

Remarks at the First Annual Joseph Smith Restoration Conference

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People are tired and I have to tell you, I feel like someone spanked me sitting on these chairs all day. I'm fairly confident that whoever's responsible for buying these intended to make people use this room for no more than twenty minutes at a time, and then to get out so the next group can come in and be equally punished.

You know, Tausha mentioned that she was warned to stay away from some of you people when she was a kid growing up because she was raised in the LDS tradition. My mother was a baptist. My father, although Christian, was nondenominational. My mother warned me to stay away from all of you people. She was completely indiscriminate. In fact, I was so surprised when I ran into a Mormon in New Hampshire while I was in the military that I made the mistake of saying something that suggested I was interested, and since in New Hampshire no one is interested in Mormonism, they proceeded to proselytize and pamphleteer and treat me as a golden contact. I remember the first time I read verses out of the Book of Mormon to accommodate these eager young elders from Bountiful and Orem, and they wanted to know what I thought of the Book of Mormon. And literally this is what I said, "It's got to be scripture. It's every bit as boring as the Bible."

I became a convert to the LDS Church and to Mormonism. But like that other fellow who ran about - Mike - right?- Mike the mechanic. You know he has a band- "Mike & The Mechanics"- and one of their big hits was, "All I Need is a Miracle". See, I was a convert and I believed in the restoration. I believed in Joseph. I believed in Christ. But I really had not warmed up at all to the Book of Mormon.

I became a gospel doctrine teacher. I suppose it was an inspired calling to put me in that position because I had to teach through a four year cycle the four standard works. And every time you got around to the year that you spent on the Book of Mormon I had to teach the Book of Mormon for a year. Well the first time I taught the Book of Mormon for a year, I used the manual and got what the manual gave me out of the Book of Mormon. The second time I taught the Book of Mormon for a year, which suggests that I couldn't get out of the calling because God in his infinite wisdom knew I hadn't learned anything yet, I decided I was not going to bore myself by re-teaching what I had taught the preceding year we had spent on the Book of Mormon, so I looked a little deeper into the book and found there was a little more to this than I thought there was. The third time I taught the Book of Mormon for a year as a gospel doctrine teacher - now mind you, I've moved from Pleasant Grove to Sandy to another location in Sandy, and I'm never escaping the gospel doctrine position because I had to teach gospel doctrine, apparently. The third time I taught the Book of Mormon for a year, I discovered that it had a whole lot more in it than I had in me. And the fourth time I taught the Book of Mormon for a year - because I was a gospel doctrine teacher for two-and-a-half decades, that's all I did, was teach the Book of Mormon and the other standard works - the fourth time, I literally thought I could not teach enough of what

this book has to offer us. Literally they would assign you up to eight chapters to cover in a single 50 minute opportunity in gospel doctrine. I didn't welcome questions. I spent 50 minutes trying to get the people to understand and appreciate sometimes one or two or three verses out of the eight chapters and promising them, there's a whole lot more in there if you'll keep looking for it.

There was a fellow who was second in charge of the graduate program of the Institute at the University of Utah. At the time they had a failing Institute program because none of the law students were interested in hearing what they had to teach. Well, at the graduate level there is no curriculum in the LDS Institute program and so you can teach whatever you want. And he came and he asked me if I would be willing to go teach graduate level Institute class at the University of Utah Law School. And since I'm a practicing attorney and curious about whether there's anyone in the class worth hiring; I decided I would go ahead and teach. I taught for two years and we had not, after two years of teaching at the graduate level, we had not gotten through first Nephi. But those kids understood the Book of Mormon better than they had through all of their previous years including the time some of them had spent on LDS missions.

Joseph Smith did begin the restoration and he did get the foot in the door but there is so much that remains yet to be accomplished.

