

Why Not Now?

by Elder Neal A. Maxwell
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they say, "but not yet ..."

Section I (Brandon)

My brothers and sisters, I should like to speak of and to a particular group of important individuals. These are they who fully intend, someday, to begin to believe and/or to be active in the Church. But not yet! These are not bad individuals, but good individuals who simply do not know how much better they could be. Such individuals often stay proximate to—but do not participate fully in—the Church. They will not come inside the chapel, but neither do they leave its porch. These are they who need and are needed by the Church, but who, in part, “live without God in the world.”

To such individuals, in the brief, imploring invitation which follows, be assured there is a real craving for your companionship and a genuine need for your unique strengths.

There are reasons for your commitment to be made now, for as the rush of hours, days, and months grows stronger, the will to commit grows weaker. Events to transpire soon on this planet will dry up the options for the lukewarm, for the issues raised by Jesus are irrepressible issues!

If, however, you really do not wish to commit now, then let me warn of the following:

Do not look too deeply into the eyes of the pleasure-seekers about you, for if you do, you will see a certain sadness in sensuality, and you will hear artificiality in the laughter of licentiousness.

Do not look too deeply, either, into the motives of those who deny God, for you may notice their doubts of doubt.

Do not risk thinking the unthinkable, lest you find yourself drawn with a deep and powerful pull toward the reality that God does exist, that he loves you, and that finally there is no escaping him or his love!

Do not think too much about what you are teaching your family, for what in you is merely casualness about Christianity may, in your children, become hostility; for what you have not defended, your children may reject angrily.

Do not reflect on the practicality of gospel standards such as abstaining from alcohol; for if you do, a surf of statistics will wash over you, confirming that abstinence is ultimately the only cure for alcoholism that is both preventive and redemptive. You will also see that the living of one protective principle of the gospel is better than a thousand compensatory governmental programs—which programs are, so often, like “straightening deck chairs on the Titanic.”

Brandon's Thoughts:

After reading this fireside I was inspired to go and read Revelation chapter 3. I have always loved studying about the second coming of our Lord and the Book of Revelation is a favorite of mine. I felt that the entire chapter lined up rather well with this talk and I'll be quoting from it this evening. I should also add, the timing of reading this talk this week has had a powerful effect in my life. The Lord knows perfectly how to teach and lead us.

- "My brothers and sisters, I should like to speak of and to a particular group of important individuals. These are they who fully intend, someday, to begin to believe and/or to be active in the Church. But not yet! These are not bad individuals, but good individuals who simply do not know how much better they could be. Such individuals often stay proximate to—but do not participate fully in—the Church."

- Revelation 3:3 says: Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

- I can say personally, that as someone who has always fully believed that the church is true, the temptation has always been there to be lax in the full application of my belief. This is a very prominent condition among the members of the church. They may say that living up to the standard of the celestial kingdom is hard and will take a lifetime's worth of work, so they delay putting in their full effort right away believing the task to be too gargantuanly big. It feels unapproachable to them! I've befriended many in the church who struggle with the weight of what is required to obtain a celestial inheritance, and the result, far too often, is that they give up. Like Brother Maxwell says, "they fully intend, someday, to begin to believe and or be active in the church". Brothers and sisters, this task is gargantuan, but we are not expected to do this alone! The Savior offers us His hand to guide us along the way! We need not be daunted at the enormity of the task. We just need to take the first step, and then the one after that, and focus on taking each step afterward and the Lord will lead us on this path. If we truly believe, we need to trust the Lord NOW!! I would even add ESPECIALLY NOW for the hour is late in 2022!!!! Remember this talk was given to the church in the 70s before I was born!! Even then Brother Maxwell, and many other prophets and apostles bore testimony about the proximate nature of the redemption of Zion and the coming of the Lord. More than ever we need to act now!

- "There are reasons for your commitment to be made now, for as the rush of hours, days, and months grows stronger, the will to commit grows weaker. Events to transpire soon on this planet will dry up the options for the lukewarm, for the issues raised by Jesus are irrepensible issues!"

- o Revelation 3:16-22 says ▪

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

- I was shocked when I read this talk, I felt like it was very personally directed at me. I've always had faith. People have been forthcoming in identifying me as extremely zealous! I can feel how much love our Father in Heaven has for us. But I needed this reminder! The Lord knew that I needed to be reminded to act now and this further adds to my testimony. It is further evidence of the workings of my ancestors on the other side of the veil on behalf of my family and myself. I needed this talk to come into my life this week.

Brother Maxwell inserts a very specific warning here that needs to be pointed out and remembered. The consequences of failing to commit now. If we delay, we lose our strength to be obedient, serve the Lord, and reap the promised blessings.

