

Sacred Truths and Labors of Love



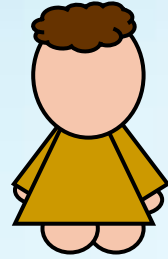
Jacob 1

and

Jacob 2:1-11

Jacob

Jacob, the fifth son of Sariah and Lehi, wrote this book. He was born in the wilderness during his family's journey to the promised land.



Lehi promised Jacob that God would “consecrate [his] afflictions for [his] gain” and that he would spend his days “in the service of [his] God”.

In his youth, Jacob “suffered afflictions and much sorrow, because of the rudeness of [his] brethren”.



Nephi consecrated Jacob to be a priest and teacher of the Nephites, and later entrusted him with the small plates of Nephi.



Jacob's Later Years

As a faithful priesthood leader and teacher, Jacob labored diligently to persuade his people to believe in Christ

He received revelations concerning the Savior, experienced the ministering of angels, and heard the voice of the Lord
see Jacob 7:5

He saw his Redeemer (see 2 Nephi 11:2–3)



Jacob was the father of Enos, to whom he entrusted the plates before his death.

Jacob wrote this while living in the land of Nephi around the year 544 BC and concluded nearly at the end of Jacob's life.



For The People

Nephi instructed Jacob to record sacred teachings, revelations, and prophecies “for Christ’s sake, and for the sake of our people”

(Jacob 1:4).



“We labor diligently to engraven these words upon plates, hoping that our beloved brethren and our children will receive them with thankful hearts. ... For this intent have we written these things, that they may know that we knew of Christ, and we had a hope of his glory many hundred years before his coming”.

Jacob 4:3-4

Central theme of his writings:

“Why not speak of the **atonement of Christ**, and attain to a perfect knowledge of him ... ?” (Jacob 4:12).

Jacob obeyed this instruction and preserved writings that he “considered to be most precious” Jacob 1:2



The Book of Jacob

The Book of Jacob begins in approximately 544 BC, when Nephi entrusted Jacob with the small plates.



The Book contains information concerning the Nephite government following Nephi's death..

Jacob's condemnation of the unauthorized practice of plural marriage. The only reference to this subject in the Book of Mormon occurs in Jacob 2..

The Book of Jacob also includes the longest chapter in the Book of Mormon, Jacob 5, which contains Zenos' allegory of the olive trees.



...And the first appearance of an anti-Christ (Sherem) among the Nephites.

Nephi anointed a man to succeed him as king and ruler of the people, while Jacob and his brother Joseph continued as spiritual leaders of the Nephites



Recording Sacred Truths

Jacob was a noble and righteous man...a man filled with the spirit

Usually, records were passed from Father to son.



The Nephite prophets desired above all else that their people “taste of the richness and goodness” and avoid “bitter fruits of disobedience.”

The Book of Mormon is a Spiritual Record with the soul purpose to bring men unto Christ; an invitation.



