

Group Conversation
“Hear and Trust the Lord in the Storm” Conference
Edited Transcript
Lexington, KY
March 26, 2022

Names have been removed to maintain the privacy of those involved in the following conversation. Irrelevant details have also been removed.

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Speaker 1: I've got a question about the “Question and Answer” session.

...

1: The Wisemen came TO the east...

Speaker 2: Came to the east—the Wisemen... From the west?

1: I mean, I spent years...

...

Speaker 3: Okay. I want you to assume for a moment that Joseph's explanation of the Garden of Eden being in the Americas is accurate.

1: Okay.

3: And I want you to assume for a moment that you needed something from the Tree of Life in order to bring a body back out of the grave.

1: Okay.

3: What direction would the people bearing the gifts from the east that included anointing oil for the Tree of Life, what direction would they necessarily have come from?

1: Depends. I mean, you can go either way...

Speaker 4: The Americas to the east.

3: Yes, it would be far more efficient.

1: Okay.

3: To the east.

1: So they would have had to have come... So, that's why it takes them a couple years to get over there.

...

4: You were saying something, though, about...

3: About which?

4: Well, you had just left off the anointing oil...

2: Going from west to east...

1: Well, he didn't say "anointing oil." He said *something* from the Tree of Life. Well, no—you did say anointing oil.

3: Well, yeah. I have to tag back up to that.

1: Okay. Yeah, that's right.

3: ... which was, you know... If you think about a creation being self-contained in the ability to take care of everything that needs to be taken care of, as part of the whole thing, and then you've got the Tree of Life, which everyone assumes is a metaphor and not an actual thing... Yeah, well, why do you need to guard it if it's merely metaphorical, you know? We always take what's literal to be metaphorical and what's metaphorical to be literal.

Speaker 5: Actually, I wanted to ask about that because, I mean, you have spoken about... Because in the creation story... The [indecipherable] creation story is an analogy, right? And it's sort of like, okay, when does that story end? Because does the creation story entail Adam and Eve's time in the Garden or is it just creation that's the analogy, you know, and now we've started out into the literal, you know, first man/first woman, you know, kind of this idea of, like, you know, yeah... Where does the analogy end? And where does the literalism begin? And what things...

3: How old do you think this planet physically is?

4: Trillions.

Unknown: 2.54.

3: I mean, the nearest anyone can date it is in the billions of years. Okay. So do you think this planet has been used in one cycle of creation (being ours) and never before and never again afterwards?

2: Well, didn't Joseph Smith say that this planet consists of fragments of other planets?

3: That's one way to describe it.

4: But it's used over and over?

3: Yeah. Why does the end of the millennium and John's revelation read rather like the beginning of the creation in the book of Abraham?

Yeah?

Speaker 6: How much downtime between cycles?

3: Apparently, almost none.

Speaker 7: So, this earth has a ways to go?

6: So then the question: Have we advanced further technologically than other rounds? Because you would think Hoover Dam and our interstate freeways and then some works of man that... Do you think they...get destroyed pretty quickly?

3: Let's say that the earth is an intelligence (and actually a feminine intelligence, at that). And let's say that she... And the only time we hear from HER is in the Enoch text of the book of Moses when she laments the wickedness that is on her face (as "her," being the mother of man, you know)... So it's a female entity. Let's say that SHE has fulfilled the measure of her creation and that SHE, now, can move on (in whatever sphere that is) to something newer and better and higher. And so she un-occupies "this" and moves to something better—and for a moment, it ceases to be animated by an intelligence, and there will be another that comes to occupy it. What happens to your interstate when it's no longer maintained in an order that an intelligence holds control over? What happens to it during that—I don't care how short it is—during that time period before "another" comes to fulfill the measure of the next cycle of creation?

Unknown: Mars?

...

3: It certainly doesn't hold all the bonds of...

...

3: ...concrete together. I would bet...

Speaker 8: And is that a higher or a lesser order of intelligence than where we currently find ourselves?

3: Well, it's certainly a different one than the one we're in.

...

3: And apparently the highest and best and greatest is the one that we're trying to figure out how to behave in. If God would just not give us, oh, ambition, sexual appetite...

...

3: ...taste, sense of taste, I mean, every one of the... Gluttony—oh, where'd that come from? Well, okay, stuff tastes good. And all that sexual misconduct, where did that come from? We're in puberty. You know, the body is an unruly animal. We got desires, appetites, and passions that belong to this physicality that... Look at every weakness that men have. I mean, why did they hoard? Why are they greedy? Because they're insecure: they're afraid they won't have clothes to wear and food to eat and shelter to protect them, so they need a whole lot of excess of everything in order to gain carnal security. It's that carnality thing. "Take no thought what ye shall eat," you know, or what you should wear. God clothes the

grass in the field. He'll take care of you, too, so "forget about it." And yet, you know, people that have more are afraid of losing the more that they have. It just doesn't... In these bodies, it just doesn't end. It's like putting you on the back of a stallion and saying, "You have to ride this thing, and you've got to work out how this is gonna work." Because it will use you up if you don't gain control. And, you know, there you are. It's just dust. But holy crap is this dust insistent, relentlessly! Especially when you break part of it.

4: It gets really mad.

5: So, going back to an intelligence that holds the, you know, this earth together, essentially...

3: Yeah.

5: ...and perhaps a different intelligence each cycle, would that not apply to also...

...

5: ...also things within the earth. So, I mean, you have...

So, if death didn't enter the earth/this world until after the fall and we have what appears to be remnants from BEFORE the fall...

3: Yeah, yeah.

5: ...of previous life inhabitants of a sort, of fossilized inhabitants... So what's the reconciliation there?

3: [chuckling] The...

5: Like, why wouldn't they also return to...

3: Be ground to dust?

5: Dissolved, yeah.

...

3: Why would some elements persist in a semi-organized state and other elements not if the cycle of creation involves a different spirit stepping up? And in order to fulfill the measure of creation and move on, does that get accomplished in a single cycle? Or does it take more?

4: Interesting. So...

3: Has it taken YOU more?

Unknown: Yes, yes.

4: Certainly.

3: Will it take more still for you?

4: Certainly.

1: I guess there's an "it depends" in there.

Unknown: In Second Nephi, it says, "Christ layeth down the life according to the flesh, so that by the power of the Spirit he can pick it up again." I think that's it. If you lay it down, you can take it up again.

3: If everything about it is willful, yeah. WE only go kicking and screaming.

4: So, this notion of a different intelligence animating the earth in a different cycle being tied to the sorts of things that get preserved from the sorts of things that do not get preserved—even in the fossil record, for example; in the earth's crust, for example—that's an interesting idea that's tied, then, to which intelligence animates this, and does it come down to preference? You know, "I like the moose; it's sticking around."

3: Joseph was very complimentary about the fidelity of the earth—the spirit of the earth—to the charge that was given to her in the creation and that the earth had fulfilled the measure of her assignment.

4: That would imply that there are rebellious planets...that have less fidelity.

3: I'm not sure I would always dismiss it as "rebellious." As inexperienced, incapable, ignorant, learning...

4: Interesting.

3: ...moving along in the path... I mean, Joseph said you're saved no faster than you get knowledge; well, the absence of knowledge doesn't imply the presence of willful wickedness as much as it implies inability, stupidity, sloth, just not measuring up, you know?

Unknown: Not measuring up to the...? What is it? The measure of its creation?

