

BM#38 "Old Things Are Done Away, and All Things Have Become New" - 3 Nephi 12-15

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I. Introduction

3 Nephi, Chapters 12 through 14, are similar to Matthew, Chapters 5 through 7. In Matthew, they are referenced as Christ's teachings given on the "Sermon on the Mount," while in the Book of Mormon they are referred to as the Sermon at Bountiful. We will also address the Savior's teachings regarding the Lord's prayer, the Golden rule and the wise and the foolish man. While the words are similar, there are differences between His teachings to the two groups that offer greater clarity as to their meaning. The verses in Matthew 5-7 will be contrasted with those in 3 Nephi 12-14.

This lesson will view the Sermon on the Mount [Matthew 5:1] or on the Plain [Luke 6:17], or the Sermon at Bountiful [3 Nephi 12], as the step-by-step process by which an individual receives sanctification.

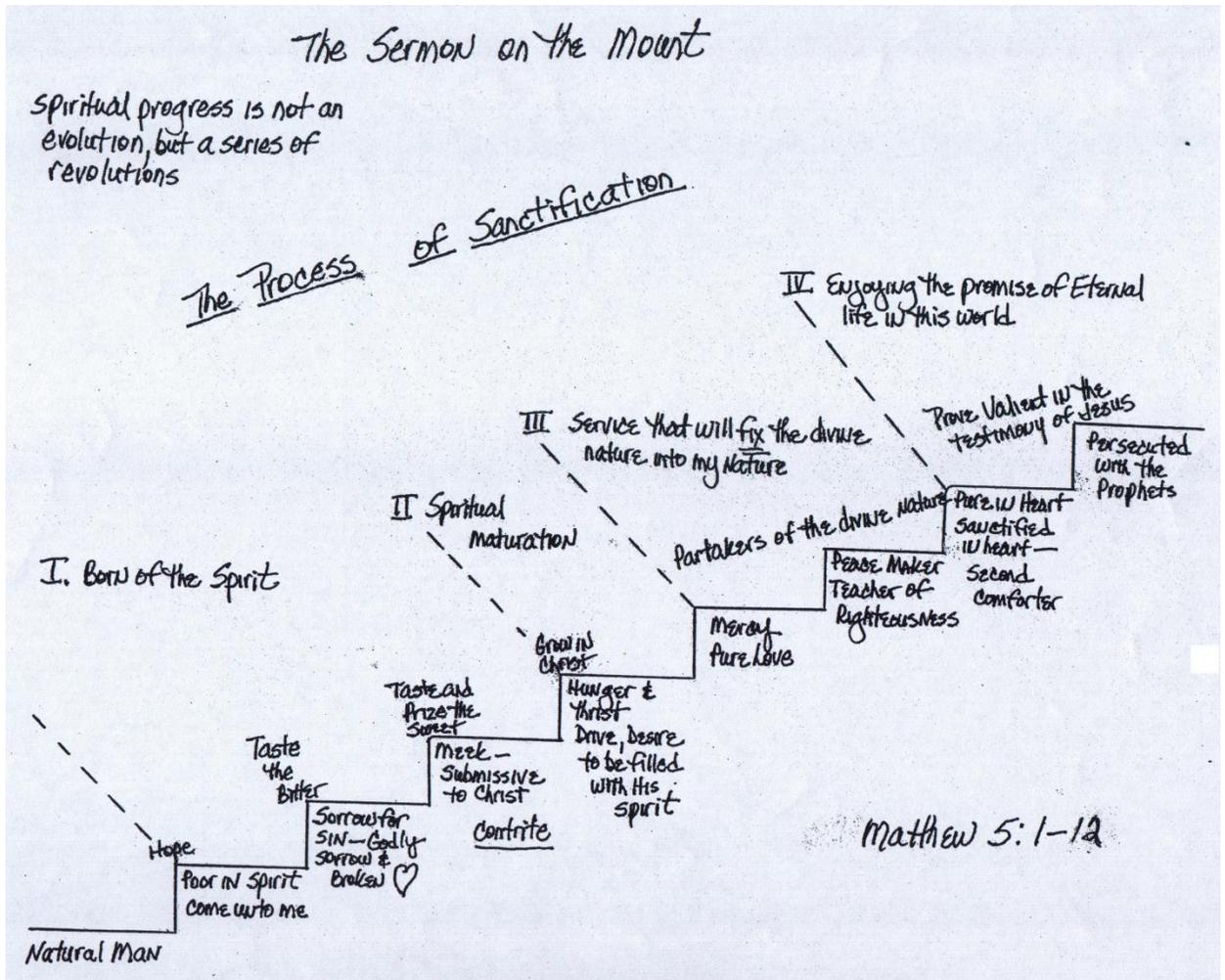
Robert L. Millet states,

"The process by which the children of God are purified and made free from the effects of sin, by which their state is changed, is sanctification...It is a lifetime process, one in which we gradually notice changes in our nature and disposition: we come to love the things we before hated (we begin to warm to and be attracted by goodness) and hate the things we before loved (we begin to find distasteful and to abhor such things as sin, uncleanness in its many forms, and the harsh, the crude, and the violent)." (Robert L. Millet, Camille Fronk Olson, Andrew C. Skinner, and Brent L. Top. *LDS Beliefs*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co, 2011, 559-560).

The four main steps as outlined in the Sermon on the Mount include: (1) Being born of the Spirit; (2) Spiritual maturation; (3) Service that will help fix the divine

nature into our nature; and, (4) Enjoying the process of Eternal life in this world. This lesson commences the teachings of the Savior to his people over the next three days. We begin our lesson by focusing upon his Sermon at Bountiful and contrasting it with the Sermon on the Mount.

Chart 1: The Sermon on the Mount: The Process of Sanctification



Reference: Hand-out at LDS New Testament Institute class. Source Unknown.

Outline of 3 Nephi 12-15:

"A. 3 Nephi 12-14 Jesus teaches same principles laid down in Sermon on the Mount; ethical principles governing the good life.

