

Tender Mercies of Our Lord Jesus Christ

October 2017 Issue #2

Newsletter for Latter-day Saint brothers and sisters in prison, and also those imprisoned who are not members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, yet seek spiritual enrichment and the Savior's peace.

*"...the **tender mercies** of the Lord are over all those whom He hath chosen, because of their faith..." (1 Nephi 20)*

From the Editor: My dear brothers and sisters. Are you aware of how valuable you are to the Lord and your Heavenly Father?

None of you came to earth to earn value in your Heavenly Father's eyes.

YOU BROUGHT THAT VALUE WITH YOU! The Savior is anxious for each of you to turn to Him and feel His peace. Oh what joy you bring me. Your responses to the inaugural edition of my newsletter

were humbling. I received many many letters. I had no idea how blessed I would be in doing this newsletter. I had intended the newsletter to provide **YOU** with a blessing or two; the blessings I have received were indeed unexpected. Oh what joy we feel when we serve our Heavenly Father and His children! Many of you shared your copy of the newsletter with others. Some of those others have since written

I am the way, the truth, and the life:
no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

JOHN 14:6



me. They will be added to my mailing list. I desire that everyone who would like a free monthly copy of this humble newsletter, receive it. I would feel great joy if **EVERY** inmate was on the mailing list! So tell others, and if they would like to receive each month's newsletter, at no cost to any inmate ever, all they need to do is write me with their name and inmate number (or many names and

many numbers in one letter) to:

Tender Mercies Newsletter

P.O. Box 17152

Holladay, Utah 84117

I will then immediately add them to the newsletter mailing list. Brothers and sisters, you are loved!

—Brother D.

Each issue of this newsletter features a front page inspirational message by a stalwart Latter-day Saint. For our second edition we are blessed with a testimony of the Savior's comfort by Brother Ned Siegfried of Siegfried and Jensen Law Firm, the attorney we see on television all of the time. Brother Siegfried is a dedicated lifetime member missionary, devoted son and servant of our Heavenly Father, and a very committed and serious Gospel scholar. He is also a Draper Facility Wasatch Chapel Institute instructor:

Words of Comfort. By Ned P. Siegfried

My dear inmate brothers and sisters, when Joseph was suffering in the Liberty Jail the Savior comforted him with these words:

"My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; and then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high; thou shalt triumph over all of the foes." (D&C 12:7-8)



As inmates, many of you undoubtedly feel much like Joseph Smith did during his time of incarceration. Like Joseph, you are separated from your families and the ones you love. You feel powerless to support, help and guide those most near and dear to you. Joseph, while still incarcerated in Liberty Jail, penned the following words of encouragement to his fellow saints:

“Therefore dearly beloved brethren, let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power; and then may we stand still with the utmost assurance, to see the salvation of God, and for his arm to be revealed.” (D&C 123:17)

In spite of his extremely challenging circumstances and deplorable living conditions, Joseph was able to see beyond his current adversity and afflictions. I believe the primary way that Joseph, as well as you, can endure well your present adversity and affliction is to stay focused on the Savior. The Lord told Joseph in 1829, a year before the Book of Mormon was published and the Church was organized to;

“Look unto me in every thought; doubt not, fear not.” (D&C 6:36)

While each of us has to pay attention to our given circumstances, and the temporal concerns in our respective lives, I believe that we can, and in fact need to, stay focused on the Savior throughout each and every day. As we always remember Him and strive to keep His commandments, we can enjoy the promise of having “His Spirit to be with us”. The Lord promises us that if we “draw near unto him, he will draw near unto us” and that if we seek him diligently we shall find him.” (D&C 88:63).

