gather with the true saints; others choose to walk in the ways of the world and to deride the humble followers of Christ. Why? Why this difference in people? To this problem there is no easy answer. Every person stands alone in choosing his beliefs and electing the course he will pursue... But in the final sense the answer stems back to premortality. We all lived as spirit beings, as children of the Eternal Father, for an infinitely long period of time in the premortal existence. There we developed talents, gifts, and aptitudes; there our capacities and abilities took**

form; there, by obedience to law, we were endowed with the power, in one degree or another, to believe the truth and follow the promptings of the Spirit. And the talent of greatest worth was that of spirituality, for it enables us to hearken to the Holy Spirit and accept that gospel which prepares us for eternal life.” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 33.))

6 To the praise of the glory of his ^dgrace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

7 In whom we have ^aredemption through his blood, the ^bforgiveness of sins, according to the ^criches of his ^dgrace;

8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all ^awisdom and ^bprudence;

9 Having made known unto us the ^amystery of his ^bwill, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: (LeGrand Richards said: “Isn’t that something to think about, when you hear that the Lord will reveal the mystery of His will? And that the mystery of His will has been revealed to His modern prophets of this day? And we have truths that no other church in this world knows anything about—we are the only church in the world that has a program to unite all that is in the kingdom of heaven with the kingdom of God here on this earth, looking to the final winding-up scenes when all the kingdoms of this world and the world to come will be under the supervision of our great King, the Savior of the world.” (“God Moves in a Mysterious Way His Wonders to Perform,” *Ensign*, May 1977, 62))

10 That in the ^adispensation of the fulness of times he might ^bgather together in one ^call things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: (This is a summary statement. Quote by TPJS. P. 168. Paul understood that his own dispensation would end in a general apostasy. (Acts 20:28-31) The fullness of the gospel would then be restored in a subsequent all-encompassing dispensation that would be the sum of all previous dispensations. Joseph Smith said: ‘...it is necessary in the ushering in of the dispensation of the fulness of times, which dispensation is now beginning to usher in, that a whole and complete and perfect union, and welding together of dispensations, and keys, and powers, and glories should take place, and be revealed from the days of Adam even to the present time. And not only this, but those things which never have been revealed from the foundation of the world, but have been kept hid from the wise and prudent, shall be revealed unto babes and sucklings in this, the dispensation of the fulness of times.’ (D&C 128:18) “Adam holds the keys of the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times; i.e., the dispensation of all the times have been and will be revealed through him from the beginning to Christ, and from Christ to the end of all the dispensations that are to be revealed. ‘Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: that in the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.’ (Eph. 1:9-10.) Now the purpose in himself in the winding up scene of the last dispensation is that all things pertaining to that dispensation should be conducted precisely in accordance with the preceding dispensations. And again, God purposed in himself that there should not be an eternal fulness until every dispensation should be fulfilled and gathered together in one, and that all things whatsoever, that should be gathered together in one in those dispensations unto the same fulness and eternal glory, should be in Christ Jesus; therefore he set the ordinances to be the same forever and ever, and set Adam to watch over them, to reveal them from heaven to man, or to send angels to reveal them.” (*Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 53. **“The dispensation of the fulness of times will bring to light the things that have been revealed in all former dispensations, also other things that have not been before revealed.”** Joseph Smith’s Commentary on the Bible, p. 176) While the dispensation in question began in 1820, the final glory of this dispensation has not yet been realized. The church’s inauspicious beginning—with only six members in a small log cabin—will be contrasted to a great worldwide organization. The little stone ‘cut without hands’ may be a large boulder now but it has yet to become ‘a great mountain [which fills] the whole earth’ (Dan. 2:34-35). **We have not yet seen all that the Lord has in mind to restore, for the**

