

Do What Mattereth Most

By Rebecca L. Craven

Second Counselor in the Young Women General Presidency

As we center our lives on Jesus Christ, we will be blessed with spiritual strength, contentment, and joy.

Section I (Kelly)

Not long ago, a dear friend had an impression to visit a woman in her ward. She brushed off the prompting because she hardly knew her—it just didn't make sense. But since the thought kept coming to her, she decided to act on the prompting. Because she was already feeling uncomfortable about the impending visit, she determined that taking something to the sister would help ease her anxiety. Certainly she couldn't go empty-handed! So she bought a container of ice cream, and off she went to begin what she worried might be an awkward visit. She knocked on the woman's door, and shortly the sister answered. My friend handed her the ice cream in a brown paper bag, and the conversation began. It didn't take long for my friend to realize why the visit was needed. As they sat together on the front porch, the woman unveiled a host of challenges she was facing. After an hour of talking in the warm summer weather, my friend noticed the ice cream melting through the brown paper bag.

She exclaimed, "I am so sorry that your ice cream melted!"

The woman sweetly responded, "It's OK! I'm lactose intolerant!"

In a dream, the Lord told the prophet Lehi, "Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast *done*."¹

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ involves more than just hoping or believing. It calls for effort, movement, and commitment. It requires that we do something, being "doers of the word, and not hearers only."²

In the case of the melted ice cream, what mattered most? The ice cream? Or that my friend simply did something?

I had a sweet experience with a darling young woman who asked a very sincere question: "Sister Craven, how do you know that anything about the Church is true? Because I feel nothing."

Before jumping to an answer, I first asked her some questions. "Tell me about your personal scripture study."

She replied, "I don't read the scriptures."

I asked, "What about with your family? Do you study *Come, Follow Me* together?"

She said, "No."

I asked about her prayers: "What do you feel when you pray?"

Her answer: “I don’t pray.”

My response to her was simple: “If you want to know anything, you will have to do something.”

Isn’t that true with anything we want to learn or know? I invited my new friend to start *doing* the gospel of Jesus Christ: praying, studying, serving others, and trusting in the Lord. Conversion won’t come while doing nothing. It comes through the power of the Holy Ghost as we intentionally make an effort to know by asking, seeking, and knocking. It comes by doing.³

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord occasionally says, “It mattereth not.”⁴ It makes me ponder that if some things matter not, or matter less, there must be things that matter most. In our efforts to *do something* or *do anything*, we might ask ourselves, “What mattereth most?”

Kelly’s Thoughts:

In a dream, the Lord told the prophet Lehi, “Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast *done*.”

1 Nephi 2:1

Book of Mormon

1 For behold, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto my father, yea, even in a dream, and said unto him: Blessed art thou Lehi, because of the things which thou hast done; and **because thou hast been faithful and declared unto this people the things which I commanded thee**, behold, they seek to take away thy life.

1 Nephi 1

4 For it came to pass in the commencement of the ^afirst year of the reign of ^bZedekiah, king of Judah, (my father, Lehi, having dwelt at ^cJerusalem in all his days); and in that same year there came many ^dprophets, prophesying unto the people that they must ^erepent, or the great city ^fJerusalem must be destroyed.

5 Wherefore it came to pass that my father, Lehi, as he went **forth prayed unto the Lord, yea, even with all his ^aheart**, in behalf of his people.

18 Therefore, I would that ye should know, that after the Lord had shown so many marvelous things unto my father, Lehi, yea, concerning the ^adestruction of Jerusalem, behold he went forth among the people, and began to ^bprophesy and to declare unto them concerning the things which he had both seen and heard.

19 And it came to pass that the ^aJews did ^bmock him because of the things which he testified of them; for he truly testified of their ^cwickedness and their abominations; and he testified that the things which he saw and heard, and also the things which he read in the book, manifested plainly of the coming of a ^dMessiah, and also the redemption of the world.

20 And when the Jews heard these things they were angry with him; yea, even as with the prophets of old, whom they had [“cast out](#), and stoned, and slain; and they also [“sought](#) his life, that they might take it away. But behold, I, Nephi, will show unto you that the tender [“mercies](#) of the Lord are over all those whom he hath chosen, because of their faith, to make them mighty even unto the power of [“deliverance](#).
Being a disciple of Jesus Christ involves more than just hoping or believing.

1983–O:6, Ezra Taft Benson, Jesus Christ: Our Savior and Redeemer

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we need to place unreserved confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom we accept as the Son of God. Until the world accepts Him as the Savior of mankind, lives [His](#) teachings, and looks to Him as the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life* in [all](#) phases of our lives, we shall continue in our anxiety about the future and our ability to cope [with](#) the challenges that mortality brings to each of us.

The fundamental principle of our religion is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Why is it expedient that we center our confidence, our hope, and our trust in one solitary figure? Why is faith in Him so necessary to peace of mind in this life and hope in the world to come?

Our answers to these questions determine whether we face the future [with](#) courage, hope, and optimism or [with](#) apprehension, anxiety, and pessimism.

My message and testimony is this: Only Jesus Christ is uniquely qualified to provide that hope, that confidence, and that strength to overcome the world and rise above our human failings. To do that, we must place our faith in Him and live by [His](#) laws and teachings.

Faith in Him is more than mere acknowledgment that He lives. It is more than professing belief.

Faith in Jesus Christ consists of complete reliance on Him. As God, He has infinite power, intelligence, and love. There is no human problem beyond [His](#) capacity to solve. Because He descended below [all](#) things (see [D&C 122:8](#)) He knows how to help us rise above our daily difficulties.

Faith in Him means believing that even though we do not understand [all](#) things, He does. We, therefore, must look to Him “in every thought; doubt not, fear not.” [D&C 6:36](#)

Faith in Him means trusting that He has [all](#) power over [all](#) men and [all](#) nations. There is no evil which He cannot arrest. [All](#) things are in [His](#) hands. This earth is [His](#) rightful dominion. Yet He permits evil so that we can make choices between good and evil.

