

Tender Mercies of Our Lord Jesus Christ

February 2018

Issue #6

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: Brothers and sisters, so dear to me! I want you to know that wonderful things are coming to each of you. Our Heavenly Father loves us all more than we can ever fathom or even conceive with our mortal minds. This has been the greatest time of my life, bringing blessings in ways I never dreamed possible, and happiness I've never known. I want each of you to know that **our Heavenly Father truly is in the details of our lives.** I have seen His hand in everything wonderful that has happened in my life for months. We are so very blessed, and when we do all that we can to be truly worthy, I promise each of you, **our Heavenly Father will pour out blessings upon us greater than we can receive.** Our happiness is so very important to our Heavenly Father. I testify that our Heavenly Father will create experiences in our lives that will lead us to our best happiness. I did not ask for the blessings I am now experiencing, Heavenly Father simply and lovingly inspired a worthy disciple to bring these blessings to me. That is how He works. He blesses us through others. He will inspire those around us to actions that will in the end bring to pass His divine designs for us. Again, I repeat a truth so very important: **Our Heavenly Father is lovingly in the small and great details of our lives. HE LOVES US! HE LOVES YOU!** Each of you as an individual are loved by Him as much as any other of His children. The Joy that has filled my life recently is greater than I had ever known could be possible. I see His hand in every step, and I give ALL credit and gratitude to Him. I testify that our Heavenly Father knows exactly what He is doing with each of us. The road may be hard. It may seem in this moment that there is no end to the pain in your trials. But I can promise each and



every one of you, through my own experience, that **OUR HEAVENLY FATHER WILL TRULY BLESS THE BROKEN ROAD THAT YOU TRAVEL UPON.** The happiness He has in store for you at the end of this broken road will be greater than you ever could have imagined no matter how much you let your mind search and ponder joyful things. (Whether in this life or the next). He truly knows the value of love, and of worthiness, and of striving to live our lives in a way that is in keeping with the principles of the Gospel. I am reading a book that is teaching me that the more pure we are, the more pure is our joy in every area of our lives. We use the word pure before other words at times to describe something that is greater than if we did not use the word pure. "Pure joy", "pure happiness," and so on. I am here to tell you that I understand this greater than I ever have before. When we seek to make our lives pure before our Heavenly Father, **He will make our JOY PURE,** He will make our happiness pure. These statements have more meaning to me now than I ever recognized before. It would be my greatest desire, for all who read these words, that you may also feel the immeasurable joy that has entered my life. I promise you that as you seek to purify your lives and yourselves and to do that which you know your Heavenly Father would have you do; this pure joy will begin to permeate areas of your life that will be immeasurably wonderful and unexpected. I have learned to trust my Heavenly Father more, for I have truly seen what He can do in the end with our trials. He truly can turn them into our greatest and most pure joy. I pray that each of you will seek Him in all you do, that you will seek to purify your lives and partake of these amazing blessings, in the name of Jesus Christ amen. - D

My beloved ones, I have a great treat for you this month. We are blessed to have a message direct to you from Burgess Owens, 1980/1981 season Superbowl winner with the Raiders. Burgess joined the LDS Church after being exposed to it by Todd Christianson (TE) and Marc Wilson (QB) of that superbowl team.

Clarence Burgess Owens (born August 2, 1951 in Columbus, Ohio) is a retired safety who played ten seasons in the National Football League for the New York Jets and the Oakland Raiders. He graduated from Rickards High School in Tallahassee, Florida in 1969, and then attended the University of Miami, where he was a 1st-Team All-American defensive back, Most Valuable Defensive Player of the North-South All Star Game, and MVP of the Coaches All-American Game. He was inducted into the University of Miami Sports Hall Of Fame in 1980, and its Orange Bowl "Ring of Honor" in 1999.

Owens was a first round draft pick of the Jets in 1973. During his rookie season, he returned a kickoff 82 yards for a touchdown against the Denver Broncos on October 28. He then became a continuous starting player for the Jets, and was a significant part of the Raiders' 1980 Super Bowl championship team.

Owens is married with six children and is a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He has publicly shared about his faith to large audiences.