But how does a person stay focused on the Lord in every thought and continually strive to draw near unto Him when we all have so many other things vying for our attention? May I suggest that our minds and hearts are much like computers in that they both have default settings. As fallen mortal beings living in an ever-darkening world, there is no question that the world does not encourage spirituality and our drawing nearer unto the Lord. In other words, unless we take affirmative steps and proactively strive to program our minds and hearts with the things of eternity we will struggle spiritually. If we allow our thoughts and feelings to be dictated by the things of this world and the philosophies of men, we will be resisting the enticings of the Holy Spirit and not be looking to the Lord in all of our thoughts.

Being incarcerated certainly forces geographical boundaries on a person, but only we and we alone place spiritual boundaries on ourselves. I suspect even though incarceration was difficult for Joseph as it is for you, Joseph focused on the Lord in his afflictions and as a result grew spiritually as he endured well his adversity. It has been said that whatever we place our attention on gets stronger in our lives and whatever we remove our attention from gets weaker and weaker until it entirely disappears from our lives. This being true, it is imperative that we do those things that will allow us to draw nearer to the Lord on a daily basis and to gain the eternal perspective that He has and that only His spirit can fully impart to us.

There is an acronym that applies to all men and women universally regardless of their circumstances that I believe can be very helpful to you as you spend time in prison. The acronym is C.P.R. We know what C.P.R. can do for people who are on the brink of physical death. Physical C.P.R. can restore physical life to the lifeless. In a similar fashion spiritual C.P.R. can restore the spirit to one’s life and can strengthen one’s spirituality as the steps of spiritual C.P.R. are continuously utilized. The spiritual acronym C.P.R. stands for Church, Prayer and Reading. I believe if a person faithfully attends his church meetings weekly, prays and reads the scriptures and other gospel material daily, he will enjoy great spiritual blessings. A person who actively participates in C.P.R. will enjoy a greater endowment of the spirit, will draw closer to the Lord, and will naturally develop a more eternal perspective. I believe having an eternal perspective helps each of us endure well our current adversities and afflictions no matter what they may be; and as the Lord said, “they shall be but a small moment.” How can that be when some of you may be facing many years in prison? Remember that compared to eternity and the riches thereof, even the longest prison sentence is infinitesimally short. Joseph said on another occasion after escaping Liberty Jail and being re-united with his family and the body of saints;

“Brethren, shall we not go on in so great a cause? Go forward and not backward. Courage, brethren; and on, on to the victory! Let your hearts rejoice, and be exceedingly glad.” (D&C 128:22)

As you go forward in attending not just your Sunday meetings, but also Institute, Family Home Evening, and any other organized opportunities to meet, learn, and worship the Lord with fellow Saints and believers - and develop and maintain a daily pattern of prayer and gospel study, your mind and heart will be more fully directed to the Savior. As a result of your increased faithfulness, you will have His sustaining Spirit to be with you in greater abundance to comfort and strengthen you and bless you with the eternal perspective you so desperately need to endure your current adversities. As you commit yourself to regularly attending your church meetings and praying and reading daily, you will indeed be nourishing the seed of testimony (Alma 32:27-43) and drawing nearer to the Lord. You will come to know that the only true freedom is the spiritual freedom that comes by being outside of the bondage of sin (which includes sins of omission) and the shackles of a mortal perspective.

The Lord loves you and continues to stand at your door knocking and hoping that you will open unto Him and let Him enter and be with you (Rev. 3:20). Only He can make your burdens light (Matthew 11:28-30) and your weaknesses strengths (Ether 12:27). Only in this manner can one's adversities and afflictions be but a small moment. In the sacred Name of Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

-- Ned P. Siegfried Wasatch Institute Instructor

Points to Ponder:

His House By C.S. Lewis

I find I must borrow yet another parable from George MacDonald. Imagine yourself as a living house. God comes in to rebuild that house. At first, perhaps, you can understand what He is doing. He is getting the drains right and stopping the leaks in the roof and so on: you knew that those jobs needed doing and so you are not surprised. But presently he starts knocking the house about in a way that hurts abominably and does not seem to make sense. What on earth is He up to? The explanation is that He is building quite a different house from the one you thought of--- throwing out a new wing here, putting on an extra floor there, running up towers, making courtyards. You thought you were going to be made into a decent little cottage: but He is building a PALACE.