"B. 3 Nephi 15 Law of Moses fulfilled. Jesus [is]henceforth the Law and the Light. Teaches the Twelve that Nephites are the sheep of another fold of which he spoke in Palestine." (Sidney B. Sperry. *Book of Mormon Compendium*. Bookcraft, 1968, 391).

II. 3 Nephi 12

Matthew gives the location of what is commonly referred to as the Sermon on the Mount as being taught to his disciples on a mountain (Matthew 5:1), whereas Luke gives the location on a plain (Luke 6:17). Similar words were spoken by the Savior at the temple in Bountiful. For the purpose of providing increased clarity to the Sermon, we will also contrast the words in 3 Nephi 12 with the words in Matthew 5.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"...they are all one [Sermon on the Mount, Sermon on the Plain, Sermon in Bountiful]: all contain the same truths; all fell from the same lips; all were spoken by the power of the same spirit. We shall not hear the whole sermon...but we shall hear the words and feel the spirit of the portion that has come down to us in Holy Writ." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 115-116).

The Christian world and those biblical scholars who do not have access to revealed truth often fail to completely understand the purpose and intent of the Beatitudes. They do not see them as the restoration of the higher law which will replace the Mosaic law that Jehovah gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. This law will find its fulfillment in Gethsemane and on the cross with the shedding of the Savior's blood.

Bruce R. McConkie continues,

"[The Sermon at Bountiful containing the Beatitudes and the higher law], was preached to instruct and counsel the newly ordained apostles; to open the door of spiritual progress for all newly called members of the Church and kingdom of God on earth; and to stand as a beacon inviting men of good will of every persuasion to come to the Fount of Wisdom and

learn those things which will assure them of peace in this world and eternal glory in the world to come." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 116).

It is important to understand that the Sermon at Bountiful, like the other two Sermons, was given to the Apostles, members of Christ's church, and those who were seeking for spiritual truth. His initial instructions [3 Nephi 12:1-2] were meant and directed specifically to the Twelve who had just been called to fulltime service in the Lord's kingdom. In this sermon, the Savior identifies the attributes and qualities each disciple must develop as they seek to ultimately become perfect.

As we proceed with the Beatitudes, the words from the Holy Bible are offered along with the Book of Mormon. Insights offered by Harold B. Lee in his book, *Stand Ye in Holy Places*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1974, 343-348 are provided. The reference will be SYHP, with the page following.

We begin with the verses from the Book of Mormon, which he gave to the multitude regarding the authority he had given to his newly called twelve disciples, prior to giving the Beatitudes.

3 Nephi 12:1-2

1 And it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words unto Nephi, and to those who had been called, (now the number of them who had been called, and received power and authority to baptize, was twelve) and behold, he stretched forth his hand unto the multitude, and cried unto them, saying: Blessed are ye if ye shall give heed unto the words of the twelve whom I have chosen from among you to minister unto you, and to be your servants; and unto them I have given power that they may baptize you with water; and after that ye are baptized with water, behold, I will baptize you with fire and with the Holy Ghost; therefore blessed are ye if ye shall believe in me and be baptized, after that ye have seen me and know that I am.

2 And again, more blessed are they who shall believe in your words [Twelve disciples] because that ye shall testify that ye have seen me, and that ye know that I

am. Yea, blessed are they who shall believe in your words, and come down into the depths of humility and be baptized, for they shall be visited with fire and with the Holy Ghost, and shall receive a remission of their sins.

It is not enough to be good, as admirable as that is, it also necessary to partake of essential ordinances and to be changed. The first principles of the gospel or doctrine of Christ is to have faith in Jesus Christ, repent, be baptized by one who has authority and to receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. Jesus has told those gathered that he had given the twelve the authority to baptize. Once they have exercised faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as Savior and Redeemer, repented of their sins, they are then to submit to the ordinances of baptism. They will then receive the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. More blessed will be those who have not seen Jesus Christ, but will exercise faith as they trust in the words of those who have.

The Holy Bible states,

"The Latin *beatus* is the basis of the English 'beatitudes,' meaning 'to be fortunate,' 'to be happy,' or 'to be blessed' (**Footnote Matthew 5:3a.**). *The Holy Bible*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1979, 1192).

Harold B. Lee states,

"In that matchless Sermon on the Mount, Jesus has given us eight distinct ways by which we might receive this kind of joy. Each of his distinctions is begun by the word 'Blessed.' Blessedness is defined as being higher than happiness. 'Happiness come from without and is dependent on circumstances; blessedness is an inward fountain of joy in the soul itself, which no outward circumstances can seriously effect.' (Dummelow's Commentary)." (*Decisions for Successful Living*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973, [Second Printing 1973], 56-57).

<p>3 Nephi 12:3</p> <p>3 <u>Yea</u>, blessed are the poor in spirit <u>who come unto me</u>, for theirs is the kingdom of</p>	<p>Matthew 5:3</p> <p>3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>
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heaven.	
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"To be poor in spirit is to feel yourself as spiritually needy, ever dependent upon the Lord...It is indeed a sad thing for one, because of his wealth or learning or worldly position, to think himself independent of spiritual needs. It is the opposite of pride, or self-conceit." (SYHP, 343-344).

The addition of the words, "who come unto me," are important. It is one thing to recognized that one is in need of spiritual nourishment, but it is essential to know the source to whom one can turn. For the natural man, it marks the beginning of hope for improvement.

3 Nephi 12:4	Matthew 5:4
4 And again, blessed are <u>all</u> they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.	4 Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.

"To mourn, as the Master's lesson here would teach, one must show that 'godly sorrow that worketh repentance' (2 Corinthians 7:10), and wins for the penitent a forgiveness of sins and forbids a return to deeds of which he mourns." (SYHP, 344).

All may become candidates for the kingdom of God if they are willing to exercise godly sorrow for sin that then leads them to "a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (3 Nephi 9:20). It is only as we experience the bitter taste of sin, that we then begin to mourn our choices.

