

Let God Prevail

Lesson summary from an Elder's Quorum lesson delivered on August 28, 2022 to the Orem Canyon View 8th Ward by Nathan Bryce. Other than the scripture references, all thoughts presented herein are the author's ideas only and do not represent the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The Cleansing of the Leper Ritual

Leviticus 14:2-7

This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought unto the priest: And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop:

And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: And he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field.

Birds: Spirits (Jesus and You), the ability to move as angels and soar into the heavens

Clay pot: Physical bodies made from the dust

Running water: The Living Water (Christ) which quenches all thirst, purifies, and cleanses

Blood: The Blood of Christ, the sacrament, the atonement, the scourging, the crucifixion

Cedar: Cedar doesn't rot, is precious, beautiful, fragrant, the substance of temple objects, doorframe, Christ's cross, the staff of Moses and Aaron, the tree of life

Scarlet thread: That blood-soaked connection made by Christ that binds us to Him and priesthood ordinances

Hyssop: Perennial herb, used in the Passover seder, used to paint doorframe with blood, used in sacrifices, cleansing, healing properties, used at crucifixion

The Light of Christ

D&C 84:43-47

And I now give unto you a commandment to beware concerning yourselves, to give diligent heed to the words of eternal life. For you shall 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. And every one that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit cometh unto God, even the Father.

Truth = Light = Spirit of Jesus Christ = Light of Christ

Moroni 7:18-19

And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.

Wherefore, I beseech of you, brethren, that ye should search diligently in the light of Christ 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 child of Christ.

The Light of Christ is present in everything that has intelligence. It is freely planted within us by God to help us distinguish right from wrong. While it can be snuffed out by disobedience, it can also be relit by sincere repentance. It comes as a sudden realization, a thought, an impression, or a feeling. It always invites us to do good and believe in Christ. It is personal revelation from the Lord. When you listen and obey your conscience, you are, in fact, listening and obeying the Lord.

The Light of Christ is direct and to the point. It doesn't argue or provide reasons. It always invites you to do lovely, virtuous, and praiseworthy things. As you follow the light, you inevitably draw closer to Christ. Worthily participating in sacred ordinances, like the Sacrament, rekindles this light.

The Darkness of Devils

Lucifer seldom personally visits us because he has billions of unembodied and disembodied hate-filled slaves who violently carry out his desires to tempt and torment man, especially those who are on the covenant path. They seem to sense when we are being inspired by the Spirit of the Lord, and immediately present to our mind reasons to NOT obey His voice. They provide many logical alternatives that appeal to our pride and carnal natures, including our desires for power, might, dominance, fame, pleasure, rank, wealth, gluttony, greed, and every other vice. They always invite us to ignore the divine conscience and do nothing, or better yet, do evil instead. They fill our minds with darkness. Their influence is bolstered through our apathy and sin.

[*Moroni 7:17*](#)

But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, 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.

The Intelligence of Man

[*D&C 93:29-31*](#)

Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also; otherwise there is no existence. Behold, here is the agency of man...

Like Freud's ego arbitrating between the superego and the id, caught between the Light and the Darkness in our mind or intelligence. It operates because of the God-given gift of agency: the ability to make your own choices and live with its corresponding consequences. It is the loudest voice in our head and is constantly jabbering away. It is unsure of what to

do. It asks questions. It gathers information. It struggles to judge, evaluate, and perceive. It tries to make sense of things, using data from senses, intuition, faith, and reason. It seeks stimulation and excitement as well as rest and relaxation. It seeks for things that benefit the self, which is why it frequently uses personal pronouns in its rational arguments. It is trying to determine what is in your best self-interests.