- “Do not look too deeply into the eyes of the pleasure-seekers about you, for if you do, you will see a certain sadness in sensuality, and you will hear artificiality in the laughter of licentiousness.”

o Personal Thoughts

- I unfortunately have seen the truth of this paragraph firsthand. Up until about a year and a half ago I was a career pilot. In this industry, you spend a lot of time away from your families and it creates a culture of being unfaithful to your spouse. I was flying overseas for a few months and witnessed the collapse of a fellow pilot's family. This pilot was very much in love with his wife and their children. His family came out to visit for about a week, they had an amazing trip together traveling around Europe and then his family went home. Almost immediately after their visit this pilot gave into temptation and got into a relationship with another woman. At first he shared with me how he just felt like a 25 year old again. In reality he was closer to 50. But within just a few more weeks he became depressed as the realization that his wife was now divorcing him, his three adolescent daughters were heart broken and he had thrown away a 22 year relationship for what amounted to nothing. It truly was “artificiality in the laughter of licentiousness.”

- Do not look too deeply, either, into the motives of those who deny God, for you may notice their doubts of doubt. Do not risk thinking the unthinkable, lest you find yourself drawn with a deep and powerful pull toward the reality that God does exist, that he loves you, and that finally there is no escaping him or his love! o My daughter had a birthday party two days ago and my wife and I made it a point to invite another couple and their children to come that we have been friends with for years. Two days ago I met with a friend of mine that I haven't seen in several months. I had been a long time since we got together and since last seeing each other I had been made aware that the husband was struggling with his testimony particularly relating to the authenticity of the Book of Mormon and honesty of Joseph Smith. Trying to remember the prophets directive to “Love, Share, Invite” I made it a point to have a frank conversation about his concerns. I was able to bear my testimony to him of how close I believe the coming of our Lord is and directed him to some resources to look into. I feel strongly that if we do not speak now to those losing their testimonies and be “watchmen on the tower” we will

be held accountable in the next life. Our friends will plead with us, eyes full of tears, “why did you not try to warn me, why did you not talk with me”. Let us extend our hand to EVERYONE we come across.

- “Do not think too much about what you are teaching your family, for what in you is merely casualness about Christianity may, in your children, become hostility; for what you have not defended, your children may reject angrily.”

- o This is a topic my wife and I have talked and pondered about in much detail over the past few years as the world as changed so drastically fast. How are we going to nurture and teach our children to obey the commandments in the face of so much opposition. We both grew up in the church and our parents took us to church weekly and would sporadically do Family Home Evening. It became quickly apparent, and during lockdown, that what our parents did for us was not going to be enough for our children. Although we were very grateful for the church’s new home centered church approach, we really struggled to figure out the best way to make our home a sanctified place. After a lot of trial and error, we actually got an inspiration from someone in this group talking about how they would have their children draw pictures of the scriptures they were reading. Our children are young and one has special needs and this seemed like a perfect answer for us. We created binders for them to keep all the scripture pictures in with titles and references for each page. We are far from perfect with this, but our children are gathered together several times a week and we teach them the commandments of God following the Come Follow Me lessons. It’s made a difference in our home.

- Do not reflect on the practicality of gospel standards such as abstaining from alcohol; for if you do, a surf of statistics will wash over you, confirming that abstinence is ultimately the only cure for alcoholism that is both preventive and redemptive. You will also see that the living of one protective principle of the gospel is better than a thousand compensatory governmental programs—which programs are, so often, like “straightening deck chairs on the Titanic.

- o Nevermind the fact that so many governmental programs are likely born from the think tanks of secret combinations. They offer no cure, merely the appearance of a solution only. Truly keeping the commandments is the cure. If we decide to serve the Lord, we must be honest with ourselves about what that actually means. We FULLY TRUST Him. We do whatever He asks us to do, when it’s simple and easy, and even when every one of our senses tells us not to. We know that He knoweth, not us. We lean unto His understanding and NOT our own. We are fully honest with ourselves in every thought and action we take. We do as He asks. We fully Trust the Lord.

- Revelation 3 has the promises that the Lord makes us if we will be sanctified.

- o Revelation 3:5,12

- 5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and will write upon him my new name.