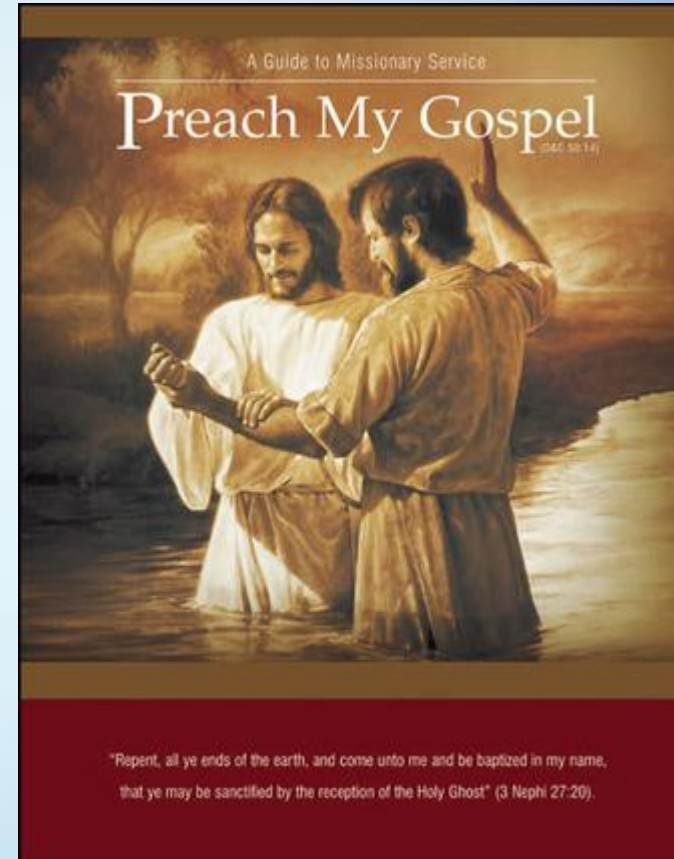
James Fullmer

The Lord showed Jacob and Joseph what would happen to the Nephites in the future, and He revealed details about the coming of Christ.

Come Unto Christ

To come unto Christ, a person “must have faith in Him unto repentance—making the necessary changes to bring their life into agreement with His teachings.”

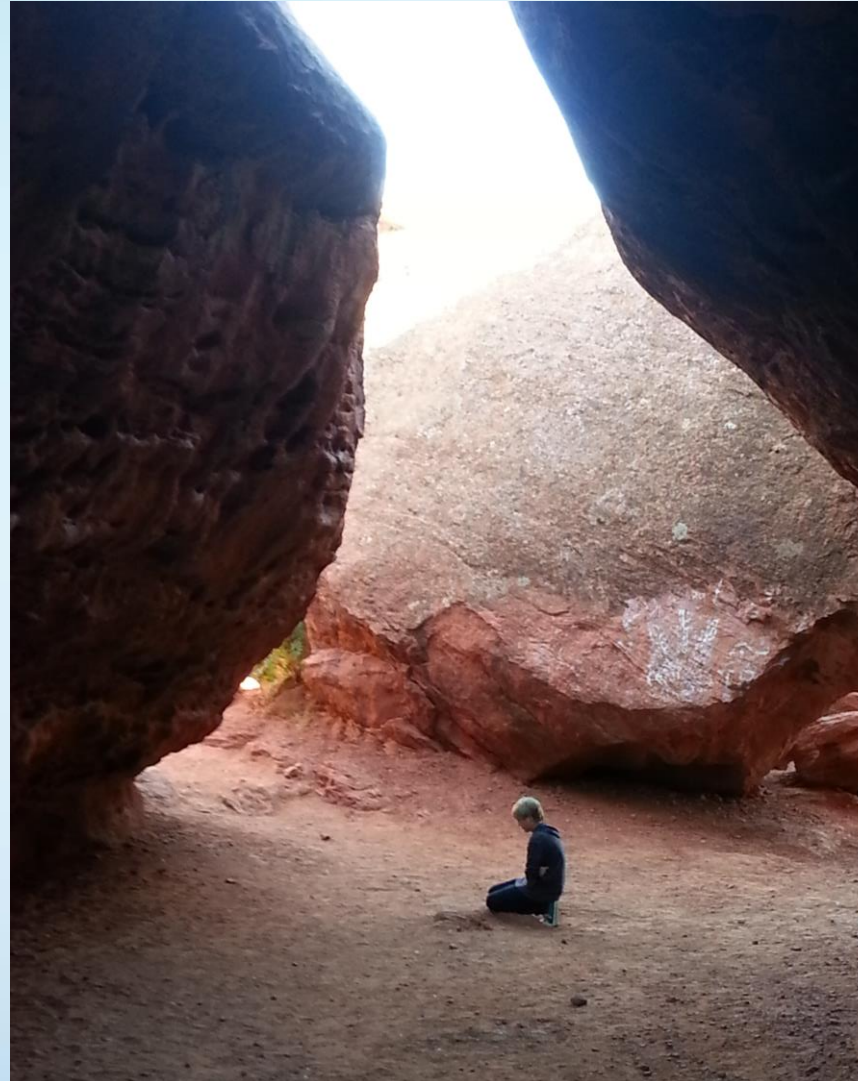
**Knowing of
Jesus Christ and
His kingdom can
motivate us to
labor diligently
to help others
come unto Him.**