3 Nephi 12:5	Matthew 5:5
5 <u>And</u> blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.	5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

"A meek man is defined as one who is not easily provoked or irritated and forbearing under injury or annoyance. Meekness is not synonymous with weakness. The meek man...[is] the man of complete self-mastery. He is the one who has the courage of his moral convictions, despite the pressure of the gang or club. In controversy his judgment is the court of last resort and his sobered counsel quells the rashness

of the mob. He is humble-minded; he does not bluster [get upset]." (SYHP, 346).

The meek are submissive to Christ. They are contrite in disposition and prize the sweet spirit that brings joy everlasting. When the Lord comes again, those who are righteous will inherit all that the Father hath.

3 Nephi 12:6	Matthew 5:6
6 <u>And</u> blessed are <u>all</u> they <u>who</u> do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled <u>with the Holy Ghost</u>.	6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

"Did you ever hunger for food or thirst for water when just a crust of stale bread or a sip of tepid water to ease the pangs that distressed you would seem to be the most prized of all possessions? If you have so hungered, then you may begin to understand how the Master meant we should hunger and thirst after righteousness..." (SYHP, 344-345).

Doctrine and Covenants 88:67

67 And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light..

Only when we truly hunger and thirst to become yet more righteous, will our spiritually craving be filled with celestial manna. Spiritual nourishment comes to us through the light of the Holy Ghost. As the third member of the Godhood, his responsibilities include enlightening us as he testifies, protects, and comforter us. As our sole desire is to be filled with light, he then leads us to become like Christ.

3 Nephi 12:7	Matthew 5:7
7 <u>And</u> blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.	7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

"Our salvation rests upon the mercy we show to others. Unkind and cruel words, or wanton acts of cruelty toward man or beast, even though in seeming retaliation, disqualify the perpetrator in his claims for mercy when he

has need of mercy in the day of judgment before earthly or heavenly tribunals." (SYHP, 346).

We have been commanded by the Savior to be forgiving to those who have wronged us. (see Doctrine and Covenants 64:9-10.) The day will come, as we all error, when we will look to another to give us mercy. On that day, we will receive as we have given to others.

3 Nephi 12:8	Matthew 5:8
8 <u>And</u> blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.	8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Course of Study: Teachers. Life of Christ states,

"God regards the state of the heart as of supreme importance. It has a wonderful reward reserved for it alone--the vision of God...Sin binds the soul; purity is clear-eyed in the spiritual world...it is only to the pure in heart that the vision of God can be a reward. The impure would be scorched by it, and would cry on the rocks and hills to cover them from its awful presence." (*Course of Study for the Quorums of the Priesthood. Teachers. Life of Christ.* Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1922, 52).

As we proceed in the process of sanctification, we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost to enlighten our path. As our hearts become pure, living by every word of God, we have been promised the gift of the other comforter.

Joseph Smith states,

"Now what is this other Comforter? It is no more nor less than the Lord Jesus Christ Himself;...when any man obtains this last Comforter, he will have the personage of Jesus Christ to attend him, or appear to him from time to time, and even He will manifest the Father unto him,..." (*Teaching of the Prophet Joseph Smith.* Compiled by Joseph Fielding Smith. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1976, [1977], 150-151).

3 Nephi 12:9	Matthew 5:9
9 <u>And</u> blessed are <u>all</u> the	9 Blessed are the

peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.	peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
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"Peacemakers shall be called the children of God. The troublemaker, the striker against law and order, the leader of the mob, the law-breaker are prompted by motives of evil; and unless they desist, they will be known as the children of Satan rather than God. Withhold yourselves from him who would cause disquieting doubts by making light of sacred things for he seeks not for peace but to spread confusion." (SYHP, 347).

3 Nephi 11:29

29 For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"By this shall all men know the Lord's disciples: They are peacemakers; they seek to compose difficulties; they hate war and love peace; they invite all men to forsake evil, overcome the world, flee from avarice and greed, stand in holy places, and receive for themselves that peace which passeth understanding, that peace which comes only by the power of the spirit." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 124).

3 Nephi 12:10-12	Matthew 5:10-12
<p>10 <u>And</u> Blessed are <u>all</u> they <u>who</u> are persecuted <u>for</u> my <u>name's</u> sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>11 <u>And</u> blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake;</p> <p>12 <u>For</u> ye shall have great <u>joy</u> and be exceedingly glad, for great <u>shall</u> be your reward in heaven; for so</p>	<p>10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p> <p>11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.</p> <p>12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets</p>

persecuted they the prophets who were before you.	which were before you
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"May [members] everywhere remember that warning when you are hissed and scoffed at because you refuse to compromise your standards of abstinence, honesty, and morality in order to win the applause of the crowd. If you stand firmly for the right despite the jeers of the crowd or even physical violence, you shall be crowned with the blessedness of eternal joy. Who knows but that again in our day some of the saints or even apostles, as in former days, may be required to give their lives in defense of the truth? If that time should come, God grant they would not fail!" (SYHP, 347-348).

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"The Sermon on the Mount, including the Beatitudes, was delivered to true believers; to the Twelve Apostles of the Lamb (it was their ordination sermon); to the saints of the Most High God; to members of the Church of Jesus Christ; to people who had been baptized and who were in the process of seeking the riches of eternity...Jesus now says: 'Ye are the salt of the earth...Ye are the light of the world.' That is to say: 'Ye are the choicest and best people on earth; and ye must now be an example to all men, that others, seeing your good works, shall come unto me and glorify your Father who is in heaven.'" (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 127).

These words of the Savior, spoken to those gathered at the temple in Bountiful, must have sunk deep into the hearts of those in attendance. The spirit would have borne witness of the spiritual truths that were being taught. Surely there must have been some who questioned their own ability to meet the requirements they had been taught. In faith, they held firm to the belief that the words He spoke contained the promises of eternal life and the kingdom of God here on earth. It would not be easy to practice what He was teaching, but there was nowhere else they could go to hear the words of peace and receive the promise He taught. Here was the kingdom of God on earth and He was the Messiah, God's own Son. This they knew.