Joseph Smith Teaches Justice and Mercy

As told by **Truman G. Madsen**

The Prophet's role as a judge and as mayor of Nauvoo and the head of the Nauvoo Legion required him to discipline the le-gionnaires and render judgment as the mayor. Anthony, a black man, had been selling liquor in violation of the law, and to make it worse, he was doing so on the Sabbath. He pleaded that he needed money urgently to buy the freedom of his child held as a slave in a southern state. Said Joseph: "I am sorry, Anthony, but the law must be observed, and we will have to impose a 'fine'." The next day Joseph gave him a 'fine' horse to purchase the freedom of the child.



From the Tabernacle

Messages From Music and the Spoken Word

FORGIVENESS

Given by J. Spencer Kinard

May 18, 1986

*One of the challenges facing us in today's ever - shrinking world is the need to cultivate a greater willingness to forgive those who have offended us. Christ taught us the extent to which we should forgive. Even at His crucifixion, as the nails were driven through His hands and feet, He prayed "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."**

The Savior enlarged the concept of forgiveness far beyond the standard of His time when He told His Apostle Peter to forgive seventy times seven. He was writing, not only for His time but also for ours, a new chapter in man's understanding of his relationship with his fellowman. Of course, the Savior didn't mean for us to keep a record of our forgiving. He was suggesting that he who really forgives doesn't keep count. Some people say they can forgive, but they can't forget. Christ was suggesting that to really forgive, we must also forget.

If you ask most people how they react to injury, most will tell you there is a natural impulse to retaliate, to hurt the person who has hurt them. But, the Savior was convinced that we need to break the vicious circle of "an eye for an eye" and "a tooth for a tooth." He taught that forgiveness is a moral duty, and He said we need to be quite direct in expressing our forgiveness to others.

Obviously, the Savior thinks forgiveness is important, since the kindred terms, "forgive, forgave, forgiveness," occur some forty times in the four gospels. Both in the Lord's Prayer and in His instruction to Peter, Jesus seems to say, "How can you ask God to forgive you if you refuse to forgive a brother?"

The Lord has admonished us to forgive, and that's enough reason to do so. But even the psychological case for forgiveness is overwhelmingly persuasive. Not to forgive is to be imprisoned by the past, by old grievances that do not permit our lives to proceed with new business.

Not to forgive is to yield one's self to another's control. It leaves us doomed to always respond to others' actions, locked into a sequence of acting and reacting ... of outrage and revenge.

Forgiveness. It frees the forgiver. It brings us inner and outer harmony. It gives us a greater sense of personal peace. Forgiveness. It is an important principle in our lives and a necessary ingredient for our happiness.

*New Testament Luke 23:34

The Story of a Son - Who Will Take the Son?

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire their great works of art.

When the Vietnam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier.

The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands.

He said, "Sir, you don't know me, but I am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.

The young man held out his package. "I know this isn't much. I'm not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this."

The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up with tears.

He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. "Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It's a gift."

The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son.

The auctioneer pounded his gavel. "We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?"

There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, "We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one."

But the auctioneer persisted, "Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?"

Another voice shouted angrily, "We didn't come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!" But still the auctioneer continued, "The son! The son! Who'll take the son?"

Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. "I'll give \$10 for the painting." Being a poor man, it was all he could afford.

"We have \$10, who will bid \$20?" "Give it to him for \$10. Let's see the masters."

"\$10 is the bid, won't someone bid \$20?" The crowd was becoming angry. They didn't want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. "Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!"

A man sitting on the second row shouted, "Now let's get on with the collection!"