The Holy Ghost

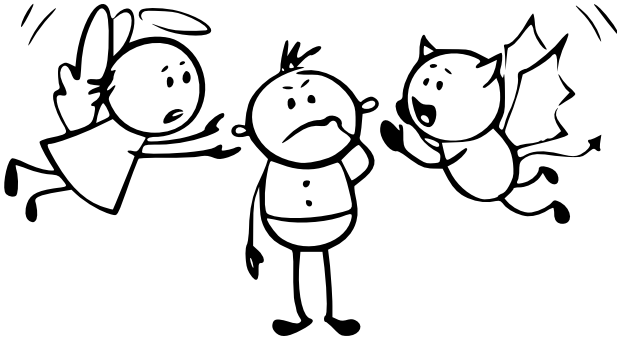
The third member of the Godhead is a spirit being that can only be in one place at one time, but His power and influence can permeate all space and time. He is subservient to the Father and the Son, and only speaks their words to us. He sometimes uses the Light of Christ to communicate with humanity and has the ability to speak directly to our spirits and bear a powerful witness of truth. He also delivers spiritual gifts and seals blessings upon us as we request them and are worthy of them. The Gift of the Holy Ghost awards faithful members the privilege to be constantly directed, purified, and sanctified by his Divine presence.

By using the Light of Christ to discern and choose what is right, we can be led to an even greater light: the gift of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the third member of the Godhead, a personage of spirit. He is the Comforter, the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit of Promise. He testifies of Jesus Christ, His work, and the work of His servants upon the earth. He acts as a cleansing agent to purify and sanctify us from sin. He comforts us and brings peace to our soul. The right to His constant companionship is among the greatest gifts we can receive in mortality.

— Robert D. Hales, [*Out of Darkness into His Marvelous Light*](#), *Ensign*, February 2002.

The War Rages On

The challenge of our existence is to choose which voice to follow. We've been struggling with this decision for a very long time. It started in the premortal realm when we heard about opposition to Father's plan, we experience it almost every moment of every day as part of our mortal probation, and we will experience it after we die far into the postmortal realm. In fact, this war will continue eternally because God declared that there must be opposition in all things ([*2 Nephi 2:11*](#)).



Do we listen and obey the Lord, the adversaries, or our own voice? Do we let our body control our spirit, or do we let the Holy Spirit direct our spirit and our body, or do we allow nefarious spirits to take possession of both our spirit and our body? Do we give into our carnal natures, or do we yield to the enticings of the Spirit? Do we allow our vision to be clouded with a highly virulent and contagious strain of “I disease” or do we intentionally focus on humbly serving others? Are we willing to incrementally work on becoming worthy to join a Zion community as well as the Church of the Firstborn which both require constant faith, sacrifice, obedience, fidelity, and consecration?

What do you really want to achieve throughout your existence? Because whatever your heart is set on, our loving Father in Heaven will grant it to you—and then some—always more than you deserve ([Alma 29:4](#)).

Spiritual Progress

How are you doing at listening and obeying the voice of the Lord either through your Light of Christ inspired conscience or through the power of the Holy Ghost? Are you making spiritual progress in your life? If not, why not? Who is stopping you? It certainly isn't the Lord. He wants you to live in such a way that you can be worthy to have a **face-to-face meeting** with Him.

[D&C 101:38](#)

And **seek the face of the Lord** always, that in patience ye may possess your souls, and ye shall have eternal life.

Or this one, from the New Testament:

[John 14:23](#)

If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and **we will come unto him**, and make our abode with him.

Or this one:

[D&C 93:1](#)

Verily, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, **shall see my face and know that I am.**

I do not believe this is a metaphorical event. It is a literal dream, vision, or manifestation that requires a physical transfiguration. As far as I can tell, nowhere in the scriptures are we taught that we should procrastinate obeying these commandments to seek the face of the Lord. Yes, we can do this in the afterlife, but wouldn't you be a more profitable servant in building up Zion if that happened sooner than later? Isn't that what Melchizedek priesthood holders are supposed to do?

[D&C 84:19-22](#)

And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live.

This isn't just a gift given to prophets like Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Lehi, Nephi, Mahonri Moriancumr, Joseph Smith, and so on. Peter taught us that “God is no respecter of persons” ([Acts 10:34](#)). What He did for one, He will do for all. As we're taught in sacred spaces, the faithful can be admitted into the presence of the Lord whenever they qualify. If ye seek Him, ye shall find Him.