3 Nephi 12:17-18

**17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to fulfill;
18 For verily I say unto you, one jot nor one tittle hath not passed away from the law, but in me it hath all been fulfilled.**

The law that Jesus had come to fulfill is the Law which He gave to Moses on Mount Sinai. It was a law designed to keep Israel in mind of the sacrifice that He would make in the future. It was a lesser law based upon animal sacrifices because they had been unable to live the higher or greater law that the Lord desired to give them. It was now his desire to give them the higher law.

3 Nephi 12:19

19 And behold, I have given you the law and the commandments of my Father, that ye shall believe in me, and that ye shall repent of your sins, and come unto me with a broken heart and a contrite spirit. Behold, ye have the commandments before you, and the law is fulfilled.

Previously, he had decreed to them, "in me is the law of Moses fulfilled...And ye shall offer up unto me no more the shedding of blood; yea, your sacrifices and your burnt offerings shall be done away, for I will accept none of your sacrifices and your burnt offerings. And ye shall offer for a sacrifice unto me a broken heart and a contrite spirit" (3 Nephi 9:17, 19-20). He then declared to them his doctrine which is faith in Jesus Christ, repentance, baptism and receipt of the Holy Ghost.

In the remainder of His Sermon, Jesus contrasted for those in attendance and to all who would be partakers of the kingdom of God, twelve differences between the requirements of the lesser law given to Moses, and the higher law of the kingdom of God. This is consistent with his teachings found in Matthew 5. For sake of clarity, the verse in Matthew 5 will be shown.

1. Murder and Anger

3 Nephi 12:21-22	Matthew 5:21-22
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<p>21 Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, <u>and it is also written before you, that thou shalt not kill</u>, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment <u>of God</u>;</p> <p>22 But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of his judgment.</p>	<p>21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.</p> <p>22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother <u>without a cause</u> shall be in danger of the judgment:</p>
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Bruce R. McConkie states,

"Moses' law--more properly Jehovah's law given through Moses--forbade murder...this higher law, in addition raises a higher standard. It strikes at the cause of murder, which is anger." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 135).

When we learn to control our anger, regardless of the cause, we have taken a major step on the path leading to the kingdom of Heaven. He or she who has learned to control their temper will never be guilty of a number of heinous crimes against their fellowmen, including abuse or murder.

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, and Brent L. Top state,

"...the true disciple [is] one who acquires control over his emotions, such that he avoids anger...Our task in living the gospel is not simply to become more disciplined, as commendable as that might appear to be; our task is to have our dispositions changed." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.4. Bookcraft, 1992, 73).

2. Profanity

3 Nephi 12:22	Matthew 5:22
<p>22 ...And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca [empty head], shall be in danger of the council; and whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.</p>	<p>22 ...and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.</p>

Bruce R. McConke states,

"Raca, Rabcah, [are] profane and vulgar epithets...[that] when hurled at our fellowmen lead to damnation [eternal progression stopped]...Men curse themselves when they think and speak ill of their brethren...Profane, vulgar, contemptuous, and unholy expressions degrade their author more than they taint the soul of the hearer." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 136).

Today the average individual is not aware of the words "Raca" or "Rabcah". At the time of Christ, they were expressions of degradation and reproach against another person. Over the centuries, we have developed our own vulgar vocabulary whose meaning, when spoken, carry similar censor even though the words are spelled differently. When spoken, they harm all who hear their epithets, but the greatest damage is to the individual or beast to whom they are directed.

3. Reconciliation between Brethren

3 Nephi 12:23-24	Matthew 5:23-24
<p>23 <u>Therefore, if ye shall come unto me, or shall desire to come unto me, and rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee--</u></p>	<p>23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;</p>
<p>24 Go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled [Quickly have kind thoughts for, or be well disposed toward] to thy brother, and then come unto me with full purpose of heart, and I will receive you.</p>	<p>24 <u>Leave there thy gift before the altar</u>, and go thy way unto thy brother, and first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.</p>

You may say, "This is a hard doctrine...I understand my need to seek forgiveness when I have harmed someone, but to go to my brother when I am the one who has been wronged...Shouldn't he be the one that comes to me instead?" The answer which the Lord has given is "No." Righting a wrong and restoring the relationship between two

individuals is more important to the Lord than who goes first. If the individual rejects the offer, then the Lord will bless the one who sincerely sought reconciliation. Someone once said, "Not to seek peace with your brother so they will suffer for their action, is like you drinking poison and hoping that it will harm the other person." When we fail to serve in the role of peacemaker, whether it is our fault or not, serves only to diminish our relationship with Deity, and to limit the inner peace we could experience.

4. Avoiding Legal Entanglements

3 Nephi 12:25-26	Matthew 5:25-26
<p>25 Agree with thine adversary quickly while thou art in the way with him, lest at any time he shall get thee, and thou shalt be cast into prison.</p> <p>26 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence until thou hast paid the uttermost <u>senine</u>. <u>And while ye are in prison can ye pay even one sinine? Verily, verily, I say unto you, Nay.</u></p>	<p>25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time <u>the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer</u>, and thou be cast into prison.</p> <p>26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost <u>farthing</u>.</p>

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"This law has particular reference to the Twelve and others engaged in missionary work, in ministerial service, and in building up the kingdom...It was more important, in the social and political circumstances then prevailing, for the Lord's servant to suffer legal wrongs than that their ministries be hindered or halted by legal process." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 137).

In our own day, where legal suits and entanglements are rampant, even those not numbered among the twelve or others engaged in missionary service, might be well advised to prayerfully consider the Lord's admonition. In all

instances, before initiating legal action, it is important to explore every alternative, before taking legal action. Likewise, it is important to carefully count the costs before proceeding. In some instances, one can become so angry and headstrong that they choose to ignore legal counsel, refuse a fair settlement when offered, and choose to proceed with the case, only to lose everything.