To my incarcerated friends and brothers and sisters, I was introduced to the Church Of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints back in 1983 by teammates of mine. I was playing with the Raiders at the time, the Super Bowl championship Raiders. Latter-day Saints Todd Christensen (2 time Super Bowl champion, all-pro tight-end), and Marc Wilson (2 time Super Bowl champion quarterback) were teammates of mine. I had an opportunity to watch for three years as they lived their faith, and whether through good or bad times, I could see a consistency which allowed me to be able to accept the message. I knew they were imperfect messengers, but they had a very strong and perfect truth in the message that I wanted to hear. Thirty years later, I testify that this church is true.



I want to talk about what I call the 13th season. The 13th season basically kind of goes back to my beginning. I grew up down south during a very special time, a time that I'm very happy I took part in, with a family that I'm so happy and proud to be a part of, and a race that I'm also very proud of. It was during a time when we were trying to overcome the prejudices of our fathers, in the 60s. I remember in the seventh grade I was standing in a line in front of the Florida State Theater, because we could not go inside that theater at the time. But it was a special time, because I look back decades later, and I am so proud of who we are because **we will always look to become our better selves, if given time.** That's who we are. That's the Americans that we are. It was such a good time for me to begin the process because in my 10th grade year, (I don't know how many of you remember the movie Remember the Titans), well, that was my experience. 10th grade year there were four black athletes, integrating into an all-white school. Rickards High School. It was a very interesting year. It

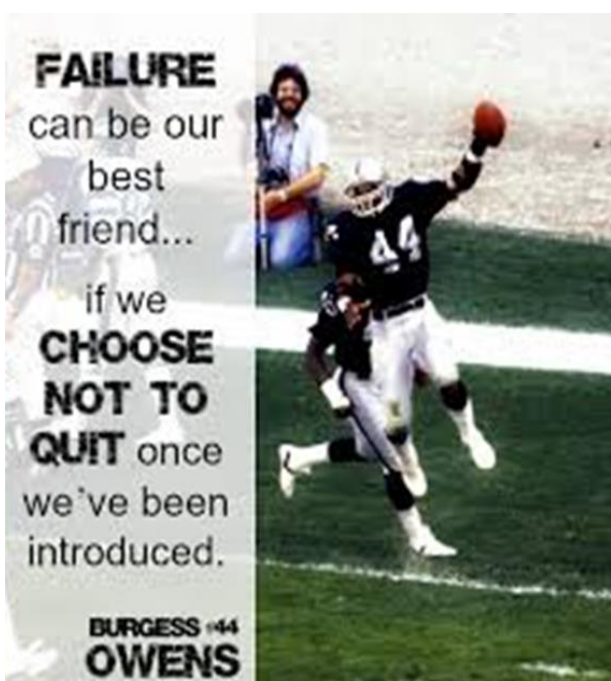
was one in which we were surrounded by a bunch of guys the first week or two and we were promised we weren't going to be there, that we weren't going to last. And I remember the commitment that the four of us made to each other, that **we were going to see this thing through, no matter how tough it got**, and it got tough at times. I still carry scars from that year. But what came out of it was really interesting. Because we did, we showed our value. We stayed tough, and by the time the year finished, not that everything had become hunky-dory, but by the time that year finished up, we had guys that didn't want us there, or didn't like us for whatever reason, that now respected us, because we hung tough, we didn't quit, and we added value. And, there's a second part of that, and that is, we saw *ourselves* different. We saw ourselves through the eyes of people now who respected us, and we respected ourselves even more. Because we had made this commitment to each other, and we hung tough, and stayed through. Well my next year, my junior year, was a little different.