[His](#) gospel is the perfect prescription for [all](#) human problems and social ills.

But [His](#) gospel is only effective as it is applied in our lives. Therefore, we must “feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you [all](#) things what ye should do.” [2 Ne. 32:3](#)
Unless we *do* [His](#) teachings, we do not demonstrate faith in Him.

Think what a different world this would be if [all](#) mankind would do as He said: “Love the Lord thy God [with all](#) thy [heart](#), and [with all](#) thy soul, and [with all](#) thy mind. ...

“Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” [Matt. 22:37, 39](#)

What then is the answer to the question “What is to be done?” concerning the problems and dilemmas that individuals, communities, and nations face today? Here is [His](#) simple prescription:

“Believe in God; believe that he is, and that he created **all** things, both in heaven and in earth; believe that he has **all** wisdom, and **all** power, both in heaven and in earth; believe that man doth not comprehend **all** the things which the Lord can comprehend.

“... Believe that ye must repent of your sins and forsake them, and humble yourselves before God; and ask in sincerity of **heart** that he would forgive you; and now, if you believe **all** these things see *that ye do them.*” [Mosiah 4:9–10](#) italics added.)

As members of the Church, we are “under obligation to make the sinless Son of Man [our] ideal—the one perfect being who ever walked the earth. “Sublimest Example of Nobility “God-like in nature “Perfect in **his** love “Our Redeemer “Our Savior “The immaculate Son of our Eternal Father “The Light, the Life, the Way.” (David O. McKay, *Improvement Era*, June 1951, p. 478.)

Our question: Who have you made your ideal?

As Saints, what has the Lord commanded of us?

Doctrine and Covenants 84:

56 And this condemnation resteth upon the children of [^aZion](#), even all.

57 And they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new [^acovenant](#), even the [^bBook of Mormon](#) and the [^cformer](#) commandments which I have given them, not only to say, but to [^ddo](#) according to that which I have written—

58 That they may bring forth [^afruit](#) meet for their Father’s kingdom; otherwise there remaineth a [^bscourge](#) and judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion.

59 For shall the children of the kingdom [^apollute](#) my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay.

60 Verily, verily, I say unto you who now hear my [^awords](#), which are my voice, blessed are ye inasmuch as you receive these things;

61 For I will [^aforgive](#) you of your sins with this commandment—that you remain [^bsteadfast](#) in your minds in [^csolemnity](#) and the spirit of prayer, in bearing [^dtestimony](#) to all the world of those things which are communicated unto you.

Doctrine and Covenants 49:23

Doctrine and Covenants

23 Wherefore, be not deceived, **but continue in steadfastness**, looking forth for the heavens to be shaken, and the earth to tremble and to reel to and fro as a drunken man, and for the valleys to be exalted, and for the mountains to be made low, and for the rough places to become smooth—and all this when the angel shall sound his trumpet.

- Matt 24: JST

- **4 ¶** And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be which thou hast said concerning the destruction of the temple, and the Jews; and what is the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world (or the destruction of the wicked, which is the end of the world)?
- **5** And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.
- **6** For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.
- **7** Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.
- **8** And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.
- **9** And many false prophets shall arise and shall deceive many.
- **10** And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.
- **11** But he that remaineth steadfast and is not overcome, the same shall be saved.

Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 298

Calling and Election

Now for the secret and grand key. Though they might hear the voice of God and know that Jesus was the Son of God, this would be no evidence that their election and calling was made sure, that they had part with Christ,¹² and were joint heirs with Him.¹³ They then would want that more sure word of prophecy,¹⁴ that they were sealed in the heavens¹⁵ and had the promise of eternal life in the kingdom of God.¹⁶ Then, having this promise sealed¹⁷ unto them, it was an anchor to the soul, sure and **steadfast**.¹⁸ Though the thunders might roll and lightnings flash, and earthquakes bellow, and war gather thick around, yet this hope and knowledge would support the soul in every hour of trial, trouble and tribulation.¹⁹ Then knowledge through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ²⁰ is the grand key that unlocks the glories and mysteries of the kingdom²¹ of heaven.

Micah's Thoughts:

The very first thing that Sister Craven shares is the story of the lady receiving personal revelation, and I love the fact that not only is it a story of how people correctly receive personal revelation, but in addition to that, how the line about the revelation “just not making sense” was included in her talk. I love this because I can't tell you how many missionary stories (good ones) have in it them being told to do or say something that “didn't make sense”. This is one of those ways that I've found that you can really know that it is revelation from God- is this a thought that has come into my mind that I know I didn't put in there, it isn't something that I would think to

do or say and doing it, whatever the prompting is, is more difficult than not doing anything. She also mentions anxiety about it- how often is that taught correctly? Where promptings from the Holy Spirit can cause anxiety? We are taught that anxiety is a bad thing and that if people feel anxious or uncomfortable or contentious etc. it can't possibly be from the Lord and in fact we almost always teach it as a sure sign it is *not* from the Lord! Far too often we neglect teaching the Holy Ghost's primary purpose or function of edification. It's not there to make you feel something good, it is there to tell you something good and almost always (99.99% of the time) something you specifically can *do* that's good.

It's also important to note, once again, that this lady was told to go visit this other sister, but she was not told why she needed to go visit her. That would have been outside the rights of revelation. In this example, the sister makes known to the other sister the why, but this is not something that you as a follower of the Spirit will always be given. There will be times when you do something and you never figure out the why. So just because you don't get a why does not mean you are not where the Lord wants you to be. When you listen to the Spirit and do what it tells you to do, you will always be told "you are where you are supposed to be" regardless of you knowing the why.

The next thing Sister Craven goes into is the doctrine of being a doer and not simply a hearer. The blessings won't come while doing nothing- you must be anxiously engaged in asking, seeking, and knocking. Why should that be important for us? This is confirmation once again that Zion will not simply fall out of the sky without actions.