There's a banner up there that says what unites us is greater than what divides us. As I think about what unites us and focus on the word "unite" the only things that I know that are possible to unite us is if we are open. If I know- if I know the truth, I know the Church is true... Yeah, churches are true? - what does that mean? Correctly organized as a legal entity? How can a church **be** true? I mean, **you** are **true** in that I see you sitting there and you're breathing and moving; you're true. But what does that mean? Is truth capable of being embodied in an organization? We have to be open, not to organizational forms but to truth. But if we're gonna be united, it's not enough to just say, "I'm open." We need to be willing to search, because whatever it is we have, it's not enough. It doesn't matter who we are, whatever we have is not enough. Blessed are they who hunger and search. I mean Christ didn't say, blessed are they who are content and closed minded for they shall be stubborn. He wants us to hunger and search after righteousness so that we can be filled. Well, if you're filled, wait a few hours. You oughta be hungry again, and therefore you should begin the search yet again. The hungering in mortality does not end until life itself comes to an end. If you're alive you need to engage in the search. **You don't have enough**; none of us do. And we have to be willing to accept. It doesn't do you any good to sit at a banquet after you have hungered and thirst if you won't take it in. You have to be willing to allow it to come into you.

Christ said "we all need to repent and become as a little child." Repenting at the fundamental level means to stop whatever it is you're doing, in whatever direction you're heading, and change directions to face God. That's the first thing, repent. Come to face God. And secondly, become as a little child. There is no more relentlessly inquisitive a creature on earth than a little child. They hunger and they thirst. They not only don't know things,

they know they don't know things. Why? What? When? Where? Relentlessly they want to be filled. They know they're ignorant. The problem with us is we don't appreciate the enormity of the ignorance that we walk about with.

I have to ask, and today I've been delighted at being here and at listening to what you people have to say. I have to ask, what do you have to offer to me? And then the question becomes, what do I have to offer you? But perhaps most importantly of all, what do others have to offer us? Because if you take in the fullness of what Joseph Smith envisioned it's all truth from whatever source it may be derived. If you have truth, come and bring it with you and give it to us.

Christ was essentially an Eastern mystical teacher with whose deepest teachings the Buddhists and the Hindus resonate. Because the kind of allegories He spoke with, the kind of similes He used, the language that He used, it's music in the ears of some of the Eastern cultures. And to us, we want to measure it, we want to define it, we want to put it on ourselves and we want to accomplish it. We're task oriented. We have a scientific approach. We are coarse, Christ was not. Christ dealt in hues, He dealt in feelings, He dealt in sentiments, He dealt in the heart. And it's very hard to take a faith that is grounded essentially in the heart of man and to make that something so outwardly visible that it is possible for you, as a wolf, to walk about in sheep's clothing because that's the kind of people we are. We need to be willing to accept truth from wherever it comes.

There's an incident. Boy, I really have to tell you, we have new scriptures. And when I say we I mean those that have been about trying to recover the original restoration, and I brought them with me. If you think you look like a pharisee carrying about a quadruple combination in the LDS Church, these new scriptures are -- well, they announce from at least two blocks away, "I'm devout. I'm religious. I don't have sticks, I have logs. Get back."

See:

...there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias, and to him the Lord said in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul of Tarsus; for, behold, he prays, and has seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him that he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on your name. But the Lord said unto him, Go your way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, ... Jesus, that appeared unto you in the way as you came, has sent me, that you might receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes [as it were] scales, [they left out -

There is a missing part. Ananias, when they finished talking, ran for the door.] and [immediately] he received his sight, ... and arose, and was baptized. And when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples who were at Damascus. (Acts 5:9 RE)

See, Ananias responded to the Lord's invitation to go minister to this fellow with the kind of healthy skepticism that comes whenever you're asked to go visit with people that are other, that are viewed as threatening. All of you probably come from congregations that suggest staying away and not cross pollinating is the best and most safe way in which to conduct a religious society. But Ananias went and did what the Lord told him that he needed to do, in any event. And when Saul was blessed, scales fell from his eyes. Now, I've always thought that the scales that fell from his eyes were like the scales that you see on a fish when you clean the scales off. But scales are also a balance that you use to wrongly apportion, wrongly measure, wrongly weigh the value of others. And I think the word scales is ambiguous precisely for that reason, to suggest to us that one of the impediments that Saul had was that he didn't have the right way of weighing things. Saul was always committed to God and dead wrong, and then God fixed him and he remained committed to God. There was no difference in the enthusiasm with which Saul, who became Paul, advocated for the purposes of what he believed to be the truth.