The focus on color was still there but not quite as strong, because we found something else that we loved even more, it's called winning. We loved this feeling of winning, and it got to the point where we began to think more about how can we work together to win more than anything else, and we were a winning team that year. We were good enough to get to the state playoffs. I had one game which was the best game of my entire athletic career. It was as a guest at a crosstown rival. I won't get into the details, but it played a major part later on. This one game in my junior year was one that I can always reflect back on. We got to the state championship, didn't win, but being the young cocky people that we were, we thought no big deal, we'll come back next year we'll do it. We'll make this thing happen. Well as life happens, everything fell apart. A few of the key players including myself got hurt. The team fell apart, the harmony that we had began to dissipate, and it became a disastrous year. The year before, I had college letters coming in and all of these options that I had. Well, my senior year nothing was happening. As far as I was concerned, I didn't know if I was going to play football anywhere. So I came up with this great idea. Since no one is recruiting me, let me see if I can go find a place that I might go and see if they might take a look at me. So I looked at the University of Miami. Now a couple of things happened as to why I looked at the University of Miami. I grew up in Tallahassee Florida, and one winter it got down to 32 degrees in Tallahassee Florida. Now that's cold in Tallahassee. It was cold enough for me to say I cannot go any further north than here. So between that and the fact that I wanted to do marine biology, I thought I would go down south where it's close to the water, let me see if I can get down in that direction. I went to my coach and since I didn't know what else to do, I said "Coach, I'd love for you to send some information down to Miami and see if they have any interest." He was inspired. He took that one game from my junior year, a year earlier, spliced it, and made that the focus of the University of Miami. They thought this was the latest and greatest Burgess Owens. They sent me a ticket to come down, and I signed as quickly as I could before they figured this whole thing out. Now I knew nothing about Miami, this was before the internet. I wasn't trying to figure out which was the best school to go to based on my football prowess. So I didn't know that Miami was one of the worst teams that I could go to if I wanted to play football. I was just happy to play anywhere at that time. So I went down to the University of Miami, it was not the university that many of you guys think about today. Most people think of Miami as a National Championship winning team, but at the time Miami could not win football games. It was a great place for the best teams to come to, to go to the Orange Bowl, and to have fun in the sun and win their game and go back home, but it left us with only two or three games of a season winning. This went on for four years. Four years at the University of Miami with not one winning season. Now what I did learn though, a very very important lesson, is **I did learn to become a total optimist**. I learned that you come to a point in life where you have to make a decision, do I stick it out, keep fighting forward or do I quit. And if you keep fighting forward you have to find a reason, you have to find something to keep you motivated. And my motivation was "It has to get better than this, next game, next year, I know it's going to get better." And I got so much into the habit that every year this expectation came. And though I was disappointed every year, I realized next year has to be better. All this went on for four years, not getting any better. I went on to the Jets, and while I call those four years at the University of Miami my character-building years, I was then drafted to the Jets and I had another seven years of character building years. My graduate program of character-building years. For seven years not one winning season. You know, I look back and I reflect on that now, and I know it's only a game. It's only a game, it's not earth shattering, it doesn't change the world. But when you're in the middle of it, with your blood sweat and tears, and your self-esteem, and everything is built on winning, and you're watching your buddies go to Super Bowl games and playoffs, and here once again you're home early, you kind of get depressed. You get a little down. I remember that 7th year with the Jets I was really getting a little bit down. I think back on that, and it's interesting how we all are in a sense. Here we are, we have some of the greatest blessings in the history of



mankind. We live in the freest world in the freest country, where we get up every day, and we make decisions as to how we're going to attack that day. What are we going to do for ourselves. What is our future going to be like? What is my dream about today? And yet we get depressed by those little things that just don't go right for us. Little things that we sometimes just forget how blessed we really are. Well, that year, **I decided to just do my best and to move on.** I was traded to the Raiders. Now for those who are young, and do not have gray hair yet, at one point the Raiders were a winning football team. They won a lot of football games. I can remember being on the sideline, on the other side line with the Jets, playing against the Raiders, and saying, "Man wouldn't it be nice to be with those guys," as they beat us of course. Well, I had an opportunity to get with them. This was my 13th season. We were not supposed to have been a winning team, we were kind of a rebuilding team. Things just happened, the Synergy was right. **We had the right attitude.** We had many of us that were so desperate to win, that **we just gave everything we had and more.** We not only had the first winning season that I had had since high school, I went to the first playoff game since high school. And lo and behold here we are sitting in the locker room getting ready to go out and play the Super Bowl game. It was an unbelievable experience for me to go head out there and we ended up beating the Eagles 27-10 in Super Bowl 15. That was the highlight of my 13th season. The only thing we regretted as a team, because we had so much fun, was we had no one else to play. The moral of that story though is this: Each and everyone of us are promised a 13th season. **There will come that day, that point, that year, where everything is worked out the way you hoped. When everything you've gone through is worth it.** This moment is one that you will always remember for the rest of your life. It might be a college experience, it might be a family experience. **It'll be something that you say, "It was worth every long night that I went through."** But that 13th season will only come by going through the 12th. And those 12 other years, the times and the seasons where you wonder how in the world did I get here? How did this happen? How can I get out? What can I do? How can I turn this thing around quickly because it's very painful? **Just know everyone goes through it. That's where you grow. That's the character. That's the humbleness. That's the faithfulness we learn. It's through those tough times.** And though I wear the Super Bowl ring, (and I only wear it when I come out by the way), it diminishes in value with time. But, it gives me the opportunity to talk about the 13th season, about that last year in high school, the four years in college, the seven years with the Jets, and about when you're trying to figure out what can I do to turn this thing around.