3: Yeah, fulfilling your full measure of creation. I mean, if you look back—you probably don't even need to go back a year—you can probably think of mistakes that you've made you would like to have done better (in just the last few months). Well, how would it be to look back over the course of a life and to think about every opportunity/every choice/every moment and to think, "I lived it to the highest and the best"? And as far as I know in THIS creation, we've got a few that are pointed to, and the Scriptures say they were "perfect in their generation." But that's—in my view—that's faint praise. Okay? It's not *perfect*; it doesn't say perfect. "Perfect *in their generation*." What does that mean? Well, in the context of the raw sewage that they bathed in daily, they were kind of tolerable.

Unknown: Graded on the curve. Yeah.

3: Exactly. And therein lies the problem. Very few are adequate for absolutes, and Christ was one of them.

4: Meaning *every moment* He had lived to the full measure—lived correctly—and being able to look back and see that moment-by-moment.

3: Yeah.

4: That's absolutely remarkable.

3: Yeah.

...

Speaker 9: ...I'm reading your blog.

4: Yeah.

9: When does number six...? It was only gonna go to six. Will there be a seven and eight?

4: As far as I know at the moment, it goes to six. And you know, much of what was said today is exactly where it was going, and that is: Everything up to five was gloom and doom; Six is: If you want some hope of not being swept off, you need to have a right to this promised land. And the right to the promised land is granted by covenant from the one who owns the land. The covenant is offered. And I'm looking for a nice way to say...

There are a lot of folks I know... Not a lot. There are folks I know who—even folks that are baptized—who've said, "I don't need that covenant. It doesn't apply to me because I have XY&Z going for me," which is nice, or "I have a bloodline going for me," which means, "I don't need to accept what Jesus is offering me at this extreme point in history right before everything gets swept off. I'm fine. I'm good without it." And I'm hoping to challenge that notion and maybe convince people that what's coming is probably a lot rougher than we think—and there's specific language in the covenant and specific promises of protection made, and I think that those promises are there because they will be desperately needed. And so, not only *accept the covenant* if you haven't, but *keep it* if you have. That's kind of where that's all going.

9: Well, I have to admit, when I read your very first one... I'm late to the party, because you broke my bubble with Christopher Columbus, like...

4: I'm sorry.

Unknown: Yeah, that was a lot of people.

9: [indecipherable] ...I was listening in Denver's talk today, and I'm [indecipherable]... Have you done a new thing? You've been kind of... Where did that all come from? And then, with the whole Roger Williams, I'd love to kinda know where you... Had you been studying that? And to rename the guy that we've been always...?

4: Years ago, I was preparing for a Scripture study that we were doing (a Saturday night study). I was in the Scriptures; I came across that man. I was reading... So, I'd...

7: He came across Christopher Columbus.

4: No, I came across the “man among the Gentiles.” And so, I was reading about Christopher Columbus to talk about him in Scripture study, and the more I read, the more I’m like, “Eww.” And so, I was pondering that and questioning (and not something I’d blog about...), but a name popped into my head, a name I’d never heard (that I know of): Roger Williams. I’m like, “That’s nice. Who’s that?”

That was years ago, and I filed it away and probably forgot about it. And (...what? Three weeks ago?) we were on vacation, and I was reading the *116 Pages* book (that I referenced) and saw the pattern and thought, “Well, gee, that’s really interesting.” And Roger Williams popped back into my head from way back when, and so I...did some more research and put it together. And a lot of people get warm fuzzies from the Spirit, and that’s their definition of “inspiration.” And more times than not, my definition of inspiration is, “Oh, shit.” And that was one of those moments when that all came together. And I’m like, “Ohhhh...”

7: Although, it’s still conjecture.

4: Oh, yeah, I’m not saying I’m right. I’m just saying...

Unknown: ...was it like, “Oh, shit, I have to SAY this,” or this is the cognitive dissonance like... What was that? Like, when, you know, when something comes, you’re like, “Oh, crap. Now I have to deal with this.”

4: See, I was planning to blog about destruction earlier, and I had a whole different idea planned, and this stuff all presented itself. And I was... I had a very heavy, crushing conviction that this is what I need to write about. And that was the “Oh, shit.” There were several other... Yeah, there were several others, you know, realizing the implications. I don’t like... Anybody here want to go out publicly and say, “Hey, guys, it looks like about eight years left, more or less.” I mean...

9: [20]30, right?

4: Yeah, I expect a buttful of arrows for that. And I don’t... I’m wildly uncomfortable writing stuff like that. And so hopefully, I’m wrong. And take it all with 1000 grains of salt.

...

Speaker 10: I think it’s interesting that the pattern that... It’s not fun to talk about the gloom and doom part...

4: No.

10: But part of it is: I think we need to become convinced that there’s no other way that we can be saved. You know, it was like Moses had to be convinced of his own nothingness. And we all have to be convinced, eventually, that any other reservations (that “maybe I could do this or this,” or there’s a lesser, less Babylon-ish way to get by, you know; “there’s a little corner I can hide in and get past”), I think that all has to be swept away, that the only real person that will ultimately help us pass over this trial we’re going through will be the Lord. He’s the only power that will be able to bring any one of us through it. And so part of that is breaking down any reservation and blowing up our bubbles. The way we see the world is

going to be crushed and broken, and then that's where He can fill in the gaps. Anyway, so that's the... It's weird; I do want to talk about the good. And that's coming. But you've got to be convinced that there is no other way.

3: One of the frustrations with talking to Evangelicals is that they turn the word "gospel" into "good news." And the assumption that comes from that is that everything must be GOOD news in order for it to be related to anything Jesus wants us to hear. "It's got to be GOOD news. I've got to feel GOOD about it. It's got to make me feel good." And when they hear something that says, "You're awful, and you have to repent," they say, "Oh, I know that's false. That's a false spirit. That's not good news. They just gave me bad news! That's the devil himself."

...

6: Yeah, I had a friend who said to me...you know, "Everything you're telling me, all these Scriptures, I don't feel the Spirit." Because it's just an uncomfortable feeling.

4: I had someone on my mission, we gave him a Book of Mormon; they promised to read it. We go back a week later and ask them.

"Oh, I threw that book in the trash."

"Why?"

"Oh, I had a dark feeling when I tried to read it." Oh, well, yeah. Clearly, it's of the devil then.

...

3: There's a lot of people that think that anything related to a continuing restoration brings a "dark feeling" because, well, "You're actually telling us that Russell Nelson can lead us astray?" That's horrifying! Teach men truth but leave the claims of the hierarchy intact, then they'll listen to ya.

Unknown: Negotiating.

10: I think no one likes feeling vulnerable. And the problem is, like, when...truth starts breaking up what you know, you're left with this... There's no foundation below you, and it's so freakin' scary that you would rather choose almost to be your delusion or illusion than the reality—because it's SO uncomfortable, and like, as I went along, it's like, "What can I trust, Lord? I can't even trust ME at times." I'm an unprofitable servant. I don't have all the answers. I can go down many wrong roads and realize that and that feeling. You have to have a certain cognitive dissonance that you're—even in your best moments—you're probably not all right. And we like being right (as Gentiles). It's painful. It's really painful to have your world blown up, and as soon as you put it back together, it's going to be blown up again, you know? And that's this whole path that all of us are on, and you gotta say, "You think you got it back together?" Yeah, I thought I've had this figured out several times. You know, I'm like, "Crap." And then the Lord goes over here, or something goes over there.

4: The sandy foundation—you're constantly scared of falling.

10: Yeah.

7: So, as Whitney was giving her talk today and just... We reviewed a lot of the mistakes that the saints have made. And I'm just... I guess I'm wondering, what mistakes are we making now? Are we making the same ones that they did? Do we have the adulterous hearts that they did that caused it all to fail? And it was after the Kirtland Temple—when all that light came—it was immediately after that that everything just went downhill. And so it seems like the more light that comes, the more difficult it is, too. So, I guess, these lessons from history, what are we doing that's the same or different or...?