Then a little bit later,

... when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join himself to the disciples, [This is at Jerusalem, see then with the disciples over at Damascus, but when he gets to Jerusalem, that's another story. He arrives there and he attempts to fellowship there,] but they were all afraid of him and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem, and he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Greeks, but they went about to slay him, ... [and] when the brethren knew this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him forth to Tarsus (Act 5:11 RE).

They protected him. They were afraid of the man. Conversion has a way of doing that.

Like so many of you, I'm an outcast. I was a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for forty years. I was baptized on September 10, 1973. I was excommunicated on September 10, 2013. Forty years to the day. And so for a 40 year sojourn I was among the saints.

You see, Paul's objective was always to serve God. He changed sides and when he did that he changed friends and he changed enemies. It just flows that way. God loves both sides. He makes the sun to shine on the good and the evil and he makes the rain to fall on the good and the evil (see Matt. 3:26 RE). We are all alike to God (see 2 Nephi 11:17 RE).

In a description of Christ when He appears standing among the seven candlesticks, symbol of the menorah, which is placed in the temple symbolically before the veil before you enter into the Holy of Holies, Christ, standing before the veil at the menorah in the vision that John has, speaks, and when He speaks out of His mouth comes a sharp two-sided sword (see Revelation 1:5 RE). See anciently the invention of the sword was a great thing but all it amounted to was a real long axe blade, and if you hit something you could then pound on the dull backside of what you hit with your hand, with your arm, with a club, and you could drive the sharp side into whatever it was you were hitting with the sword, and you could successfully amplify its cutting power, its killing power. But when you got a two-edged sword that required a whole new skill set and a whole new bunch of precautions. You could hurt yourself on the back swing with a one-sided sharp sword. You could bounce it off your shoulder and get momentum. With a two-edged sword you're going to split yourself open. The rules of warfare changed. You could now hit with a front stroke and a backstroke. You could now enter the batter's box either closer to first base or further from first base because it was a two-edged sword. Why is the word that proceeds forth out of the mouth of Christ sharper than a two-edged sword? Because it cuts both ways. And in handling the word of God every one of us had better take care not to injure ourselves least we be found to fight against the work of God.

Well, James McKay commented today about how we have not seen the fulfillment of the promises, not the gathering of Israel nor the Holy City, and he posed the question: is that God's fault or ours? Well it's certainly not God's fault so it really just leaves us and we're on stage now.

Patrick McKay talked about genetic diversity and inbreeding. Inbreeding produces idiocy, mad men, and European royalty but it doesn't produce the gathering of all truth. (I mean look at Prince Charles, really.)

I wanted to comment about church organization because that's come up. Having a central command and authoritarianism is an issue that deserves careful scrutiny if you're looking at the restoration. The restoration through Joseph Smith was intended to shed light on a lot of things and he had only a short time with us. He died at 38-and-a-half. Some people today don't even move out of their parents' house at 38-and-a-half. And Joseph Smith's life was coming to an end- ok.

When the restoration began to roll out Joseph Smith aggregated a central position, central authority. He established an organizational hierarchy in which, when they finally got it organized in the land of Zion – that is in Missouri – and they had a presidency there with David Whitmer in charge. He departed after establishing the presidency in Missouri, headed back to Kirtland, and he said now, now if his life came to an end he had fully organized the Church, because there was a church with a presidency in Zion that could replace him in the event that his life were taken. That had been done. His life, his mission, his work had been fulfilled. This is in the 1833-34 time period. Joseph is talking in these terms. By 1838 members of the presidency in Zion had not only forsaken the Church,

excommunicated, but many of them signed affidavits and participated in what eventually resulted in the Missouri..., the Mormon War, the imprisonment of Joseph Smith, and the scattering of the entire gathering in Missouri. An extermination order was issued and everyone had to flee. Joseph was taken prisoner, sitting in prison. You need to read all of the words of the letters that Joseph Smith wrote from Liberty Jail but you also need to look at the affidavits that were signed by the members of the Church that had turned on Joseph. You need to look at the transcripts of the trial that was held in front of Judge King¹. You need to look at how Joseph Smith could not be bound over for trial on the charge of treason if it were not for Mormons who came to testify against Joseph Smith. The very people in whom authority had been invested were the ones that had the credibility to keep Joseph Smith in prison on the false charge of treason. And so sitting within Liberty Jail and reflecting upon the lessons that he had learned, Joseph Smith in Liberty Jail is not talking about how joyful and wonderful it is to have a hierarchy with authority. He's come to a different recognition and a different realization and he's saying, "*No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood*" (T&C 139:6). The only thing that ought to matter is persuasion and gentleness and pure knowledge that will greatly enlarge the soul.