I want to share my testimony of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the difference it makes in anyone's life, if you understand, and just do your best to recognize that **we are here for a special purpose.** That we have a Heavenly Father that loves us, and He has put together a plan that allows us to live a life that He sees is a perfect way for us. **Our struggles, our victories, it's all part of His perfect plan.** It allows us to go through



our obstacles, which we all have them. It allows us to have our own victories, which we all will also have. And, know that it's all part of a way that Heavenly Father allows us to know who He is, know that He loves us, and to know that **if we focus and do our very best and follow His Commandments and the direction that He asks us to take, that at the end of the day we'll be okay.** One of the things about the gospel that allows me to know that every phase and chapter I go through is going to be one in which I learn, is something president Gordon B Hinckley said: **"Everything works out in the end; if it has not worked out yet, it is not the end."** So I know that is the Eternal truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I leave my testimony that this church is true. That it allows us to live a life of joy even in the tough times. One of my great reflections in gratitude is: I know that we continue to go through life, because we do have our Heavenly Father who loves us, and, **He looks at us from the inside out, not the outside in.** His gospel allows us to do the same. I leave this with you in the name of Jesus Christ, amen

Lives of the Apostles

ELDER BRUCE R. MCCONKIE

At six feet, five inches, Elder Bruce R. McConkie of the Quorum of the Twelve was an impressive figure. His physical stature in some ways matched his striving for eternal truth. Elder S. Dilworth Young, once wrote of Elder McConkie: “He is impatient with half truth and intolerant of untruth. The way to righteousness is a clearly marked road of scriptural and revealed truth. He will have nothing else.”

On April 19, 1985, Elder Bruce R. McConkie passed away in Salt Lake City. He was 69 years old. He had battled against cancer for more than a year. His last public appearance was on April 6, when he addressed the Church’s general conference. [That final testimony is in Tender Mercies Newsletter Issue #2 Oct 2017]

Elder Bruce R. McConkie had served in the Quorum of the Twelve since 1972. He had also served in the First Council of the Seventy for 26 years prior to his calling to the Quorum of the Twelve.

Elder McConkie was the first child born to Oscar W. McConkie and Margaret Vivian Redd. His father practiced law in Monticello, Utah, until Bruce was 12. The family then moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where his father studied law for a year. Even though just a deacon, Bruce taught the Book of Mormon in family Sunday School.

Following his father’s year of law study, Bruce and his four brothers and a sister returned from Ann Arbor to Salt Lake City with their parents. As youngsters they enjoyed working on the farm in Monticello every summer. At age 19, Bruce served a two-year mission in the Eastern States Mission. After returning home he attended school at the University of Utah, earning his B.A. degree, and later his juris doctor degree. It was while walking to and from school at the university that he developed a habit of study that was of great value to him. He would think of a subject in the gospel such as repentance and would then, in his mind, make up an outline for a sermon on the subject, adding the appropriate scriptures and supporting material. Doing this daily as he walked gave him practice in analysis of doctrinal subjects. This careful organization and logical progression was evident in his sermons.

After graduation from law school, Elder McConkie was assistant city attorney in Salt Lake. He served four years in the armed forces during World War II as an intelligence officer, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel, and upon his return became a writer on the editorial staff of the Deseret News. In 1946, at the age of 31, he was called to the First Council of the Seventy. In the council he served as serviceman’s coordinator and managing director of both stake missions and full-time missions.