Partake of the Goodness

...an invitation to receive God's blessings through obedience to the commandments and ordinances of the gospel

Priesthood leaders labor diligently to persuade us to come unto Christ and partake of the goodness of God



If we come unto Christ and partake of the goodness of God, then we will enter into God's rest

Enter Into His Rest

Enjoying peace in this life and receiving “the fulness of [God’s] glory” in the next life (D&C 84:24)

To Qualify for the “rest” through faith and obedience

“Suffer his cross”—Our willingness to deny ourselves of ungodliness and worldly lusts and to keep the Lord’s commandments (Our willingness to endure and sacrifice as we follow the Savior).

“Bear the shame of the world”—keeping the commandments despite the worldly pressure, humiliation, and opposition that often come to disciples of Jesus Christ.

Provocation In The Days of Temptation



In the day of the ancient Israelites who provoked God's anger by rebelling against Him in the wilderness

View Christ's Death



Yongsung Kim

When Jacob wrote that he wanted to persuade people to “believe in Christ, and view his death,” he may have meant that he wanted them to examine the Atonement of Jesus Christ attentively, realize its importance, and gain a personal testimony of it.

Suffer His Cross

Our willingness to deny ourselves of ungodliness and worldly lusts and to keep the Lord's commandments

“We may wonder why we Latter-day Saints don't place a cross on our churches or wear a cross to show that we are Christians, thereby making it easier for others to identify in whom we believe. Is the cross important to our faith?”

The answer is an unequivocal yes! The Redeemer's suffering on the cross is vitally important to us and is an inseparable part of the Atonement, through which He suffered and died for our sins and thereby provided us with a clear path to salvation and exaltation.

The Savior was clear when He stated that in following Him we should take upon ourselves a cross—not the Roman cross that was the instrument of death but our *own cross*, whereby we present a sacrifice to the Lord of our own heart to be obedient to His commandments.

“And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me,” Jesus said, “is not worthy of me” (Matthew 10:38).



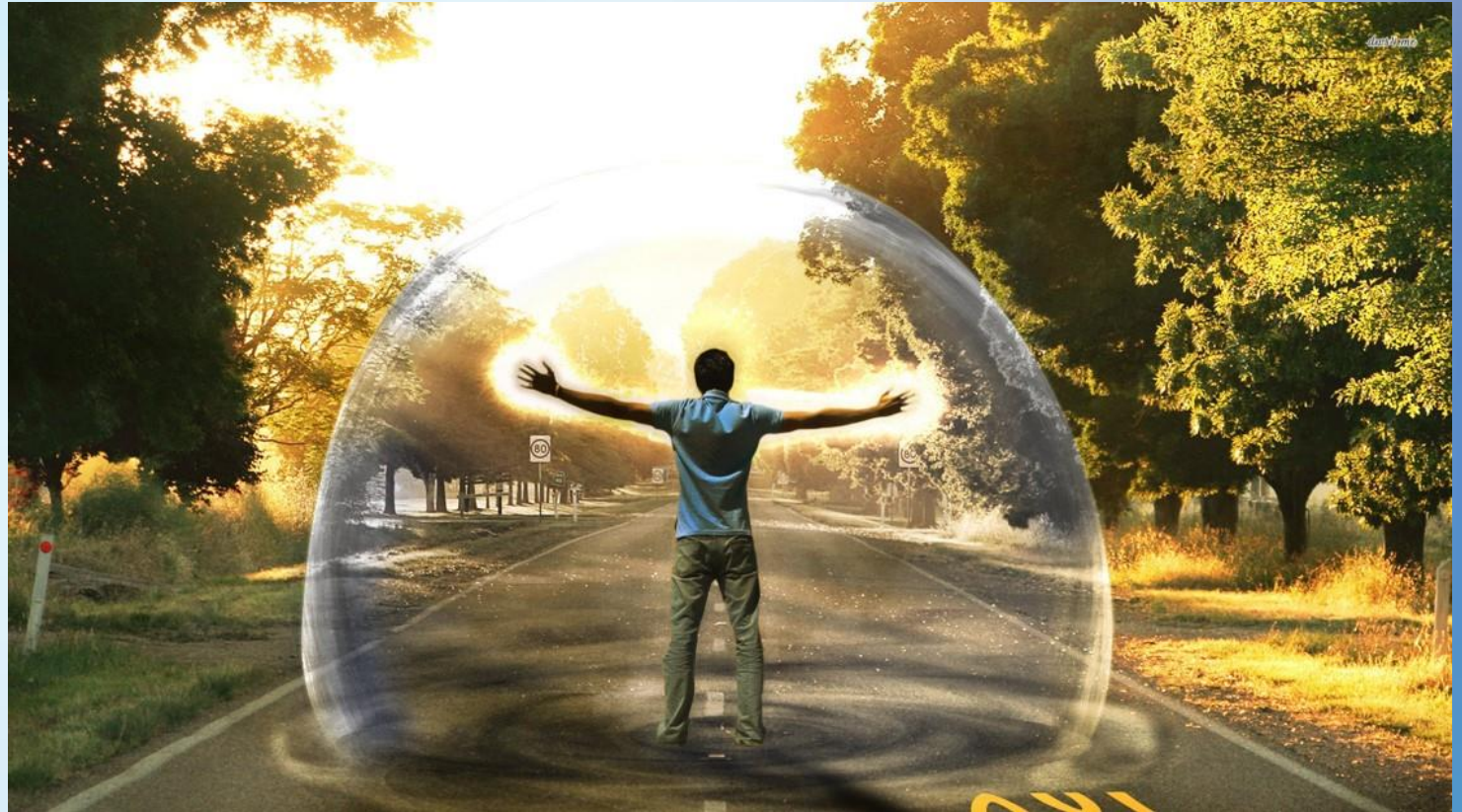
“The message of the gospel of Jesus Christ includes what happened on the cross, but this message and meaning is within each of us and requires no external symbol to manifest our faith. Our cross is the giving up of worldly sins and following the Savior with a humble heart and an obedient spirit.”