Doctrine and Covenants 113:7-10

7 Questions by Elias Higbee: What is meant by the command in Isaiah, 52d chapter, 1st verse, which saith: Put on thy strength, O Zion—and what people had Isaiah reference to?

8 He had reference to those whom God should call in the last days, who should hold the power of priesthood to bring again Zion, and the redemption of Israel; and to put on her strength is to put on the authority of the priesthood, which she, Zion, has a right to by lineage; also to return to that power which she had lost.

9 What are we to understand by Zion loosing herself from the bands of her neck; 2d verse?

10 We are to understand that the scattered remnants are exhorted to return to the Lord from whence they have fallen; which if they do, the promise of the Lord is that he will speak to them, or give them revelation. See the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses. The bands of her neck are the curses of God upon her, or the remnants of Israel in their scattered condition among the Gentiles.

"We have assembled together to do the business of the Lord and it is through the great mercy of our God that we are spared to assemble together, many of us have gone at the command of the Lord in defiance of everything evil, and obtained blessings unspeakable, in consequence of which our names are sealed in the Lamb's book of life, for the Lord has spoken it. It is the privilege of every Elder to speak of the things of God; and could we all come together with one heart and one mind in perfect faith the veil might as well be rent today as next week, or any other time, and if we will but cleanse ourselves and covenant before God, to serve Him, it is our privilege to have an assurance that God will protect us at all times."

- **Joseph Smith Jr** a—FWR, pp. 13–14. (Oct. 25, 1831.)

3 Nephi 24:16-18

16 Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.

17 And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of Hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 Then shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.

1 Nephi 14:14

14 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord, who were scattered upon all the face of the earth; and they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory.

Doctrine and Covenants 98:9-12

9 Nevertheless, when the wicked rule the people mourn.

10 Wherefore, honest men and wise men should be sought for diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil.

11 And I give unto you a commandment, that ye shall forsake all evil and cleave unto all good, that ye shall live by every word which proceedeth forth out of the mouth of God.

12 For he will give unto the faithful line upon line, precept upon precept; and I will try you and prove you herewith.

If we don't as Saints seek for diligently the honest and wise in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and come together with one heart and one mind in perfect faith in that desire, being doers in that direction, will the veil ever be rent? Will the blessing of the redemption of Zion ever take place? Will the power of the Lamb of God ever descend? Will the curses of God around the necks of the elect in their scattered condition ever be removed? The answer to that will always be no.

Should we be obedient to the keys? Absolutely! And you have never heard me share anything other than a position of "when the keys same jump, we jump." That being said however, I have also been very clear that this isn't the test for righteous men and women in the Church; the answer to "should I follow the keys?" should always be yes. That's a given. The real test, the real proving is what do we do or say when the keys aren't speaking. As the Lord teaches us in the Doctrine and Covenants:

Doctrine and Covenants 58:26-33

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

27 Verily I say, men should be anxiously engaged in a good cause, and do many things of their own free will, and bring to pass much righteousness;

28 For the power is in them, wherein they are agents unto themselves. And inasmuch as men do good they shall in nowise lose their reward.

29 But he that doeth not anything until he is commanded, and receiveth a commandment with doubtful heart, and keepeth it with slothfulness, the same is damned.

30 Who am I that made man, saith the Lord, that will hold him guiltless that obeys not my commandments?

31 Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?

32 I command and men obey not; I revoke and they receive not the blessing.

33 Then they say in their hearts: This is not the work of the Lord, for his promises are not fulfilled. But wo unto such, for their reward lurketh beneath, and not from above.

If we are being commanded, i.e., the keys are telling us to do something, that's a given. But if we don't do anything save for what the keys command us to do, if we don't do anything save for what our local bishops and stake presidents tell us to do, the same is a slothful and unwise servant and will receive no reward.

Pay close attention to what the Lord says here in D&C 58- He tells us that there are things resting on the membership that they themselves are responsible to do. It is not something that will be commanded and compelled from the keys. And then He says this, "who am I, sayeth the Lord, that has promised and not fulfilled?" Now what do you think is on the Lord's mind right now when he is saying this? There are things you need to be doing and will not be compelled by the keys. I expect you Saints who desire this to be doers in this direction. And then says trust me, that which I have promised will be fulfilled.

Doctrine and Covenants 101:11-20

11 Mine indignation is soon to be poured out without measure upon all nations; and this will I do when the cup of their iniquity is full.

12 And in that day all who are found upon the watch-tower, or in other words, all mine Israel, shall be saved.

13 And they that have been scattered shall be gathered.

14 And all they who have mourned shall be comforted.

15 And all they who have given their lives for my name shall be crowned.

16 Therefore, let your hearts be comforted concerning Zion; for all flesh is in mine hands; be still and know that I am God.

17 Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered.
18 They that remain, and are pure in heart, shall return, and come to their inheritances, they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy, to build up the waste places of Zion—
19 *And all these things that the prophets might be fulfilled.*
20 And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed; neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my saints—

The Lord clearly is talking to this group of watchmen. I do not believe that this will ever be something compelled upon the Saints, it will be something brought about by the desire and worthiness of the scattered watchmen praying night and day until deliverance finally comes. And there is nothing that matters more than that.

“But what about my family?” Asks one. Would you rather raise your family in Zion or out here in the world?

There is nothing that this does not affect profoundly. It should be our every waking desire, for it is the culmination of every effort made by every worthy Saint since this Church was restored.

Section II (Daniel)

Advertisers often use slogans such as “Essential” or “Must Have” in the hope of luring us to believe the product they are selling is necessary for our happiness or well-being. But is what they are selling *really* essential? Must we *really* have it? Does it *really* matter?

Here are some thoughts to consider. What mattereth most?

- How many “likes” we get on our social media posts? Or how much we are loved and valued by our Heavenly Father?
- Wearing the latest trend in clothing? Or showing respect for our bodies by dressing modestly?
- Finding answers through an internet search? Or receiving answers from God through the Holy Ghost?
- Wanting more? Or being content with what we have been given?