restoration of the city of Enoch, the restoration of the continents to their original positions (DC 133:23), and the purity of the Garden of Eden (2 Ne. 8:3), must all be restored. As Elder McConkie put it: “It should be noted that Peter (Acts 3:21) does not say that all things must be restored before Christ comes, but that the age, era, period, or times in the earth's history in which restoration is to take place must itself commence. That era did begin in the spring of 1820, but all things will not be revealed until after Christ comes. (D. & C. 101: 32-34.)” (*Mormon Doctrine*, 2nd ed., p. 796.) Joseph Smith said: **“The heavenly priesthood will unite with the earthly to bring about those great purposes. And whilst we are thus united in the one common cause to roll forth the kingdom of God, the heavenly priesthood are not idle spectators. The spirit of God will be showered down from above; it will dwell in our midst.** The blessings of the Most High will rest upon our tabernacles, and our name will be handed down to future ages. Our children will rise up and call us blessed, and generations yet unborn will dwell with peculiar delight upon the scenes that we have passed through, the privations that we have endured, the untiring zeal that we have manifested, the insurmountable difficulties that we have overcome in laying the foundation of a work that brought about the glory and blessings which they will realize, a work that God and angels have contemplated with delight for generations past, that fired the souls of the ancient patriarchs and prophets, a work that is destined to bring about the destruction of the powers of darkness, the renovation of the earth, the glory of God, and the salvation of the human family.” (Kent P. Jackson, *From Apostasy to Restoration* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1996], 258.) **“The work of the Lord in these last days is one of vast magnitude and almost beyond the comprehension of mortals. Its glories are past description and its grandeur unsurpassable. It has been the theme which has animated the bosom of prophets and righteous men from the creation of this world down through every succeeding generation to the present time. And it is truly the dispensation of the fulness of times, when all things which are in Christ Jesus, whether in heaven or on the earth, shall be gathered together in him, and when all things shall be restored, as spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began. For in it will take place the glorious fulfillment of the promises made to the fathers, while the displays of the power of the Most High will be great, glorious, and sublime. . . .Here, then, beloved brethren, is a work to engage in worthy of archangels—a work which will cast into the shade the things which have heretofore been accomplished, a work which kings and prophets and righteous men in former ages have sought, expected, and earnestly desired to see, but died without the sight. And well will it be for those who shall aid in carrying into effect the mighty operations of Jehovah.”** (Kent P. Jackson, comp. and ed., *Joseph Smith's Commentary on the Bible* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1994], 175.) **“We are the favored people that God has made choice of to bring about the latter-day glory. It is left for us to see, participate in, and help to roll forward the latter-day glory.”** (Kent P. Jackson, *From Apostasy to Restoration* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1996], 258.) **“This is the dispensation of the fullness of times, and we see running into it, as mighty streams rush into the ocean, all the former dispensations, putting us in touch with them, putting them in touch with us; and we see that God has had but one great purpose in view from the beginning, and that has been the salvation of His children. And now has come the final day, the final dispensation, when truth and light and righteousness must flood the earth.”** B.H. Roberts, CR, Oct, 1904, p. 73.)

11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being ^apredestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who ^afirst trusted in Christ.

13 In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the ^agospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were ^bsealed with that holy Spirit of ^cpromise, (Joseph Smith said: **“Paul exhorts us to make our calling and election sure. This is the sealing power spoken of by Paul in other places.** ‘In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his

glory' (Eph. 1:13-14), that we may be sealed up unto the day of redemption. This principle ought (in its proper place) to be taught, for God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known unto the Twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them, for the day must come when no man need say to his neighbor, Know ye the Lord; for all shall know him (*who remain*) from the least to the greatest. How is this to be done? It is to be done by this sealing power, and the other Comforter spoken of, which will be manifest by revelation. (HC 3:379-80.)" (*Discourses of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, compiled by Alma P. Burton [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1977], 150 - 151.)

14 Which is the earnest (down payment) of our inheritance (No one has yet received their eternal inheritance, because the earth has not yet been redeemed.) until the redemption of the **purchased possession**, (George Q. Cannon said: "God had given his Spirit to the Saints in that age, in confirmation of the truth of the words of his servants, and to assure them that the inheritance which had already been purchased by Jesus for all those who would obey the Gospel, should, in due time, be redeemed from the possession of those who wrongfully held it and bestowed upon His faithful Saints. **That 'possession' is the earth in its purified and celestialized condition together with the gift of eternal life to enable us to enjoy it; and, although neither the former nor latter-day Saints have yet received that inheritance for which both have been laboring, yet we, as well as they, have received the 'earnest,' or assurance of the Spirit that we shall yet possess it if we endure to the end.**" (Roy W. Doxey, comp., *Latter-day Prophets and the Doctrine and Covenants* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1978], 2: 216 - 217.)) unto the praise of his glory. ("**Though this passage refers specifically to being sealed up unto eternal life, I believe the principle is also true in regard to our qualifying for and cultivating the gift and influence of the Holy Ghost.** That is, the Lord sends to us 'the earnest of the Spirit' ("2 Cor. 1:22) as an evidence that our lives are in order. **The Lord's 'earnest money' on us, his down payment, his indication to us that he will save us, is the Holy Spirit. We know that we are on course when we have the companionship of the Spirit.** We know that our lives are approved of God when we have the companionship of the Spirit. We know that we are in Christ, in covenant, when we have the companionship of the Spirit. **And we know, I suggest, that we are saved when we truly have the constant companionship of the Spirit. If we live in such a way that we can take the sacrament worthily, hold and utilize a current temple recommend, maintain the gift and gifts of the Spirit (including the greatest gifts of faith, hope, and charity), and in all things yield our hearts to God (see Helaman 3:35; D&C 20:31), then we are in the line of our duty; we are approved of the heavens, and if we were to die suddenly, we would go into paradise and eventually into the celestial kingdom.**" (Robert L. Millet, *Within Reach* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1995], 78.))