5: Actually, I had a question...and I was gonna ask you this probably later, but I figured this would be a good place to ask it now. Have you had...?

If you're comfortable; if you're comfortable!

Speaker 11: If I'm not, I won't answer.

5: Okay, great, great, great. I don't know if you've already written about this or not, but I had heard the idea that... Because when it came to Joseph's sealings, you know, he hadn't just sealed women to him. It was like, you'd seal sons, daughters, men, like, families to him. And I was trying to search into, I was trying to, like, back up that claim; I did some stuff. Have you come across any things like that or...?

11: Yeah, so Denver actually had a talk where (in the "Civilization" in Colorado) where he goes over the law of adoption. I think it's also in *A Glossary of Terms* in the Scriptures.

5: Right. Right. And I...

3: Yeah, and Bushman described what Joseph was up to as “yearning for familial plentitude in Heaven,” the purpose being to expand his family so that when he got into Heaven, he had brothers and sisters and fathers and uncles and aunts and relations—and it was about familial plentitude, which just shows you that Bushman is grappling with something that... He could not get his hands around it.

The diaries of the brethren in the late 1800s—just before they finally cut off adoption practice—in the diaries, they're talking about, “What was it that Joseph was up to?”—'cuz in *The Joseph Smith Papers*, it doesn't even show up until October of 1843. He'll be dead eight months later. And the first mention of this kind of practice is October of 1843. And it's an obscure reference to the necessity for adoption to get into the Kingdom. So, it's not fully explained—but he's doing something—and then he's dead, and he's gone, and they start doing something to imitate it. And by the time you get in the 1880s, their diaries are saying, “We didn't understand what this was all about.”

George Q. Cannon says, “I didn't believe it when Joseph did it, and I don't believe it now.” I mean, they're saying things like, you know, “This is—whatever the hell this is—we don't know what it is, and we shouldn't be doing it.” Until finally, Wilford Woodruff put some “absolute” into it in a talk he gave to the Utah Genealogical Society in the 1880s, and they edit out THE paragraph that deals directly with it when they publish the talk. And so the

talk today is sans the adoption stuff. But they got to the point where you did your genealogy as far as you could do your genealogy, and when you reached the end of the road, then you seal that person to Joseph Smith. And so, we're all connected into the family (the way that Joseph is trying to do it)—which flips everything on its ear.

2: Well, interestingly, all of the temple presidents of the time kept notes as to what was accomplished each day in the temple. And if you go read their diaries, you'll see in Manti and in the different temples around, they talk about, "Today, we baptized this many people for the dead, this many for healing, this many endowments were done, this many sealings, this many adoptions," and they keep track of all of this, right? So they knew it was a specific ordinance that was necessary. And they were actually doing this (even though they didn't know why). And that persisted for decades. So adoptions (as a specific tool to accomplish the construction of a family) has nothing whatsoever to do with marriage. The problem is that people conflate the two. They think marriage, you know, sealing, adoption...

3: That was deliberate!

2: ...it's all the same thing, and now it looks like polygamy.

5: My main question was like, do we, anybody, do either of you have a list of names of the families, the children, the husbands that were also sealed to Joseph, or is that kind of like... Do we have record of that?

3: Devery Anderson's *Quorum of the Anointed* gives a list, and I think it's a pretty good one. Devery... It's a three-volume set. Devery Anderson...

9: [indecipherable] ...she wrote books about the temple. She's written a couple books.

...

1: *The Quorum of the...* The three books Denver's referring to were published by Signature Books, and they're probably out of print, but you can find them online. And there's *The Nauvoo Endowment Company*.

...

6: So the question is: Was Joseph really doing endowments in the Red Brick Store? Or is that a lie from the apostles so they could give legitimacy to what they invented and put into the Salt Lake Temple?

Because it would make sense that if he's trying to get a temple built, that he would do something that sacred outside it?

4: Well, they did baptisms in the river.

6: And then it stops.

4: Yeah, but for a time, it was acceptable. And then it had to stop. I wonder if endowment was the same sort of thing—and perhaps even knowing there was a fuse burning on his own life...

Unknown: So I can... I have a question. Nobody knew what the endowment session... They didn't actually have endowment sessions before Joseph Smith died, did they?

Unknown: Well, that's what I was gonna bring up. Hugh Nibley talked about parallels between the LDS endowment and early Christian practices. And there's some in Pistis Sophia and several other places where, you know, there's a creation story, and then there's sets of covenants that are made, and there's a prayer circle. So, it looks like there's things that are parallel.

Unknown: Well, so my question about that is: If post-Joseph Smith they developed an endowment session, was that ever right in the face of the Lord, in the view of the Lord? Or was it... I mean, if Brigham Young... had part, too, in developing that, then was it ever really right?

Speaker 12: Can I...? Okay. There's a quote that Johnny Page, I think it's probably in *Joseph Smith Fought Polygamy*, where Johnny Page was one of the Twelve. And he said he went... He told his wife (after they went through the endowment with Brigham Young), he said, "I went through the endowment with Joseph, and this was nothing like it." So like, what he learned from Joseph was totally different from what Brigham did.

Unknown: And he was the only apostle that didn't go along with the Brigham Young movement.

12: Yeah, yeah. So, there probably was something...

Unknown: So, technically, the endowment session (that they have changed repeatedly and repeatedly and repeatedly over the years) never really was correct to begin with. Is that right?

Speaker 13: I've always assumed that was part of what was going TO BE restored when the temple got finished and Joseph could get those answers and directions. And since Brigham never received the Savior and was still looking for Him when he died...

Unknown: (He was still looking for wives, this is what he was looking for...)

13: [indecipherable] ...didn't receive the Savior, so how can he receive that information to do that?

Unknown: So, we don't really care that they keep changing things and changing things because they weren't right to begin with? I mean, I cared when... I couldn't understand it when I was active in the church. And now, you know, first, I don't really care, but it's just so bizarre thinking about it, you know, that it was never right from the beginning.

Although, there is this very uncertain consideration [indecipherable] in that a lot of this stuff has also been helpful in getting people to a (I don't know...) "higher point" in spiritual lives. There's a number of different things there that, at least esoterically speaking, you do make a certain progress up to the Lord, right? And that whole process getting there is associated with that ascension process.

And you're on faith as an individual rather than...

Unknown: Correct.

Unknown: ...the origins.

Unknown: And so, okay, I don't know that it was given specifically to anybody credible, let's say, but I do believe that there is some aspect of it that is actually spiritual and helpful in that ascension process.

4: And I think there's records that talk about Joseph doing something in the Red Brick Store and setting it up as a garden and so on. So, it's my understanding that Brigham managed to preserve and corrupt something of what Joseph had—so it's based on something that was correct. It was a poor imitation. And it's been... And it's degraded ever since. But nevertheless, the idea that there are increasing degrees of glory, ultimately conversing with the Lord through the veil and entering His presence, and that that is our journey—if it preserved only that, that's instructive and helpful. And it's good to know. That's how I view it.

Unknown: I thought it was really interesting (and I can't remember who was giving the talk), but seeing how God doesn't change things from one prophet to another. You know, I mean, he/they add things—knowledge or something like that—but He's not going to reverse the revelations of another prophet. So, like, Joseph Smith didn't reverse anything that whoever was the last prophet before him.

12: Joseph Smith's papyrus book of, you know, like Hugh Nibley's books—that's a big one. At the back in the appendix, it's got, like, the Sofa P...whatever..