The standard ought not be what office one holds. The standard ought to be what truth you bring with you. What is the content? Is it delicious? Does it bring me to Christ? Does it make me desire to be better than I am, to rise above the condition in which I presently find myself in this fallen world? Then when Joseph Smith gets to Nauvoo and he gives a talk to the Relief Society in Nauvoo, he tells the women of the Church that the saints are depending too much upon the prophet and that they are darkened in their own minds because they're neglecting the responsibilities that are devolving upon themselves.

Joseph Smith may have established a hierarchy but through the Missouri experience he came to realize the limitations of the value of having that, and the necessity of changing the format and looking instead to persuasion, truth, pure knowledge, love, gentleness, meekness; those are the things that matter, not hierarchy. And he came close to denouncing even his own position when he said your minds are darkened because you're depending too much upon the prophet and you're neglecting the duties that are devolving upon yourselves.

I'm so glad to hear Patrick advocate the central purpose of the Book of Mormon. He talked about that. And then there was a reference to the Wentworth letter that was given by Adrian. And the Wentworth letter, he put it up on the board:

[T]he truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent, till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country, and sounded in every ear, till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the Great Jehovah shall say, The work is done (T&C 146:20).

¹ Judge Austin A. King, 12 Nov 1838

That's not a reference to a church. That's a reference to the Book of Mormon. That's the truth that has been set out, the purpose of which is to warn the entire world. In answer to the question that Patrick posed today, yes, I have thought of Christ's church consisting of us all, no matter where we are, no matter what we are. I've advocated that if a Catholic priest comes to us and wants to be baptized, we baptize them. And we don't need to insist they give up their Catholicism. I've advocated baptizing anyone and everyone who will accept the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine of Christ that's set out in the Book of Mormon. I don't care about denominationalism. I've been kicked out of the only church I ever belonged to and I don't have a church to offer anyone apart from the church that Adrian put a definition up on the board. If you will repent, believe in Christ and come to Him and be baptized, that's all I want to be involved in, that simple a matter, as a church. Organizations do impede the real church. The real church consists of faith in Christ, repentance and baptism, and that brings about the gift of the Holy Ghost.

In response to Michael Kelly's comment today: No, God's not a jerk but many who claim to follow Him really are. And if you're trying to measure His countenance by those who claim to follow Him, very often you get the misapprehension that God is a jerk. I am doing my best not to be one, but between my own weaknesses and failing I don't know how often I am a very good reflection on God, but to the extent that there is any light and truth that ever comes through me, I don't claim responsibility or credit for that. That is a reflection of Him because the only things I've ever had to offer that are valuable have come solely and exclusively from Him.

Terry Patience talked today about searching for God. My word, he has more institutional experience than the next ten guys. I mean the name Patience is an apt name for Terry. I can't imagine carrying on that sort of quest through all of the various restorationist movements, but I do agree that God does want to reveal Himself. That is the constant theme of the Book of Mormon. That's really what the Book of Mormon does, is give you account after account after account of those who have experienced God revealing Himself to a person. There's a vocabulary that gets used consistently in the Book of Mormon. The Book of Mormon uses the word "belief" to mean that you've got correct understanding of God's teachings. It uses the word "unbelief" to mean that you don't have a correct understanding of God's teachings. You believe some things but they're mistaken. Unbelief doesn't mean that you're a non-believer, it means that the beliefs that you possess are simply wrong. Then there is "faith". And the use of the word, in the Book of Mormon, of faith, means that angels have ministered to you, because if angels have ceased ministering then there is no faith. And "knowledge" in the Book of Mormon means that one has come into contact with the Lord, and then this man had knowledge. He had faith no more for he had entered into the presence of the Lord and he knew Him.