15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your ^afaith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

17 **That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of ^awisdom and ^brevelation in the knowledge of him:** (George F. Richards said: "There is in this thing called 'Mormonism' a spirit, a spiritual life, and I fear that many of us have not found it. I fear that we are too mechanical in our prayers, in our worship, and in our service of God. When this spirit is upon us we feel the truth and see the beauty of the gospel which we have received. Our souls are lighted up by it and we have the spirit of testimony and knowledge of the truth. It is the spirit of revelation, it is the spirit by which the Church and kingdom of God has been set up and by which the work has been conducted up to the present time. We can have this spirit with us and have its manifestation if we will live for it, my brethren and sisters. We must make these tabernacles of ours, which are the temples of God, fit to receive the Holy Ghost that he may dwell within us, that we may be inspired by him in that which we have to do in life, to see aright, to feel aright, and to act aright, that our administrations and our lives may be acceptable unto God." (*Conference Report, April 1926, Afternoon Session 147 - 148.*))

18 The eyes of your ^aunderstanding being ^benlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his

calling, and what the ^criches of the glory of his ^dinheritance in the saints,
 19 And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his ^apower to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,
 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he ^araised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the ^bheavenly places, (Christ is over all.)
 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every ^aname that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:
 22 And hath put ^aall *things* under his ^bfeet, and gave him *to be* the ^chead over all *things* to the ^dchurch,
 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Ephesians 2

We are saved by grace through faith—Blood of Christ saves Jew and Gentile alike—Church is built upon foundation of apostles and prophets.

1 AND you *hath he quickened*, who were ^adead in trespasses and sins;
 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this ^aworld, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of ^bdisobedience: (Satan)
 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the ^alusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by ^bnature the children of wrath, even as others.
 4 But God, who is rich in ^amercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,
 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath ^aquickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
 6 And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:
 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding ^ariches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.
 8 **For by ^agrace are ye ^bsaved through ^cfaith; and that not of yourselves: (but) *it is the ^dgift of God:* (“Are works unimportant, then? Doesn't it matter what we do? Of course works matter. Of course it matters what we do. But the scriptures attest again and again that it is not our works that save us. Our works—our reception of the ordinances of salvation, our acts of goodness and benevolence, our contribution to the work of the kingdom—are necessary, but insufficient. As Elder McConkie pointed out, our works, no matter how many or how good, are not enough. We are not saved by our works. Some people say that we are saved by the grace of Christ but exalted by our works. That also is false. Our works evidence our faith in Christ and our desire to follow him and rely upon his atoning grace. But there are simply not enough loaves of bread to bake or home teaching visits to make or meetings to attend to save me from the woes of sin; such requires the mediation of a God.” (Robert L. Millet, *Steadfast and Immovable: Striving for Spiritual Maturity* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1992], 119.) Bruce R. McConkie said: “Man cannot save himself. He cannot be saved by the works of the Mosaic law; he cannot be saved by the works of the gospel. Man cannot resurrect himself; neither Mosaic works nor gospel works can bring him forth from the grave. The resurrection comes by the grace of God; all men are resurrected, and in that sense all are saved by grace alone. And further: No man can raise himself unto eternal life; he cannot create a state of salvation and provide the means to obtain it. Man cannot create the kingdom of God, nor can he save himself in such a kingdom. If it were not for the grace of God, as shown forth in the redemption of his Son, there would be no eternal life. Neither the works of the Mosaic law nor the works of Christian righteousness, standing alone, without the grace of God as manifest in the sacrifice of his Son, could save a man. **Salvation does not come into being by the works of men; it comes because of Christ and his atonement.**” (*A New Witness for the Articles of Faith* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1985], 150.) Helaman 14:13 And if ye ^abelieve on his name ye will repent of all your sins, that thereby ye may have a remission of them through his ^bmerits. We are saved by the grace of Christ, not for anything we can do.)**

9 Not of works, lest any man should ^aboast.

10 For we are his ^aworkmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good ^bworks, which God hath before ordained that we should ^cwalk in them. (What then is grace? The term is derived from the Greek *charis*, which suggests condescension, kindness, generosity, charity, and so forth. In essence, divine grace consists of divine works. Broadly speaking, grace is everything the Father and the Son do to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Pertaining to man's redemption, it is centered in the atonement and resurrection of Jesus Christ. While Paul uses the term grace ninety-five times in his letters, his critical passages on the subject are found in Romans 3:23-45 and 11:5-6, Galatians 2:21 and most especially, in Ephesians 2:8-10. **Paul wanted these Gentiles who had come out of heathenism to understand that the ultimate source of their salvation was Jesus Christ, not their own efforts or those ordinances however essential, they had received. Self-salvation, like self-righteousness, is an illusion for Jew and Gentile alike....Paul saw eye to eye with James. The issue was never faith or works, but faith *with* works. More to the point, it was the *right* faith with the *right* works. The Father foreordained precisely what those right works would be for the elect when he chose the elect "before the foundation of the world. Rodney Turner, Studies in Scriptures, 6:110-112. Paul declares that we were foreordained unto good works. While we may think of foreordination in terms of being foreordained to perform a certain mission, to fulfill a certain calling, or to receive the priesthood, Paul tells us that we were foreordained to be good people who do good things. We were created 'unto good works,' to be kind to others, to be as Christ who 'went about doing good' (Acts 10:38). On this subject the scriptures declare: 'Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness' (DC 58:27). '...put your trust in that Spirit which leadeth to do good—yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit' (DC 11:12).)**

