

The Gospel News

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Summertime
Church
Events!*



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What Does a "Thank You" Look and Feel Like?

A Message from the Quorum of Seventy

Over the course of the last 12 years of canvassing the 39 federally recognized Native American Tribes in Oklahoma, our missionaries have made contact with more than 800 individuals. Some of these contacts have only been available for our initial visit with them. This is not unusual, as jobs within tribal offices are constantly changing, depending upon the tribal elected officials, retirements, and health reasons. Many of our contacts are active for many years, and in fact, they become our friends, especially when we are able to share in the love of Jesus Christ with them.

Over the years, we have become so close with some people, that they call us when they want to share blessings in their lives or when they have needs and want us to pray for them. We have visited hospitals to pray for our friends and their families, some of whom were in life-threatening situations. The Lord is ever ready and merciful all the time, and we have seen many of our friends recover, and their lives have been blessed. The Lord has provided many different open doors to demonstrate the Love of God as we build our relationships. We can certainly say that a relationship that is built with the love of God is deep and long lasting.

Charles is an elderly Christian Native American that our brothers met several years ago. The Lord put him in the path of our missionary brothers to Oklahoma, not once, but twice. The first meeting at a tribal office, Charles was not the intended contact, but happened to sit in on a discussion that our brothers were having with another man working for the Muskogee Creek Tribe. Several years later, upon arriving at a different tribal office, our brothers learned that their planned contact was no longer working there. While inquiring if there was anyone else that they could speak with regarding tribal history and culture, Charles walked into the reception area. Well, The Lord provided Charles at the very moment that this visit was shaping up to be a dead end. The Lord indeed wanted our relationship with Charles to blossom. Charles was, and is to this day, a wonderful man, who continues to serve the Lord and inspire others, even with significant health issues and advanced age. He has become a very close friend who has for several years opened doors for our missionaries to speak in many Indian Baptist churches in Oklahoma. We have become friends with hundreds of people in this area due in no small part to the introductions of Charles. These congregations now welcome us in, and consistently ask when we can return to meet and preach to them again. Charles is now developing a plan for his home location to host a Vacation Bible School, with our members and young people participating and leading this effort in order to train their own people. This welcoming and inclusion in their worship services certainly feels like a Thank You and vote of confidence for The Church of Jesus Christ.

When establishing and building relationships among the Native Americans we often seek out the cultural, language, and historical departments in the tribal offices. These departments are very important to the Tribes as they help maintain their tribal knowledge and requirements for their US government recognition. Sandra,

(Continued on page 6)



THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT:
(A study guide)

The L_____of
LOVE

(A small fruit plant that usually grows in tropical regions and belongs to the family of soapberry. When dried, it is acidic, and when fresh, the pulp is mushy and aromatic.)



The J_____of
JOY

(A Chinese red date that is sweet in taste and chewy in nature. The most common way to consume this fruit is dried.)

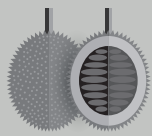
The P_____of
PEACE

(Super yummy and very cute. Belonging to the rose family with a sweet but mild taste. A texture similar to apricots. Quite expensive as compared to others.)



The L_____of
LONGSUFFERING

(This fruit belongs to the bean species. Family: Fabaceae. The tree is typically found in tropical regions but also found in places such as grasslands. The color of this fruit is purple.)



The G__ of
GENTLENESS

(About the size of a small melon. Originally from Southeast Asia. Varies in color from green to red. Hard to open. Giant health benefits.)



The F__ of
FAITH

(An Italian classic. Many old saints have trees in their backyards they have to wrap in the winter.)



The G_____of
GOODNESS

(Small, very nutritious, in a variety of colors from green to purple.)

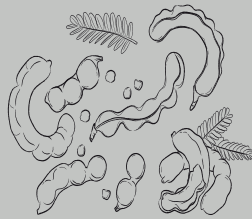


The M_____of
MEEKNESS

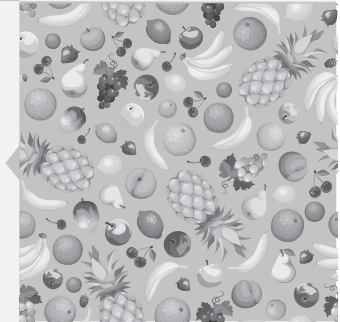
(One of the most well-known citrus fruits on the market, it's a lot of people's go-to snack.)

The T_____of
TEMPERANCE

(With its sweet and tangy flavor, this fruit has won millions of hearts and is considered a home 'bread' of tropical Africa.)



BTW,
it's not plural, i.e., "fruits";
it's the "fruit" of the spirit.
Because they are
not individual,
but elements and
characteristics of one spirit.
Just sayin'...