The Book of Mormon is an account of people who have come to know God. They went from unbelief, very often from horrifically false traditions, to a state of belief, to a state of faith, to a state of knowledge.

The LDS Church has abandoned the idea of Zion even though they ask in their temple ceremony, for those who go through it, to consecrate your time, your talents, and everything with which the Lord has blessed you or may bless you to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, for the building up of the kingdom of God on earth and the establishment of Zion. (Those are the very words of the covenant. I know that because I went to the temple so often during that 40 years that I've got the ceremony memorized, so it didn't do any good to kick me out anyway because I know all the secrets.) See, what they've done with that, they think that they've put themselves in a position to own exclusively the right to establish Zion because the word of consecration, the covenant of consecration as adapted by them, requires that they be the possessor or the bringer of Zion and no one else. But a clever lawyer could interpret the clause to say, no not so, it's conditional because the consecration is conditioned upon the requirement that you build up the kingdom of God and you establish Zion, and if you fail to meet the requirements of the condition you have no right to the consecration. And I think the latter view is the better view, and they broke it so it's their failure.

In my view, from my careful observation of everything that went on during Joseph Smith's day and careful scrutiny of the course of events that followed his demise, a truer version of an organized hierarchical structure has no hope of bringing Zion. I know there are those who in this room have expressed a hope that it can be achieved otherwise. My personal view is that you cannot improve any chance of bringing Zion by a truer version of an organized hierarchical structure, it just will not will not work because implicit within the hierarchy is the disadvantage of stratification. If the hierarchies look like a pyramid with someone at the top and all you have to do, all you have to do to corrupt that is to corrupt the top, if you break that you've broken the whole thing. That's essentially what has happened. And over and over again people wishing that they would like to escape the corruption that they've found in the integrated structure, can be improved upon if they just get a better guy in that position, it'll all work out somehow. I believe that the correct structure is completely flat, and that that completely flat structure with no one greater than anyone else. If there be someone who would choose to help the group they need to descend below. They need to kneel to wash the feet of others. They need to elevate. They need to put others above themselves. And they need to find the weakest spots and raise it as much as they can throughout and let them all move forward together with no one atop.

Christ did not come to do anything other than to heal and to serve and to kneel and to wash the feet of others. How can I ever claim that I would have a right to stand above another person if my Lord's example makes that an obscenity for me? Peter found the Lord's humility unbecoming. "You're not going to wash my feet, Lord. How dare you kneel." "No, Peter. Peter, you don't understand. It's necessary" (see John 9:2 RE; and T&C Testimony of St. John 10:2).

When – I'll call him Brother Wiggle – said there are about a hundred revelations we agree on, yes, that is true. And what has been said about what was set out in 1831 on the law of consecration is also true. However, once again the trajectory of Joseph's life took some turns. After the experiences with the common-stock-established stores that had been put in

place that Joseph and Sidney and others participated in, in Kirtland, after the experiences in Independence, after the failures at Far West, and in Nauvoo, in 1840, Joseph Smith got up in a conference and rescinded the law of consecration.² He said it wasn't to be lived any longer. That's not in our scriptures but it's in the minutes of the conference, where Joseph said it ought not be lived any longer.

Because the law of consecration is almost in and of itself an oxymoron. How might I make your heart and my heart one by a law? Even if with a deed we all have all things in common, give me the law that will make your heart and my heart one. Give me the law that will make your mind and my mind one. Because against such there is no law. The only way I know to become united in a way in which I care for you and you care for me, in a way that we could successfully consecrate our lives together, is if both of us have for the other love unfeigned. It's easy to feign love. It's very difficult to have unfeigned love. Authentic, 'I would lay my life down for you' love, which doesn't mean you always get along and agree. You can fight and yet love one another. You can disagree and yet love one another. If you love your children there are times you are going to correct them. There are some times you may reprove them with sharpness and then reluctantly show forth afterwards an increase of love. That's just life.

I was really surprised; I mean, I don't know how I missed this. I do know that it got de-emphasized but when Jim Vun Cannon said in 1984 the RLDS Church abandoned the Book of Mormon as a canon, and that that resulted essentially in what he called a civil war and split families, I knew there had been a de-emphasis, but striking it from the canon.