Micah’s Thoughts:

The first thing that caught my attention in the first section was Elder Maxwell laying out the doctrine of “the point of no return”. The Savior’s atonement has the power to save all and redeem all no matter their condition- that said however, for the atonement to apply the individual must enter into covenants by ordinance and then “do all they can” before grace is applied. There is a point in time, a “point of no return”, which an individual reaches when their will to commit reaches a point where they will never act. This is known as “the point of no return” or when “the spirit of the Lord ceases to strive with men”. I go over this in my papers “Agency in Progression”

“Watch the Switches in Your Life” Gordon B. Hinckley”

“Many years ago I worked in the head office of one of our railroads. One day I received a telephone call from my counterpart in Newark, New Jersey, who said that a passenger train had arrived without its baggage car. The patrons were angry.

We discovered that the train had been properly made up in Oakland, California, and properly delivered to St. Louis, from which station it was to be carried to its destination on the east coast. But in the St. Louis yards, a thoughtless switchman had moved a piece of steel just three inches.

That piece of steel was a switch point, and the car that should have been in Newark, New Jersey, was in New Orleans, Louisiana, thirteen hundred miles away.

So it is with our lives—a cigarette smoked, a can of beer drunk at a party, a shot of Speed taken on a dare, a careless giving in to an impulse on a date. Each has thrown a switch in the life of a boy that put him on a track that carried him far away from what might have been a great and foreordained calling. And as Nephi said, “... thus the devil cheateth their souls and leadeth them away carefully down to hell.” (2 Ne. 28:21.)”

Events are transpiring on this planet that are drying up the options for the lukewarm members, President Nelson said of such “do it now, time is running out”, which almost entirely had reference to this talk “why not now?” making it clear that the time of lukewarm members being “spewn from the Lord’s mouth” was on our doorstep... President Nelson also gave us the key to know the major meanings in “drying up” of options when he added “the time is coming when those who obey the Lord will be separated from those who do not”... These concepts are clearly taken from the following scriptures:

Revelation 3

15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Doctrine and Covenants 1

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

and some bonus scriptures that I feel tie in well with those two:

Doctrine and Covenants 64

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.

37 Behold, I, the Lord, have made my church in these last days like unto a judge sitting on a hill, or in a high place, to judge the nations.

38 For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion.

39 And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known.

40 And even the bishop, who is a judge, and his counselors, if they are not faithful in their stewardships shall be condemned, and others shall be planted in their stead.

41 For, behold, I say unto you that Zion shall flourish, and the glory of the Lord shall be upon her;

42 And she shall be an ensign unto the people, and there shall come unto her out of every nation under heaven.

43 And the day shall come when the nations of the earth shall tremble because of her, and shall fear because of her terrible ones. The Lord hath spoken it. Amen.

Section II (Vicki)

Do not think too much, either, about other doctrines, such as the importance of love at home; because if you think about them very long—in a world full of orphans with parents—you will be grasped by a reality that will make your teeth chatter.

Do not think, either, about the doctrine that you are a child of God, for if you do, it will be the beginning of belonging.

Do not dare to read the Book of Mormon seriously, or you may suddenly realize that it is inlaid with incredibly important insights from a millennium of sacred history.

Do not overpack the luggage you plan to take with you when you leave this world, for we simply cannot get most mortal things by celestial customs; only the eternal things are portable.

Do not pray, for you will get answers from a listening and loving Father.

Do not think too much, either, about the possibility that there are living prophets in the world today. Think instead about how those who are sustained seem quite ordinary in many ways. Forget that other prophets were fishermen and tentmakers—ordinary enough to scarcely be noticed—*except* for what they said and what they did! For the winds of tribulation, which blow out some men's candles of commitment, only fan the fires of faith of these special men.

Do not let yourself reflect too much on the social, political, and economic indicators that suggest the gathering storm, lest you realize that there is an inseparable connection between the keeping of the commandments and the well-being of society.

Do not read what the holiest inhabitant ever to live on this planet said about the necessity of certain ordinances, or you will see that he allowed for no exceptions, including himself.

Do not search the scriptures to see if good people still need the Church, for the best being who ever lived organized the Church—because random, individual goodness is not enough in the fight against evil.

Do not, if you have been offended, recall that while you may have been bumped by an ecclesiastical elbow, the chip was on your shoulder long before the elbow appeared.

Do not be fully honest about the hypocrisy of those in the Church who may pretend to be better than they are, or you will soon realize that there is also another form of hypocrisy—appearing to be *less* committed than one really is!

Yes, brothers and sisters, it is best to avoid all such things as these *if* you wish to continue to delay deciding about Christ and his church.

However, Joshua didn't say choose you next year whom you will serve; he spoke of "this day," while there is still daylight and before the darkness becomes more and more normal. (See [Josh. 24:15](#).)