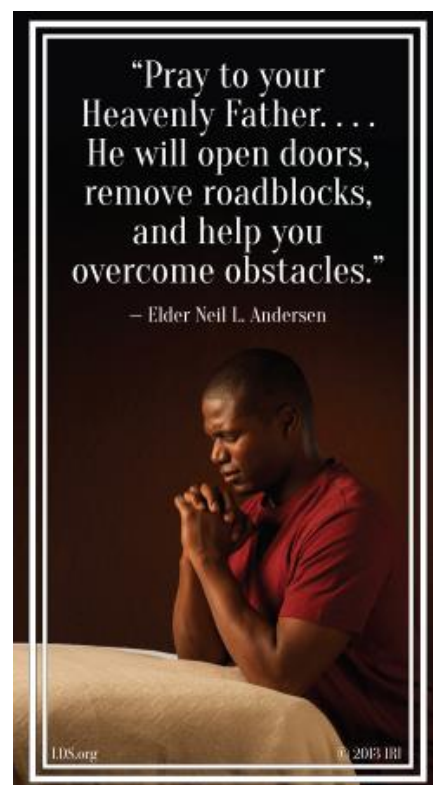
The auctioneer laid down his gavel, "I'm sorry, the auction is over."

"What about the paintings?"

"I am sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was told of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!"

God gave his Son 2,000 years ago to die on a cruel cross. Much like the auctioneer, His message today is, "The Son, the Son, who'll take the Son?" Because, whoever takes the Son gets everything.

--Author Unknown



BEHIND THE HYMNS:

“O My Father”

Text: Eliza R. Snow (1804-1887; LDS) Music: James McGranahan (1840-1907)

"Implicit in the Christian verity that all men are the spirit children of an Eternal Father is the usually unspoken truth that they are also the offspring of an Eternal Mother," wrote Elder Bruce R. McConkie. "This glorious truth of celestial parentage, including specifically both a Father and a Mother, is heralded forth by song in one of the greatest of Latter-day Saint hymns, O My Father by Eliza R. Snow." (Mormon Doctrine).

Latter-day Saints love the beauty of this hymn's poetry and the importance of its unique doctrine. George D. Pyper pointed out that Eliza R. Snow was close to the Prophet Joseph Smith at the time she wrote this hymn and thus had many opportunities to discuss matters of doctrine. He continued:

"It was during this period that Zina D. Huntington (afterwards Zina D. Young) was grieved over an unusual circumstance. Her mother, who had died some time before, had been buried in a temporary grave and it became necessary to remove the body to a permanent resting place. When the remains were exhumed it was discovered that they were partially petrified. It seemed to Zina as if the very foundation of the doctrine of the resurrection crumbled. To the question 'Shall I know my mother when I meet her in the world beyond?' the Prophet responded emphatically, 'Yes, you will know your mother there.' A firm believer in Joseph's divine mission, Zina D. Huntington was comforted by the promise. From the discussions on the resurrection and the relationship of man to Deity no doubt came the inspiration to Eliza R. Snow for the writing of 'O My Father.' The poem was written in the home of Stephen Markham, and was penned on a wooden chest, the only table available in her meagerly furnished room.

"The hymn is in four stanzas and is an epitome of the great drama of eternal life as revealed by the restored Gospel of Jesus Christ.

"The Prologue: The first stanza proclaims the literal Fatherhood of God; that we were nurtured by His side in our ante-mortal existence, connoting the truth that we were instructed in the great plan, obedience to which would enable us to 'regain His presence' and 'again behold His face.'

"The Play: Stanza II shifts the scene to earth-life, where we are placed in a school to see whether we will do the things required of us and prove our right to the promised restoration to God's presence. Our recollection of ante-mortal life is withheld in order that we may walk by faith: yet, not to be left wholly in the dark, a 'secret something,' a key that opens the door to knowledge, is given us, and through it (Stanza III) is revealed the new and glorious doctrine that we are children also of a Mother in heaven: 'In the heavens are parents single, No, the thought makes reason stare...Truth is reason, truth eternal, tells me I've a mother there.'"