Gregory A. Schwitzer



Bare The Shame of the World

Keeping the commandments despite the worldly pressure, humiliation, and opposition that often come to disciples of Jesus Christ.



The Nephite Dynasty

Nephi had been appointed as king by the voice of the people and chose another king to reign in his stead.



To retain Nephi's name in remembrance they established a Nephite monarchy...Second Nephi Dynasty, third Nephi and so on.

This was much like the system used by the Egyptians and the Romans with their Pharaohs and Caesars.



The Nephite Dynasty continued for almost 500 years, in which a system of judges was established. (Mosiah 29)

Anointed King and Sword

From ancient times it was the practice and tradition among the people of the Lord, at times when they had a monarchical government, to anoint their kings. The anointing, a symbol of the outpouring of the spirit, was a sacramental charge, one in which the king effectually covenanted to lead his people in righteousness. Prophets, priest, and kings—all of which were anointed—thus became messianic testimonies of the King of kings.



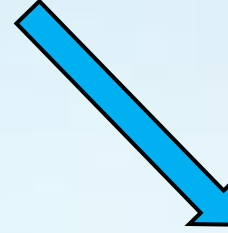
Wielding the sword of “Laban”

The sword was emblematic of the arm of the Lord, a promise that He would strengthen and bless them. It was a reminder that there was a price to be paid, even the shedding of blood, that the world of God might be had and honored.

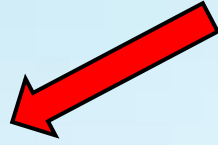
The Three Witness—were promised they would see the sword of Laban, as well as the gold plates, the breastplate, and the Urim and Thummim
D&C 17:1

All In A Name

Nephites



Lamanites



Lamanites

Lemuelites



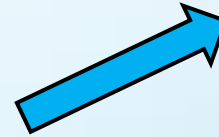
Those people who rebelled against righteousness and against the things of God.

Ishmaelites



Those who seek to destroy the people of Nephi.

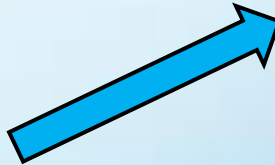
Jacobites



Those people who chose to follow the Savior.

Nephites

Josephites



Those who believed in the commandments of God and the traditions of their fathers.