Unknown: The *Sophia*.

12: Yeah. And a bunch of different ones from countries like Iraq and, you know, those old, old places, their records, and they all have this Garden of Eden story in it as part of their ceremony. So He's done this in all different places. So I can understand how Joseph did that garden drama—that parable or whatever. But it was, of course, Heber C. Kimball that was really intimate with the Masons (wanting to be a high-level Mason) and then Brigham Young (wanting the wives). So between the secret rituals of the Masons and the spiritual wifery, they came up with their endowment, and I think that's kind of how we've got where we're at.

3: Let's just go back and remember the way some things unfolded. Yeah, Joseph Smith got the papyri in Kirtland, and he began to work to translate it. And he didn't finish it, and he didn't publish it. And then in late 1842, he published in the *Times and Seasons* the first and then the second installment that we now know to be the Book of Abraham as an installment of what he had gotten by revelation/translation, promising there would be another installment that came out, which never came out in public, but which it appears was what he did—because if you read the account of the Book of Abraham, it goes right up to the Garden of Eden. The next installment/the next increment shows up in private as a translation—the promised next installment—in what we know as the temple, which picks

up in the Garden of Eden. And we know from independent sources in diaries and journals that the Red Brick Store, what was going on there—including a garden scene and an angel with a flaming sword that was guarding the Tree of Life because people interrupted what was going on there—that that was an ORAL tradition.

Brigham Young went through that initiation. There were others who had gone through that initiation who were still alive and were still present. Joseph died, the ceremony stopped, nothing picks up again until November (late November) of 1845. And by February of '46, they are driven out of Nauvoo. So the ceremony recommences late November 1845, and then it ends in February of 1846, during which the Twelve presided over what was going on. But more than Brigham Young had been through the Red Brick Store initiation. Had he made MASSIVE alterations, that would have been detected and denounced.

Between February of 1846 and the commencement of ceremonies in the Endowment House on Temple Square, there was only ONE endowment done (and that was on Ensign Peak for a missionary that was leaving—to endow him). And then the Endowment House picks up, in which Brigham Young more or less managed things.

Then they dedicated the St. George Temple. At the dedication of the St. George Temple, they start taking down—because there is a temple—they start taking down the Endowment House, but it's still orally transmitted, orally preserved, orally continued. Then the Logan Temple comes online, and now they're gonna have two temples very far apart geographically. I mean, it's like...300 miles apart between them.

2: Well, and each of the temple presidents kind of had control over how it was done.

3: So, now at the dedication of that temple, the decision is made to reduce the endowment to writing—for the first time. Now, this is like 1877. So, Joseph's dead in 1844; you're now 33 years later that you're finally going to reduce it to writing FOR THE FIRST TIME. It got reduced to a typewritten copy in the 1877 timeframe. And it did not change again until the Reed Smoot hearings in Congress when Joseph F. Smith is asked about the oath of vengeance that's taken as part of the temple rites, and Joseph F. Smith DENIES that that is part of the Mormon covenant-making (because if it were a part of Mormon covenant-making, then that would mean that Reed Smoot could not be seated as a senator and a member of the Quorum of the Twelve is not going to be a U.S. Senator).

The first change that is made to the manuscript that's typewritten is Joseph F. Smith changing it by eliminating the oath of vengeance. That's the first one, and that was done contemporaneous with the Reed Smoot hearings. Whether he went to Washington and answered the question and said it wasn't part, intending to come back and delete it, or whether he knew he was going to be asked that question and so he deleted it before he went out so he could deny it, we don't know the timing on that. But we do know that it was eliminated; it was crossed out. That's the very first change made in (what?) 1906 to the thing that had been written down for the first time in 1877.

And then, by the time you get to cutting back the...

4: Penalties.

3: ...the penalty... I mean, they didn't eliminate them; they just remove "the bowels gushing out" and "the tongue being..." All that. They eliminated the graphic description. But they didn't eliminate the penalties. That was another kind of slow-inching. And then in 1990, "Katy, bar the door," there's been a flood of changes that have occurred since then.

Unknown: There was... Wasn't there another change, though? Didn't Brigham Young have a lecture...?

3: Yes, a lecture at the veil.

Unknown: Yeah, at the veil.

3: But that was a one-off event.

6: And there was the congregation singing.

3: Yeah. If you went to the temple and heard Brigham's lecture on Wednesday and then you went back on Friday, it might be a different lecture.

Unknown: And so it wasn't really the "endowment."

3: But they did reduce that to writing, too, in 1877. But until then, it was "stream-of-consciousness Brigham," you know.

Unknown: "This is our God, and we have no other God."

3: If someone stole a goat earlier in the morning and now he's giving his lecture, you might hear a whole lot about thievery and goats and... I mean, how that fit into the creation and was, you know, living properly...

Unknown: So, how are those things recorded? Like, 'cuz, as you know...

3: Typewritten, preserved in notebooks in the Salt Lake Temple, on the floor between the level on which the First Presidency meets and the upper level where the Seventy meet, in a room that James Talmage used to write *Jesus the Christ*.

Unknown: But...wasn't the... When the endowment was reduced to writing, that was pretty much John Nuttall that did that, just reading back to Brigham to see if he added in changes.

3: There was actually a committee of three people that worked on it; Nuttall was part of it as scribe—but I mean, they all got to voice their remembrances. The biggest vulnerable points were: Joseph's gone in 1844, and it's in November of 1845 when they... Everything then was what they could recall of what Joseph had done. And so the question is, how much did they recall? And Brigham...

Look, Brigham Young, John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff... EVERY one of them said, "The temple rites are not finished. This is not done. This is not right. This is the best we can do. Someday, Joseph is gonna come back, and he's gonna fix these rites." It was... They NEVER

said they got it nailed right. They always said, “Joseph's gonna return, and he's gonna fix this, and it's gonna get done right.”

It's not until after Joseph F. Smith that they begin to say, “We've got it,” you know, “You're secure in your afterlife if you come fetch from us what we have to offer.” I mean, it became one of the major sales points, and it remains one of the major sales points for the religion brand that they offer. “We can promise you stuff. And you'll get it.”

4: Does anyone know where this notion came from that Joseph is coming back? Because that still gets kicked around, and there's, you know, people making claims now. But where did that come from?

3: Brigham.

6: I was wondering if they were saying that it'll take a resurrected Joseph Smith to restore this. Were they thinking, well, “When the Christ comes, the Millennium begins...” correct? “...Joseph comes back...in the morning of the first resurrection. And then we'll get it all straightened up.”

4: Oh, is that it?

6: That's what I think it is. And then it makes me think people now ('cuz there are some groups like the “Doctrine of Christ” group), they really believe that—that this resurrected Joseph... And then I asked someone, well does it have to be... “Does he come back as a glorified personage, like Jesus Christ?”

“Well, no, he's just gonna be born again”—like it's a rebirth; it's a Dalai Lama thing.

4: Well, that's not the morning of the first resurrection.

6: No, so it's kind of changed a little.

Unknown: “Doctrine of Christ” people actually have somebody picked out.

Unknown: Yeah.

3: Phil Davis.

Speaker 14: Wait, I want to go back to...a good question that nobody's answering.

Unknown: Yeah.

7: That's a hard question. Nobody wants to talk about it.

14: Well, that's the interesting thing: Nobody wants to talk about it. You want to talk about all these other things that actually don't really matter in the grand scheme of things.

3: I was in the bathroom. I don't even know what the question is.

14: [The] question is: “Are we messing up the same way? Or different ways?”