Elder McConkie served as president of the Australia South Mission with headquarters in Melbourne from 1961–1964. He also wrote numerous articles, poems, and handbooks. Among his published works are Mormon Doctrine, an encyclopedia-type work covering more than 1100 gospel subjects; and Doctrines of Salvation, three volumes of the doctrines expounded and explained by President Joseph Fielding Smith. He has also written Doctrinal New Testament Commentary and a multi-volume series on the life and mission of Christ.

His testimony, given often in conference sermons in his characteristic booming voice, was a moving testament from one called to bear special witness of Christ. Writing of Jesus Christ, Elder McConkie said:

“Let it now be written once again—and it is the testimony of all the prophets of all the ages—that he is the Son of God, the Only Begotten of the Father, the promised Messiah, the Lord God of Israel, our Redeemer and Savior; that he came into the world to manifest the Father, to reveal anew the gospel, to be the great Exemplar, to work out the infinite and eternal atonement; ...

“And now let it also be written, both on earth and in heaven, that this disciple ... does himself also know of the truth of those things of which the prophets have testified. For these things have been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit of God, and he therefore testifies that Jesus is Lord of all, the Son of God, through whose name salvation comes” (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 1:876).



Favorite Scriptures:



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

Book of Mormon:

"And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the a rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send forth his mighty winds, yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which ye are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall."
(Helaman 5:12)

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." (Psalm 23:4)

:Old Testament

Doctrine and Covenants:

"These things remain to overcome through patience, that such may receive a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (Doctrine and Covenants 76:14)

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Corinthians 4:17)

:New Testament

Pearl of Great Price:

"But he that remaineth steadfast and is not overcome, the same shall be saved." (JS-M 1:11)

BEHIND THE HYMNS:

“How Great Thou Art”

Text: Stuart K. Hine (1899-1989) Music: Swedish melody arranged by Stuart K. Hine

The father speaks to us through his creations - this is the message that opens “How Great Thou Art.” But even more than through his handiwork, the Father's goodness is shown through the sacrifice of his Son, Our Savior, and through His desire to bless and reward those who are faithful. This hymn follows the thoughts of a devoted Christian as he meditates along these lines.

“How Great Thou Art” was popularized by the Billy Graham evangelism team in their tours of Britain and North America in the 1950s. By 1974, it had become, according to a poll among readers of the Christian Herald magazine, the most popular hymn in America.

Its history goes back a surprising number of years. In 1886, a Swedish minister, Reverend Carl Boberg, wrote a text beginning “Oh mighty God.” In 1907 the text was translated into German, and in 1912, a Russian clergyman I.S. Prokhanov, made a Russian translation of this German version. In 1925 a clergyman in Chicago translated the Swedish text into English for the first time, but his translation, beginning “Oh mighty God, when I behold the wonder,” did not achieve wide popularity.

In 1923, the Reverend and Miss Steward K. Hine, English missionaries, were preaching in Russia when they first heard this hymn. So impressed were they that it remained in their memories. They decided to write an English version, based partly on the Russian words they had heard and partly on the breathtaking scenery they had witnessed in their travels.

Thus were the first three verses born. The fourth verse was not written until after World War II. Reverend Hine stated that part of the inspiration for verse four was the question constantly on the lips of the Eastern European refugees “When can we go home?” The joy of our Heavenly home is at the center of this verse.

“How Great Thou Art” was new with the 1985 handbook, the current handbook we use. President Ezra Taft Benson often requested this hymn in meeting's over which he presided. It was a favorite of his.

Oh Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the worlds Thy hands have made
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder
Thy power throughout the universe displayed

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

When through the woods, and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And see the brook, and feel the gentle breeze

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And then proclaim, “My God, how great Thou art”

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee
How great Thou art, how great Thou art

Conference Talks – The Best of the Best...

“Come What May, and Love It”

Elder Joseph B. Wirthlin Of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles



Wirthlin carrying the ball for the U of U circa 1937-1938

The way we react to adversity can be a major factor in how happy and successful we can be in life.