11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* (were) in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called ^aUncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and ^astrangers from the ^bcovenants of promise, having no ^chope, and ^dwithout God in the world:

13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

14 For he is our ^apeace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle ^bwall of partition *between us*; (The wall that kept the Gentiles out of the sacred place that only Jews could enter. The atonement of Christ breaks down the partition both between Jew and Gentile and between man and God. "As can be noted in the outline of this letter, Paul is pointing out that the gentiles who accept the gospel are now brought in and made part of the 'covenant people.' In the great temple of Jerusalem, the temple proper was shielded from gentile influences. A special barrier was erected, and if a gentile passed beyond it, he could be put to death. Archaeologists have even found one of the marble blocks of this barrier with this inscription: 'Let no foreigner enter within the screen and enclosure surrounding the sanctuary. Whosoever is taken so doing will be the cause that death overtaketh him.' It will be remembered that it was the accusation that Paul had ignored this warning and brought gentiles beyond the barrier that led to the riot and his arrest (Acts 21:28)." (Institute Manual, *The Life and Teachings of Jesus & his Apostles*, 2nd ed., p. 351) **See below for temple picture and the small wall surrounding the temple.**



Gentile wall around the Temple.

15 Having ^aabolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ^bordinances; for to make in himself of twain one ^cnew man, *so* making peace;

16 And that he might ^areconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

19 Now therefore ye are no more ^astrangers and foreigners, but ^bfellowcitizens with the ^csaints, and of the ^dhousehold of God; (Christ had reconciled Jew and Gentile to God and to one another.)

20 And are built upon the foundation of the ^aapostles and ^bprophets, (necessary officers in the true

Church of Jesus Christ Bruce R. McConkie said: “Where there are apostles and prophets, there is the Church and kingdom of God on earth; and where these are not, the true Church and the divine kingdom are not present. How can a church be the Lord's Church unless it receives

revelation from him? Who can head up the Lord's work on earth if there are no prophets? Who can preach and teach true doctrines without prophetic insight? Who can perform the ordinances of salvation with binding certainty and sealing surety unless they are legal administrators

endowed with power from on high? And so it is written that Christ ‘gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers’—all given as ‘gifts unto men.’ For what purpose? They are given ‘for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.’ How long are they to remain in the Church? ‘Till we all come in the unity of the faith’; until that millennial day when every living soul is converted to the truth; until righteous men are prepared to receive their own instructions direct from the Lord.” (*The Millennial Messiah: The Second Coming of the Son of Man* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982], 69-70.) Neal A. Maxwell said: “The significant words directed by the Lord through the Apostle Paul tell us why Christ established the Church with its foundation of apostles and prophets, with Jesus Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). The Church was established ‘for the perfecting of the saints,’ the very process of our becoming men and women of Christ. The Church is established ‘for the work of the ministry’ and for the ‘edifying of the body of Christ,’ the members of the Church. This was necessary

too in order for us to have a 'unity of the faith' and also 'of the knowledge of the son of God.' In addition we are urged to strive to progress 'unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.' (Ephesians 4:12-13.) Without the Church and its Apostles and prophets we could, in fact, be severely 'tossed to and fro,' being 'carried about with every wind of doctrine.' We could be manipulated 'by the sleight of men' and their conspiracies and cunning craftiness (Ephesians 4:14).

True Christianity thus requires real authority, real verity, real orthodoxy, and real unity! Then let the storms and the winds come, including the various 'winds of doctrine.'" (*Men and Women of Christ* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991], 15.) **Jesus Christ himself being the chief 'corner stone;**

21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: (Paul knew that the church was destined to become much more than a human enterprise, however elaborate, clothed in clerical robes. When finally completed, the "building" and each man and woman in it would be nothing less than a holy temple in which God, through the Holy Ghost, would dwell. It was for this reason that the church had to be built upon the solid foundation of apostles and prophets, who would not only teach correct principles and administer correct ordinances, but who would also safeguard those principles and ordinances against heresy.)

Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scriptures*, 6:114)

22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ephesians 3

Gentiles are fellowheirs with Israel—The love of Christ passeth all understanding.