5. Adultery

3 Nephi 12:27-30	Matthew 5:27-30
<p>27 Behold, it is written by them of old time, that thou shalt not commit adultery;</p> <p>28 But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart.</p> <p><u>29 Behold, I give unto you a commandment, that ye suffer none of these things to enter into your heart;</u></p> <p><u>30 For it is better that ye should deny yourselves of these things, wherein ye will take up your cross, than that ye should be cast into hell.</u></p>	<p>27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery;</p> <p>28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.</p> <p>29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell</p>

The words of Jesus to those gathered at the Mount and those gathered in Bountiful as recorded in Verses 27 and 28 are the same. Thou shalt not commit adultery. The higher law of Christ, as contrasted with the Law of Moses, addresses not only the act of adultery, but the lustful desires on the part of the participants that precede the act. The higher law of sexual purity includes our thoughts. If they are pure, then immoral sexual liaisons are prevented. The word of the Lord is clear. Sexual purity includes purity of

thoughts as well as actions, if we desire to have the spirit of the Lord to be with us.

The insight provided to the Nephites is that the violation of the law of chastity is of such serious consequences that if unrepentant, ones eternal salvation is in jeopardy. The meaning of the phrase to "deny yourselves of these things [desires], wherein ye will take up your cross," is provided in the Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 16:26. It states, "And now for a man to take up his cross, is to deny himself all ungodliness, and every worldly lust, and keep my commandments."

In Matthew 5:29, we read, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee:" has caused confusion to many.

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

"When the Lord spoke of parts of the body, it is evident that he had in mind close friends or relatives who endeavored to lead us from the path of rectitude and humble obedience to the divine commandments we receive from the Lord. If any friend or relative endeavors to lead a person away from the commandments, it is better to disperse with his friendship and association rather than to follow him in evil practices to destruction...We should not,...take such a statement as this...in the literal interpretation." (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol.5. Compiled and Edited by Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1966, [Fourth Printing 1972], 79).

This admonishment is especially applicable to those individuals who are having difficulty controlling their sexual thoughts. It would be better for them to sever their relationship and association than for them to violate the law of sexual purity.

The words "Oh, if I had not taken the first step, I would never have ended up where I am now" are especially true when it come to sexual indiscretion. The powerful forces within each of us are not to be treated lightly regardless of the prevailing attitudes of the world today. The word of the Lord is clear; consequences will follow.

6. Casting Sins Away

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"Jesus has spoken of sins of the heart [murder], and of the mind [adultery] and of the mouth [profanity]. And as in murder; profanity leads to hell; ill feelings against our brethren canker the soul; lewdness, evil thoughts--adultery committed in the heart--are as the very act itself. Gospel standards govern what is in the hearts of men as well as the deeds they do...The severing of a hand...show the need to cast away our sins, to cast them away least we die spiritually, to cast them away least our eternal souls be themselves cast into fire." (*The Mortal Messiah, Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 137-138).

7. Divorce

3 Nephi 12:31-32	Matthew 5:31-32
<p>31 It hath been written, that whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement.</p>	<p>31 It hath been said, whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.</p>
<p>32 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and <u>whoso</u> shall marry her who is divorced committeth adultery.</p>	<p>32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.</p>

The first marriage occurred in the Garden of Eden. Because it was done under God's power and authority, it was meant to be eternal, rather than for this life only. Only in designated Holy Temples can a man and a woman enter into a marriage that is legally binding on earth as well as extending into eternity. In all instances, marriage continued to be defined under God's law as a legal and binding contract between a man and a woman.

Through the passing of time, the contract of marriage was changed. Under the law, the marriage contract could, under certain conditions, be terminated. With time, the acceptable reasons for terminating a marriage varied to the point that almost any reason was acceptable. In the eyes of the Lord, this was an abomination and in direct opposition to the eternal law of marriage established by God the Father in the garden of Eden.

In spite of the laws enacted today that protect the rights of the divorced, the pain and emotional scars that often accompany the ending of a marriage, especially for children, should seriously be thought through when divorce is being considered.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

[Jesus teaches that] "divorce is totally foreign to celestial standards...If husbands and wives lived the law as the Lord would have them live it, they would neither do nor say the things that would even permit the fleeting thought of divorce to enter the mind of their eternal companions. [However] though we today have the gospel, we have yet to grow into that higher state of marital association where marrying a divorced person constitutes adultery." (*The Mortal Messiah, Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 139).

8. Gospel Oaths

3 Nephi 12:33-37	Matthew 5:33-37
<p>33 <u>And again it is written</u>, thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths;</p>	<p>33 Again ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forsware thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths.</p>
<p>34 But <u>verily, verily</u>, I say unto you, swear not at all; neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;</p>	<p>34 But I say unto you, Sware not at all; neither by heaven: for it is God's throne.</p>
<p>35 Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool;</p>	<p>35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it it's the</p>

<p>36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair black or white;</p> <p>37 But let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever <u>cometh of more than these is evil.</u></p>	<p>city of the great King.</p> <p>36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.</p> <p>37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.</p>
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It is tragic that trust between individuals has greatly deteriorated with the passing of the years. The day when a man's word was his bond is almost non-existent in today's milieu. In many ways, we have attempted to legislate morality and personal integrity. These individual qualities are often at a premium in today's society. Unfortunately, we have learned that for every broken promise, there is a lawyer for hire that can find justification for the individual's action.

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet and Brent L. Top state,

"Jesus'...call [is] to a higher righteousness, and invitation to let our word be our bond...Essentially, Jesus called for the cessation of oaths and counseled his followers to be people of their words, honest and trustworthy in every regard." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 75).

Can you imagine what a different world it would be if you could trust each individual to do as they promised?