Micah's Thoughts:

Elder Maxwell takes a very interesting approach in teaching starting at the end of Section 1 and the entirety of Section 2- I actually find it very intellectually stimulating, the steps involved in even conceiving doing it I find awesome. So what does Elder Maxwell do here? Well, in most teaching situations, people should "anti-anti" the student (as well as themselves, for we are all edified together) if time permits, but what is an "anti-anti"? An "anti-anti" is a tactic of preparing people for the opposition that will come when they start making the right choices- "how do you think God feels about you making these choices? What about Satan? What do you think Satan will do to prevent you from making these positive changes?" etc. etc. etc.

But what did Elder Maxwell decide to do? He was "anti-anti'ing" people as though they were going to make the wrong choice, which presents to them the absurdity of holding their position or even thinking about taking that position let alone justifying it... I truly don't know how many members truly appreciated the genius of Elder Maxwell, many loved listening to him like many enjoy reading a good poem, but they have no idea of what's hidden in the stanzas because they never got beyond "surface level" on anything...

If I wanted to teach people, for example, of the importance of being honest, of the dangers of secret combinations built purely off of hatred of another, etc. I would do so and then "anti-anti" everyone by saying "what would be some temptations to being dishonest? To joining secret 'cool kids mean girl' combinations?" and what could we do to overcome those temptations?"

What Elder Maxwell did was teach the doctrine and then said, “ok, well if you want to continue to be dishonest, if you want to continue to not repent, if you want to continue to remain in your secret ‘cool kids mean girls’ combination, fine... then you best stay away from conversations about Zion! Because learning about Zion and what’s required to get in, you might decide that choice isn’t the best choice... and you best avoid talking about The Second Comforter entirely! Because if you talked about The Second Comforter you’d know without any doubt that living in such a state of dishonesty with other ‘tares’ for members you will never receive such a blessing!”

Etc. Etc. Etc.

Can you see what Elder Maxwell did here? If an Apostle (or God forbid, myself) pulled something like this off the usual crowd would light their hair on fire with “passive aggressive this!” and “passive aggressive that!” and kick right up against the pricks... It’s things like this that making reading an Elder Maxwell talk an absolute treat for myself... If you want to remain in your “lukewarm” condition and do not want to commit *now*, then you truly are kissing some things goodbye, somethings maybe for eternity, and you best stay away from positive things like this Zion or Bust! Group of Saints! Because we won’t let you “go off carefully down to hell” without one hell of a fight! We love ya too much!

Section III (Tamzan)

When Jesus called his first disciples, the scriptures record that they left their ships and nets “straightway.” They didn’t ask to join Jesus *after* the fishing season; they didn’t even delay their response in order to make just one more catch. They left “straightway”! (See [Matt. 4:20](#).)

Act, my brothers and sisters, for once the soul is tilted toward belief, and once there is even a desire to believe, then marvelous things begin to happen! Once one leaves the porch and comes inside the Church, then one not only hears the music more clearly—he becomes a part of it.

Act now, so that a thousand years from now, when you look back at this moment, you can say this was a moment that mattered—this was a day of determination.

Never mind, therefore, that you have made an investment of self and time in inactivity. Never mind that there is an accumulation of pride that will make it difficult to acknowledge that you have been wrong, for it will never be easier to do than it is now.

All must know that feeling which is associated with a broken heart and a contrite spirit—by which we are cleansed by the hot, holy fire of a special shame, so that we might, thereafter, have a more pure love and a greater capacity to serve both God and man. Hearts “set so much upon the things of this world” are hearts *so set* they must first be broken.

Indeed, one of the most cruel games anyone can play with self is the “not yet” game—hoping to sin just a bit more before ceasing; to enjoy the praise of the world a little longer before turning away from the applause; to win just once more in the wearying sweepstakes of materialism; to be chaste, but not yet; to be good neighbors, but not now. One can play upon the harp-strings of hesitations and reservations just so long, and then one faces that special moment—a moment when what has been sensed, mutely, suddenly finds voice and cries out with tears, “Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.” ([Mark 9:24](#).)

The truth is that “not yet” usually means “never.” Trying to run away from the responsibility to decide about Christ is childish. Pilate sought to refuse responsibility for deciding about Christ, but Pilate’s hands were never dirtier than just after he had washed them.

The past of each of us is now inflexible. We need to concentrate on what has been called “the holy present,” for now is sacred; we never really live in the future. The holy gift of life always takes the form of now. Besides, God asks us now to give up only those things which, if clung to, will destroy us!

And when we tear ourselves free from the entanglements of the world, are we promised a religion of repose or an Eden of ease? No! We are promised tears and trials and toil! But we are also promised final triumph, the mere contemplation of which tingles one’s soul.