1 FOR this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ ~~for~~ (among) you Gentiles,

2 ~~If ye have heard of~~ (For) the ^adispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

3 ~~How~~ (As ye have heard) that by revelation he made ^aknown unto me the **mystery** (of Christ); (as I ^bwrote ~~afore~~ (before) in few words, (Paul mentions 3 mysteries in Ephesians. The first mystery pertains to proselytizing period called "the times of the Gentiles." The second is the dispensation of the fullness of times. (Eph 1:10) The third is marriage and the church. (Eph 6:5-9) Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scriptures*, 6:115)

4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the ^amystery of Christ) (**"Paul employs the term *mystery* twenty times in his letters in discussing Christ, the gospel, the resurrection, Israel, the Gentiles, speaking in tongues, iniquity, and godliness. A mystery is a divine secret or unknown truth. Three mysteries are discussed in Ephesians. The first mystery pertains to a process that began in the days of the apostolic church. For the first time since the Flood, the non-Israelitish nations (Gentiles) were to be given the opportunity to receive the gospel and be adopted into immortal Israel. (Rom. 11:11-26; 1 Ne. 10:12-14.) In doing so, they would partake of 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' (Eph. 3:2-8.) This proselytizing period is called 'the times of the Gentiles.' (Luke 21:24; D&C 45:25-30.)"** (Rodney Turner in *Studies in Scripture, Vol. 6: Acts to Revelation*, ed. by Robert L. Millet, [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1987], 115.))

5 **Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now ^arevealed unto his holy apostles and ^bprophets by the Spirit;**

6 **That the ^aGentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:**

7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this ^agrace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable ^briches of Christ;

9 And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the ^amystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who ^bcreated all things by ^cJesus Christ:

10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

11 According to the eternal ^apurpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the ^aFather of our Lord Jesus Christ, (Paul is saying that Christ and God the Father are two distinct persons.)

15 Of whom the whole ^afamily in heaven and earth is named, (“Paul said, ‘I bow my knees,’ as do we all, ‘unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named’ (Eph. 3:14-15). In a manifestation to Brigham Young after his death, Joseph Smith told his successor to be sure to instruct the Saints to keep the Spirit of the Lord, promising that if they would do so, ‘they will find themselves just as they were organized by our Father in Heaven before they came into the world. Our Father in Heaven organized the human family, but they are all disorganized and in great confusion.’ Brigham also said that Joseph showed him the pattern, ‘how they were in the beginning.’ He said that he could not describe it but that there must yet be ‘a perfect chain from Father Adam to his latest posterity.’ During an illness, Jedediah M. Grant visited the spirit world two nights in succession. He reported a perfect order and government that existed there, saying that the ‘righteous gathered together,’ that there were ‘no wicked spirits among them,’ and that they were ‘organized in family capacities.’ ‘To my astonishment,’ he said, ‘when I looked at families there was a deficiency in some, there was a lack, for I saw families that would not be permitted to come and dwell together, because they had not honored their calling here.’” (Robert L. Millet and Joseph Fielding McConkie, *The Life Beyond* [Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1986], 101.) Joseph Fielding Smith said: “Is there a family in heaven and in earth? Yes. That family is composed of those who go to the temple of the Lord and there are sealed or married for time and for all eternity according to the law of the Lord. Marriage is to be eternal, just as the Lord declares here in the words that I have read, and when a man and a woman go to the house of the Lord and are married for time and for all eternity, they take upon them certain covenants that they will be true and faithful in that union... Children born in that union will be the children of that father and mother not only in mortal life but in all eternity, and they become members of the family of God in heaven and on earth, as spoken of by Paul, and that family order should never be broken.” (*Conference Report, April 1961, Second Day—Morning Meeting 49.*)

16 That he would grant you, according to the ^ariches of his glory, to be ^bstrengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being ^arooted and ^bgrounded in love, (Neal A. Maxwell said: “We must deepen our faith until it becomes the real thing. Otherwise, when the heat of the day comes, if we are not, to use Peter and Paul’s words, ‘grounded,’ ‘rooted,’ ‘established,’ and ‘settled,’ we will wither under the scorching summer of circumstances.” (*We Talk of Christ, We Rejoice in Christ* [Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1984], 10.))

18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

19 And to know the ^alove of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. (George F. Richards said: “More than forty years ago I had a dream, which I am sure was from the Lord. In this dream I was in the presence of my Savior as he stood in mid-air. He spoke no word to me, but my love for him was such that I have not words to explain. I know that no mortal man can love the Lord as I experienced that love for the Savior unless God reveals it unto him. I would have remained in his presence, but there was a power drawing me away from him, and as a result of that dream I had this feeling, that no matter what might be required at my hands, what the gospel might entail unto me, I would do what I should be asked to do, even to the laying down of my life. And so when we read in the scriptures what the Savior said to his disciples: ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions: . . . I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also,’ (John 14:2,3.) I think that is where I

want to be. If only I can be with my Savior and have that same sense of love that I had in that dream, it will be the goal of my existence, the desire of my life.” (*Conference Report, October 1946, Afternoon Meeting 139.*)

20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

21 Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, ^aworld without end. Amen.

Ephesians 4

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism—Apostles and prophets essential to the Church—Saints exhorted to live righteously—They are sealed unto the day of redemption.

1 I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk ^aworthy of the ^bvocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, ^aforbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the ^aunity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

4 *There is* (In) one ^abody, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one ^afaith, one ^bbaptism, (There is only one true church.)