President Russell M. Nelson teaches:

“With the Holy Ghost as your companion, you can see right through the celebrity culture that has smitten our society. You can be smarter than previous generations have ever been. ...

“Set a standard for the rest of the world!”⁵

It takes effort to stay focused on what is *truly essential* for lasting joy. Satan would love nothing more than for us to misplace our eternal values, leading us to waste precious time, talents, or spiritual strength on things that matter not. I invite each of us to prayerfully consider those things that distract us from doing what mattereth most.

Our oldest son's third-grade teacher taught her class to "boss your brain." It was a reminder to her young students that they were in control of their thoughts and could therefore control what they do. I remind myself to "boss *my* brain" when I find myself drifting toward things that matter less.

A high school student recently told me that it has become popular among some youth of the Church to disregard the commandments with a calculated plan to repent later. "It's sort of a badge of honor," I was told. Certainly the Lord will continue to forgive those who humbly repent "with real intent."⁶ But the Savior's merciful Atonement should never be used in such a mocking way. We know the parable of the one lost sheep. Of course, a shepherd will leave the other 99 sheep to find the one who has strayed. But can you imagine the joy that those who choose to be the 99 bring to the Good Shepherd? The ones who stick together and help each other live their covenants? Can you visualize what the world or your school or your work or your home would be like if being obedient was the popular thing to do? It's not about *doing* life perfectly—it's about finding joy while *doing our best* to live the covenants we have made with the Lord.

With the world expressing more doubt about God and confusion and pressures increasing, this is the time we must stay closest to the prophet. As he is the Lord's mouthpiece, we can trust that what he urges, counsels, and pleads with us to do are things that matter most.

Daniel's Thoughts:

Blue = Daniel's words

Black = scriptures/words of prophets

Red = quotes from Sister Craven

Brown = manuals/publications

Purple = talks

Advertisers often use slogans such as "Essential" or "Must Have" in the hope of luring us to

believe the product they are selling is necessary for our happiness or well-being. But is what they are selling really essential? Must we really have it? Does it really matter?

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, 19 And the cares of this world, and the **deceitfulness of riches**, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. (Mar 4:18-19)

Elder Hales spoke of learning lessons of using our means (time, energy, or money) effectively and wisely:

I was in the air force, and we had missed Christmas together. I was on assignment overseas. When I got home, I saw a beautiful dress in a store window and suggested to my wife that if she liked it, we would buy it. Mary went into the dressing room of the store. After a moment the salesclerk came out, brushed by me, and returned the dress to its place in the store window. As we left the store, I asked, "What happened?" She replied, "It was a beautiful dress, but we can't afford it!" Those words went straight to my heart. I have learned that the three most loving words are "I love you," and the four most caring words for those we love are "We can't afford it."

When faced with the choice to buy, consume, or engage in worldly things and activities, we all need to learn to say to one another, "We can't afford it, even though we want it!" or "We can afford it, but we don't need it—and we really don't even want it!" ([Becoming Provident Providers Temporally and Spiritually, Robert D. Hales, April 2009](#))

To His disciples, the Savior instructed

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6)

Likewise, the prophet Jacob taught

18 But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God. 19 And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good—to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted. (Jacob 2)

In respect to using our resources effectively, the Savior taught us using the parable of the unjust steward:

And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

On first reading, the parable of the unjust steward may seem to condone the steward's dishonesty. Careful study shows, however, that the parable teaches the care with which the Saints of God should approach the task of preparing for their eternal future. Knowing that he had but a short time left in his appointed post, the steward wisely tried to secure his future by winning some friends. Elder James E. Talmage explained:

"It was not the steward's dishonesty that was extolled; his prudence and foresight were commended, however; for while he misapplied his master's substance, he gave relief to the debtors; and in so doing he did not exceed his legal powers, for he was still steward though he was morally guilty of malfeasance [wrongdoing]. The lesson may be summed up in this wise: ... Be diligent; for the day in which you can use your earthly riches will soon pass. Take a lesson from even the dishonest and the evil; if they are so prudent as to provide for the only future they think of, how much more should you, who believe in an eternal future, provide therefor! If you have not learned wisdom and prudence in the use of 'unrighteous mammon,' how can you be trusted with the more enduring riches?" (Jesus the Christ, 464). (New Testament Student Manual)

In continuing her thought, Sister Craven asks, **What mattereth most?**

- How many “likes” we get on our social media posts? Or how much we are loved and valued by our Heavenly Father?
- Wearing the latest trend in clothing? Or showing respect for our bodies by dressing modestly?
- Finding answers through an internet search? Or receiving answers from God through the Holy Ghost?
- Wanting more? Or being content with what we have been given?

What really matters most to us? Do we build up Babylon and entertain ourselves, or do we build up the kingdom of God and His righteousness? I invite each of us to ponder this question. As our group has discussed at length, especially during the Hugh Nibley book club, do we live lavishly and turn our back on the poor and the needy? Amulek, after considering many righteous endeavors we need to follow said,

And now behold, my beloved brethren, I say unto you, do not suppose that this is all; for after ye have done all these things, if ye turn away the needy, and the naked, and visit not the sick and afflicted, and impart of your substance, if ye have, to those who stand in need—I say unto you, if ye do not any of these things, behold, your prayer is vain, and availeth you nothing, and ye are as hypocrites who do deny the faith. (Alma 34:28)

As Micah has wonderfully explained, the “true riches” are our children, our families, and friends. If we can’t be trusted to make good use of our means, how can the Lord entrust us with stewardship over the kind of “true riches” or eternal increase (which is to say posterity) He has?

Seeing a question about how many “likes” we get on something compels me to touch on priestcraft, briefly. For those who are longtime members of this group, this will be very familiar. For any who are new or if this concept is unfamiliar, I strongly suggest watching Micah’s [excellent video on priestcraft](#).