BFTP Blast From The Past

By Sister Kellie Speck



One hundred forty-nine years ago this month, In July 1873, Brother Charles Brown had a dream in which he and other brothers heard a rapping sound coming from a coal mine and concluded that there were men trapped inside calling for help; they finally brought the men out to safety and they had the appearance of being American Indian. The interpretation of this dream given by Brother William Cadman was that these men who were trapped in the mine represented the condition of the Native Americans—we had made one effort to deliver them and failed, but if we would not give up and try again we would be successful. This interpretation was accepted and Brother Cadman said he was certain that the revelation came from God. (Excerpt from *A History of The Church of Jesus Christ Volume 2*)

Brother Charles Brown

Purpose Statement

- To fulfill the plan of God by bringing salvation through Christ to all people.

Mission Statement

- The Church of Jesus Christ will teach the Gospel to all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things commanded by Jesus Christ, while working to draw Israel to Christ through efforts focused on the indigenous peoples of North, Central, and South America

Vision Statement

- Living and worshipping in unity and righteousness will result in the fullness of God's Spirit and power among the Saints, culminating in continuous growth of the Church and fulfillment of Christ's promises concerning His Kingdom on Earth.



"In Remembrance" *By Brother Doug Obradovich*

"This do in remembrance of me" – Luke 22:19

Many holidays remind us how courageous individuals have committed themselves to defend their country through the armed forces. They do this knowing that times of conflict may involve deployment to unfavorable and dangerous foreign lands, putting them in grave danger. This sacrifice can and has resulted in so many lost lives. What thoughts rush through these heroes' minds as they realize they are near death? In some instances, this may occur in total isolation from others, and almost always, in the absence of any family members nearby. Are they thinking of specific loved ones, some favorite place "back home," or simply lamenting how tragically their promising life was cut short?

Jesus identified this extraordinarily unselfish behavior, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). This defines the ultimate preference shown to another when

anyone courageously, lovingly chooses to sacrifice themselves for another/others. Jesus was prophesying about Himself and His love for His followers and "the world" His Father "so loved" (John 3:16).

Later, "He took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you: THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME'" (Luke 22:19). "This" was specifically referencing the utilization of bread and wine to commune together. Yet, there must be some expansion of "this" to include other things we might do in remembrance of Jesus Christ. Jesus' words always arrive with multiple meanings for those willing to open their hearts and minds to more.

We begin our walk with the Lord answering two poignant questions. "Do you repent of your sins?" Yes? Well then, "this" do in remembrance of Him; not just in that moment, but "this" constant repentance in remembrance of Him. We are then asked, "Do you promise to serve God all the days of your life?" Yes? "This" do in remembrance of Him. Again, not just in that moment, but "this" accountability commitment revisited daily, in remembrance of Him. But don't stop

there ...

Looking for a new job or a career change? "This" do in remembrance of Him. Searching for love in your life? "This" do in remembrance of Him. Deciding on relocating? "This" do in remembrance of Him. Talking casually to a co-worker? "This" do in remembrance of Him. Reacting to a sharp-tongued individual? "This" do in remembrance of Him. Posting something on social media? "This" do in remembrance of Him. But don't stop there ...

Jesus laid down His life long before His crucifixion. In every facet of His life, His sacrifices manifested multiple ways of "laying down his life for His friends." You are amongst His list of friends, so personalize His sacrifices. They were for you specifically. He did all of "this" in remembrance of you, and all of us. We can choose to submit to His heartfelt plea, whether during the soberness of communion or any random moment on any random day. All, in remembrance of Him.

In all you think, all you say, and all you do, THIS do in remembrance of Him.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SUMMERTIME CHURCH ACTIVITY?

VBS • Campout • SSP • Picnics • YIA • Treats After MBA



My favorite Summertime Church Activity growing up in Lorain Ohio has always been Sunday School and MBA picnics. We had always had a lot of fun activities.- Brother Michael McGuire, Cape Coral Mission



Every activity!" -Sister Sharon Sloan, Forest Hills, FL Branch

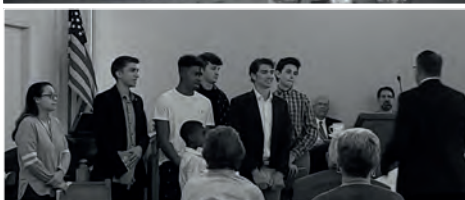


Without a doubt, Vacation Bible School!" -Sister Anita Znoy, Creekside, MI Branch

GMBA Camp is always my favorite because I get to see my church family from around the country that I do not regularly see. The spirit of God is always felt at GMBA camp." -Brother Andrew Tenorio, Edison, NJ Branch



GMBA Camp has always been the best week of the year! A concentrated week to grow in the Lord, connect with lifelong friends and form new relationships, praising God in the choir, truly a week that feels heavenly! I'm so excited for the chance to bring my children in the future and pray they take full advantage of this beautiful and blessed event!" -Sister Jennifer Bertolo, Detroit, MI Branch #1.