You know one of the things which Joseph Smith intended to do but did not get accomplished during his lifetime was he intended always to publish, in one volume, the New Testament and the Book of Mormon. It was always intended that that happen. That now has happened for the first time. It just happened a couple of years ago. And the name of the volume that has the Book of Mormon and the New Testament in it is called "New Covenants," because that reflects the covenants that were established at Jerusalem, that were established in the New World at Bountiful, and that came forth through Joseph as the covenant at the beginning of the restoration -- the Book of Mormon. So that's The New Covenants.

Joseph Smith labored over the course of his lifetime. And someone who was up here talking, talked about how the Joseph Smith translation was the Bible version that they used. It's the Joseph Smith translation of the Bible that is in the scriptures. The Old Testament has been called The Old Covenants because that includes the covenants that got established with Adam, with Enoch, with Noah, with Abraham, [and] with Moses. Those covenants are in The Old Covenants. And then The New Covenants are as I described. The text for The Old Covenants and the New Testament and The New Covenants are the Joseph Smith translation. But when the Joseph Smith translation got published by the RLDS Church, they made..., the committee that published 'em made a number of editorial changes of their

² Council meeting held 6 March 1840 in Montrose, Iowa Territory.

own. And Joseph Smith made hundreds of punctuation changes that did not get incorporated into 'em. And during talks that Joseph Smith gave in the Nauvoo era, there were several times when he said, the Bible reads this way but it ought to read that way. Or, this is what it says but a plainer meaning or plainer translation would be this. These scriptures encompass every change Joseph Smith made, whether it made it into the version published by the RLDS Church or not, and all of the punctuation changes, and they eliminate any of the changes that the committee that published them for the RLDS Church inserted into 'em. In The Old Covenants and The New Covenants these are the Joseph Smith translation of the Bible insofar as we have any ability to gather and make it correctly reflect exactly what Joseph intended. That's what's in those books. And then instead of the Doctrine and Covenants there's the Teachings and Commandments. Instead of the D&C it's the T&C. That avoids any copyright claims, you see.

But these include... , Joseph Smith put out not just the Joseph Smith History that you find in the triple combination of the LDS Church. When he was the editor in chief of the *Times and Seasons* he published his history, and his history is much longer there than the excerpts that got put into the D&C Joseph Smith History. All of what he put is in this and it's much longer, it takes a lot more time to read. Also, instead of the haphazard way in which it's organized, Joseph Smith's revelations, corrected – that is, going back and eliminating all of the emendations, changes, alterations, that got put into 'em after publication – the original version of the revelation has been put together, and it's been put together chronologically. The only exception to that is the Joseph Smith History, which begins the account in the 1820 timeframe, actually with his birth in 1805, is the earliest chronological description of events and so his history is the first thing in here. Then everything else that follows is in chronological order. You can see where Joseph put the *Lectures on Faith* in the 1835 timeframe by this layout. You can see when he published the *Book of Abraham* in the 1842 timeframe by this layout. In fact, it almost tells the story of the restoration and of Joseph's ministry simply by the way in which the layout of this has been gathered together.

Adrian mentioned that Joseph Smith, in retelling the story when the angel, correctly identified as Nephi by Joseph, incorrectly identified by everyone else as Moroni. And by the way, before the three witnesses to the Book of Mormon saw the plates shown them by the angel – and they never identify the name of that angel, they refer to him as an angel so the three witnesses never weigh in on the identity – David Whitmer's mother encountered the angel and she identifies him with the same name that Joseph Smith identifies him with, Nephi. In any event as Adrian referred to, the purpose of the restoration is to return the hearts of the children to the Fathers because everything that is going to happen in the last days got established at the beginning by a covenant that was made three years previous to the death of Adam, when he gathered together his posterity in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman and he prophesied whatsoever should befall them unto the latest generation. And the Lord appeared and administered comfort unto Adam, and the gathering there rose up and called him Michael the Prince (see T&C 154:19-20).