Nephi taught of the Savior:

29 He commandeth that there shall be no priestcrafts; for, behold, priestcrafts are that men preach and set themselves up for a light unto the world, that they may get gain and praise of the world; but they seek not the welfare of Zion. 30 Behold, the Lord hath forbidden this thing; wherefore, the Lord God hath given a commandment that all men should have charity, which charity is love. And except they should have charity they were nothing. Wherefore, if they should have charity they would not suffer the

laborer in Zion to perish. 31 But the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish. (2 Nephi 26)

Whenever we share or consume content or messages, are we seeking for likes and the praise of the world, or do we seek to build up Zion and the kingdom of God?

One key problem with priestcraft is that it focuses on the individual putting out the content. “Look at my wonderful ideas! They’re so wonderful, and so unique, that I deserve to make money from them or get praise and glory of men. Therefore, subscribing to my channel for \$9.99, making a small donation of only \$14.99, or sitting through irrelevant advertising that is monetized by my bank account is completely acceptable and godly!” To summarize what Nephi taught, if we preach for money or the glory of the world, we “shall perish.” And in Micah’s words, Period.

In contrast to pointing others to ourselves, the Savior invites us to hold Him up as our light (see 3 Nephi 18:24-25). Then-Elder Ezra Taft Benson declared

God the Father has given Jesus Christ a name above all others, so that eventually every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ. He is the way, the truth, and the light, and no one can come back into the presence of our Father in heaven except through him. Christ is God the Son and possesses every virtue in its perfection. Therefore, the only measure of true greatness is how close a man can become like Jesus. That man is greatest who is most like Christ, and those who love him most will be most like him. ([Listen to a Prophet’s Voice, October 1972 General Conference, then-Elder Ezra Taft Benson](#))

Let us remember also that Jesus Christ gives of His salvation freely, without price (\$) to all who will accept it. Jacob paraphrased Isaiah saying,

50 Come, my brethren, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. 51 Wherefore, do not spend money for that which is of no worth, nor your labor for that which cannot satisfy. Hearken diligently unto me, and remember the words which I have spoken; and come unto the Holy One of Israel, and feast upon that which perisheth not, neither can be corrupted, and let your soul delight in fatness. (2 Nephi 9, see also Isaiah 55:1-2)

Elder Bruce R. McConkie (1915–85) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles explained what it means to “buy ... without money”: “Salvation is available to all men, not just a select few. Eternal life is not reserved for apostles and prophets, for the saints in Enoch’s day, or for the martyrs of the Christian

Dispensation. 'All mankind may be saved, by obedience to the laws and ordinances of the Gospel.' (Third Article of Faith.) God is no respecter of persons; 'he inviteth them all to come unto him and partake of his goodness; and he denieth none that come unto him, black and white, bond and free, male and female; and he remembereth the heathen; and all are alike unto God, both Jew and Gentile.' (2 Ne. 26:33.) The eternal call of the Eternal God is: 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price' (Isa. 55:1), for 'salvation is free!' (2 Ne. 2:4.)" (Doctrinal New Testament Commentary, 3 vols. [1971–73], 3:416–17). (Book of Mormon Student Manual)

Moving on, Sister Craven quotes President Nelson on the importance of having the Holy Ghost as our companion. As we have often discussed in this group, if we start ignoring counsel from the prophets or the scriptures and, therefore, seek blindly to have Holy Ghost as our companion, we are likely to be deceived by what we call our "spirit-o-meter" which means we come up with our own ideas or "revelations" in place of what God has revealed. As we have often quoted from President Joseph Fielding Smith (and we need to quote it and share it again and again!)

"Our right to guidance from Holy Ghost. We have the right to the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but we cannot have that guidance, if we wilfully refuse to consider the revelations that have been given to help us to understand and to guide us in the light and truth of the everlasting gospel. We cannot hope to have that guidance when we refuse to consider these great revelations which mean so much to us both temporally and spiritually. Now if we find ourselves in this condition of unbelief or unwillingness to seek for the light and the knowledge which the Lord has placed within our reach, then we are liable or in danger of being deceived by evil spirits, the doctrines of devils, and the teachings of men. And when these false influences are presented before us, we will not have the distinguishing understanding by which we can segregate them and know that they are not of the Lord. And so we may become prey unto the ungodly, to the vicious, to the cunning, to the craftiness of men." -Joseph Fielding Smith (Doctrines of Salvation, p.43)

Nephi taught

3 Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ. Wherefore, I said unto you, feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do. 4 Wherefore, now after I have spoken these words, if ye cannot understand them it will be because ye ask not, neither do ye knock; wherefore, ye are not brought into the light, but must perish in the dark. (2 Nephi 32)

Are we seeking from the words of Christ found in the scriptures and words of the prophets, or are we perishing in the dark? Moreover, then-Elder Oaks warned we can be grossly deceived if fail to obey and

heed the counsel given to us by priesthood leaders with keys, particularly the President of the Church and First Presidency:

Similarly, we cannot communicate reliably through the direct, personal line [of revelation] if we are disobedient to or out of harmony with the priesthood line. The Lord has declared that “the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness” (D&C 121:36). Unfortunately, it is common for persons who are violating God’s commandments or disobedient to the counsel of their priesthood leaders to declare that God has revealed to them that they are excused from obeying some commandment or from following some counsel. Such persons may be receiving revelation or inspiration, but it is not from the source they suppose. The devil is the father of lies, and he is ever anxious to frustrate the work of God by his clever imitations. ([Two Lines of Communication, October 2010](#))

A bit more note-form to finish off - sorry!