By Brother Josh Gehly

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People rarely preach on the street corner anymore, even evangelists. Most churches hold closed door meetings, not open tent revivals. A few religious organizations write letters and knock on doors, but even the most pious in America seem content to give God a small fraction of their day on Sunday...that is until the TV turns on for football or kids have a soccer game to play.

PRAYER: Lord, help me be like William Bickerton. He stood on the corner of the streets and preached your everlasting gospel in Spirit and truth when nobody else would. He sacrificed his life in pursuit of a heavenly kingdom. I'm sure many mocked him. Please give me the Spirit of the restoration in my heart and a burden to share your Gospel to EVERYONE. Let me find your comfort in being uncomfortable.

Most financial secretaries in the Church receive donations from the membership towards the end of the month. The average, active member gives 3 percent of their take home pay or less back to the Lord. Financially, we tend to give God only fractions from our leftovers, not our first fruits.

PRAYER: Lord, please give me a willing heart. If I place you first in my life, help me understand that includes not just the sacrifice of my time, but of my money, too. After all, You gave me my life, so it doesn't matter how much the brother down the aisle gives. You're my provider and all You've ever asked in return is a tenth, a tithe. Let my donation to the Church be found in the spirit of Abel and not his brother, Cain.

The internet has allowed Satan to infiltrate our homes and our pockets via cell phones. The average child in America gets exposed to pornography by 11 years old. Brains get warped before they ever have a chance to properly form.

PRAYER: Lord, this world is filled with sin and sexual immorality. Let me live a life of integrity and allow me to demonstrate the power of forging a marriage which God has put together. Help me to protect and raise children who value You more than their own bodies and fear You despite the pressure and temptation the evil one so readily forces upon them. Help us raise children who are proud to be abstaining and who delight in chastity, like You.

In today's world where catchy memes flood social media, we need to write posts which quote scripture from the Bible and Book of Mormon. When standing with a group who will surely reject you and look down on you, testify about Jesus Christ and His Church. With inflation rising and when every last dollar counts, write a larger check next month to the Church. If you're not married, be a remain pure. If you're married, pray together with your spouse and fight for your marriage. If the internet provides temptation in your life, live in a house without the internet. Take your children on a missionary trip instead of a sporting event.

The Lord sacrificed His own life for us. Let us not lower the standard of righteousness in our life. If the Lord gave His all for us, we need to feel the weight of forgiveness.

Romans 6:18 says, "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." We deserve death and judgment. May the hope of eternal salvation burden us into sacrificial service on the behalf of our suffering servant, Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

Time to Do

By Sister Kayla Smith

There are a lot of young people in the world but comparatively, there are not that many young people in the Church. What will happen to the Church if we do not go out and spread our message, spread the joy and love, and bring others like us to Christ? For many of us, our parents brought us to Church every Sunday. That is why we are here. It took a lot of prayers from the brothers and the sisters to help us make it through what we have had to go through in our lives. I am not saying that we still do not have a big fight ahead of us, but the main battle has already been won. We have chosen to follow Jesus Christ. What other victory out there is greater than that?

Being out in the world is hard. I do a very stressful job that I never thought I would be able to do. I have requested so many prayers, and I thank God for the prayers and the good thoughts that have been brought up without me asking for them. Growing up in the Church, you are to an extent sheltered from the world. You still go to school, get a job, maybe go back to school. But we learn at a young age that there is something different that we need to hold ourselves to. For the young people that came into the Church later in life, you still had that emotion and feeling in you that there was something different that you wanted to pursue and go after. You

had that desire to find the truth and continue with it. In my job, a phrase comes up often, "You miss 100 percent of the shots that you don't take." It made me start to think that not only does that apply in your personal and work life, but it also goes for the spiritual part of your life as well.

For so long I wondered IF I was going to be able to be something in the Church, IF I was going to make a difference, IF God would speak to me, IF God would use me. I realized that my problem was that I kept questioning it. Instead of saying IF, I needed to start getting into the scriptures more, praying more, and getting more active when I could. It is not a matter of IF you can do something, it is the question of ARE you ready to do something. ARE you ready for God to speak to you, ARE you in the right place in your life naturally and spiritually for God to use you where He sees fit? God will use you, but He can only use you when He has seen that you are ready and prepared for what He has in store. God will only give you things in your life that He knows you can handle and overcome. "I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHENETH ME" (Philippians 4:13).

In all you think, all you say, and all you do, THIS do in remembrance of Him.