3: Oh, I heard that question.

14: Yeah. And nobody answered it.

3: I ignored that. Yeah.

14: And I don't care if anybody answers it. But it's really interesting that you'd rather talk about all this other stuff than that question. Because that's an important question.

Speaker 15: Well, I didn't ignore it. And something happened here for this actual conference that kind of puts that in perspective, which is: Denver says, "Yeah, I'm not speaking on Sunday, and there's a 90-minute gap, so deal with it," and then what does the organizing committee do? And then we have Joe Alexander who hears the voice of the Lord saying (as he's asking, "Who do we ask to speak;"), the Lord tells Joe Alexander, "I want to be asked to speak at the conference." So now the organizing committee is going, "What the hell do we do?" because we've invited the Lord to speak. Does He show up in person? Do we have that kind of faith? Does He speak through somebody? Are we supposed to have a prayer meeting? We don't know how to do LDS 2.0—uncorrelated, without minute-by-minute scheduling—for a conference. So...are we doing the same thing? Or have we learned what to do with a 90-minute gap? How close are we to hearing and listening to the Lord's voice in this conference? We don't know—'cuz it's scaring us to death as an organizing committee. The Lord wants to speak; He told Joe Alexander, "I want to be invited to speak." What does that mean? What do we do with that? Like, panic. And so we may not be as far along as we think we are when a 90-minute gap in the program, which is totally set out minute-by-minute, gives us pause. We don't know yet. So this is a new thing for us. And where are we in that? ...

10: If we're uncomfortable with space, as I've seen through a lot of conferences, we like to program everything out. And that's a gentile thing is that we don't know how to come to a meeting and to say whether to let to preach, teach, exhort, have music, you know. But that's, like, down here we...

I find in our progression, we either want to be "here" or "here"; we want to jump this chasm without going through a process of growth. And so, part of... Kind of back to the endowment; we're all talking about the endowment—but there's fruit that came from that endowment. There's people here that connected with Heaven because of what we have, you know. So there was enough there; it's like... But we get caught away with details and forget to connect with Heaven and to let Heaven guide us versus wanting someone to preach to us or someone to tell us what to do.

So, I mean, I think what... I would say we've made every... I've seen every mistake made in the Nauvoo period, and I've made probably most of 'em myself, too—and I don't say that hyperbole. I feel like when Denver was talking, I was convinced of my own weaknesses 'cuz I see how I was...committed so much to... I was into the LDS Church so much that I was a religious freak sometime. And then I also chased after things I shouldn't chase after. So the two things that you mentioned, kind of, priestcraft and the sins of the flesh is like, yeah, get a [indecipherable]. So we all, I think, we all are still trying to progress, but as I... I have hope

'cuz I felt/I still feel like we're here talking, you know, we're here trying, so... I feel like the Lord's trying to take us along a path. In Colorado there was...

We're recovering from Babylon. I joke about this sometimes: Babylon Anonymous. We're kind of like the children of Israel leaving Egypt, and they have all these bad habits—and I think that's part of what, I think, we're trying to do is overcome these bad habits and learn how to live differently with each other, not to be passive-aggressive, not to talk about each other. You know, I think much of what Stephanie is doing is trying to develop a new culture that we're not used to; we're used to this other way of dealing with each other. And so we ARE recovering from being in this world, and we're trying to learn how it is...to [be] godly with each other, how to say, “No,” to each other and not get offended of, you know... So it's an uncomfortable and vulnerable process—I feel like—that we're all going through. And we don't know...

We...all have left feet right now. I mean, I feel uncomfortable sometimes because I know I'm not “right” (still) inside. And I'm like, wow, my natural instincts are... I can't trust some things that I used to trust. I'm having to learn how to walk all over again in a different manner. And it's... It IS uncomfortable. And so that's... But then I know there's also somebody that really wants to help in this, and I just have to listen to that enough and not give up.

There was an answer given by Denver today about how that desire to give up—I've seen it in others; I've seen people... When we become aware of just...what a vulnerable state we're in, it takes much effort to keep going and not want to say, “Okay, I tap out, God,” you know; “I've had enough for this existence...” you know, “...but let me take this up in the next one.” It's har... Every minute we stay here is kind of like a continual miracle that we can keep on adding upon. I almost died years ago and wanted to die, for [indecipherable], for intercession. And so, I've looked at every minute since then... It has been so valuable, that I want to HAVE this.

So yeah, we are here, and it's a miracle that we're here. And for me, it...should give us a sense of gratitude that we even HAVE a chance and that He is paying attention to us.

15: So Monday morning, the conference organizing committee asks the question, “What did we learn and what ought we to have learned from this conference?” And I hope we ask that question and get a good answer. Because this is a new thing; Kentucky's new ground. This isn't Utah and Boise. This is the mission field, and we've gathered people here that are cold-calls, never heard it before, never heard the name. What ought we to have learned about the Lord being invited to speak? That'll be the question Monday morning.

Unknown: You know, I really appreciate your comments...and what was... It was very well-put. There are a lot of things we're still learning and still figuring out as this stuff goes along. You know, something that kind of occurred to me when we were talking about this scripting and scheduling thing is: You know what? We're all just sitting here together, talking about stuff in pretty much an unscripted environment right this instant. This is kind of like an unscheduled meeting, as it were. And it seems to me like a lot of these things kind of happen all over the place. Why did it have to be skipped?

10: See, that's the... What I... For years I saw (in putting the conference together) that eventually that we can... The old conferences, they used to show up, and typically, Joseph Smith was chosen—but it's like they could choose somebody to kind of conduct/guide it, but everybody would work out/decide what business needs to be taken care of in the community, which the community was there to... There was complaints and everything that would come up, and you deal with those things. And so it was more you arrange to show up and be there. We're not... We haven't been ready for that as a people 'cuz it's like it's too much chaos. 'Cuz if there's an open mic, you never know what's gonna happen with an open mic, you know. And there's been a lot of stuff. All these false spirits or half-truths or partial truths that people get excited about and want to rush ahead causes its own chaos. And so...

But in looking forward and backward years ago, we had to start someplace. We had to come out of the wilderness, start to practice doing something different, you know, and recovering from it being in the LDS culture, recover from being unequal. We're not used to being equals—like, we want somebody (like I said) to always tell us/organize it, you know, and it's... That's hard. But eventually, we can get to a point... In Moroni it talks about, “They gathered together and spoke one with another concerning the welfare of their souls.” And they also (like I said) decided whether to preach, teach... The CHURCH decided. We don't know how to do that still, quite yet, but we get there by incremental steps. And that's where the patience comes in, is letting Him guide us all, and each one of us... working out our own ambitions and false pride and fears of not having enough or being left out (and all those instincts that are within us we have to struggle with), that if we can come to that kind of calmness to trust that the Lord won't forget any one of us here, and if we have faith that He won't forget us, then we can let things happen that we would otherwise be uncomfortable letting things happen, so... It's when it comes back to, first and foremost, trusting Him that He never forgets any one of His kids. So...

Speaker 16: [Indecipherable] my outward success as a gauge of how I was doing and how pleased I was with my performance, then I would be terribly depressed. I don't look at my outward performance; I look at my INWARD sensitivity to feel what I've done wrong and how quick I am to repent of it. That's where I look at my (and I don't even want to say) “success.” It's really “my failure” is what it is. But the failures have made me more sensitive to what I do and what I say, even though it seems like I'm not making much progress a lot of times. But I think what we should look at in ourselves is: Do we repent quickly when we know we've done something wrong? Is it “real-time” repentance? Or is it “three days later” repentance? Or is it “never” repentance? Because really, repentance is going to help us in our salvation and that communication with the Lord. I mean, the doctrine of Christ, it always is, it's a very simplistic type of systematic approach to success through failure. And, I mean, if I thought that I could be successful because of what I did right, then gosh, you know, I'd be totally deluding myself. So don't get down on yourself, because I feel your heart and your desire, and your intent is good to want to do right. And that's what the Lord desires.