9. Retaliation

<p>3 Nephi 12:38-39</p> <p>38 <u>And behold, it is written</u>, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;</p> <p>39 But I say unto you, that ye <u>shall</u> not resist evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him</p>	<p>Matthew 5:38-39</p> <p>38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:</p> <p>39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him</p>
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<p>the other also;</p>	<p>the other also.</p> <p>JST, Luke 6:29-30</p> <p>29 And unto him who smiteth thee on the cheek, offer also the other; <u>or, in other words, it is better to offer the other, than to revile again.</u> And him who taketh away they cloak, forbid not to take thy coat also.</p> <p>30 <u>For it is better that thou suffer thine enemy to take these things than to content with him. Verily I say unto you, Your heavenly Father who seeth in secret, shall bring that wicked one into judgment.</u></p>
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The additions offered by the Joseph Smith Translation, Luke 6:29-30, bring additional clarity to the admonition of the Lord. The condemnation that comes from our reviling or contending with our brother or sister is greater, in the eyes of the Lord, than our being physically struck or losing our coat. You may ask, "What would justify our passive non-violent action, when we are being harmed or losing our possessions?"

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"Contention leads to bitterness and smallness of soul, persons who contend with each other shrivel up spiritually and are in danger of losing their salvation. So important is it to avoid this evil that Jesus expects his saints to suffer oppression and wrong rather than lose their inner peace and serenity through contention." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 139).

3 Nephi 11:29

29 For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me [Jesus Christ], but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and

he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another.

There are the words of the Savior to those in ancient America. They add to our understanding that disciples of Christ are willing to bear reviling or contention rather than retaliate. With the devil as the source of all contention, we can be assured that retaliatory responses will only serve to escalate the existing circumstances. The peacemaker can take comfort that their non-action is noted by Father in Heaven, who in the final analysis will administer justice.

10. Persecution by Legal Process

3 Nephi 12:40-42	Matthew 5:40-42
<p>40 And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also;</p> <p>41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.</p> <p>42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away.</p>	<p>40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.</p> <p>41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.</p> <p>42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.</p>

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"This directive was given, 'To his apostles and ministers—those whose talents and strength must be devoted, without hindrance, to the preaching of the gospel and the building up of the kingdom...The petty legal processes of that day must not be permitted to impede the setting up of the new kingdom.'" (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 141).

While it is important to note that this directive was given to the apostles and others who were called to missionary labor, and is not applicable to the general membership of the church, it is excellent advice. What if each of us were willing to give service to others beyond that which we may be required to render.

11. The Law of Love

3 Nephi 12:43-44	Matthew 5:43-44
<p>43 <u>And behold it is written also, that</u> thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy;</p> <p>44 But <u>behold I</u> say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you;</p>	<p>43 Ye have heard it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.</p> <p>44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;</p>

The doctrine of rendering kindness, even to those who despise and persecute us, is a practice higher than prevails in the world in which we currently live. If, however, we want to be an example to others, our behavior must also exemplify our desire, even if it is difficult to do. This action may not only bless the lives of our enemies, it may also bless our lives.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"All men will be judged [also] by what is in their own hearts. If their souls are full of hatred and cursing, such characteristics shall be restored to them in the resurrection. Loving one's enemies and blessing one's cursers perfect the soul." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 142).

Proverbs 23:7

7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:...

12. Perfection

3 Nephi 12:48	Matthew 5:48
<p>48 Therefore, I would that ye should be perfect <u>even as I, or</u> your Father who is in heaven is perfect.</p>	<p>48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JST, Matthew 5:50</p> <p>50 <u>Ye are therefore commanded</u></p>

	to be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect.
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The words of the Savior in Matthew were given prior to his atonement and crucifixion, otherwise the words of the two scriptures would have been identical. It is noteworthy that in the Joseph Smith Translation, Matthew 5:50, the imperative begins with the words, "Ye are therefore commanded to."

It would appear that what is difficult, with the addition of the Joseph Smith Translation, it is now a commandment. How could one in this life ever obtain perfection?

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"If the newly called saints overcome anger; if they are reconciled with their brethren; if they rise about lewd and lascivious thought and commit no adultery in their hearts; if they cast away their sins, as though severing an offending hand; if their every spoken word is true as though sworn with an oath; if they do not retaliate when others offend them; if they turn the other cheek and resist not evil impositions; if they love their enemies, bless them who curse them, and pray for those who despitefully use them and persecute them--if they do all these things, they will become perfect even as their Eternal Father [or his Son] is perfect. And perfection comes not by the law of Moses, but by the gospel." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 143).

I do not believe that Our Heavenly Father and his Son, Jesus Christ, are asking us to do the impossible. They are, however, asking us to change our dispositions and to become true disciples of Christ. As we do this, we will become even as they are. While it is true, it is likely that we will not be able to accomplish this task during our mortal existence, we will be given time to continue this process after this life. If we strive each day to live our lives a little better than we did the day before, repenting as needed, having done all that we can do, I believe that Our Savior, Jesus Christ, will bless our efforts.

III. 3 Nephi 13

In 3 Nephi, Chapter 12, the focus of the Lord's remarks were knowing ourselves leading to the perfection of an individual. Our focus now shifts to our relationship with our fellowmen and God. We now dwell upon fifteen areas of importance as taught to those gathered at Bountiful. We will continue to contrast his teachings with those recorded in the Holy Bible.

1. Ostentation and Hypocritical Display

3 Nephi 13:1, 3-4	Matthew 6:1, 3-4
<p>1 <u>Verily, verily, I say that I would that ye should do alms [righteous acts of religious devotion] unto the poor;</u> but take heed that ye do not your alms before men to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father who is in heaven.</p>	<p>1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.</p>
<p>3 But when thou doest alms let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth;</p>	<p>3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:</p>
<p>4 That thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father who seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.</p>	<p>4 That thine alms may be in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.</p>

The contrast between those who give so that they may be seen of others and the conduct of a disciple of Christ, who gives in private is striking. Those who give and receive the accolades of the world already have their reward. Those who give anonymously experience not only the feeling within for having given to another in need, but in addition, are also the recipients of heaven's reward.