My friends, there are footprints to follow where we must go—made not by a leader who said, safely from the sidelines, “Go thither,” but by a leader who said, “Come, follow me.” And our mortal leader is a prophet who is showing us how to lengthen our stride.

Yes, for those in the Church’s courtyard or on its porch, ask not “for whom the [Church] bell tolls; It tolls for thee.” (John Donne, *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, Meditation XVII.) And, if you sense that one day every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, why not do so now? For in the coming of that collective confession, it will mean much less to kneel down when it is no longer possible to stand up!

Meanwhile, may we be different in order to make a difference in the world. And may God hasten that time for all our sakes. I pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Tamzan’s Thoughts:

When Jesus called his first disciples, the scriptures record that they left their ships and nets “straightway”. They didn’t ask to join Jesus after the fishing season; they didn’t even delay their response in order to make just one more catch. They left “straightway.”

As I read and reread this talk it seems to be directed toward the lukewarm members and the inactive members of our church. For those of us that have been warned of the events to come before the [4] Second Comings of our Lord Jesus Christ **D&C88:81 Behold I send you out to testify and warn the people and it becometh every man who has been warned to warn his neighbor.**

An excerpt from a conference talk by Thomas S. Monson {Your Eternal Voyage} April 2000
Though the tasks seem large we are strengthened by this truth: “The greatest force in this world today is the power of God as it works through man.” If we are on the Lord’s errand we are entitled to the Lord’s help. That divine help is predicated upon our worthiness.

Act my brothers and sisters for once the soul is tilted toward belief, and once there is even a

desire to believe then marvelous things begin to happen! Once one leaves the porch and comes inside the Church then one not only hears the music more clearly – he becomes a part of it.

Act now, so that a thousand years from now, when you look back at this moment, you can say this was a moment that mattered- this was a day of determination.

Alma 32:27-28 But behold if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a Particle of faith, yea even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner than can give place for a portion of my words. (28) Now, we will compare the word unto a seed. Now if ye give place that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold if it is a true seed or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold it will begin to swell within your breasts; and when you feel the swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves, it must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good for it beginneth to enlighten my soul, yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, yea it beginneth to be delicious to me.

The Savior said to Peter (and all of us) Luke 22:32 --- But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

David A Bednar (Converted to the Lord October 2012)

Conversion is an enlarging, a deepening, and a broadening of the of the undergirding base of testimony. It is the result of revelation from God, accompanied by individual repentance, obedience, and dilligence. Any honest seeker can become converted by experiencing a mighty change of heart and being spiritually born of God.

D&C 97:8 Verily I say unto you, all among them who know their hearts are honest, and are broken, and their spirits are contrite, and are willing to observe their covenants by sacrifice-yea every sacrifice which I, the Lord, shall command- they are accepted of me.

Never mind, therefore that you have made an investment of self and time in inactivity. Never mind that there is an accumulation of pride that will make it difficult to acknowledge that you have been wrong, for it will never be easier to do than it is now.

All must know that feeling which is associated with a broken heart and a contrite spirit- by which we are cleansed by the hot, holy fire of special shame, so that we might, thereafter have a more pure love and a greater capacity to serve both God and man. Hearts “set so much upon the things of this world” are hearts so set they must first be broken.

Mosiah 3:19 For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam, and will be forever and ever, unless he yields to the enticing of the Holy Spirit, and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love ,willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father.

Indeed, one of the most cruel games anyone can play with self is the “not yet” game- hoping to sin just a bit more before ceasing; to enjoy the praise of the world a little longer before turning away from the applause, to win just once more in the wearying sweepstakes of materialism; to be chaste, but not yet; to be good neighbors but not now. One can play on the harp-strings of hesitation and reservations just so long and then one faces that special moment – a moment when what has been sensed mutely, suddenly finds voice and cries out with tears “Lord I believe; help thou mine unbelief.”

The truth is that “not yet” usually means “never”. Trying to run away from responsibility to decide about Christ is childish. Pilate sought to refuse responsibility for deciding about Christ, but Pilate’s hands were never dirtier than just after he washed them.

Alma in talking to his son Corianton about sin stated to him Alma 41:10-11

Do not suppose because it has been spoken concerning restoration, that ye shall be restored from sin to happiness. Behold I say unto you, wickedness never was happiness. 11 And now my son, all men that are in a state of nature, or I would say, in a carnal state, are in the gall of bitterness and they have gone contrary to the nature of God; therefore, they are in a state contrary to the nature of happiness.

King Benjamin told his people that after a person has been taught the gospel and deliberately breaks the commandments, that person is in a state of rebellion.