Thank you Continued from front cover

one of our longtime friends, is a librarian in central Oklahoma. Over the years that we have known her she has worked for several tribal and city libraries. She has always been very cordial and helpful with all of our missionaries that meet with her. She has introduced us to several different people and understands our desire to help the Native Americans when it is possible. Over the years we have been able to provide some humanitarian aid in different ways that benefit these people. A few years ago, we provided some financial aid for a tribal library to use in procuring some additional computer equipment primarily for the elderly. Many of this tribe are very poor and need access to the internet for medical and assistance needs. Sandra thanked us for this assistance and our relationship has continued to grow. During this last visit to Oklahoma, we found Sandra working in a very small, run-down city library. She was pleasant as usual, and shared with us that she has a grant funded to provide lunch for the children during a summer program. She expressed a desire to also feed

the helpers, parents, or grandparents that watch the children on a daily basis. We asked her what she needed and she was looking for a griddle to make grilled sandwiches and pancakes for this effort. We were able to provide this meager humanitarian effort with an easy order on Amazon, and within a week we received the following Thank You.

We all need to thank God for what He has provided to us in our lives, and by His providence to us, we can share with the many in the world who are less fortunate as well. We leave you with the following scripture, and ask if this photo is recognizable to you as a warm and heartfelt "Thank You".

Ecclesiastes 11:1 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.

May God's Blessing be upon all of you and your families as you continue to support the missionary efforts around the world, The Oklahoma Team of the Native American Outreach Committee.



DRESS FOR SUCCESS AS A SERVANT OF GOD

A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

Much has been written from a worldly perspective on how to “dress for success”—we are encouraged to stock our wardrobes with designer clothes, power outfits, proper accessories, etc. as a way of getting ahead in the world. Dressing for success as a servant of God, however, is an entirely different concept—we won’t find anything written in fashion magazines about this but rather we must look to the Word of God.

Since we all wear clothes, the guidance given by the scriptures on this topic should be of interest to all of us. As people of God, our choice of attire says something about us so we want to make sure we are sending the proper message by the way we dress—one that is consistent with God’s Word. This should be our desire at all times but it is especially true in our church services where we represent the Church—people may make decisions about Church attendance (or even Church membership) based on how we dress and how we expect others to dress.

The balance of this article will present scriptural references that make it clear what God’s intentions are regarding clothing. At the end of the article, we will share a few general guidelines that are consistent with these scriptural references. We have mostly focused on dressing for church services since that affects the church as a whole but we encourage all of our church members to dress like people of God at all times.

We hope this scriptural study will make the choice of dress less of a distraction—even a complete non-issue if possible. If you know what the Word of God says on this subject and you allow the Holy Ghost to guide you, you can focus more on strengthening your relationship with God rather than worrying about the clothes that you (or others) are wearing.

With that as an introduction, here is what the Word of God has to say about the topic of clothing:

Original Purpose of Clothing—Cover Nakedness

In the Garden of Eden, after Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, “the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons” (Genesis 3:7). And thus, the first clothes were created. Later, “God made coats of skins [from animals], and clothed them” (Genesis 3:21).

These first clothes served a specific purpose—to cover the nakedness of the people, not from God (since He sees all) but from each other (since “their eyes had been opened”). This same purpose permeates the scriptures as people make garments to clothe their nakedness (Mosiah 10:5, Helaman 6:13, Ether 10:24) and followers of Christ are encouraged to “clothe the naked” as a way of helping others (Matthew 25:34-45, Jacob 2:19).

Based on the above, as long as our clothes cover our nakedness, they

are fulfilling their basic purpose. Unfortunately, as time has passed, the style of clothing has evolved such that it covers less and less nakedness. As people of God, we should be mindful of choosing clothing that covers the parts of our bodies that are not meant to be seen by others. To do otherwise creates the risk of others forming unfavorable opinions of our morality (however inaccurate such perceptions may be), placing carnal thoughts in the minds of people who see us and perhaps even attracting the wrong type of attention.

Distinguishing Between Men and Women

Typically, the type of clothing that we wear identifies us as men or women. This has been true since Old Testament times—everyone wore robes at that time but there were men’s robes (1 Samuel 18:4) and women’s robes (2 Samuel 13:18) as well as other garments that pertained to one gender or the other. Even though everyone wore the same basic type of garment (a robe), the Law of Moses stressed that everyone was expected to wear the right types of garments for their gender:

“The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman’s garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God” (Deuteronomy 22:5)

Some may say this prohibition of “cross-dressing” is no longer valid today as it is part of the Law of Moses that was fulfilled by Christ. Some may think it is so minor of a point as to not be worth concerning ourselves over. However, we see in today’s society that certain people are trying to eliminate the concept of male and female that was created by God—promoting the acceptance of cross-dressing is a key part of that effort. As such, the Church does not support the concept of cross-dressing—let’s continue to let our clothes indicate whether God created us as men or women.