2. Prayer

3 Nephi 13:5	Matthew 6:5
<p>5 And when thou prayest thou shalt not <u>do</u> as the</p>	<p>5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the</p>

<p>hypocrites, for they love to pray, standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.</p> <p>6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father who is in secret; and thy Father, who seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.</p> <p>7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.</p> <p>8 Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.</p>	<p>hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.</p> <p>6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.</p> <p>7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.</p> <p>8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.</p>
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The similarity of the injunction by the Savior to the "hypocrites [who] love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets," would suggest that there were also hypocrites in ancient America who likewise chose to offer prayers in public places. All are instructed to choose a private, rather than a public place, to express their prayers to the Father. We are also admonished not to be redundant in our prayers for the Father knows already our needs before we ask.

In 3 Nephi 13:9-13, and in Matthew 6:9-13, Jesus offers what has become known as the Lord's Prayer. The wording in both scriptures is the same. His purpose was likely to give the new disciple an example or illustration of a prayer rather than providing a prayer to be constantly repeated. The simple qualities of prayer include: (1) Addressing our Father in Heaven; (2) Thanking Him for our many blessings; (3) Expressing our needs; and, (4) As we will understand, concluding our prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ, Amen. All our petitions to the Father, are done in the Name of, or through, His Son, Jesus Christ. (see 3 Nephi 18:19.)

3. Forgiveness

3 Nephi 13:14-15	Matthew 6:14-15
<p>14 For, if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you;</p> <p>15 But if you forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.</p>	<p>14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.</p> <p>15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.</p>

We learn by modern revelation that those of us who refuse to forgive another who has trespassed against us will find ourselves condemned before the Lord for we will be guilty of the greater sin. (see Doctrine and Covenants 64:9-10.) Someday, each of us will need forgiveness from the Lord for sins that we have committed. How could we hope to receive His forgiveness if we had refused to forgive those who had offended us?

4. Fasting

3 Nephi 13:16-18	Matthew 6:16-18
<p>16 Moreover, when ye fast be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance, for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.</p>	<p>16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.</p>
<p>17 But thou, when thou fastest anoint thy head, and wash thy face;</p>	<p>17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;</p>
<p>18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, who is in secret; <u>and thy Father who seeth in secret</u>, shall reward thee openly.</p>	<p>18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret, shall reward thee openly.</p>

The Lord noted that the individual who alters their appearance so that their actions gain the attention of

others, such as disfiguring their faces and appearing sad, already have received their reward. The disciple of Christ is counseled to observe the fast in a manner that does not draw attention to them. As they do so, their Father who is in Heaven, will then openly reward them.

5. Worldly Wealth and Eternal Treasure

3 Nephi 13:19-21	Matthew 6:19-21
<p>19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal;</p> <p>20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.</p> <p>21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.</p>	<p>19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and thieves break through and steal;</p> <p>20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.</p> <p>21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.</p>

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“Treasures upon earth would include, money, clothes, jewels, houses, lands, property, business enterprise, honors bestowed by men, social affiliations, and political positions. All these fade away when life ends...they have no inherent eternal value.” (*Doctrinal New Testament Commentary*, Vol. 1. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1965, [11th Printing, 1976], 239).

In contrast, the coin of the realm in heaven is obtained by obedience to God’s commandments and the service rendered to others while on earth. It is when we lift up those who are in need that we gain our greatest joy. King Benjamin taught, “when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17).

6. The Light of the Eye

3 Nephi 13:22-23	Matthew 6:22-23
<p>22 The light of the body is the eye; if, therefore, thine</p>	<p>22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine</p>

<p>eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.</p> <p>23 But if thine eye is evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!</p>	<p>eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.</p> <p>23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!</p>
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Bryan Richards states,

"Eye movements are controlled by some of the smallest, most well-controlled muscles in the human body. Almost imperceptible contractions of these muscles make incredibly large changes in the visual landscape. This analogy is particularly effective, because it is so difficult to keep our eyes focused on one thing. It takes no effort to take a quick glance either to our right or to our left. Yet, in the microsecond that we let our eyes wander, our mind can be filled with all sorts of evil. Like racehorses, we need to keep our muscles finely tuned to the finish line; we need blinders to block out the many worldly distractions which are always pestering us from the periphery. Certainly, of all the skills we need to learn in mortality, keeping our eyes on the prize requires the greatest self-discipline." (www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Ne-13).

Doctrine and Covenants 88:67-68

67 And if your eye be single to my glory, your whole bodies shall be filled with light, and there shall be no darkness in you; and that body which is filled with light comprehendeth all things.

68 Therefore, sanctify yourselves that your minds become single to God, and the days will come that you shall see him; for he will unveil his face unto you, and shall be in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will.

If we are willing to dedicate ourselves to do the work of the Lord, with an eye single to his glory, we will receive his light. The more light we receive, the less darkness will be within us, until someday we will be filled with his light and be able to stand in his presence.

7. Not Serve Two Masters

3 Nephi 13:24	Matthew 6:24
<p>24 No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.</p>	<p>24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.</p>

Brigham Young states,

"They who love and serve God with all their hearts rejoice evermore...But if they who try to serve God and still cling to the spirit of the world, have got on two yokes--the yoke of Jesus and the yoke of the devil...They will have a warfare inside and outside, and the labor will be very galling, for they are directly in opposition one to the other. Cast off the yoke of the enemy, and put on the yoke of Christ, and you will say that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. This I know by experience." (*Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 16. London: Latter-Day Saints' Book Depot, 1874, 123).