10: We have to rely wholly upon the merits of Christ, not on ourselves. So to answer your question, I mean I... That's hard. I mean, I think we have made all the mistakes, but... All

we can give Him is our willingness. I mean, the sacrament prayer talks about willingness, and that's the one thing we can... We can keep screwing up, but if we keep trying to come back to Him and be willing to be taught again when you fail again... I mean, having failed a thousand times on some things, it's like, it's so hard to come back to Him and say, "Well, I keep trying, but..."

"Bless his heart." I've heard, "Bless his heart," quite a few times.

Unknown: ...what was your question again?

7: Well, it was just—looking at church history and the ways that they failed—are we failing in the same ways, or are we succeeding? I mean, having them as our guide (or the guide as how to NOT succeed), I mean, where do we land? And as I look back at church history, I mean, they got off on the wrong foot pretty quick. You've got Oliver asking Joseph, "Hey, go ask through the Urim and Thummim if I can be one of the three witnesses."

"Hey, Joseph, go ask through the Urim and Thummim if..."

4: I can translate.

7: ...if I can translate." So immediately, they were relying on the prophet too much and not having the direct relationship with God themselves. Then you go through the years and you have the Kirtland... The temple came, but then you had the Safety Society mess-up in the banking, and Oliver and counterfeiting money, and then the polygamy thing all comes in, and then diverting funds from the temple to build homes, and so it was just this... Yeah, I look at all these mistakes and then just try to see where we are at. Are we making these same mistakes? And where are we at? How can we do better? Are we gonna do this, or are we not? Is it an individual thing of rising up, being redeemed, receiving the Lord? Or is it more of a group thing of "let's make sure we have enough money for the temple"?

14: I think... I find it interesting that all of that is outward. I mean, obviously, a lot of it comes from your heart, but you're talking about outward behaviors. And I don't think your outward behaviors... No, they're a representation of what's inside, but if you... I don't know how to... None of it's gonna matter if you can't figure out who you are and how you operate in the world. It... None of it's gonna matter. None of it's gonna matter unless you understand how I perceive you, or I understand how you perceive me. It's not gonna matter what you do because the mistakes are gonna start... They're gonna perpetuate themselves. It feels like what the world is missing is...for the ability of people to be quiet and be still. "Be still, and know that I am God."

"What lack I yet?" We run around doing lots of really fantastic things—fantastic things—much of them motivated by [indecipherable] and the power of God. And obviously, don't put them down. But they have to be balanced with the ability to be still.

I have this theory; I mean, it's not a theory—it's actually real. We go around and DO things so we don't have to do the real work of figuring out how we are in the world.

7: How we are "in the world" or "with God"—or both?

14: Both—with “you and me” and “Him and me,” and you know, and missing this big piece of, basically, the yoga of Christ and the centeredness and the awareness and the stillness of being able to hear God tell you what is wrong with you. Not “You’re not reading your Scriptures enough.” Not “You should have done this.” But basically, you know, “Your relationship with your kids really needs work.” You know, “You’re a good dad. You provide. You do the things that you need to do, but your kids have no connection with you whatsoever. They don’t even know you.” I’m just... These are just... I’m just throwing these... These are the things that are going to make people fit to be in community with other people. I mean...

3: There was... I don’t know if it’s still around. There was a moment when there was that sexual impropriety going on involving... The catchphrase was “bonded spirits,” like we were bonded together in a prior...

Unknown: Existence.

3: ...existence. And so, you know, “We belong together now, honey, so let’s get naked.” That crap showed up, and I hope we dealt with it. But for all I know, that crap’s still out there. And I mean, what really blew apart Nauvoo and ultimately destroyed both the community, the peace, the lives, the whole thing was—ultimately—sexual immorality.

14: ...AND people’s un... (Again, this... I think these are tied in.) Your... People’s unwillingness to have the internal fortitude to do something about it. “I don’t want to offend. I don’t want to hurt. I don’t wanna be ostracized. I don’t wanna be the one to...” I mean (I think), knowing what you’re talking about, I mean, the EXCUSES people were laying out for not dealing with it was just kind of mind-blowing. And I think this goes back to: We don’t have... As people, we’re doers; we’re not be-ers. We just like to do. Doing makes us feel so good.

Unknown: What did she say at the very beginning in Kirtland, where things first began to manifest going sideways; it wasn’t even sexual impropriety, but it really was the spirit of excelling and the spirit of materialism that gripped the church with get-rich-quick schemes—because everybody could see: “Others are gonna be moving in; we can buy the land now and resell it.” And there wasn’t the community. “Oh, we have a commandment to build a temple; let’s go build a temple.” It wasn’t until Joseph received an additional revelation saying, “Hey, build the temple,” that they then put in a push. But I don’t know that the people actually changed.

And that’s what I think blew things up the first time—was a disappointment about materialism and getting rich, and “All we have to do is trust the Prophet, and everybody’s gonna be, you know, happy in Zion.” And from there, given that there was a hierarchy, there was always envy and strife about who’s in charge and who’s closer to Joseph. And they got pushed from place to place out of pride-of-position and being above others and being able to be something that, you know, “I’m this in the world; I should be this in the church, too.” And I think then, by the time they got to Nauvoo, that’s when the sexual immorality had really become...matured—because of missionaries going to places where there was an

awful lot of communal societies that were doing that, and you had some false spirits that persuaded Brigham and Heber and friends to do things wrong.

But I look at **us**, and I think we've... Having a flat, completely flat, everybody's-gonna-be-dependent-on-the-Lord, we're actually gonna realize that you have to know God and be connected to Heaven—that has put 90% of the “excelling over one another” away. I think some people, honestly, they still want to be “there's an inner circle” maybe, or “I'm closer, and I hear these things and that things,” but [in Denver's] blog—from the very beginning—[he] always put, “Don't rely on anything anybody tells you, just what I said in my writing.” That I think has killed 90% of that.

Unknown: No, he said EVEN...himself and his writing.

Unknown: Yeah, search it out and find it.

Unknown: Yes. Well, he wants people to find and make the connection themselves and not be overly dependent on the dispensation head.

3: If you've got a rank-and-file hierarchy, how do you be one—one heart, one mind? I mean, I can understand the value of teaching to come together in one heart and one mind. But to have no poor among you with a rank-and-file...

I mean, eventually, we will have a temple—I believe. Eventually, I believe people will want to bring their gifts to the temple. My expectation is when that happens and there is something that accumulates of value of that temple, that that'll be turned over to the women to distribute among the poor. I don't think men oughta touch it. I don't think men oughta be involved. I think the women oughta care for the needs of the community in the same kind of vision that the Relief Society had, where the purpose of the society was to take care of the needs of the... Essentially, the children come first. But I think as soon as you invent structure, you invent disunity and inequality.

14: ...You're right, and there's really nothing new under the sun. And it is a CONSTANT battle.

Unknown: But this is a new thing. There are very few organizations I've ever seen or read about that have attempted to do something like this.

14: Right, but the urges still exist.

Unknown: Yeah, well, we're all bad habits.

14: Yes. Yeah. No, no, no, and to resist those is great, and you know, to the extent that you're doing it, you're doing a good job, but there's nothing new under the sun.

Unknown: For me, it was a culture shock.