- It takes effort - President Nelson “the Lord loves effort”
- Ian Arden - [A Time to Prepare](#) - grind to powder . . .
- Sister Michelle Craig who was always looking at her phone and then helped the man whose birthday it was
- Boss your brain - world says we cannot control our thoughts but we can - check Strength of Youth pamphlet

- Intentional sinning
 - Sins of weakness v. sins of rebellion
 - God will not be mocked
 - Alma 41:10
 - The Lord has joy in our righteousness and sorrow in our wickedness
- Can you visualize what the world or your school or your work or your home would be like if being obedient was the popular thing to do? It’s not about doing life perfectly—it’s about finding joy while doing our best to live the covenants we have made with the Lord.
- Can you visualize . . . Zion?
- As we learn in the temple and scriptures, obedience is the first law of heaven
 - 34 And wo be unto him that will not hearken unto the words of Jesus, and also to them whom he hath chosen and sent among them; for whoso receiveth not the words of Jesus and the words of those whom he hath sent receiveth not him; and therefore he will not receive them at the last day; 35 And it would be better for them if they had not been born. For do ye suppose that ye can get rid of the justice of an offended God, who hath been trampled under feet of men, that thereby salvation might come? (3 Nephi 28)
 - 14 And the arm of the Lord shall be revealed; and the day cometh that they who will not hear the voice of the Lord, neither the voice of his servants, neither give heed to the

words of the prophets and apostles, shall be cut off from among the people; 15 For they have strayed from mine ordinances, and have broken mine everlasting covenant; 16 They seek not the Lord to establish his righteousness, but every man walketh in his own way, and after the image of his own god, whose image is in the likeness of the world, and whose substance is that of an idol, which waxeth old and shall perish in Babylon, even Babylon the great, which shall fall. (D&C 1)

- 34 Behold, the Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind; and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days. 35 And the rebellious shall be cut off out of the land of Zion, and shall be sent away, and shall not inherit the land. 36 For, verily I say that the rebellious are not of the blood of Ephraim, wherefore they shall be plucked out. (D&C 64)
- It's not about being perfect, it's about doing our best
 - 2 Nephi 25:23 - we are saved by grace after all we can do
 - Careful versus casual - great talk by sister Craven
- We can trust the Lord's mouthpiece - what he "urges, counsels, and pleads" us to do are things that matter most
 - What has the prophet urged us to do?
 - Wilford Woodruff - the Lord will never allow the president to lead the Church astray

"Please remember this one thing. If our lives and our faith are centered upon Jesus Christ and his restored gospel, nothing can ever go permanently wrong. On the other hand, if our lives are not centered on the Savior and his teachings, no other success can ever be permanently right" ("Fear Not, Little Flock," 1988–89 Devotional and Fireside Speeches, Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1989, p. 112). - Howard W. Hunter

Micah's Thoughts:

I love how my studies of this section have gone as I have read this talk. We've gone from the last subject which was Saints worldwide in their scattered condition coming together and being doers towards the cause of Zion and the very next thing Sister Craven goes into in this section is "is this essential?" How often have we run into individuals who have claimed that they could no longer draw their hearts out to these Saints worldwide because it was taking too much time and they had to focus on more "essential" things locally. I ask the same questions, many times we are told, even in the Church, that some things are "essential" that aren't. I'm an Eagle Scout, I went through the scouting program, and God knows that I was in more fights in leadership meetings in the Church regarding the lack of necessity of the scouting program. The time we invested in it, the money we invested in it, etc. was not worth what we were getting out of the program and the program was moving in a direction that was not good. I can't tell you how many older men and women looked at me in disgust when I dared to suggest that, how many told me that the Church would NEVER sever their relationship with the Boy Scouts of America, and yet here we are.

Just because it's a program that the Church is currently using does not mean that it is the most effective use of time. "Oh, I'm going to be busy. I'm going to be spending three weeks hunting with my son, it's really important to have these experiences with your children!" Really? You mean to convince me that you are too busy to reach out and say hi to likeminded Saints because you are going hunting for three weeks? Asking the question, "is this essential" is very important because far too much of what we do is clearly not essential. And it is shameful that some have taken it upon themselves to not only deem things as essential but classify them as more or most essential. Some have even taken to call these actions as "building up Zion where they are" which when I hear Saints say, the words in Nephi come pounding into my brain, "[and in that day] the blood of the Saints will cry from the ground against them". How have we gone from pioneer ancestors who died trying to get Zion, the New Jerusalem, realizing just how important that single thing was that they were ok dying for it just so long as they were buried facing it, and yet today Saints (in some cases these very Saints' descendants) are declaring that camping trips with their sons are just as important if not more important and that acts like that "build Zion where they are" and that when the redemption of Zion and building of New Jerusalem does take place they will obviously be included. Can no one else see clearly why the blood of our ancestor Saints are crying from the ground against us? Sitting in the lap of such luxury while treating the concepts and doctrine of Zion so casually. There is nothing more essential that men and women can be doing on their own freewill and time.

Those who have a calculated plan to mock the Saints partaking of the fruit, who have their hearts drawn out toward Zion, etc. but who plan or expect cheap repentance at the last minute i.e., Jesus waving a magical wand, and then entrance into the New Jerusalem, I 100% concur with Sister Craven that this mocks God and the Atonement.

Section III (Angie)

Although it may not be easy, there is always a way to do the right thing. While talking with a group of friends at school, a young woman felt her heart drop when the conversation turned to criticizing the standards of the Church. She realized she couldn't stay silent—she had to do something. Respectfully, she spoke of the love of Heavenly Father and how the commandments He set are to bless and protect His children. It would have been much easier for her to do nothing. But what mattered most? Blending in with the crowd? Or standing *out* as a witness of God at "all times and in all things, and in all places"?⁷

If the restored Church of Jesus Christ is going to come out of obscurity, we must come out of obscurity. As covenant-keeping women, we must shine our gospel light all over the world by stepping up and standing out. We do this together as daughters of God—a force of 8.2 million women ages 11 and beyond, whose work is exactly the same. We are gathering Israel as we participate in the work of salvation and exaltation: striving to live the gospel of Jesus Christ, caring for others in need, inviting all to receive the gospel, and uniting families for eternity.⁸ The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of action and a gospel of joy! Let us not underestimate our capacity to do those things that matter most. Our divine heritage gives us courage and confidence to do and be all that our loving Heavenly Father knows we can be.