When I was young I loved playing sports, and I have many fond memories of those days. But not all of them are pleasant. I remember one day after my football team lost a tough game, I came home feeling discouraged. My mother was there. She listened to my sad story. She taught her children to trust in themselves and each other, not blame others for their misfortunes, and give their best effort in everything they attempted. When we fell down, she expected us to pick ourselves up and get going again. So the advice my mother gave to me then

wasn't altogether unexpected. It has stayed with me all my life.

“Joseph,” she said, **“come what may, and love it.”**

I have often reflected on that counsel.

I think she may have meant that every life has peaks and shadows and times when it seems that the birds don't sing and bells don't ring. Yet in spite of discouragement and adversity, **those who are happiest seem to have a way of learning from difficult times, becoming stronger, wiser, and happier as a result.**

There may be some who think that General Authorities rarely experience pain, suffering, or distress. If only that were true. While every man and woman on this stand today has experienced an abundant measure of joy, each also has drunk deeply from the cup of disappointment, sorrow, and loss. **The Lord in His wisdom does not shield anyone from grief or sadness.**

For me, the Lord has opened the windows of heaven and showered blessings upon my family beyond my ability to express. Yet like everyone else, I have had times in my life when it seemed that the heaviness of my heart might be greater than I could bear. During those times I think back to those tender days of my youth when great sorrows came at the losing end of a football game.

How little I knew then of what awaited me in later years. But whenever my steps led through seasons of sadness and sorrow, my mother's words often came back to me: “Come what may, and love it.”

How can we love days that are filled with sorrow? We can't—at least not in the moment. I don't think my mother was suggesting that we suppress discouragement or deny the reality of pain. I don't think she was suggesting that we smother unpleasant truths beneath a cloak of pretended happiness. But I do believe that the way we react to adversity can be a major factor in how happy and successful we can be in life.

If we approach adversities wisely, our hardest times can be times of greatest growth, which in turn can lead toward times of greatest happiness.

Over the years I have learned a few things that have helped me through times of testing and trial. I would like to share them with you.

LEARN TO LAUGH

The first thing we can do is learn to laugh. Have you ever seen an angry driver who, when someone else makes a mistake, reacts as though that person has insulted his honor, his family, his dog, and his ancestors all the way back to Adam? Or have you had an encounter with an overhanging cupboard door left open at the wrong place and the wrong time which has been cursed, condemned, and avenged by a sore-headed victim?

There is an antidote for times such as these: learn to laugh.

I remember loading up our children in a station wagon and driving to Los Angeles. There were at least nine of us in the car, and we would invariably get lost. Instead of getting angry, we laughed. Every time we made a wrong turn, we laughed harder.

Getting lost was not an unusual occurrence for us. Once while heading south to Cedar City, Utah, we took a wrong turn and didn't realize it until two hours later when we saw the "Welcome to Nevada" signs. We didn't get angry. We laughed, and as a result, anger and resentment rarely resulted. Our laughter created cherished memories for us.

I remember when one of our daughters went on a blind date. She was all dressed up and waiting for her date to arrive when the doorbell rang. In walked a man who seemed a little old, but she tried to be polite. She introduced him to me and my wife and the other children; then she put on her coat and went out the door. We watched as she got into the car, but the car didn't move. Eventually our daughter got out of the car and, red faced, ran back into the house. The man that she thought was her blind date had actually come to pick up another of our daughters who had agreed to be a babysitter for him and his wife.

We all had a good laugh over that. In fact, we couldn't stop laughing. Later, when our daughter's real blind date showed up, I couldn't come out to meet him because I was still in the kitchen laughing. Now, I realize that our daughter could have felt humiliated and embarrassed. But she laughed with us, and as a result, we still laugh about it today.

The next time you're tempted to groan, you might try to laugh instead. It will extend your life and make the lives of all those around you more enjoyable.

SEEK FOR THE ETERNAL

The second thing we can do is seek for the eternal. You may feel singled out when adversity enters your life. You shake your head and wonder, "Why me?"

But the dial on the wheel of sorrow eventually points to each of us. At one time or another, everyone must experience sorrow. No one is exempt.

I love the scriptures because they show examples of great and noble men and women such as Abraham, Sarah, Enoch, Moses, Joseph, Emma, and Brigham. Each of them experienced adversity and sorrow that tried, fortified, and refined their characters.