14: The newness has to...

10: Alcoholics Anonymous tried to do the same.

14: No, it's just new creatures in Christ, the same old... We're the same old people.

10: It's the same patterns.

14: Same old things.

10: I noticed, and it's funny, I...

When I was in Alcoholics Anonymous and all these other anonymous groups, I noticed they had the same issues. The reason it's called "Anonymous" wasn't because they were worried about their reputation; it was because they were worried about a strongman taking over each group. It's like it was the disposition... They'd have a spiritual experience, have a change, and then they want to come over, and then they started fighting with each other for power. And they had these same urges/same instincts within each one of them that destroyed community. And so, they actually tried not to have an unorganized, locally, everybody-had-their-own-fellowship/group. And it was all local control, no central office—and of course, eventually, they got a central office and whatever else and screwed it all up. But that's, you know, same patterns. They were trying to do what we're trying to do, and not... And they came up with twelve traditions of how to try to accomplish that. Money, power, and prestige was...the main things that diverted from their primary purpose, which was to help each other connect with God. That was the whole purpose of gathering was to help each alcoholic connect with their higher powers.

3: We've been able to take the money out of it...

10: Yeah.

3: ...completely.

10: Yeah.

3: No one gets anything.

10: Yeah.

3: We're not supporting...

10: When I was in treatment, this AA guy told me... He had the spirit with him, and I was like, "How can he have the spirit with him? He's like a general authority." And I asked him, "So you used to be Mormon?" And he's like, "Well, yeah." But I said, "Well, why aren't you Mormon now?" He pointed to this one tradition: money, power, and prestige. He said, "The Mormons are all screwed up because of this. The Book of Mormon's true. Joseph was a prophet. They screwed up," and it blew my mind 20 years ago. I was like, "Wow, that can't be true." But yeah, it was true. So, anyway...

Unknown: But to [her] other point, because it... And it ties on what you said. I think I know for myself... Some things that I've wrestled with for years, one day an inspiration came to me about how to deal with it. And it's not anything I'd ever thought of before. And it's like, okay, how do I build that into a habit, 'cuz it's such... It happens, mentally, so fast, and yet

I... It was the right thing to do. And as I've done it, a broken little piece of me now works much better than it used to be. And I think probably all of us have had those kinds of experiences where the Spirit has whispered something—it's almost like microcode—something deep down inside that if you just change this or just attempt to do things differently than you've been doing it like this (in your thinking or in your acting), and it shifts, and it made me a better person. And I think that is that inner thing that [she] is talking about. And if we're all doing some of that, then I think that we're rising and ascending and being more palatable and more tolerable to God and to our spouses and friends than we have been in the past. And so, I think in Joseph's time, they were always having external pressure, and external pressure definitely focuses you and causes you to call upon God. And it always worried me that we're gonna HAVE to...

...

3: I think the value of honesty and the loss of honesty from the polygamous comings and goings... Even the *Manifesto* was a damned lie. They didn't stop practicing polygamy until a later letter from Joseph F. Smith finally discontinuing it.

Unknown: In 1897?

3: When they finally excommunicated two members of the Quorum of the Twelve for practicing plural marriage, their excommunication was not based on the *Manifesto*. It was based on the letter from Joseph F. Smith discontinuing it. And he did that because of what happened back in Washington. I mean, he was accused under oath of hiding the practice.

(It was the 1905 letter that he wrote.)

Unknown: Oh.

3: Yeah, so from 1890 'til 1905—for 15 years, a decade and a half—the church was lying again. They called it: Beating the devil at his own game. “The devil's a liar; we'll beat him at his game; we'll lie, too.” You can't do that! You can't even play that game. If you do, you know, you ARE the devil. You just are.

...

11: So, I have a thought on that question. I felt really strongly that that needed to be the theme of this talk: false spirits. And I felt very strongly it needed to be said for this group—not just people here, but anybody who will listen to it.

- So we may have done away with hierarchy. Yay. We're not gonna struggle with aspiring to a calling.
- We may have done away with money. Yay. We're not gonna have those issues.
- We have not dealt with WHY we have those issues, no matter what organization we belong to.

So when I stand before the judgment bar of God and He says to me, “How did you overcome your aspiring?” and I say, “Oh, I went, and I got involved in a group that didn't have a hierarchy.” And He's gonna say, “Well, couldn't you have overcome it when you weren't

involved in a group?" Like, how hard is that to overcome it if I'm in a group that doesn't even give that to me as an issue? Right?

So it all goes back to: We do have jarrings; we do have contention; we do have envy; we do have strife; and we do have lustful and covetous desires in each one of us. So it takes... What she was trying to get to was it takes a lot of self-awareness, and that's what Paul's mentioning when he sat and self-reflected and asked God to help him with something. So, the...

I have never had a prayer answered more quickly in my life than when I kneel down and say, "What's wrong with me?" And it's immediate. It's like immediate, right? God's like, "Well finally! Hey, you need to work on this."

So yes, we have those things among us. Yes, we listen to false spirits. They are at work whenever God begins a work. And it's in our *Glossary of Terms*. (Anything smart I had to say today comes almost exclusively from the *Glossary of Terms*. So if you read my paper and all the footnotes, you're gonna realize I really just quoted Denver without saying, "Denver said.") So yes, we have all those, and we've got to... What will make us different than the thousands of years of history before us—because God tries to save His children as often as He can—what will make us different is if we can overcome pride and arrogance enough to really honestly self-reflect and ask and...take the time to say, "We have got so many diversions today that are diversions." That is a false spirit.

So we may have woken up to the false tradition of our fathers. Yay for us. Are we really any better? Am I really a better person? Am I really anymore able to be successful in a community called Zion? Or am I just dragging with me a lot of social and personality and characteristics that are gonna, like, cause it to fail? So for me, writing this talk was a opportunity to self-reflect and really ask myself... I don't ever like to give talks where I think I have it all figured out. I much prefer to give a talk that is for me. And if anybody else benefits, that's awesome.

So I know I have had enemies. I know things have happened in this movement that have made me feel left out and my feelings hurt. That is a symptom of envy. I know that I have been contentious. I know that I have had jarrings with people. And for those things, I have been really ashamed when I have stopped and really looked in the mirror. So I'm here to say that I know I still am influenced by false spirits. I sure hope nobody else is. And I love being around a lot of you because you're so inspiring to me.

But I do think that Stephanie, her mission... If you guys haven't started listening to her podcast, you really need to. It is free therapy every week, but it is so much deeper than that because she is mindfully (and with the Spirit) teaching us what...skills and techniques and things we can do so that we can hopefully become people that our neighbors won't want to kick out.

10: See, and that's where...

7: Amen.

10: Amen. What we just did, too, was... We talked about this pattern in the “Civilization” [talk] in the Grand Junction conference years ago: confession. We don't confess... particular sins; we confess our character issues, our struggles, our “I gossip too much,” “I don't pay attention to what I should with my kids,” “I'm worried too much about what other people think”— that's being willing to... You take away the power of the accuser when you acknowledge your own weakness, you know. And we don't know how to do that, because we get too graphic, and “Oh my gosh, I don't want to hear that,” you know, or we, yeah, we confess stuff that's like just surface, and we're doing it... to be heard. So anyway...

But the “wisdom” thing... So, today we had tons of knowledge. Tomorrow, we need wisdom how to apply, how to go/where do we go from now? You know, it's like that's what we lack. In Aravada, Denver... The first part of the talk was knowledge; the second part was the wisdom talk. So we lack wisdom—how to apply, how to live with each other, and how to interact.