"The Epilogue: Back again into the Eternal Presence our thoughts are projected. Through obedience, and through having completed all we have been commanded to do, with the 'mutual approbation' of our Heavenly Parents, we claim the promise made in our ante-mortal state."

"Truly 'O My Father' is the drama of eternal life: not merely a hymn, but a prophecy and a revelation." (Stories of Latter-day Saint Hymns, pp. 4-6)

Eliza R. Snow: LDS. American, 1804-1887. At age twenty-one she had already received recognition as a poet: she had won a prize for a poem on the deaths of Adams and Jefferson. She was baptized a Latter-day Saint in 1835 and helped convert her brother, Lorenzo Snow, who became the fifth President of the Church. She taught school in Kirtland and Nauvoo. She was a key administrative figure in the early history of the Church: she was the first secretary and second General President of the Relief Society, and she also helped organize the Mutual Improvement Association and the Primary. She was the first president of the board of directors of Deseret Hospital. Her hymns include: Awake, Ye Saints of God, Awake!, Great Is the Lord, Though Deepening Trials, Again We Meet Around the Board, Behold the Great Redeemer Die, How Great the Wisdom and the Love, The Time Is Far Spent, Truth Reflects upon Our Senses, O My Father, and, In Our Lovely Deseret.



Favorite Scriptures:

Search and find these passages and mark them in your personal scriptures.



Book of Mormon:

"The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants: and none of them that trust in Him shall be Desolate." (Psalms 34:22)

"When ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God the Eternal Father, in the Name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, He will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost. And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things." (Moroni 10:4-5)

:Old Testament

Doctrine and Covenants:

"Come unto me...and I will give you rest...learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matthew 11:28-29)

"If thou shalt ask, thou shalt receive revelation upon revelation, knowledge upon knowledge, that thou mayest know the mysteries and peaceable things - that which bringeth joy, that which bringeth life eternal." (Doctrine and Covenants 42:61)

:New Testament

Pearl of Great Price:

"Jesus Christ, the only Name which shall be given under heaven, whereby salvation shall come unto the children of men." (Moses 6:52)

Conference Talks – The Best of the Best...

From the Editor: This talk is my favorite testimony of the Savior. This was Bruce R. McConkie's final testimony and General Conference talk before he passed away. He died just a couple short weeks after bearing this commanding personal witness of the Savior. The final paragraph makes it clear that this man KNEW the Savior! The picture shown of Elder McConkie is from that talk. Read this testimony and then pray about the Savior.

The Purifying Power of Gethsemane

Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (29 Jul 1915 -19 Apr 1985)



I feel, and the Spirit seems to accord, that the most important doctrine I can declare, and the most powerful testimony I can bear, is of the atoning sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. His atonement is the most transcendent event that ever has or ever will occur from Creation's dawn through all the ages of a never-ending eternity. It is the supreme act of goodness and grace that only a god could perform. Through it, all of the terms and conditions of the Father's eternal plan of salvation became operative. Through it are brought to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. Through it, all men are saved from death, hell, the devil, and endless torment. And through it, all who believe and obey the glorious gospel of God, all who are true and faithful and overcome the world, all who suffer

for Christ and his word, all who are chastened and scourged in the Cause of him whose we are—all shall become as their Maker and sit with him on his throne and reign with him forever in everlasting glory.

In speaking of these wondrous things I shall use my own words, though you may think they are the words of scripture, words spoken by other Apostles and Prophets. True it is they were first proclaimed by others, but they are now mine, for the Holy Spirit of God has borne witness to me that they are true, and it is now as though the Lord had revealed them to me in the first instance. I have thereby heard his voice and know his word.

Two thousand years ago, outside Jerusalem's walls, there was a pleasant garden spot, Gethsemane by name, where Jesus and his intimate friends were wont to retire for pondering and prayer. There Jesus taught his disciples the doctrines of the kingdom, and all of them communed with Him who is the Father of us all, in whose ministry they were engaged, and on whose errand they served. This sacred spot, like Eden where Adam dwelt, like Sinai from whence Jehovah gave his laws, like Calvary where the Son of God gave his life a ransom for many, this holy ground is where the Sinless Son of the Everlasting Father took upon himself the sins of all men on condition of repentance.