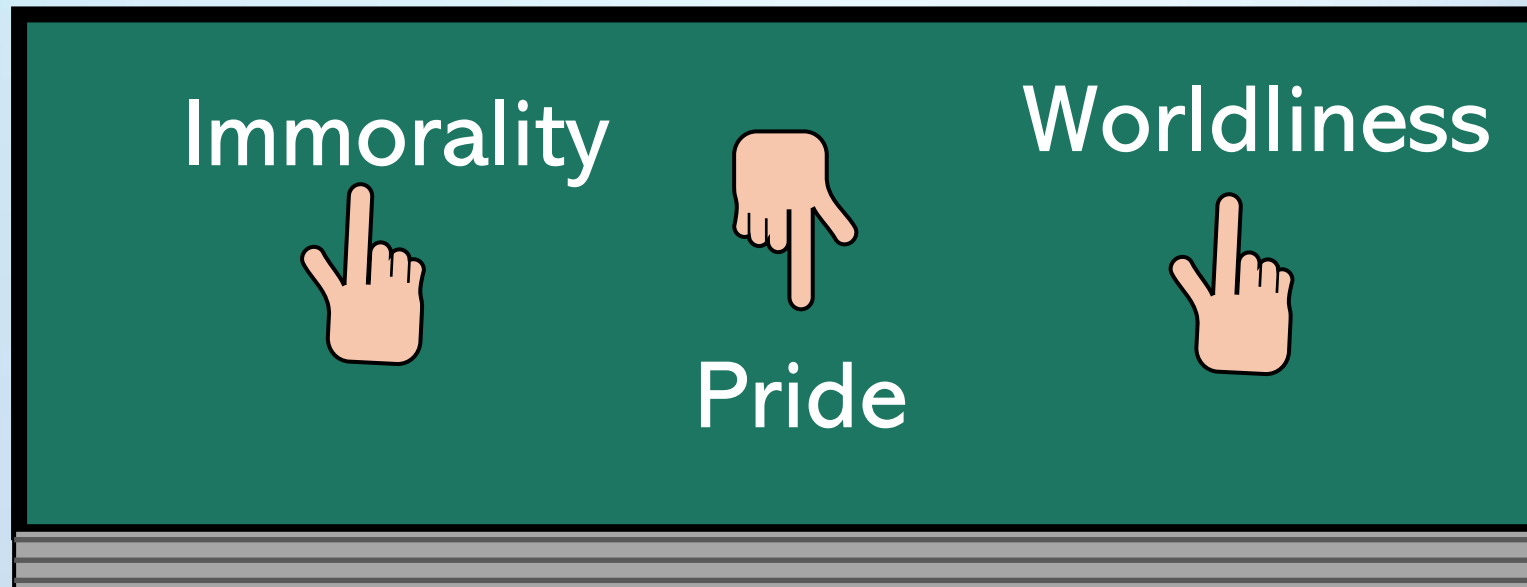
Zoramites



Warnings

Why do Church leaders warn us against sin?

Jacob recorded that after the death of his brother Nephi, the people began to indulge in certain wicked practices



Errand of the Lord

We believe that a man must be called by prophecy, and by laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof”
Article of Faith 1:5



”Again I say unto you, that it shall not be given to any one to go forth to preach my gospel, or to build up my church, except he be ordained by some one who has authority, and it is known to the church that he has authority and has been regularly ordained by the heads of the church.” (D&C 42:11)



Consecrated Priests and Teachers

“The Nephites officiated by virtue of the Melchizedek Priesthood from the days of Lehi to the days of the appearance of our Savior among them. It is true that Nephi ‘consecrated Jacob and Joseph’ that they should be priests and teachers over the land of the Nephites, but the fact that plural terms *priests and teachers* were used indicates that this was not a reference to the definite office in the priesthood in either case, but it was a general assignment to teach, direct, and admonish the people.”

Joseph Fielding Smith



“Perhaps you already know (but if you don’t you should) that with rare exception, no man or woman who speaks [in general conference] is assigned a topic.