Mosiah 2:36-39 And now I say unto you my brethren, that after ye have known and been taught all these things, if ye should transgress and go contrary to that which has been spoken, that ye do withdraw yourselves from the Spirit of the Lord, that it may have no place in you to guide you in wisdom’s paths, that ye may be blessed, prospered, and preserved-may be blessed, prospered and preserved-

37 I say unto you, that the man that doeth this, the same cometh out in open rebellion against God; therefore he listeth to obey the evil spirit, and becometh an enemy to all righteousness; therefore the Lord has no place in him for he dwelleth not in unholy temples.

38 Therefore if that man repenteth not, and remaineth and dieth an enemy to God the demands of justice do awaken his immortal soul to a lively sense of his own guilt, which doth cause him to shrink from the presence of the Lord and doth fill his breast with guilt and pain and anguish, which is like an unquenchable fire, whose flame assendeth up forever and ever.

39 And now I say unto you, that mercy hath no claim on that man, therefore his final doom is to endure a never ending torment.

These scriptures are very solemn warning. Some of us have loved ones and friends that are in this ugly cycle, we must reach out to them as Alma reached out to his sons.

The past of each of us is now inflexible. We need to concentrate on what has been called, “The holy present.” For now is sacred; we never live in the future. The holy gift of life

always takes the form of now. Besides, God asks us now to give up only those things which, if clung to, will destroy us.

Bruce R. McConkie in April 1955 talk (Overcoming the World) If we are to inherit eternal life in the kingdom of our father, we must overcome the world. The world is a state of wickedness, evil, and carnality, a corrupt state in which men dwell and in which wickedness holds sway. To overcome the world we must triumph over these things. All men who live in this world, in this state of carnality, and who have not overcome the world, are themselves sensual and devilish by nature. That is the kind of inheritance we have received as part of this mortality, and our object and end is to overcome the world and develop the kind of bodies and attributes and perfections that will enable us to dwell with the holy, pure, and exalted beings in the eternal world.

I love the description of our mortal present as (the holy present) now is the time we have to obey God's law and sanctify ourselves.

And when we tear ourselves free from the entanglements of the world are we promised a religion of repose or an Eden of ease? No! We are promised tears and trials and toil; but we are also promised final triumph the mere contemplation of which, tingles our souls.

We have made covenants with God to obey his commandments. We are trying to sanctify ourselves and serve others, to be watchmen on our towers, to stand in holy places and to be witnesses of Christ.

Ezekiel 33: 7 So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchmen unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

D. Todd Christofferson in April 2017 gave a talk (A Voice of Warning). While the duty to warn especially keenly by prophets, it is a duty shared by others as well. In fact "it becometh every man whom has been warned, to warn his neighbor." We who have received a knowledge of the great plan of happiness and its implementing commandments- should feel a desire to share that knowledge since it makes a difference here and in eternity. "Who is my neighbor?" was tied to the two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thine mind." "And thy neighbor as thyself." The motivation for raising the warning voice is LOVE- love of God and love of fellow men. To warn is to care. The Lord instructs that it is to be done, "in mildness and meekness and by persuasion, by long suffering, by gentleness, and by love unfeigned."

My friends, there are footprints to follow where we must go- made not by a leader who said safely from the sidelines, "go thither" but by a leader who said "come follow me". And our mortal leader is a prophet who is showing us to lengthen our stride.

Our prophet Russell M. Nelson in his October 2020 talk (Let God Prevail) has given us instructions.

As members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latterday Saints or latterday covenant Israel, we have been charged to assist the Lord in this pivotal work. [Footnote] As we participate in the gathering of Israel, the Lord has a wonderful way of describing those who are being gathered. He refers to us collectively as his “peculiar treasure” (Exodus 19:5, Psalms 135:4) as his “jewels” (Malachi 3:17, D&C 101:3) and as a “holy nation” (Exodus 19:6, Deuteronomy 14:2, 26:18) when we speak of gathering Israel on both sides of the veil, we are referring of course to missionary, temple, and family history work. We are referring to building faith and testimony in the hearts of those with whom we live, work, and serve. Anytime we do anything that helps anyone- on either side of the veil- to make and keep covenants with God, we are helping to gather Israel.

I wonder to whom we will be lead when we plead to find those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives.

We may be led to some who have never believed in God or Jesus Christ but who are now yearning to learn about Them and Their plan of Happiness. Others may have been born “in the covenant” but have since wandered away from the covenant path. They may now be ready to repent, return, and let God prevail. We can assist them by welcoming them with open arms and hearts. And some to whom we may be led may have always felt there was something missing in their lives. They too are longing for the wholeness and joy that comes to those who are willing to let God prevail in their lives.