6 One God and ^aFather of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

7 But unto every one of us is given ^agrace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

8 Wherefore he saith, When he ^aascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

10 He ~~that~~ (who) descended is the same also ~~that~~ (who) ^aascended up *far above* (into heaven, to glorify him who reigneth over) all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Scripture Mastery: 11 (What are the church leaders identified? Which church leaders can we do without?) And he ^agave some, ^bapostles; and some, ^cprophets; and some, ^devangelists; and some, ^epastors and ^fteachers; (Why are there so many keys on a piano? Let’s say that you know how to play just three of the keys, but you do it very well. Why is that not enough? Baptism is one key, faith in Christ another, a correct understanding of the Godhead is another key. The full keyboard provides the harmony of gospel principles necessary for exaltation.)

12 (What is the purpose of church leaders?) For the ^aperfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the ^bedifying of the body of Christ: (In addition to apostles and prophets, Christ provided evangelists (patriarchs), pastors (bishops) and teachers in his church for the “perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (upbuilding) of the body of Christ.” The word “perfecting” implies oneness. A divided church, much less a fragmented Christianity, can never become perfect. Christ declared, “I say unto you, be one, and if ye are not one, ye are not mine.” D&C 38:27. The hallmark of the true church is unity. Rodney Turner, *Studies in Scriptures*, 6:114)

13 (How long will we need our church leaders?) Till we(, in the unity of the faith,) all come *in the aunity of the faith, and of* (to) the ^bknowledge of the Son of God, unto a ^cperfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

14 (What would happen if we didn’t have our church leaders?) That we *henceforth* be no more ^achildren, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of ^bdoctrine, by the sleight of men, *and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;* (“The authorities which the Lord has placed in his Church constitute for the people of the Church, a harbor, a place of refuge, a hitching post, as it were. No one in this Church will ever go far astray who ties himself securely to the Church Authorities whom the Lord has placed in his Church. This Church will never go astray; the Quorum of the Twelve will never lead you into bypaths; it never has and never will. There could be individuals who would falter; there will never be a majority of the Council of the

Twelve on the wrong side at any time. The Lord has chosen them; he has given them specific responsibilities. And those people who stand close to them will be safe. And, conversely, whenever one begins to go his own way in opposition to authority, he is in grave danger. I would not say that those leaders whom the Lord chooses are necessarily the most brilliant, nor the most highly trained, but they are the chosen, and when chosen of the Lord they are his recognized authority, and the people who stay close to them have safety.” Spencer W. Kimball, CR, April 1951, p. 104)

15 But speaking the ^atruth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the ^bhead, *even* Christ:
16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other ^aGentiles walk, in the ^bvanity of their ^cmind,

18 Having the ^aunderstanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ^bignorance that is in them, because of the ^cblindness of their ^dheart:

19 Who being ^apast ^bfeeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

21 If so be that ye have *heard* (learned) him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

22 ~~That ye aput off~~ (And now I speak unto you) concerning the former conversation, (by exhortation, that ye put off) the ^bold man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful ^clusts;

23 And be renewed in the *spirit of your* mind (of the Spirit);

24 And that ye put on the ^anew man, which after God is created in ^brighteousness and true holiness. (Practicing Christians are good men and women. However, people can be good in the normative sense of the word without belonging to any religious organization. There are many good men and women who seldom, if ever, darken the doors of a church. However, the goal of the saint is not mere goodness, but holiness. And holiness requires not only personal morality but also those doctrines and ordinances through which the saint is endowed with the holiness of the Godhead. Only those who accept and live the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ can be sanctified. And only the sanctified are heirs of the celestial kingdom. They alone are members of the heavenly church, the Church of the Firstborn. They alone partake of the fullness of the grace of God.” Rodney Turner, Studies in Scriptures, 6:113)

25 Wherefore putting away ^alying, speak every man ^btruth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26 ~~aBe ye angry, and sin not:~~ (Can ye be angry, and not sin?) let not the sun go down upon your ^bwrath:
27 Neither give place to the ^adevil.

28 Let him that stole ^asteal no more: but rather let him ^blabour, working with *his* hands (for) the thing(s) which ~~is~~ (are) good, that he may have to ^cgive to him that needeth.

29 Let no corrupt ^acommunication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30 And ^agrieve not the holy ^bSpirit of God, whereby ye are ^csealed unto the day of redemption.

31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and ^aanger, and clamour, and ^bevil ^cspeaking, be put away from you, with all ^dmalice:

32 And be ye ^akind one to another, tenderhearted, ^bforgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 5

Saints exhorted to avoid uncleanness and walk uprightly—Husbands and wives should love each other.

1 BE ye therefore ^afollowers of God, as dear children;

2 And ^awalk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an ^boffering and a ^csacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling ^dsavour.