The youth theme for this year is from [Proverbs 3:5–6](#):

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

“In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”

A key component of trusting in the Lord is moving forward, believing He will guide us even when we don't have all the answers.

Sisters, it's not about the ice cream. And it's not about doing more. It's about doing what matters. It's applying the doctrine of Christ in our lives as we strive to become more like Him.

The more we do to stay firmly on the covenant path, the more our faith in Jesus Christ will grow. The more our faith grows, the more we will desire to repent. And the more we repent, the more we will strengthen our covenant relationship with God. That covenant relationship draws us to the temple because keeping temple covenants is how we endure to the end.

As we center our lives on Jesus Christ, we will be guided to do what mattereth most. And we will be blessed with spiritual strength, contentment, and with *joy*! In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Angie's Thoughts:

Talk, Insights, Scriptures, Talks, Misc.

“Although it may not be easy, there is always a way to do the right thing.” Courage, honesty, sacrifice.

Joseph Smith History 1:25

“So it was with me. I had actually seen a light, and in the midst of that light I saw two Personages, and they did in reality speak to me; and though I was hated and persecuted for saying that I had seen a vision, yet it was true; and while they were persecuting me, reviling me, and speaking all manner of evil against me falsely for so saying, I was led to say in my heart: Why persecute me for telling the truth? I have actually seen a vision; and who am I that I can withstand God, or why does the world think to make me deny what I have actually seen? For I had seen a vision; I knew it, and I knew that God knew it, and **I could not deny it, neither dared I do it; at least I knew that by so doing I would offend God, and come under condemnation.**”

Here's an example that Joseph Smith has shown of courage, honesty and steadfastness. He knew what he saw, no persuasions from other people could make him deny it. When in our lives will we be required to show this sort of courage to speak about the gospel, stand up for it even if we stand alone?

Galatians 1

10 For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Proverbs 3

26 For the Lord shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken.

27 Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it.

God is the most powerful being, we need not fear that evil will prevail. God will win ultimately so who's side will you be found on? "...for behold he is mightier than all the earth..." (1 Nephi 4:1) We have been taught and have even come to know of how much pain wickedness causes. The only way to be freed from the bonds of sin is to follow Christ and have a posture of repentance; doing what matters most.

There is no time to bask in Babylon, our time here is short and what we do with it matters a whole lot. A lot of things in this world are fleeting and "everything is vanity under the sun." It won't be helping us rend the veil of unbelief. Awake and arise Zion, get up and build the kingdom of God.

D&C 30

11 And your whole labor shall be in Zion, with all your soul, from henceforth; yea, you shall ever open your mouth in my cause, not fearing what man can do, for I am with you. Amen.

D&C 136

17 Go thy way and do as I have told you, and fear not thine enemies; for they shall not have power to stop my work.

Our divine heritage gives us courage and confidence to do and be all that our loving Heavenly Father knows we can be.

Mosiah 18

8 And it came to pass that he said unto them: Behold, here are the waters of Mormon (for thus were they called) and now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are **willing** to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light;

9 Yea, and are **willing** to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to **stand as witnesses of God at all times and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life—**

10 Now I say unto you, if this be the desire of your hearts, *what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord*, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him, that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?

What can we do to be doers of the word and not hearers only? How can we participate in the work of God? How do we put the effort? Doing what matters most sometimes requires sacrifice to standing up for the gospel in front of those actively against it. But with an eternal perspective, we will not be dropping down slowly into the depths of regret that we did not speak up when we could've.

Matthew 16

25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

The Work of Salvation and Exaltation [from the Church Handbook]

As we come unto Christ and help others do the same, we participate in God's work of salvation and exaltation. This work is guided by the two great commandments to love God and to love our neighbors (see Matthew 22:37–39). We show our love for God as we keep His commandments and serve His children (see John 14:15).

The work of salvation and exaltation focuses on four divinely appointed responsibilities. These are outlined below:

We come unto Christ and assist in God's work by:

- Living the gospel of Jesus Christ
- Caring for those in need.
- Inviting all to receive the gospel.
- Uniting families for eternity.

[These things] will help you understand these four aspects of God's work. The Holy Ghost will guide you as you do your part in fulfilling them (see 2 Nephi 32:5).

Living the gospel of Jesus Christ includes:

- Exercising faith in Christ, repenting daily, making covenants with God as we receive the ordinances of salvation and exaltation, and enduring to the end by keeping those covenants.
- Learning and teaching the gospel of Jesus Christ at home and at church.
- Becoming self-reliant in providing for ourselves and our families, both spiritually and temporally.
- **[TAKING UPON OURSELVES THE NAME OF CHRIST]**

Caring for those in need includes:

- Serving and ministering to individuals, families, and communities.
- Sharing resources, including Church assistance, with those in need.
- Helping others become self-reliant.
- **[Becoming one in both TEMPORAL and SPIRITUAL things.]**

Inviting all to receive the gospel includes:

- Participating in missionary work and serving as missionaries.
- Helping new and returning Church members progress along the covenant path.
- **[BEING A WATCHMAN]**

Uniting families for eternity includes:

- Making covenants as we receive our own temple ordinances.
- Discovering our deceased ancestors and performing ordinances for them in the temple so they can make covenants with God.
- Going to the temple regularly, where possible, to worship God and perform ordinances for His children.
- **[Cultivating the Spirit of ZION in our homes.]**

The Redeemer is the ultimate and only source of enduring joy. True joy comes from exercising faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, worthily receiving and faithfully honoring sacred covenants and ordinances, and striving to become deeply converted to the Savior and His purposes.

Ordinances of salvation and exaltation:

1. Baptism
2. Confirmation and the gift of the Holy Ghost
3. Priesthood (for men)
4. Temple endowment
5. Temple sealing (celestial marriage and family sealing)

"If we choose . . . the course of discipleship, we will . . . move from what may be initially a mere acknowledgment of Jesus on to admiration of Jesus, then on to adoration of Jesus, and finally to emulation of Jesus. In that process of striving to become more like Him . . . we must be in the posture of repentance."