Each is to fast and pray, study and seek, start and stop and start again until he or she is confident that for this conference, at this time, his or hers is the topic the Lord wishes that speaker to present regardless of personal wishes or private preferences. ... Each has wept, worried, and earnestly sought the Lord’s direction to guide his or her thoughts and expression.”

by R. Holland



Fast

Pray

Study

Seek

**Priesthood leaders have a
divinely given responsibility to
teach the word of God and warn
against sin.**

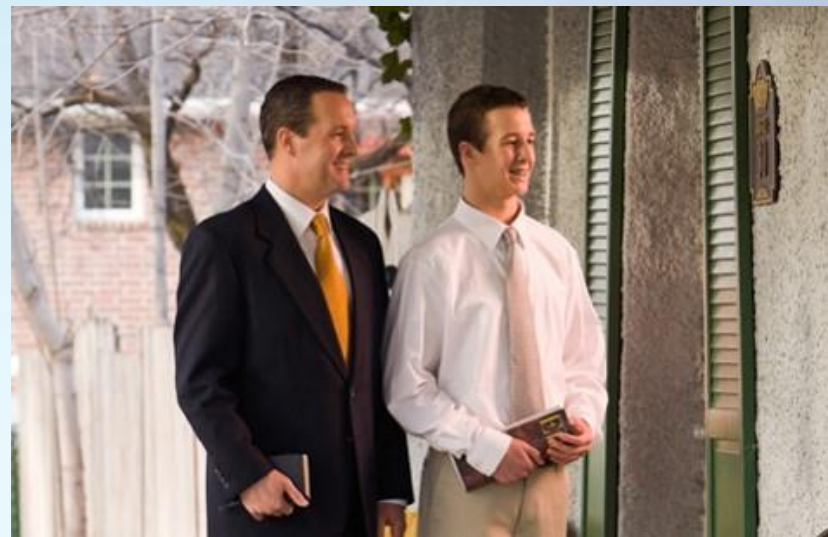


Magnify

“A person’s errand is his or her assignment, his or her calling—the task to be undertaken.

A member of the Church is able to proceed in the magnification of a calling much more powerfully when he or she knows that the call came from God, that the word of prophecy, the spirit of inspiration, was the directing influence in knowing full well that with the assignment will come also the needed strength and direction for accomplishment of labor.”

JFM and RLM



“What does it mean to magnify a calling? It means to build it up in dignity and importance, to make it honorable and commendable in the eyes of all men, to enlarge and strengthen it, to let the light of heaven shine through it to the view of other men.

“And how does one magnify a calling? Simply by performing the service that pertains to it. An elder magnifies the ordained calling of an elder by learning what his duties as an elder are and then by doing them. As with an elder, so with a deacon, a teacher, a priest, a bishop, and each who holds office in the priesthood” Thomas S. Monson



Sins Upon Our Head If We Don't Teach

“For behold, this is my work and my glory—to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.”

Moses 1:39

Those who have leadership duties in the Church bear a sobering responsibility. Jacob taught that when leaders neglect to teach the word of God to those whom they are called to lead, they become partly responsible for the people's sins.

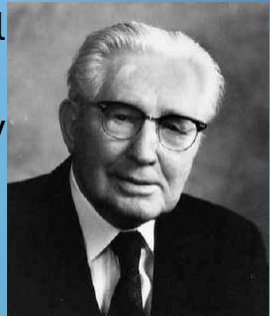
“If you do not magnify your callings, God will hold you responsible for those whom you might have saved had you done your duty.” John Taylor



“This is a challenging statement. If I by reason of sins of commission or omission lose what I might have had in the hereafter, I myself must suffer and, doubtless, my loved ones with me. But if I fail in my assignment as a bishop, a stake president, a mission president, or one of the General Authorities

of the Church—if any of us fail to teach, lead, direct, and help to save those under our direction and within our jurisdiction, then the Lord will hold us responsible if they are lost as the result of our failure.”

Hugh B. Brown



Calling People to Repentance

Jacob's message is not his message, but a message from God

How does Jacob feel toward calling his people to repentance?



There are no heavier burdens in life than those associated with sin. It is not the sinner alone..often the burden of sin rests upon the righteous.

Just like our prophets and general authorities—the messages are from God

Parents all too frequently mourn out their days because of the mistakes of loved one.