Learning to endure times of disappointment, suffering, and sorrow is part of our on-the-job training. These experiences, while often difficult to bear at the time, are precisely the kinds of experiences that stretch our understanding, build our character, and increase our compassion for others.

Because Jesus Christ suffered greatly, He understands our suffering. He understands our grief. We experience hard things so that we too may have increased compassion and understanding for others.

Remember the sublime words of the Savior to the Prophet Joseph Smith when he suffered with his companions in the smothering darkness of Liberty Jail:

"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 thy foes" (D&C 121:7-8). With that eternal perspective, Joseph took comfort from these words, and so can we. Sometimes the very moments that seem to overcome us with suffering are those that will ultimately suffer us to overcome.

THE PRINCIPLE OF COMPENSATION

The third thing we can do is understand the principle of compensation. The Lord compensates the faithful for every loss. **That which is taken away from those who love the Lord will be added unto them in His own way. While it may not come at the time we desire, the faithful will know that every tear today will eventually be returned a hundredfold with tears of rejoicing and gratitude.**



One of the blessings of the gospel is the knowledge that when the curtain of death signals the end of our mortal lives, life will continue on the other side of the veil. There we will be given new opportunities. Not even death can take from us the eternal blessings promised by a loving Heavenly Father.

Because Heavenly Father is merciful, a principle of compensation prevails. I have seen this in my own life. My grandson Joseph has autism. It has been heartbreaking for his mother and father to come to grips with the implications of this affliction.

They knew that Joseph would probably never be like other children. They understood what that would mean not only for Joseph but for the family as well. But what a joy he has been to us. Autistic children often have a difficult time showing emotion, but every time I'm with him, Joseph gives me a big hug. While there have been challenges, he has filled our lives with joy.

His parents have encouraged him to participate in sports. When he first started playing baseball, he was in the outfield. But I don't think he grasped the need to run after loose balls. He thought of a much more efficient way to play the game. When a ball was hit in his direction, Joseph watched it go by and then pulled another baseball out of his pocket and threw that one to the pitcher.

Any reservations that his family may have had in raising Joseph, any sacrifices they have made have been compensated tenfold. Because of this choice spirit, his mother and father have learned much about children with disabilities. They have witnessed firsthand the generosity and compassion of family, neighbors, and friends. They have rejoiced together as Joseph has progressed. They have marveled at his goodness.

TRUST IN THE FATHER AND THE SON



The fourth thing we can do is put our trust in our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16).

The Lord Jesus Christ is our partner, helper, and advocate. He wants us to be happy. He wants us to be successful. If we do our part, He will step in.

He who descended below all things will come to our aid. He will comfort and uphold us. He will strengthen us in our weakness and fortify us in our distress. **He will make weak things become strong** (Ether 12:27)

One of our daughters, after giving birth to a baby, became seriously ill. We prayed for her, administered to her, and supported her as best we could. We hoped she would receive a blessing of healing, but days turned into months, and months turned into years. At one point I told her that this affliction might be something she would have to struggle with the rest of her life.

One morning I remember pulling out a small card and threading it through my typewriter. Among the words that I typed for her were these: “The simple

secret is this: **put your trust in the Lord, do your best, then leave the rest to Him.**”

She did put her trust in God. But her affliction did not disappear. For years she suffered, but in due course, the Lord blessed her, and eventually she returned to health.

Knowing this daughter, I believe that even if she had never found relief, yet she would have trusted in her Heavenly Father and “[left] the rest to Him.”

CONCLUSION

Although my mother has long since passed to her eternal reward, her words are always with me. I still remember her advice to me given on that day long ago when my team lost a football game: “Come what may, and love it.”

I know why there must be opposition in all things. Adversity, if handled correctly, can be a blessing in our lives. We can learn to love it.

As we look for humor, seek for the eternal perspective, understand the principle of compensation, and draw near to our Heavenly Father, we can endure hardship and trial. We can say, as did my mother, “Come what may, and love it.” Of this I testify in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Final word from the editor: My precious sisters and brothers. DON'T GIVE UP! Strive with all of your might to live a worthy life and I promise you amazing blessings will be yours eventually. It is absolutely worth it! Hang in there. Trust the Lord. Together, you with the Lord can accomplish anything and indeed everything. I love you all! -D