-Neal A. Maxwell (Testifying of the Great and Glorious Atonement)

One of the major blessings from the gospel is being given the chance to change and to become new creatures through Christ. I know we are nothing without Him and we can only be perfected in Him. God gave man weakness so that they may be humble. The people in Zion are righteous, but they are not perfect. But Christ gives them the strength to reach the perfection that God has been making possible for them to attain. An understanding of the Atonement gives the Saints knowledge of overcoming all things only through Christ. Building the kingdom of God is what matters most to us right now. Being watchmen, gathering Israel, becoming more pure and increasing in faith everyday is what matters most right NOW.

Micah's Thoughts:

At the beginning of this section Sister Craven tells a story of the young woman who was subject to hearing something that she knew was inappropriate and she knew she had to say something. Far too often we rationalize away the need to be watchmen while not realizing just how critical that is for our salvation. President George Albert Smith was quoted in Preach My Gospel, saying "we will attain our exaltation in the celestial kingdom based primarily on our desire to share the blessings of the gospel." And the Savior said,

Matthew 10:32-33

32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Saying something, doing something, is better than doing nothing. There will be those that critique your delivery, "oh you spoke too softly", "oh you spoke too harshly"- you will never find the Lord condemning people for their delivery, you will only have Him constantly reassuring you that the words will be given to you in the very moment that you need them, constantly telling you to open your mouth and it shall be filled, and constantly warning of condemnation towards those who say nothing, especially those who know better, those that were set up to be watchmen and who do not raise the warning voice. "Their blood will I require at the watchman's hand."

I shared a quote recently on Facebook that I believe goes perfectly with this and it goes as follows:

"Perfect lights under perfect bushels are perfectly damned; imperfect lights letting that light shine as best they can are perfect in Christ"

John 15:18-21

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Brothers and Sisters, it isn't about just doing more, it is about doing the most important things. This will require us to remove the debris, remove the activities that are keeping us too busy to do the most important and essential things. Being a watchman is not easy- I felt a few weeks back the crushing influence that President Nelson warned was coming to the faithful Latter-day Saints- and the word faithful is the key word in that. But I have in the last few weeks seen the crushing effect on many of you on such social media sites such as Facebook, Discord, Youtube etc. There are many actively engaged in attempting to crush the faithful Latter-day Saints into silent weakness. They do this through many perverse means including a perversion of the word "love", telling us that if we truly were Christ's followers and loved as the Savior loved we would stop being such valiant watchmen and be more accommodating to wickedness. They do this through perverse means of "building up Zion where you are" by directly or passive aggressively inferring that there are better and more important things that you should be doing- that you being such a watchman is a waste of precious time and when you are evaluating non-essential things to remove from your life include being a watchman and coming together with Saints to rend the veil at the top of your list. They do this through perverse means such as declaring that one must have keys in order to be such a watchman or to come together as Saints, and that any time an individual raises his warning voice or tries to create group activities with those they don't have keys over, there is no way those things can be of God! Despite the fact that nobody would argue the value of a single mother gathering her children together and raising the warning voice to them (hint, she has no keys also). They do this through many perverse and perverted ways. We have entered the day in which President Heber C Kimball prophesied:

"Salt Lake City has been classed among the wicked cities of the world. A spirit of speculation and extravagance has taken possession of the Saints, and the result has been financial bondage. Persecution came next and all true Latter-day Saints are being tested to the limit. Many are apostatizing, others are still not knowing what to do. Darkness is covering the earth and gross darkness the minds of the people. The judgments of God will soon be poured out on the wicked

to the extent that our Elders from far and near will be called home... The western boundary of the State of Missouri will be swept so clean of its inhabitants that as President Young tells us, when you return to that place, there will not be left so much as a yellow dog to wag his tail. Before that day comes, however, the Saints will continue to be put to a test that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure is becoming so great that the more righteous among the Saints are crying unto the Lord day and night, and they will do so until deliverance comes... The time has come when we are mixed up to that extent that it is difficult to tell the face of a Saint from the face of an enemy to the people of God. Brethren and sisters, look out for the great sieve, for this is a great sifting time, and many are falling and will continue to fall and who will be able to stand? This church has before it many close places through which it must pass before the work of God is crowned with victory. To meet the difficulties that are now coming it will have been necessary for you to have obtained knowledge of the truth of this work for yourselves. The difficulties are now of such character that the man or woman who does not possess this personal knowledge or witness will fall. If you have not got the testimony, it is because you do not live right, you do not call upon the Lord, and you quit before you obtained it. If you are in such a state, you will not stand... Soon the Prophet Joseph and others will make their appearance and those who have remained faithful will be selected to return to Jackson County, Missouri and take part in the building of that beautiful city, the New Jerusalem.”

- **Elder Heber C. Kimball** (May 1868, in Deseret News, 23 May 1931; see also Conference Report, Oct. 1930, p. 58-59; Orson F. Whitney, Life of Heber C. Kimball, Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1945, p. 446, Smith, Robert W. and Elisabeth A., Scriptural and Secular Prophecies Pertaining to The Last Days, Ninth Edition, Pyramid Press, SLC, UT, 1947, pp. 134-138; Deseret News, May 23, 1931; W. Cleon Skousen, Prophecy and Modern Times, pp. 31-33, An Army of Elders, May 1868, Heber C. Kimball Reported by his son J. Golden Kimball, CR October 1930, p. 58. See also Prophetic Sayings of Heber C. Kimball to Sister Amanda H. Wilcox)

I testify with President Nelson that there is nothing more essential that you can be doing right now than the gathering of Israel and being a watchman. Ye Saints of God the Lord has set you as watchmen upon the walls, watchmen who shall never hold their peace, day nor night, hear the words of Isaiah to you:

“Never hold thy peace day nor night ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest til he establish and til he make New Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”

In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.