Although Jacob found this responsibility difficult, he carried it out because he cared about the people and because he wanted to obey God's commands.

The Gift of Discernment

All powerful Creator

*“He comprehendeth all things,
and all things are before him,
and all things are round about
him; and he is above all things,
and in all things, and is through
all things, and is round about all
things; and all things are by him,
and of him, even God, forever
and ever.”*

D&C 88:41



The gift of discernment, as well as the spirit of prophecy and revelation, is the rightful province of those on the Lord’s errand.

“And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,”

Luke 9:47

“Now when the king had heard these words, he marveled again, for he beheld that Ammon could discern his thoughts; ”

Alma 18:18

“Yea, I tell thee, that thou mayest know that there is none else save God that knowest thy thoughts and the intents of thy heart.

D&C 6:16

Shrink With Shame

Jacob cannot recommend his people to God. He is ashamed and embarrassed that the deeds of those he has been called to serve are so offensive to their Maker.



Jacob must teach the consequences of sin with boldness

“No doubt many of the mothers and children were already aware of the abominations of their husbands and fathers.

...Many of Jacob’s words would revive many memories, poignant and painful memories, cold and bleak memories know only to those whose confidence and trust have been shattered by the callous infidelity of one with whom sacred covenants had been made.”

JFM and RLM



Healeth the Soul

Moroni 10:5—“And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.”

When new information is confusing or bothersome to gospel learners, it is better for them to seek answers from God, who knows all things, than to conduct a general search on the Internet or turn to anti-Mormon material. Going directly to God for answers shows our faith in Him and allows us to receive answers through the Holy Ghost



James 1:5-6—“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask God, ... and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith.”



We should also turn to the scriptures and the words of latter-day apostles and prophets, which can answer difficult questions and heal wounds.

Will the Lord do for us to help heal our souls?

“[God] has infinite attention to spare for each one of us. He does not have to deal with us in the mass. You are as much alone with Him as if you were the only being He had ever created. When Christ died, He died for you individually just

as much as if you had been the only man [or woman] in the world.”

C.S. Lewis



Boldly—Strict Commands

Jacob

“But, notwithstanding the greatness of the task, I must do according to the strict commands of God, and tell you concerning your wickedness and abominations, in the presence of the pure in heart, and the broken heart, and under the glance of the piercing eye of the Almighty God.”



D. Todd Christofferson

“My plea to women and girls today is to protect and cultivate the moral force that is within you. Preserve that innate virtue and the unique gifts you bring with you into the world. Your intuition is to do good and to be good, and as you follow the Holy Spirit, your moral authority and influence will grow. To the young women I say, don’t lose that moral force even before you have it in full measure. Take particular care that your language is clean, not coarse; that your dress reflects modesty, not vanity; and that your conduct manifests purity, not promiscuity. You cannot lift others to virtue on the one hand if you are entertaining vice on the other.”

Jacob 2:10



Dieter F. Uchtdorf

“And, to be perfectly frank, there have been times when members or leaders in the Church have simply made mistakes. There may have been things said or done that were not in harmony with our values, principles, or doctrine. I suppose the Church would be perfect only if it were run by perfect beings. God is perfect, and His doctrine is pure. But He works through us—His imperfect children—and imperfect people make mistakes.”



Henry B. Eyring

“You young men cannot know what acts of priesthood service the Lord is preparing you to give. But the greater challenge for every priesthood holder is to give spiritual help. All of us have that charge. It comes with being a member of a quorum. It comes with being a member of a family. If the faith of anyone in your quorum or your family is attacked by Satan, you will feel compassion. Much like the service and mercy given by the Samaritan, you will also minister to them with healing balm for their wounds in their time of need.”

What About Today?

What have Church leaders of today taught you?

How can you apply these teachings in your life?

How can you apply what you have learned in your callings such as priesthood quorums or class presidencies?



Sources:

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Dieter F. Uchtdorf *Come, Join with Us* Oct. 2013 Conference

D. Todd Christofferson *The Moral Force of Women* Oct. 2013 Conference

Henry B. Eyring *Bind Up Their Wounds* Oct. 2013 Conference