The Ten Virgins

Remember the parable of the Ten Virgins as found in [Matthew 25:1-13](#)? The Savior will return to the earth soon. But it sounds like half of his followers won't be prepared when the call goes out to be admitted into his celestial presence. What does it take to be prepared? Take a close look at this scripture:

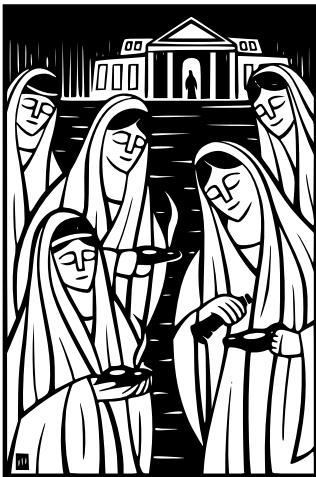
[D&C 34:56-57](#)

And at that day, when I shall come in my glory, shall the parable be fulfilled which I spake concerning the ten virgins. For they that are wise and have received the truth, and have taken the **Holy Spirit for their guide, and have not been deceived**—verily I say unto you, they shall not be hewn down and cast into the fire, but shall abide the day.

Once again, the key to surviving and thriving in the present and the future is to listen and obey the voice of the Lord, manifest in our conscience and through the Gift of the Holy Ghost, rather than the self-focused voice of our natural man, and rather than the persuasive presentations by Satan’s sycophants who want us to engage in thoughts and behaviors that are negative, notorious, non-compliant, nihilistic, nefarious, nasty, noxious, and filled with superfluous naughtiness.

[James 1:21](#)

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.



Using Your Agency to Make Spiritual Progress

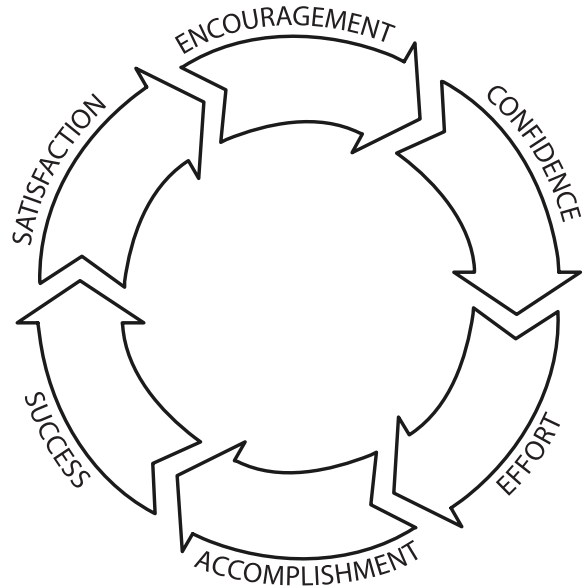
God has never—and will never—violate agency and force anyone to do anything against their will. If we don’t want to live a millennial lifestyle now, do you think we’ll want to do it later?

The Savior became the Savior in part because He sacrificed everything—including His personal will—for the good of others and the glory of God. If we want to live with Him and be like Him isn’t that what we need to do too—even if it is in a relatively infinitesimal way?

That’s why we enlisted into His Holy Order, so that He can teach, discipline, and condition us to quickly obey His voice. He is the one that established the obstacle course that lies before us, and He has promised to help us complete it. The sooner we sacrifice our desires and “let Jesus take the wheel,” the sooner we’ll find everlasting peace and joy.

How to Find Spiritual Confidence

To help us hear and obey the Spirit of the Lord, let me introduce you to a psychological term known as the “wheel of confidence.” Psychologists often use it to help people who are struggling with life improve their self-image, but it has spiritual applications as well.



In our case, we are to use it to help us develop our capacity to hear and obey our conscience. The next time our conscience gives us a nudge or encouragement to do something, if we have confidence that it came from God because it is a good thing, then we need to exert some effort. This effort, when combined with divine assistance, will inevitably lead to accomplishment. If it doesn’t, we need to put in more effort. When we finally accomplish our task, we will enjoy a feeling of success. If we don’t feel success, perhaps we deceived ourselves and need to take some steps back until we feel a measure of success. Success gives us a deep feeling of satisfaction that it was all worth it. Which then leads us to seek out more inspiration, and the cycle continues.