However, we also want to state that just as there were robes for men and robes for women in the time period referenced above, there are some types of clothing today that have a male version and a female version and even some that can be worn by either gender. Obviously, wearing clothes such as these does not constitute cross-dressing.

Specifically, we are all aware that today’s selection of feminine styles includes pants. Women who wear such outfits are not cross-dressing. So, if a woman feels to wear tasteful pants to our church services, they should feel comfortable to do so and should be viewed no differently than those who wear dresses or skirts.

Pride in Clothing

In general, having pride in one’s appearance is a good thing. It typically means we want to look our best which is an admirable trait.

However, we need to be careful to not be “lifted up in pride” regarding our clothing. There are numerous examples in the Book of Mormon of times when the people

(Continued on page 10)

Founding Fathers

By Brother Kerry Carlini

In 1830, the major thrust of the Restoration was to establish God's kingdom on earth. However, at the time of Joseph Smith's death in June of 1844, there was little that resembled that which the Lord had desired. Yet, the "new wine" in Isaiah 65:8 is understood by many to symbolize the authority and blessings of the Restoration that would stay intact through Sidney Rigdon—and then ultimately fall upon William Bickerton, who had been baptized into Rigdon's organization in 1845, and soon thereafter ordained an elder and evangelist. But Rigdon's church disbanded in 1847. And when Brother Bickerton utterly denounced the Mormon doctrine of polygamy in 1852, he stood alone. To this time we attribute the Lord asking "where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" (Isaiah 66:1). And, to this man, we find the Lord answering in the next verse "even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Brother William Bickerton:

Here, I was left to myself. But the Lord did not leave me; no, he showed me a vision, and in the vision I was on the highest mountain on the earth; and he told me that if I did not preach the gospel I would fall into a dreadful chasm below, the sight thereof was awful... I moved with fear, having the Holy Spirit with me. Here I was, none to assist me, and without learning, popular opinion against me... I went ahead preaching repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Some believed my testimony and were baptized, and we met together [and] the Lord met with us... William Bickerton's Testimony, The Church of Jesus Christ, p1

In 1852, the first congregation of the Church emerged under Brother Bickerton in West Elizabeth, Pennsylvania. In the 1850s, as the Church grew, he recorded, "the signs followed the believers, the gifts of the Spirit being made manifest in tongues, interpretation of tongues, prophecy, wisdom, knowledge, visions, dreams, faith, discerning of Spirits, and the sick healed ... so we began to grow up into the knowledge of the Son of God..." (Scattering of the Saints, p193) By the end of the decade conferences had been held and branches established in Rock Run, Pine Run, Allegheny, Green Oak (all located in Pennsylvania), and Wheeling, West Virginia. (History of The Church..., Vol 1., WH Cadman, p28)

The Church was organized during a four-day conference in July of 1862, at Green Oak. As in prior conferences, Brother Bickerton was sustained as President of the Church and Brothers George Barnes and Charles Brown his counselors. On Monday, July 7th, in the morning of the third day, Brother Benjamin Meadowcroft spoke in the gift of tongues and the interpretation was as follows: "Set apart, Set apart and ordain the twelve; Set apart, Set apart and ordain." On the following day, Brothers Arthur Bickerton, Thomas Bickerton, Alexander Bickerton, James Brown, Cummings Cherry, Benjamin Meadowcroft, Joseph Astin, Joseph Knox, William Cadman, James Nichols, John Neish, and John Dixon, who had been called prior to this conference, were ordained into the Quorum of Twelve Apostles. Brother William H. Cadman, from Volume 1 of the Church history, describes:

...the power of God came down so powerfully that all were made to praise God and give glory to HIm. Many of the Apostles and Elders spoke in tongues that they knew not...The word of the Lord was given to George Barnes as follows: "Hear ye the word of the Lord; Ye are my Sons and Daughters, and I have committed unto you the Keys of the Kingdom, therefore be ye faithful." ...The word of the Lord given by Brother Charles Brown was, "Here ye the word of the Lord, oh ye Twelve, whom I have chosen and ordained; I commit unto you the Keys of the Kingdom; and no weapon that is formed against you shall prosper until you have finished your work. I will make you as a bow and my word shall go from you as an arrow and many shall cry out, 'What shall we do?'" p34



Plates of Brass

By Brother Jerry Valenti

In 1 Nephi 3 and 4, we read how the sons of Lehi risked their lives to obtain a collection of records engraved on plates of brass. Since Lehi and his family were leaving Jerusalem forever and would be establishing a new nation in the Americas, they needed to have access to the information on these plates of brass. What was this vital information? Here are 5 amazing facts regarding the information engraved on the plates of brass.

1 Genealogy - The Israelites placed a very high priority on keeping track of their genealogy. Knowing who belonged to which family and who was firstborn meant a great deal in terms of rights and inheritances. Some of this information is included in the Bible (for example, in Genesis 5) but the plates of brass include a more detailed genealogy. Of particular interest to Lehi was his own genealogy, which showed that he was a descendant of Joseph, the son of Jacob (see 1 Nephi 10:14).