Right there, at that moment, at the beginning of the history of the family of Adam, he prophesies by the power of the Holy Ghost what should befall his descendants unto the

latest generation in the presence – Adam-ondi-Ahman – Adam in the presence of Son Ahman. Adam-ondi-Ahman was an event. It’s like the Super Bowl. It doesn’t matter where you play it. Wherever it is it’s the Super Bowl. Adam-ondi-Ahman is an event. When Adam is there in the presence of Son Ahman, that is Adam-ondi-Ahman. Now you can say Springfield, Missouri is Adam-ondi-Ahman but it doesn’t matter where it happens. When it happens – and it will happen again, in fulfillment of that original prophecy that was made in the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, when Adam was before Son Ahman the first time – when it happens again it doesn’t matter if that’s in Mesa, Arizona or Springfield... I don’t know, where do the Simpsons live? Springfield USA, or Bogus Basin. Wherever it is that that occurs that is Adam-ondi-Ahman and it will certainly happen.

The hearts of the children turning to the Fathers so that the earth is not smitten with a curse means that the purpose of the restoration ultimately is to return us back to something that was here in the beginning, the way in which it once was, the dispensation of Adam, the dispensation of Enoch, the dispensation of Noah, all of which were running simultaneously at the time of the flood. *“As it was in the days of Noah so also shall it be at the time of the coming of the Son of Man”* (Matthew 24:37).

We’re gonna have three different kinds of remnants operating at the same time at the coming of the Lord, a dispensation that will reflect somewhat of the Christian era, a dispensation that will reflect somewhat of Joseph Smith’s era, and a dispensation that will reflect somewhat of the original, the one in which man stood in the presence of God. Of course we’ve got a couple of those functioning after a fashion but we lack yet in what necessarily will involve the presence of Son Ahman to achieve, is something that He must bring about. When He said, I will bring again Zion, He literally means that because you can’t have it without His presence.

That dispensation, that’s the one that needs to occur. Joseph gave a talk where he referred to the spirit of Elias and the spirit of Elijah and the spirit of Messiah, because there are really three great spirits that are involved, with three great stages. Abraham is the father of the righteous because at the time that Abraham lived, the connection back to the government of God that began with Adam, to whom dominion was given over the earth, had been broken. It had been broken for generations. It had existed at one time for ten generations, continuously and uninterrupted from the days of Adam to the days of Shem, but when Abraham lived it had been broken for generations.

Now Shem – who had lived on the other side of the flood and who could have fled with Enoch’s people into Zion, because people were taken up into Zion continuously, right up until the flood – and Shem did not need to remain on the earth but he remained on the earth to perpetuate what was there in the beginning. And so Shem, who would be called Melchizedek, Melek, Zadok, king, priest, the prince of peace, the king of Salem, the king of peace, the teacher of righteousness, he remained through the flood but he held onto the covenant that would allow him to lay hold upon that. And he waited through generations of apostasy.

And Abraham represents every man because Abraham came into the world in a state of apostasy, disconnected from the Fathers, incapable of laying hold upon the promises that go back through Adam, and Seth, and Enos, and Jared, and Mahalaleel and the other descendants, right down until the days of Shem. Abraham was disconnected from that. And he went and he looked and he searched because the records belonging to the Fathers had come down into his possession and he knew there was something to that. He knew there was something more to be obtained, and he longed for his appointment unto that, that which was in the beginning. He obtained a connection for himself into that. That's why he had to connect up with Melchizedek because the bond had to be formed, the covenant had to be established, the connection had to be made. And when it was made, the same right that belonged to Adam in the beginning, that right that belonged to Adam as the one to whom dominion over all the earth had been given, had been passed to Abraham. And Abraham became the rightful heir, the holder of that right belonging to the Fathers, even the first Father, or Adam, that came down from the beginning. **That's** what Joseph Smith sought to have be restored. **That's** something that cannot be done apart from the direct personal involvement of God. **That's** something that when it's restored returns us back to a state in which Eden is again possible.

The right of dominion given to Adam gets distorted in the minds of gentiles as something that allows you to thump your chest and rule and reign over others. You want to know what the exercise of dominion looks like in the hands of a righteous person? You will find Christ girded about with a towel, kneeling to wash the feet, because He's the one, He's the one to whom the right belonged. He viewed Himself as a gardener, as someone tending the creation, as someone laboring to bring about its greatest, its highest, its most perfect form, to cause it to flourish, to cause it to dwell in harmony and in love with one another.