3 But ^afornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh ^bsaints;

4 Neither ^afilthiness, nor ^bfoolish ^ctalking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

5 For this ye know, that no ^awhoremonger, nor ^bunclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any ^cinheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

6 Let no man ^adeceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the ^bwrath of God upon the children of ^cdisobedience. (Practicing sinners will not be saved in the kingdom of God.)

7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as ^achildren of ^blight:

9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all ^agoodness and righteousness and truth;)

10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

11 And have no ^afellowship with the unfruitful works of ^bdarkness, but rather ^creprove *them*.

12 For it is a ^ashame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee ^alight.

15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

17 Wherefore be ye not ^aunwise, but understanding what (*is*) the will of the Lord *is*.

18 And be not ^adrunk with wine, wherein is ^bexcess; but be filled with the Spirit;

19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and ^ahymns and spiritual songs, singing and making ^bmelody in your heart to the Lord;

20 Giving ^athanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

21 ^aSubmitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

22 ^aWives, ^bsubmit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23 For the ^ahusband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the ^bhead of the ^cchurch: and he is the saviour of the body. (“Can you find in all the holy scriptures where the Lord Jesus Christ ever failed his church? Can you find any scripture that says he was untrue to his people, to his neighbors, friends or associates? Was he faithful? Was he true? Is there anything good and worthy that he did not give? Then that is what we ask – what he asks of a husband, every husband. That is the goal. Can you think of a single exception in his great life? There should be none in yours.” Spencer W. Kimball, Address to Religious Educators, 12 Sep 1975, p. 3-5)

24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in every thing.

25 ^aHusbands, ^blove your ^cwives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; (There is a scripture which says, ‘Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.’ (John 15:13) Your wife is your friend. You should be willing to go even to the extent of giving your life for her if the need should appear. Would you give your life for her? You need to ask yourself, ‘Can I love my wife even as Christ also has loved the Church?’ Can you think of how he loved the Church? Its every breath was important to him. Its every growth, its every individual, was precious to him. He gave to those people all his energy, all his power, all his interest. He gave his life – and what more could one give?” Spencer W. Kimball, Address to Religious Educators, 12 Sep 1975, p. 3-5. To put the principle in proper perspective, Paul draws an analogy between the relationship of a priesthood husband to his wife and of Christ to the

church. Christ and the husband “in Christ” constitute the “head” in their respective callings. For marriage is more than a partnership; it is also a priesthood stewardship. Since every steward is accountable for his stewardship, he must be able to exercise righteous dominion over it. There can be no legitimate responsibility without legitimate authority...Husbands do not derive their authority from their sex, but from Christ. They are the “head” of their wives because Christ is their “head.” A man’s authority and the right to exercise that authority in righteousness originates in Christ, not in the man. Consequently, a wife’s commitment to her husband imposes a profound obligation on him to be worthy of her commitment. To justify the wife’s commitment, Paul commands, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. Rodney Turner, Studies in Scriptures, 6:117)

26 That he might ^asanctify and ^bcleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his ^awife loveth himself.

29 For no man ever yet ^ahated his own ^bflesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30 For we are ^amembers of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be ^aone flesh.

32 This is a great ^amystery (the most sacred ordinance - In keeping with his emphasis on the "mysteries" or ordinances of the Gospel, Paul indicates that marriage is the "great mystery" (in Greek, the *megamysterion* or highest and greatest ordinance). Certainly he did not mean that marriage is a great secret or a mystery that needs a solution. What he means here is that marriage is the highest and holiest ordinance of the Gospel: "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh" 95:3:32). For what cause? For the fulfillment of the plan of the Father, the plan that provides for eternal love and its truest expression, "eternal lives" (D&C 132:19-20, 24). Breck England, Meridian Magazine, Lesson 39): but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the ^awife see that she ^breverence *her* husband. (In the scriptures there are only a few passages where the Lord tells us to love something with all our hearts: Loving the Lord and loving our wife: D&C 42: 22 Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else. Sisters, what would it be like to be married to the Savior? Brethren, what would it be like if you were a husband like the Savior?)

Ephesians 6

Children should honor their parents—Servants and masters judged by the same law—Saints should put on the whole armor of God.

1 ^aCHILDREN, ^bobey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2 ^aHonour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4 And, ye ^afathers, ^bprovoke not your ^cchildren to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

5 ^aServants, be obedient to them that are *your* ^bmasters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in

singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the ^aservants of Christ, doing the ^bwill of God from the heart;

7 With good will doing ^aservice, as to the Lord, and not to men:

8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he ^areceive of the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

9 And, ye ^amasters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your ^bMaster also is in heaven; neither is there ^crespect of persons with him. (“The important thing was not their transitory situations in life, but their conduct toward one another in those situations. The same principle applies in the parent-child relationship, where one is also temporarily subordinate to another. It is right for children to obey their parents, in the Lord. It is wrong for fathers to be overbearing and to provoke their children to anger and rebellion.” Rodney Turner, Studies in Scriptures, 6:116-17)

10 Finally, my brethren, be ^astrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 **Put on the whole ^aarmour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