2 Five Books of Moses - Corresponding to the books of Genesis through Deuteronomy, this section describes the creation of the world as well as the accounts of Abraham through Joseph and also of Moses who led the exodus from Egypt. There is again some information included that is not in the Bible, such as a prophecy of Joseph in which he states, "A

seer shall the Lord my God raise up, who shall be a choice seer unto the fruit of my loins" (2 Nephi 3:6).

3 History of the Jews - Corresponding to the books of Joshua through 2 Chronicles, this section describes the history of Israel, beginning with their arrival in Canaan and continuing through the reign of judges and the establishment of kings. It continues through the division of Israel where the Jews (Judah) established a southern kingdom and ends with the reign of Zedekiah as king of the southern kingdom.

4 Prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah - The prophecies of several Old Testament prophets are included on the plates of brass. Most notable are the prophecies of Isaiah which Nephi reproduced in his writing

(mostly in 2 Nephi), telling his people that these prophecies "may be likened unto you, for ye are of the house of Israel" (2 Nephi 6:5). Only some of the prophecies of Jeremiah are included because Jeremiah was still alive at the time that Lehi left Jerusalem.

5 Prophecies of Other Prophets - In addition to the Old Testament prophets, prophecies of other prophets who are not mentioned in the Bible are included on the plates of brass. Prophecies attributed to men named Zenos, Zenock and Neun appear in the Book of Mormon. Most notable of these is the parable of the tame and wild olive tree (see Jacob 5) which contains many prophecies, some of which have already come to pass and some (such as the establishment of Zion) which are still in the future

Ladies' Uplift Circle News

Perspective By Sister Luann Carson

Perspective: attitude toward or way of regarding something

After climbing a steep waterfall, I admired the amazing view. My hiking partner had a worried look on her face. When I asked why she wasn't admiring the view, she replied that she was too worried about how we would descend the cliff we had just climbed. **Perspective.**

Knowing that the Lord would lead them to a land of His promises, Lehi and Nephi praised God for bringing them out of Jerusalem. Nephi's brothers complained that they were frivolously led away from their comfortable home and riches. (Book of 1 Nephi in Book of Mormon) **Perspective.**

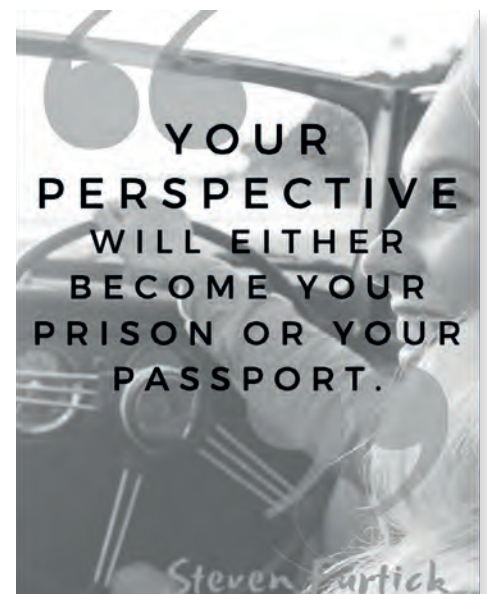
Walking outside on a sunny 50-degree February afternoon, I basked in the warmer temperature. My friend met me shivering, "I can't believe I left hot sunny Florida for this cold weather." **Perspective.**

When Elisha and his servant woke to see that they were surrounded by the enemy army, the

servant cried in dismay, "Alas, my master! how shall we do?" Elisha answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." (1 Kings 6:15 & 16) **Perspective.**

No one can deny that we live in tumultuous times. When we watch the news, we can be consumed by the stress and negativity. But when we think of the prophecies we read in the scripture being fulfilled, we should praise God with joyful hearts that He has given us an understanding of the times. Looking forward to the blessed fulfillment of prophecies, our hearts should be grateful that we live in this exciting time! **Perspective.**

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob." - Isaiah 2:2&3



were being blessed by God and were prosperous but then allowed themselves to become prideful and turned away from God—one of the symptoms of their prideful condition was the wearing of “costly apparel” (Jacob 2:13, Alma 4:6, Alma 5:53, Alma 31:28, 4 Nephi 1:24, Mormon 8:36-37).

In 4 Nephi, the people lived in a greatly blessed condition for nearly 200 years after Christ had appeared in their land. This condition came to an end as a result of pride among the people—“there began to be among them those who were lifted up in pride, such as the wearing of costly apparel” (verse 24), and it all went downhill quickly from there.