Christ tried to explain what it was that would make us right in the Sermon on the Mount. He says, Here is the commandment: thou shalt not commit adultery but I say to you, you can walk around all day not committing adultery and still be a lustful, wretched, perverse, undesirable, unlovely, unbecoming, depraved soul. So, don't lust in your heart. You have read and it's been told you 'thou shalt not kill'. You can do a lot of damage to another human being without killing them. Words can be weapons. You can do a lot of damage with the words you speak, and never inflict a single bruise on another person's body but you can break their heart. And Christ says love your enemies. Do good to those that hate you and despitefully abuse you. Don't be angry with your brother. Don't call them names. Return good for evil.

Christ was saying the problem isn't your conduct, the problem is your heart. Christ is telling us, I want to take that heart that you've got and I want to break it. I want you to have a broken heart and I want you to have a contrite spirit because the only way you're going to let me come in is if what you are doing to surround yourself is broken down enough to permit me to come in.

(Well, I don't like going over and I saw on the schedule that there's a closing prayer at 5:15 and we're nearly there.)

Let me end by explaining that as an active faithful devoted Latter-day Saint I wrote the book, *The Second Comforter*, in order to bear testimony that all of that stuff in the LDS temple that was designed to prepare you in all things for further light and knowledge by conversing with the Lord at the veil, was not just a symbolic trip to dress up funny and go down and do a show. It was designed to convey a message in which you literally expect to converse with the Lord through the veil, preliminary to entering His presence. The purpose of that was to open your mind to the possibility, as the Book of Mormon says, that you can enter into the presence of the Lord. When I wrote the book it was good LDS doctrine. I've been asked why I don't revise the book now that I've been booted from the organization and I've said, it's going to stand as a landmark. It was good doctrine once in the LDS Church; that's what the Church believed at that time. Dallin Oaks came up here to Boise to denounce that doctrine as **one of the tricks of the devil**. [Actually he didn't talk like that- "it's one of the tricks of the devil."]

Look, it's not a trick of the devil. God does want to reveal Himself and that is the constant theme of the Book of Mormon. And knowledge of God is the fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is nothing greater than Christ, the originator and the finisher of our faith. Everyone always mutilates the account. Get your LDS version -- see they'll edit it. Now if I say this and they find out they'll just edit it and fix it. In General Conference, when they talk about it in the heading, they felt the nails in His hands and feet and sides, hands feet and side. That's not the way the Book of Mormon account begins. It begins with an embrace. The first wound that is felt when they come to the Lord at Bountiful is an embrace. It is the wound on His side. The first place He brings you is to Himself, standing in His presence, beside Him, in an embrace, in plain humility, as if any of us were good enough to stand in His presence. That's where it begins. Then His hands, and then as it fully dawns upon you the enormity of the gulf between you and Him, where you end up kneeling at His feet. It's the wounds on the feet you see last.

The Book of Mormon is trying to tell you something, and it is deep and profound and real. It is intended to tell you that Christ didn't just have sheep in Jerusalem. He has sheep all over this world. It's precisely omitted from the account that there are still other sheep that you don't know about so that you never become arrogant, assuming that there aren't yet still other sheep. If He identified 'em, well, you'd say they're in the club too and so they're okay. He doesn't want you to know that just yet. So that you entertain the possibility that anywhere in the world there may yet be those who know something more than you, that you ought to welcome, that you ought to listen to, that you ought to invite to come to join, and to bring with them some new truth that you've not yet heard that may be of value to you.

Well, I don't want to delay a closing prayer because I see that that happens at 5:15 and I'd hate to be standing up here talking while someone's praying. Let me end by thanking all of you that have spoken today for the contributions you've made. I've learned things today. I've had my horizon broadened. And I appreciate all the contributions that got made today,

so much so I've made notes and I intend to listen to this again. As I understand it this is gonna be put on line, is that correct? Yah, I intend to listen. Thank you all very much.

[Transcription v2.1]