We do not know, we cannot tell, no mortal mind can conceive the full import of what Christ did in Gethsemane. We know he sweat great goutts of blood from every pore as he drained the dregs of that bitter cup his Father had given him. We know he suffered, both body and spirit, more than it is possible for man to suffer, except it be unto death. We know that in some way, incomprehensible to us, his suffering satisfied the demands of justice, ransomed penitent souls from the pains and penalties of sin, and made mercy available to those who believe in his holy name.



We know that he lay prostrate upon the ground as the pains and agonies of an infinite burden caused him to tremble and would that he might not drink the bitter cup. We know that an angel came from the courts of glory to strengthen him in his ordeal, and we suppose it was mighty Michael, who foremost felt that mortal man might be. As near as we can judge, these infinite agonies—this suffering beyond compare—continued for some three or four hours. After this—his body then wrenched and drained of strength—he confronted Judas and the other incarnate devils, some from the very Sanhedrin itself; and he was led away with a rope around his neck, as a common criminal, to be judged by the arch-criminals who as Jews sat in Aaron's seat and who as Romans wielded Caesar's power. They took him to Annas, to Caiaphas, to Pilate, to Herod, and back to Pilate. He was accused, cursed, and smitten. Their foul saliva ran down his face as vicious blows further weakened his pain-engulfed body. With reeds of wrath they rained blows upon his back. Blood ran down his face as a crown of thorns pierced his trembling brow. But above it all he was scourged, scourged with forty stripes save one, scourged with a multithonged whip into whose leather strands sharp bones and cutting metals were woven. Many died from scourging alone, but he rose from the sufferings of the scourge that he might die an ignominious death upon the cruel cross of Calvary. Then he carried his own cross until he collapsed from the weight and pain and mounting agony of it all.

Finally, on a hill called Calvary—again, it was outside Jerusalem's walls—while helpless disciples looked on and felt the agonies of near death in their own bodies, the Roman soldiers laid him upon the cross. With great mallets they drove spikes of iron through his feet and hands and wrists. Truly he was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. Then the cross was raised that all might see and gape and curse and deride. This they did, with evil venom, for three hours from 9:00 A.M. to noon. Then the heavens grew black. Darkness covered the land for the space of three hours, as it did among the Nephites. There was a mighty storm, as though the very God of Nature was in agony. And truly he was, for while he was hanging on the cross for another three hours, from noon to 3:00 P.M., all the infinite agonies and merciless pains of Gethsemane recurred. And, finally, when the atoning agonies had taken their toll—when the victory had been won, when the Son of God had fulfilled the will of his Father in all things—then he said, "It is finished" ([John 19:30](#)), and he voluntarily gave up the ghost. As the peace and comfort of a merciful death freed him from the pains and sorrows of mortality, he entered the paradise of God. When he had made his soul an offering for sin, he was prepared to see his seed, according to the messianic word. These, consisting of all the holy prophets and faithful Saints from ages past; these, comprising all who had taken upon them his name, and who, being spiritually begotten by him, had become his sons and his daughters, even as it is with us; all these were assembled in the spirit world, there to see his face and hear his voice.

After some thirty-eight or forty hours—three days as the Jews measured time—our Blessed Lord came to the Arimathea's tomb, where his partially embalmed body had been placed by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. Then, in a way incomprehensible to us, he took up that body which had not yet seen corruption and arose in that glorious immortality which made him like his resurrected Father. He then received all power in heaven and on earth, obtained eternal exaltation, appeared unto Mary Magdalene and many others, and ascended into heaven, there to sit down on the right hand of God the Father Almighty and to reign forever in eternal glory. His rising from death on the third day crowned the Atonement. Again, in some way incomprehensible to us, the effects of his resurrection pass upon all men so that all shall rise from the grave. As Adam brought death, so Christ brought life; as Adam is the father of mortality, so Christ is the father of immortality. And without both, mortality and immortality, man cannot work out his salvation and ascend to those heights beyond the skies where gods and angels dwell forever in eternal glory.