Yes, for those in the Church’s courtyard or on its porch ask not “for whom the [Church] bell tolls; it tolls for thee”. (John Dunne, Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, meditation XV II)

And if you sense that one day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, why not do so now? For in the coming of that collective confession, it will mean much less to kneel down when it is no longer possible to stand up!

Neal A. Maxwell in April 1985 conference (Willing to Submit) and teaches spiritual submissiveness is so much more than bended knee and bowed head. Alas insofar as we “mind things of the flesh” we simply cannot have the “mind of Christ”. Jesus laid down the sobering requirement “except ye—become as little children ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven”. One of Jesus’ prophets delineated- with submissiveness thrice stipulated- how a disciple, can become “as a child submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him even as a child doth submit to his father.”

Yielding one's heart to God signals the last stage in our spiritual development. Only then are we beginning to be fully useful to God! How can we sincerely pray to be an instrument in His hands if the instrument seeks to do the instructions?

It is only by yielding to God that we can begin to realize His will for us. And if we truly trust God, why not yield to his loving omniscience? After all, He knows us and our possibilities much better than do we.

Meanwhile, may we be different in order to make a difference in the world. And may God hasten that time for all our sakes. I pray in the name of Jesus Christ- Amen.

Each of us has a mission to do. Let us ask Father what our mission is and if we are willing, God will reveal line upon line. I will close with these scriptures...

D&C 18:10-16

10 Remember the ^aworth of ^bsouls is great in the sight of God;

11 For, behold, the Lord your ^aRedeemer suffered ^bdeath in the flesh; wherefore he ^csuffered the ^dpain of all men, that all men might repent and ^ecome unto him.

12 And he hath ^arisen again from the dead, that he might bring all men unto him, on conditions of ^brepentance.

13 And how great is his ^ajoy in the ^bsoul that ^crepenteth!

14 Wherefore, you are called to ^acry repentance unto this people.

15 And if it so be that you should labor all your days in crying repentance unto this people, and bring, save it be one ^asoul unto me, how great shall be your joy with him in the kingdom of my Father!

16 And now, if your joy will be great with one soul that you have brought unto me into the ^akingdom of my Father, how great will be your ^bjoy if you should bring many ^csouls unto me!

Micah's Thoughts:

The last section Elder Maxwell entirely taught from the "anti-anti" perspective as though one was not making the right choice- in this section he strongly commits us to make the right choice, and he even provides a bit of 'anti-anti' for the right choice when he said: "when we tear ourselves free from the entanglements of the world, are we promised a religion of repose or an Eden of ease? No! We are promised tears and trials and toil!"

Brothers and Sisters, I personally believe that hundreds, if not thousands of people that join us, that view these videos etc. have or are in the process of "tearing ourselves free from the entanglements of the world"- there are many across the world, even in Christ's Church, and many on Youtube that preach an "all is well in Zion!" for a few bucks but I don't believe that is

who is listening and taking part in these... Sure, there is the occasional troll, just here to stir the pot and they shall have their reward, but the overwhelming majority of people that couldn't keep the righteous pace or who were offended by the Word because they had not depth of root, etc. are not listening or participating in these events or with us. That being said my heart, my mind, my very soul has been drawn out as of late to "anti-anti"... I have done so often, and frequently on this channel, with my friends and family, etc. When you leave Babylon, as I've said multiple times, it is exciting, thrilling, spiritually exhilarating, but by and by, the further one gets outside of that proud city, the more they realize just how "few" there are outside of that city and "fewer yet" pressing on. Many at this time "turn back" to Sodem, and pitch their tents facing that great city- "if we are safe enough outside of the city" we self-justify, "then when the city is burned we will be safely outside of its blast radius- but in the meantime I can enjoy the view, by and by I can even visit the city from time to time, to 'do missionary work', or 'make a living', or whatever else I can self-justify." Such thinking they can safely stretch both legs out and have a foot in both worlds will be spewn from the Lord's mouth and will have their portion allotted with the hypocrites. Others have self-justified away the need to leave Babylon at all and have marched right back into her gates, "the Lord couldn't possibly destroy this entire city! The Lord is far more merciful and forgiving! All of these good, honorable people will not be damned by the Lord! Nah! If it so be they are guilty, the Lord will beat them with but a few strips and at last! They shall be saved in the Kingdom of God!"

But the damned are not who I want to talk about, and are not who I am talking to- I want to talk about those that didn't stop- that continued to push forward with faith further and further away from Babylon the Great, "they are few" indeed! Lonely? You better believe it... Were we promised a religion of repose or an Eden of ease? No!