Of course, we don't want to be found guilty of standing around doing nothing until we receive another burst of inspiration.

[D&C 58:26-27](#)

For behold, it is not meet that I should command in all things; for he that is compelled in all things, the same is a slothful and not a wise servant; wherefore he receiveth no reward. 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;

If we pray for inspiration, and are worthy to receive it, but can't seem to feel it, perhaps we should exercise our own initiative to accomplish the good works of the Lord. It sounds like the Lord already trusts you will do things that are virtuous, lovely, or good report, or praiseworthy ([Articles of Faith 1:13](#)). So just do it!

If you get stuck along the way, see if you can figure out what stage you are in, and then seek divine assistance to help you complete that step. Or if you see someone else who is struggling with their life challenges, help them figure out where they are on this wheel and then jump in as necessary. Sometimes you may need to provide encouragement, sometimes you will help them develop confidence, sometimes you will need to help them appreciate the progress they've made. Wherever they are, help them do their part.

Which Messiah Are You Seeking?

Throughout most of their history on this planet, the children of Israel have been looking for a particular type of Messiah. Most of the time, they sought someone to establish a kingdom of power, and greatness, and glory who would deliver them from their current economic, political, and social woes. Instead, they got something different. It was better, but they didn't recognize it.

Two millennia ago, when Jesus came to Kingdom of Judah, instead of delivering them from their physical captivity, he delivered them from their **spiritual** captivity and taught them how to inherit an eternal life in a celestialized kingdom. But that wasn't enough for Jesus. He went the extra mile and gave them **physical** deliverance too. After they died, He promised to give everyone a restored and glorified immortal physical body. He gave them more than what they wanted—but they didn't have the eyes to see this remarkable gift!

As Latter-day Saints are we falling into the same trap as our ancient Jewish cousins? Are we anxiously waiting for a Millennial Messiah who will destroy the wicked and set up a new paradisiacal utopia without too much effort on our part? After all, according to [D&C 76:71-80](#) if you want to live in a terrestrial kingdom all you need to do is live a terrestrial law. This means you need to live a good and honorable life, obey the important commandments, sustain the leaders you like, and do some little kindly deeds every once in a while. You don't even have to belong to His church! Of course, there's never any marriage or family, but who wants that? You get to "do you" with your single friends for all eternity.

Instead, maybe we should be earnestly working with the Lord, right now, to destroy every little bit of wickedness from our own lives so that He can, one day, let us enter into His kingdom. If we listen and obey our divine conscience, which is also the iron rod (the Word of God) along with the inspired voices of our past and present prophets, that is exactly what will happen!

And then once we're inside the gates of Zion, maybe we could ask Him to empower us to gather others into His kingdom. After all, we haven't merely been called and chosen, but we are also to **call and choose others!** If we're stuck on choosing ourselves, we can't possibly choose others.

For many of us, the Spirit of the Lord will inspire us to spend more of our time, talents, and treasure in becoming more prepared in all things (physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual) in order to survive the difficult journey ahead. One day, many of us may witness a celestial world being transformed into a terrestrial world—but only if we allow Him to transform us from celestial saints to terrestrial saints. If we aren't living a terrestrial law as the bare minimum, we'll be watching from the other side of the veil! Someone needs to literally build the Kingdom of God on the earth. **Why not us?**

If you are true and faithful, the Lord will eventually ask you, "What do you want?" Think carefully before answering. You have a unique collection of talents, skills, spiritual gifts, knowledge, and experiences that makes you an extremely valuable member of the Lord's Kingdom. A gem—a pearl of great price. As an endowed and empowered Child of God, Jesus will help you accomplish anything, even helping you return, washed, purified, and sanctified—just like He did with the leper—to the presence of God the Father! ■