12 **For we ^awrestle not ^bagainst ^cflesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the ^drulers of the ^edarkness of this world, against spiritual ^fwickedness in high places.** (The war in heaven is still going on, it’s just moved to earth. “Being spiritual enemies, they must be fought with spiritual weapons.” Rodney Turner, Studies in Scriptures, 6:121)

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God (the armor used is both offensive and defensive), that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having your **loins** (virtue and chastity “Now the loins in that part of the body between the lower rib and the hip in which you will recognize are the vital organs which have to do with reproduction...he was saying that that part of the body was one of the most vulnerable.” Harold B. Lee, Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace, Speeches of the Year, 1954, p. 2-7) **girt about with ^btruth** (“Truth, the Lord said, is knowledge of things as they are, things as they were and things as they are to come...What is going to guide us along the path of proper morals or proper choices? It will be the knowledge of truth.” Ibid. **Scriptures and living prophets.**), and having on the **breastplate** (“...over the heart...the heart has always been used to typify our conduct.” Ibid.) of **righteousness**; (Having learned truth we have a measure by which we can judge between right and wrong and so our conduct will always be gauged by that thing which we know to be true.” Ibid.)

15 **And your feet** (“suggesting the feet as the objectives, the goals of life which we should have guarded by some kind of armour and protected from getting off on the wrong foot.” Ibid.) **shod with the preparation of the gospel of ^apeace**; (“How fortunate are you if in your childhood in the home of your father and mother you were taught the doctrine of repentance, faith in Christ, the Son of the Living God; the meaning of baptism and what you gain by the having the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. Fortunate is the child who has been taught to pray and who has been given those steps to take on through life.” Ibid.)

16 Above all, taking the **shield of ^afaith**, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery ^bdarts of the wicked.

17 And take the **helmet** (“...our head, our thoughts.” Ibid.) of **salvation** (“Saved from death and saved from sin. When these two things are missing from this earth and when it has been sanctified and cleansed of its impurity, this shall be the place of salvation.” Ibid.), and the **sword of the Spirit** (“...which is the word of God. I can’t think of any more powerful weapons than faith a knowledge of the scriptures in the which are contained the Word of God.” Ibid), **which is the word of God**: (In our day, it is clear that the "armor of God" is more than just a figure of speech. Elder Carlos E. Asay teaches that the armor of God is a token of the promise of eternal life: "There is, however, another piece of armor worthy of our consideration. It is the special underclothing known as the temple garment, or garment of the holy priesthood, worn by members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who have received their temple endowment. This garment, worn day and night, serves three important purposes: it

is a reminder of the sacred covenants made with the Lord in His holy house, a protective covering for the body, and a symbol of the modesty of dress and living that should characterize the lives of all the humble followers of Christ. The white garment symbolizes purity and helps assure modesty, respect for the attributes of God, and, to the degree it is honored, a token of what Paul regarded as taking upon one the whole armor of God. Garments bear several simple marks of orientation toward the gospel principles of obedience, truth, life, and discipleship in Christ. The real battles of life in our modern day will be won by those who are clad in a spiritual armor—an armor consisting of faith in God, faith in self, faith in one's cause, and faith in one's leaders. The piece of armor called the temple garment not only provides the comfort and warmth of a cloth covering, it also strengthens the wearer to resist temptation, fend off evil influences, and stand firmly for the right." Asay, Carlos E. "The Temple Garment: 'An Outward Expression of an Inward Commitment,' " *Ensign*, Aug. 1997, 19.)

18 ^aPraying (This is the final piece of armor, prayer.) always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all ^bperseverance and supplication for all saints; (Spencer W. Kimball: It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the devil to enter a door that is closed. He seems to have no keys for locked doors. But if a door is slightly ajar, he gets his toe in, and soon this is followed by his foot, then by his leg and his body and his head, and finally he is in all the way. Lucifer readily becomes the master when one succumbs to his initial blandishments [flattery]. Soon then the conscience is stilled completely, the evil power has full sway, and the door to salvation is closed until a thorough repentance opens it again. *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, 215-16. President Gordon B. Hinckley: The war goes on. It is as it was in the beginning... It is an ongoing battle... We cannot be unclean and expect the help of the Almighty... You cannot afford to partake of things that will weaken your minds and your bodies. These include cocaine, crack, alcohol, tobacco. You cannot be involved in immoral activity. You cannot do these things and be valiant as warriors in the cause of the Lord... We are engaged in a great eternal struggle that concerns the very souls of the sons of daughters of God. We are not losing. We are winning. We will continue to win if we will be faithful and true. We can do it. We must do it. We will do it. CR, Oct 1986, 57.)

19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the ^amystery of the gospel,

20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak ^aboldly, as I ought to speak.

21 But that ye also may know my affairs, *and* how I do, ^aTychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and *that* he might comfort your hearts.

23 Peace *be* to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace *be* with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in ^asincerity. Amen.