



A Message from the Quorum of Twelve Apostles

INCREASE IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

Brothers, Sisters & Ministry of The Church of Jesus Christ:

Throughout the past few years, the Lord has blessed the Church with many experiences and revelations. Some experiences have been encouragement. Some messages have had instruction and counsel to prepare. Other experiences have reminded us of God's great plan and of fulfillment of the great work of the restoration and the Kingdom of God on earth.

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles writes to you today as a responsibility of our office. As Jacob (brother of Nephi) wrote in Jacob 2:2, "...according to the responsibility which I am under to God, to magnify my office with soberness," we do the same today. We write to The Church of Jesus Christ in soberness.

Last year, the Lord revealed that He has been saddened to observe the effect distractions have had upon His Church. As we considered those experiences, most of us found that we needed to look deeply into our own individual lives to identify those things that had become distractions to us in our service to God. For the most part, distractions had accumulated gradually without our full awareness. But now, almost out of nowhere, we find most of those distractions eliminated as we are immersed in a very serious global pandemic with grievous impact on life and living. It is up to each of us to determine whether this condition is an enormous distraction or a call to arms in terms of our service and faith in God.

As we, along with the entire world, have reacted to the coronavirus pandemic, the Lord has given us many words of hope and encouragement to trust in Him. One experience stated, "...Trust that all you see around you, trust that all the turmoil and all the chaos is seen by Me, the Father, trust that I desire for My creation to look to My Son, Jesus Christ..." We have all learned to trust in God to one degree or another as we have faced various circumstances in our lives. However, none of us alive today can remember anything like this pandemic. God is urging us to learn to elevate our trust and our focus on Jesus Christ above and

beyond our previous degree of faith. He is telling us to stay aware that His power is the determining force.

The Lord has also revealed other messages for us as The Church of Jesus Christ. As shepherds of the flock, it is our responsibility as Apostles to share these recent messages with the Church and to do our best to lead the Church in paths of righteousness. While the Church often wonders why we do not witness greater manifestations of the power and gifts of God, we are compelled to look within and acknowledge that The Church of Jesus Christ is not yet in the spiritual condition the Lord intends for us wherein, "...because of the righteousness of His people, Satan has no power...for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth (I Nephi 22:31)." As it was regarding the distractions, it may be necessary to look deeply within ourselves to find the things that would prompt the Lord to communicate His desire to see further improvements in our service to Him.

In one dream, a member was told by a past Apostle (who we feel represented the Lord in the dream) to clean his home and start cleaning it now. Another member had a similar dream in which, with great effort, large wasps had to be eliminated from a home that represented the church. In a third experience, a member heard the voice of the Lord listing specific shortcomings that exist among some of the people, including:

- There is pride, haughtiness, and a lack of love and mercy.
- Many are not humble one to another; and many are not humble before God.
- Due to the above sins and perhaps others, there are those who are partaking of the Lord's Supper unworthily.

Although he perceived that they were ... "in the path that leads to the kingdom of God..." Alma still warned the people of Gideon of God's unvarying requirements. Alma "...said these things unto you that I might awaken you to a sense of your duty to God, that ye may walk blameless before Him, that ye may walk after the holy order of God, after which ye have been received. And ...that ye should be humble...submissive and gentle; easy to be entreated; full of patience and long-suffering...temperate in all things...diligent in keeping the commandments of God at all times..." (Alma 7: 19-23). Sins among His people, even those we consider small, are a great offense to the Lord. Dearly beloved Brothers, Sisters, and Ministers, we must all examine our own individual lives. Let each of us humble ourselves and repent of our shortcomings before the Lord.

The prophet Joel (Joel 2:12-18) instructs us to, "...turn ye even unto me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God:" The Lord's Church must be righteous. Our hearts must be right with God. Our actions must be reflective of the love of God and we must obey the commandments of the Lord in all things. As members of The Church of Jesus

Christ, we must live in righteousness, full of the love of God to see the Kingdom of God on earth be established in all its splendor and glory.

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles are requesting a Church-wide Fasting and Prayer effort throughout the week of May 11th – May 16th 2020. We ask that everyone who is able, spend as much time as possible during the week in prayer before the Lord. We also ask that all mid-week meetings during this week, focus on lessons using Joel 2:12-18 and other scriptures as the Spirit directs.

The focus is to ask the Lord to show us all what changes in action or belief must occur in each of our own lives to improve our standing before God. It is our prayer that collectively, we “...shall repent of their iniquity, and become clean before the Lord.” (Ether 4:6).

The prophet Zenos (Jacob 5:71-72) spoke of our day and we believe he spoke of us, the Church. He prophesied that there would be a day that we would labor along with the Lord to bring about the restoration of the precious natural fruit of the Lord. Zenos saw our people and said of us, “...they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things.” The Lord is pleading with His Church that the words of this prophecy may be true of us today. It is in our hands and it is up to us to please the Lord today.

The Quorum of Twelve Apostles

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To learn more about *The Church of Jesus Christ*, with Headquarters in Monongahela, PA, please visit our web site. The World Operations Center for world-wide missionary efforts is in Greensburg, PA.

www.thechurchofjesuschrist.org