So tomorrow... The whole program got blown up. It's like... Or it's probably getting blown up. And so I would invite everybody coming tomorrow... We're gonna have the sacrament. But as far as the rest of the program, it may be under flux. We know Denver's not gonna be there. The later program that Laura and I were thinking of doing, the intent was to have all of us learn from each other. “What did we learn? What has the Lord taught us about... ‘Hearing and Trusting the Lord in the Storm’?” We were gonna have a discussion because we wanted everybody to have a chance to, if they wanted, you know... How do we learn to talk succinctly like I'm doin'... (I'm not doing it good right now.) But how can we get to the point and share the light that the Lord gives us and stop talking? So anyway...

So tomorrow I invite everybody to come and pray for us... not just as the committee, but that we, as a people, can know what to do tomorrow to bring the most spirit into us personally. And... 'Cuz I walked away today being convinced I needed to change. I was taking the same inventory. I looked around... I saw relationships I haven't always... I felt to repent after hearing today's talk. So anyway, so I invite you guys to come tomorrow, knowing that we're needing inspiration how to fill these things, what to change, whatever, and I think you're all a part of it. Everybody here is a part of it, whether it's... Whatever you feel led to do. So anyway, thank you.

...

5: Hey, what's Stephanie's podcast?

11: It's called “In Sanity, A piece of mind.” And if you understand...

...my question is if the Lord wants to speak tomorrow, why didn't He change the flight to Monday instead of tomorrow? I mean, why is His mouthpiece gone? Just sayin', like, I don't know. It makes me a little nervous.

Unknown: Relying on him too much.

11: No, see, we have that... We have the misunderstanding... of what Joseph meant. He was talking... When he gave that statement, “You're relying on the Prophet too much,” he was

saying it to the women who were giving in to the seductions of Brigham and Heber and John C. Bennett because they would say, “Well, Joseph said it's okay.”

“Oh, okay. Joseph said it's okay. All right, I can have sex with you, and we're not married.”

And then he took the women out and he said, “Learn the commandments, and learn to think for yourself.” Joseph does such a good job being humble and meek and letting the men, in particular...

Brigham got into trouble because Brigham thought he was better and smarter and more awesome than Joseph. You don't get that way if you have a guy who's always a strongman. So we got to be really careful that we balance that—because the problem the Saints really had was a whole lot of men who thought they knew better than Joseph. And so, once they let that arrogance and pride start... Like even Oliver Cowdery—his issue with “I want to translate with you because I'm smarter than you, and I have an education,” it wasn't because he wanted to serve the Lord. It's because he thought he was better than Joseph and could do a better job.

7: And then the Whitmer brothers thought that they could replace Joseph, and they were the next in line...

11: Yeah, yeah.

7: ...because they could do a better job than he was doing. But I agree. I mean, Denver does speak for the Lord, and...

11: So that's my first thought, and I'm nervous. So we will definitely be praying.

And then my other thought is if you understand Stephanie's role, if you understand [t]hat a son of God or an exalted man has an elect lady with him (and...he's knowledge, and she's wisdom), then that is why I suggest we listen to her podcast—because she is acting in her role to help us learn a lot of stuff to heal from the scars. I mean, like the Answer to Prayer for Covenant talks about, we've all been scarred. We have. We've all had difficult things in our lives (sans the church) just being children and people and whatever. Like, we've... A lot of people have suffered some really horrific things. And so, I think a lot of healing needs to happen...

7: Yeah, dealing with trauma, boundaries, communication skills, letting go of the passive-aggressive tendencies, I mean, she covered so much stuff.

11: Oh yeah, she is just, like, amazing. Yeah, yeah. So, for sure, I would listen to that. And try to actually become that. That's harder. Listening is a little easier. It's actually the implementing, right?

12: Are all of them, like... The older ones? You can hear the older ones?

11: Mmhmm.

12: Okay.

11: She's been going for about a year, so I think she has...

7: Yeah, over a year.

11: ...I don't know how many shows. She does...

7: One a week, every Monday, she has a new podcast.

5: "61" is what I saw when I looked it up.

Unknown: What's her podcast on?

11: So, she's a clinical psychologist...

4: What platform?

Unknown: That was a poor question, let me rephrase. Where is it? Where is the stream at?

7: Like if you have an Apple, you can go to the podcast app.

Unknown: If you don't...

Unknown: Perhaps Spotify?

7: Spotify, Google Podcasts...

11: "In Sanity, A piece of mind"

...

Unknown: I just asked her where would be a good place to start some of this. That was kind of... I felt like there was a lot. And she wrote down a few websites for me to go to. I could share them.

11: Yeah, that would be great.

Unknown: They weren't necessarily her stuff, but they were some other stuff that she says would be a good place to start. So I mean, I don't know if anybody would like me to share that with you...

11: I think that would be great, like, maybe they could put together a resource page for their conference website page. That would be awesome.

Unknown: I can put that down if you guys want.

11: I mean, we're all broken, right?.

Unknown: I've been wondering the same stuff.

7: She's very talented.

11: She is. She can drill into an issue really fast.

10: It seems like she brought up... We spend a lot of time on all this history stuff, it was like, I'm more interested in how do we learn today how to deal with each other and how to deal with these pragmatic things—because her podcasts are not like deep doctrine. It's pragmatic stuff about how to deal with each other.

7: It's living here in this Telestial world and all the baggage we've gotten and how we just don't know how to have relationships or deal with our own trauma or anything like that. We all need help with that.

10: Here's an exercise. Think of the person... Think of one person that you can't stand right now. And it's about you. Okay, it's like, whoever that is, you're that person. There's something about you that you cannot accept in yourself, and it's... But you can see it in them; it's easy. But turn that mirror around, and why does that bother you about them? That's one way...

7: So, I used to have a really hard time wanting to ever get counseling or hear from someone all of these earthly techniques to fix myself. I'm like, the Lord can just fix it all. And I was very much in that mindset until just recently. I've dealt with a chronic illness for a long time, and I've just been finally open to anything that might help me get better. And I realized, okay, I have some trauma stored in my body that I need to release so I can heal physically. And I've cried out to the Lord. And He's directed me to some people who can help me, and so I feel like He is absolutely involved in the whole process. But some of these human angels have been able to help, too. So...

...

Speaker 17: Well, I remember at one point in time, Stephanie was talking on her podcast about a values-based activity that they'd done in their family. I don't know if any of you listened to that particular podcast. I think it was on the new year or something like that. I'm kind of curious what that was. ...I don't know if anybody has talked to them extensively enough to know what that was? And I guess my second thing was...

2: Can you speak up a little bit...? We can't hear you.

17: Sorry, it's a problem I have. I have to be a lot louder than I think I am. And so, the other question was, like, I think a lot of my sources of conflict usually come with that cognitive dissonance of, "Okay, there's this commandment over here, and there's this one over here. And in this particular situation, which one takes precedence?" Right? So like, she talks about being direct and talking to people about commandments that they're breaking and things like that...and how to confront these situations. And sometimes I run into issues dealing with those because there's other commandments that kind of seem to conflict, like: How do you approach a situation without being contentious, while at the same time saying, "Hey look, this is a bad direction for you to go." Does that make sense? Am I like off on tangents?

5: No, like how do you confront them without... But we're also commanded to be persuasive...

17: Right.

5: ...and long-suffering. And so, it's like how do you approach someone in both confrontation (which is seen as aggression) but also in a place of love for them that they just don't ball up and get defensive about? How can you deliver that message without walls just shooting up?

17: Yeah. Yeah. So, I don't know. Those are just some things that I've run into that I'm not particularly good at.