We want to stress that it is not the “costly apparel” that is the problem but rather the prideful feelings that may accompany it. Such feelings may manifest themselves in treating people who wear less costly clothing as being somehow worth less—this is especially problematic when it comes to church where all should feel equally valued (as God views us).

James 2 warns us against showing favoritism in church toward those who dress better. Based on what is written, it appears that church members at that time would invite a well-dressed person to “sit thou here in a good place” while telling a poorly-dressed person to “stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool” (verse 3). The next verse says that if you would do this, “Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

In Alma 32, poorly-dressed people were actually “cast out of the synagogues because of the coarseness of their apparel...they were not permitted to enter into their synagogues to worship God” (verses 2-3). Hopefully, none of us would go this far but making people feel inferior because of how they are dressed can accomplish the same thing by making them feel unworthy, unloved and unwelcome.

We want all to feel welcome and valued in The Church of Jesus Christ, regardless of how they are dressed. So, let’s do our best to not build a church culture in which the better dressed members are considered to be “better members”, at a higher level of understanding or righteousness that the poorer dressed members should strive to reach.

We find no correlation in the scriptures between being better dressed and being more righteous. One of the worst-dressed people in the scriptures is a man known as John the Baptist and Jesus said, “Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist” (Matthew 11:11). Righteousness is determined by what’s in a person’s heart, not by the clothes they wear.

Choosing Appropriate Clothing

Alma 1 describes a time when the people of the church focused on learning the Word of God, helping the poor and having all feel equally valued. At that time, “they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely” (Alma 1:27). “Comely” is defined as “attractive or appropriate”. This provides an excellent guideline to follow in choosing our clothing—neat, attractive and appropriate for the occasion.

Based on this and the other scriptures discussed in this article, we would like to identify a few general guidelines for dress for our church gatherings. Most likely, you’re already dressing in the manner described below. However, it’s worth stating just so we’re all on the same page.

Clothing should cover the parts of the body that are not meant to be revealed in public. There’s no need to list here any specific types of garments or lengths of garments—just choose appropriate apparel that is not overly revealing or especially form-fitting.

Men should wear men’s garments and women should wear women’s garments, noting that there are some garments that are suitable for either gender. Specifically, a woman wearing an appropriately styled pants outfit is totally acceptable.

For our Sunday services, we would like our ministers to continue to dress as they do now, wearing a suit and tie (unless there is a reason not to, such as extreme heat or another valid reason).

Members of the congregation can feel liberty in choosing their mode of dress as long as it is “neat, attractive and appropriate for the occasion”. Specifically, we encourage you to choose clothing that shows appropriate respect for the House of God. Also, please make an effort to not choose clothing that may be offensive to your brothers and sisters in Christ, some of whom may be from different eras of time when styles of clothing were different than today. In all cases, let the Holy Ghost guide you. If it feels like a certain garment is inappropriate for church, it probably is.

Finally, we request that we all make an effort to not think more or less of anyone based on the way they are dressed—even those who may dress differently than what is outlined above. This is perhaps the most important point to be made here.

In closing, we encourage our members to focus most on being clothed in the “whole armour of God” (righteousness, faith, the Word of God, etc.) (Ephesians 6:11-17) and to be “clothed with humility” (1 Peter 5:5). This is the clothing for the soul which is much more important than the pieces of cloth that cover our temporal bodies. This constitutes “dressing for success” as a servant of God.

And, as we focus more on our own inner selves, let’s try our best to connect with others at a deeper level, looking past the outer garments and seeing each other as fellow servants of God or potential servants of God. Don’t let clothing be a barrier to growing the kingdom of God.

“Therefore take no thought, saying,...Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness” (Matthew 6:31, 33)

In the Love of God,
The Quorum of Twelve Apostles



The Four Who Have Never Died

Dear Friends,

The other day, on a Friday, I heard a lot of voices outside my house. When I went out, there was a golf cart stuck in the ditch, a grandpa in a big truck pulling it out, and a dad guiding it. The three teenage girls who made the mistake of driving in a big wet spot were talking. "I knew it!" the driver exclaimed. "It's Friday the 13th!"

I didn't know any of them but I spoke up and said, "No, girls, that's not true." They weren't sure.

We don't know each other but I hate to see people getting trapped into thinking certain days are bad luck, or certain things make them lucky. It wasn't because of a certain date. It was because the driver made a bad choice.

Also, in the past, I've had friends who think that if they don't do things a certain way, everything will go wrong. They don't know that if they don't know what to do, they should pray and ask God in the name of Jesus what they should do

And things will work out.

I lost my extra set of car keys and mentioned it to a really wonderful friend from another religion. I told her I was praying to find them, (I did pray and I did find them.) She advised me to pray instead to a statue that her church believes in. I told her I would rather just go directly to the Lord for help.

A rock? What if it was carved to look like a person, or animal? Do you think that old rock could hear you, make you lucky, or care about your problems? No.