I, of late, have constantly had the Holy Spirit bring to my mind the words of our beloved prophet President Nelson:

Why do we need such resilient faith? Because difficult days are ahead. Rarely in the future will it be easy or popular to be a faithful Latter-day Saint. Each of us will be tested. The Apostle Paul warned that in the latter days, those who diligently follow the Lord "shall suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). That very persecution can either crush you into silent weakness or motivate you to be more exemplary and courageous in your daily lives.

"crush you into silent weakness"- those specific words, "crush you into silent weakness"... I will tell you now bluntly, there is not a more talked about group of Saints online anywhere, then this group... You go into any, and I mean any, comment section of any of the known "LDS Youtubers and podcasters" and you will find people talking about myself and this group... And not in a positive light. Even many members of this group when sharing truths talked about in this group curtail it with backhanded insults against myself and others in this group. I have looked online, and nowhere, and I mean nowhere, has this prophecy of President Nelson been more readily seen then with this group. Period. And why?

"Because we are Saints who are diligently seeking to learn the will of the Lord and follow Him"...

1 Nephi 8

24 And it came to pass that I beheld others pressing forward, and they came forth and caught hold of the end of the rod of iron; and they did press forward through the mist of darkness, clinging to the rod of iron, even until they did come forth and partake of the fruit of the tree.

25 And after they had partaken of the fruit of the tree they did cast their eyes about as if they were ashamed.

26 And I also cast my eyes round about, and beheld, on the other side of the river of water, a great and spacious building; and it stood as it were in the air, high above the earth.

27 And it was filled with people, both old and young, both male and female; and their manner of dress was exceedingly fine; and they were in the attitude of mocking and pointing their fingers towards those who had come at and were partaking of the fruit.

28 And after they had tasted of the fruit they were ashamed, because of those that were scoffing at them; and they fell away into forbidden paths and were lost.

Priestcraft is a mortal sin. Period. But man oh man, when you see people making hundreds and thousands of dollars practicing it, you will do all sorts of self-justifying- but all you've done is march into the building. Once there, are you still? Do you keep your peace? No! For you must now lift up your voice and curse God and die! You must convince those still at the tree to leave the tree or get rid of them entirely, for their presence makes it unbearable for you for their very presence makes self-justifying an impossibility. Before Christ came to the America's we had Nephi and Helaman,

3 Nephi 7

16 Therefore, being grieved for the hardness of [the people's] hearts and the blindness of their minds— [Nephi] went forth among them in that same year, and began to testify, boldly, repentance and remission of sins through faith on the Lord Jesus Christ.

17 And he did minister many things unto them; and all of them cannot be written, and a part of them would not suffice, therefore they are not written in this book. And Nephi did minister with power and with great authority.

18 And it came to pass ***that they were angry with him, even because he had greater power than they, for it were not possible that they could disbelieve his words, for so great was his faith on the Lord Jesus Christ that angels did minister unto him daily.***

And before the Lord comes again, there shall be men like Nephi and Helaman raised up:

Micah 5

5 And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.

Brothers and Sisters, Nephi and Helaman were not “dogmatic” in their views and doctrines, they were “faith-filled”, and that faith which was sure and immovable was offensive to everyone who wanted so desperately to be “tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine” so as to remain “facing Babylon”...

“Crushed into silent weakness” - “CRUSHED INTO SILENT WEAKNESS”

Is that what will become of us who have or are in the process of tearing ourselves free from the entanglements of the world? When the Lord comes, will he find faith in the earth? Yes, Elder Maxwell's focus of his talk was almost entirely on “getting people to wake up!” to make the choices today, to commit today, etc. but I want to cry out from the depths of my soul to members of this group “don't be crushed into silent weakness”, don't be silent! Keep not silence! Don't heed the calls coming from the Great and Spacious building- HEED THEM NOT! For where Christ goes, they cannot follow... We are followers of Jesus the Christ, members of His church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who are doing all we can to accomplish what only members of Christ church can do- prepare the world for the Savior's second coming.

If such a city is never built- the Lord will never come. Such a city will not be built but by clean hands and pure hearts, by the watchman, by Israel. May our faith be so great that we keep not silent day or night until the Lord comes, may our faith be like Nephi and Helaman, faith that could never be “crushed into silent weakness”, faith that was so great those listening hated them, spread rumors about them, self-justified themselves right out of their midst- because their faith gave them such power that those listening could not disbelieve their words, and they were hated for it.

May we be found so worthy to be counted jewels in His crown is my prayer in Jesus' name, amen.