Now, the atonement of Christ is the most basic and fundamental doctrine of the gospel, and it is the least understood of all our revealed truths. Many of us have a superficial knowledge and rely upon the Lord and his goodness to see us through the trials and perils of life. But if we are to have faith like Enoch and Elijah we must believe what

they believed, know what they knew, and live as they lived. May I invite you to join with me in gaining a sound and sure knowledge of the Atonement.

We must cast aside the philosophies of men and the wisdom of the wise and hearken to that Spirit which is given to us to guide us into all truth. We must search the scriptures, accepting them as the mind and will and voice of the Lord and the very power of God unto salvation. As we read, ponder, and pray, there will come into our minds a view of the three gardens of God—the Garden of Eden, the Garden of Gethsemane, and the Garden of the Empty Tomb where Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene. In Eden we will see all things created in a paradisiacal state—without death, without procreation, without probationary experiences. We will come to know that such a creation, now unknown to man, was the only way to provide for the Fall. We will then see Adam and Eve, the first man and the first woman, step down from their state of immortal and paradisiacal glory to become the first mortal flesh on earth. Mortality, including as it does procreation and death, will enter the world. And because of transgression a probationary estate of trial and testing will begin. Then in Gethsemane we will see the Son of God ransom man from the temporal and spiritual death that came to us because of the Fall. And finally, before an empty tomb, we will come to know that Christ our Lord has burst the bands of death and stands forever triumphant over the grave. Thus, Creation is father to the Fall; and by the Fall came mortality and death; and by Christ came immortality and eternal life. If there had been no fall of Adam, by which cometh death, there could have been no atonement of Christ, by which cometh life.



And now, as pertaining to this perfect atonement, wrought by the shedding of the blood of God—I testify that it took place in Gethsemane and at Golgotha, and as pertaining to Jesus Christ, I testify that he is the Son of the Living God and was crucified for the sins of the world. He is our Lord, our God, and our King. **This I know of myself independent of any other person. I am one of his witnesses, and in a coming day I shall feel the nail marks in his hands and in his feet and shall wet his feet with my tears. But I shall not know any better than I know now that he is God’s Almighty Son, that he is our Savior and Redeemer, and that salvation comes in and through his atoning blood and in no other way.** God grant that all of us may walk in the light as God our Father is in the light so that, according to the promises, the blood of Jesus Christ his Son will cleanse us from all sin. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

—Bruce R. McConkie (April General Conference 1985)

Enclosing my dear brothers and sisters, I want you to know that I too have a powerful testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ and His amazing Atonement. I know the Savior lives! He is real, and His blessings and comfort are real. Our Savior loves each and every one of us... AND YOU. He is anxious to have us reach out to Him and turn to Him so that He can reach out to us. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is true. The scriptures are the Word of God. The blessings of a relationship with our Creator are immeasurable. Your Heavenly Parents are pulling for you. Angels and your ancestors who have already passed are cheering for you. No matter where you have been, you can embrace the blessings and eternal joy of the Lord’s Gospel. Your glorious eternity awaits. You are loved by our Heavenly Parents and the Savior...and you are all absolutely loved by ME. I hope to add many names to the mailing list for this newsletter in the coming weeks. Do your missionary work and get the word out. Or, just send me the name and number of those you feel would benefit from these uplifting stories and testimonies. Together, let’s bless as many of Father’s children as we can. They will be blessed and we will be blessed. The Lord is our God. He is cheering on your success and happiness. He wants you to heal and to be happy. He loves you beyond your comprehension or imagination. He wants you to “come unto Him.” He is waiting for YOU with open arms. I so testify in Jesus’ Name, amen. —Brother D.