Now, when the people in the Bible had been living as slaves in Egypt, they were influenced to worship the statues of that place. When God took Moses up into the mountain to meet with him, he wrote Ten Commandments to lead all people. They are listed in the second book of the Bible, called Exodus, in Chapter 20: 1-17.

The 10 Commandments—Given to the world by God:

1. You shall have no other God's before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images. (That means statues, carved good luck

charms—anything like that)

3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. (Do not swear and use God's name.)

4. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it Holy.

5. Honor your father and mother.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Go with someone else's wife or husband).

8. Thou shalt not steal. No one is allowed to take something that belongs to another. That is God's law and it is the basic law of the society we live in.

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness. This means do not tell a lie. Do not tell stories that are untrue about people. When you tell a lie, you hurt yourself as well as others. Soon people will not trust what you say.

10. Thou shalt not covet. (Really want something that belongs to another person) you shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, not his ox, not his ass, not any thing that is your neighbor's.

Since the second commandment clearly states not to make any graven images, I wondered how my dear friend's church worshiped so many statues. I found out that her church had changed the Ten Commandments. They had taken out the second commandment about graven images and went to Number 10 and split it into two parts! I was so shocked! No wonder they didn't know better! Their church had changed the Bible!

Aren't we blessed in The Church of Jesus Christ to know this! We can pray to God for the simplest things, like lost car keys or toys. And we can pray for the big things, like our health, jobs, and foods. He hears us. We may have to wait sometimes, but our living God is with us through every trial and trouble. We are not alone.

We do not have to fear any date of the year, or wish really hard on a piece of rock or clay. All we must do is talk to God and Jesus in our heart! Pray what to do. Then thank Him, thank Him and Thank Him! He cares for us!

With love, Your friend, *Sister Jan*

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Blessing Bits

July Blessing Bits

BB A Tiny Bundle, A Huge Blessing

When my wife, Leica, entered her second trimester, she went in for a routine ultrasound. The doctor found an abnormality with the baby's heart and sent her to see a specialist. We learned that if something was detected that Leica would have to give birth in San Francisco (1.5 hours away) and the baby would receive heart surgery after being born. Even having the surgery wouldn't rule out life with a heart condition. As first-time parents it was hard for us to hear this news; we were scared and discouraged. Through this trial, we turned our trust and faith to God. Two prayerful months passed and we visited with a pediatric cardiologist. After multiple tests he came back to say he found nothing and our baby was healthy. This showed me that no matter what man may say, God is our doctor and will take care of us if we put our trust in Him. Now, almost a year since that news, we have a healthy, beautiful five-month old baby girl, Leilani. When she grows up we can tell her of this blessing and she will know God's love and power towards her. - Brother Moroni Bojorquez, Modesto, CA Branch

BB **A Glorious Unfolding** - I thank God for the guidance He gives me daily. One day I wasn't feeling myself—I was consumed with a lot of overwhelming and stressful

thoughts. I decided to open up the Word of God to find His guidance, peace, and comfort. At first, I could feel God's presence, but I still felt so overwhelmed. I decided to pray. Too overwhelmed to speak, I prayed to God for a sign of His comfort and presence. Before I could even say "Amen," I heard the lyrics to a song that had been playing in the background. "Lay your head down tonight. Take a rest from the fight. Don't try to figure it out." Not only were the lyrics instructing me, but they contained the same message being spoken in the scriptures I was studying that night. I knew at that moment that God was telling me to hand over all my worries and anxiety and lay my head down to rest. He had it all under control. - Sister Sabrina Liberto, San Diego, CA Branch

BB **Aligned with the Spirit** - For a little more than a year, I've been blessed with the opportunity to teach the adult Sunday School class in the Vanderbilt Branch. My prayer is that I'm always in tune with the ministry, drained of myself and filled with God's Spirit. Recently I'd prepared a lesson, but we got a late start because we were fellowshiping with visitors. On the fly I changed my lesson and decided to save my original lesson for the following week when we'd have more time. To open the preaching service, the visiting

minister spoke on the EXACT chapter I had prepared, with a different message that laid the foundation for our lesson the following week! Praise God! - Brother Andrew DiNardo, Vanderbilt, PA Branch

Send us your Blessing Bits by contacting Sister Elizabeth McDonnell at eksanchor@gmail.com. [in approximately 150 words].
Answers to Question of the Month to gospelnews@thechurchofjesuschrist.org.



Question for this month: What advice can you share with the students starting school this month?



Answer from last month: It's Summertime! What is your favorite Summertime Church activity? Please also share a picture or two of a VBS, going out after MBA, camp, youth in action, branch picnic or any other activity. Photos can be recent or from the past. Turn to page 4 for answers to this question.

...I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. Matt. 26:29