8. Apostles to Forsake All in Missionary Cause

3 Nephi 13:25, 31-33	Matthew 6:25, 31-33
<p><u>25 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words he looked upon the twelve whom he had chosen, and said unto them: Remember the words which I have spoken, For behold, ye are they whom I have chosen to minister unto this people.</u></p> <p>Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than the meat, and the body than raiment?</p>	<p>25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?</p>

<p>31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?</p> <p>32 For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.</p> <p>33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.</p>	<p>31 Therefore take no thought, saying What shall be eat? or, What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed?</p> <p>32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek☺ for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.</p> <p>33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.</p>
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The words recorded in the Book of Mormon make it clear that this requirement does not apply to the general membership of the Church, but only to the apostles and those called to give full-time service to the work. As part of their service and lifetime dedication, God will provide for them the necessities of life.

IV. 3 Nephi 14

3 Nephi 14:1

1 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had spoken these words [to the Twelve] he turned again to the multitude, and did open his mouth unto them again saying:...

This verse further clarifies that the instruction Jesus gave to those gathered at Bountiful was divided between the twelve and the general membership of the Church. This was also true at the Sermon on the Mount, though it is not clearly delineated.

9. Judging Others

<p>3 Nephi 14:1-2</p> <p>1 <u>...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Judge not, that ye be not judged.</u></p>	<p>Matthew 7:1-2</p> <p>1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.</p>
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<p>2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.</p>	<p>2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.</p>
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A reading of these verses would lead one to conclude that Jesus was stating that judgments were not to be rendered upon others. While this is true for the general membership, as will be noted, it is a necessary aspect of the administration of Christ's Church upon the earth today. This judgment must be rendered by those who are authorized to direct the affairs of the Church. It is essential that in all circumstances, the leader acts in a responsible manner and seeks the inspiration of the Lord in all judgments he must render to those under his jurisdiction. Modern revelation provides the following counsel.

Doctrine and Covenants 11:12

12 And now, verily, verily, I say unto thee, put your trust in that Spirit which leadth to do good--yea, to do justly, to walk humbly, to judge righteously; and this is my Spirit.

Spencer W. Kimball states,

"The Lord can judge men by their thoughts as well as by what they say and do, for he knows even the intents of their hearts; but this is not true of humans. We hear what people say, we see what they do, but being unable to discern what they think or intend, we often judge wrongfully if we try to fathom the meaning and motives behind their actions and place on them our own interpretation." (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1969, [13th Printing, 1972], 268).

The counsel not to judge others is wise, unless we are acting within our spiritual responsibility. Only through the spirit of the Lord can the leader be able to render fair and impartial judgments.

10. Disseminating Sacred Truths

3 Nephi 14:6	Matthew 7:6
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<p>6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.</p>	<p>6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.</p>
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Each member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints has been given the opportunity and commandment to share the blessings of the gospel with others. The following counsel is pertinent to keep in mind: (1) Do not, in your enthusiasm, share all you know about the gospel. Confine your conversation to the basic principles; (2) Do not be disappointed as not everyone will be receptive to the message you have to share. Each individual has their own timetable regarding their receptiveness to religious truths. Now may not be their time; and, (3) Honor the individual's choice not to hear more. No one likes it when their feelings are not being respected; some may even get angry. Remember not everyone joins the church at the same pace; some take longer than others. Some may not join at all. Respect their feelings. It is important to remember to keep your message simple and sincere and then, if they are interested, invite them to meet the missionaries

11. The Golden Rule

<p>3 Nephi 14:12</p> <p>12 Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.</p>	<p>Matthew 7:12</p> <p>12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.</p> <p>Luke 6:31</p> <p>31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.</p>
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The above counsel given to those gathered at Bountiful as well as the Lord's Sermon delivered on the Mount is identical. While condensed, the meaning in Luke is similar. The same is referred to in western society as the Golden Rule: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet, and Brent L. Top state,

"It is 'only as we lose ourselves can we find ourselves (see Matthew 16:25). We gain the inner peace and stability of soul promised by the Savior only as we lose ourselves in our quest for God and as we give ourselves selflessly in the service of others.'" (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol.4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 93).

12. Strait is the Way

3 Nephi 14:13-14	Matthew 7:13-14
<p>13 Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, which leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat;</p> <p>14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.</p>	<p>13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:</p> <p>14 Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.</p>

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"It is *strait* because it is narrow and restricted, a course where full obedience to the full law is required.

"Straightness has reference to direction, straitness to width...By entering in at the strait gate (which is repentance and baptism) a person gets on the "straight and narrow path which leads to eternal life' (2 Nephi 31:17-18)." (*Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 769).

Both those gathered at Bountiful and on the Mount, understood that the gate to which Jesus referred to represented baptism. The prerequisites to baptism included faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and personal repentance. The broad way represented the various teachings based upon the philosophies of man that were easy to access, but led to spiritual destruction. They were not based on the specific truths necessary to obtain eternal life as taught by Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

13. Beware of False Prophets

3 Nephi 14:15-20	Matthew 7:15-20
<p>15 Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.</p> <p>16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?</p> <p>17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.</p> <p>18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.</p> <p>19 Every tree that bringeth not forth fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.</p> <p>20 Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.</p>	<p>15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.</p> <p>16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?</p> <p>17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.</p> <p>18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.</p> <p>19 Every tree that bringeth not forth fruit is hewn down, and cast into a fire.</p> <p>20 Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them.</p>

The words of Jesus are directed at being able to identify a true prophet in contrast to a false prophet. He makes it clear that appearance alone will not be sufficient. One area upon which to determine the difference are the fruits, or the results of the individual's teachings. Do they bring an individual closer to God the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ? Are their words congruent with the words of the prophets as found in the Holy Scriptures? Do they help the individual to gain control over their natural desires and actions and make them a better person? Do they inspire within the individual a desire to serve others, especially the poor and infirmed? Do they encourage an individual to pray that through the Spirit they may receive personal confirmation of the truths that are being taught to them?

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"What are false prophets? They are teachers and preachers who profess to speak for the Lord when, in fact, they have received no such appointment...False prophets are false teachers; they teach false doctrine; they neither know nor

teach the doctrines of salvation. Rather they have followed cunningly devised fables that they suppose make up the gospel of Christ, and they preach them as such. They are the ministers who proclaim a false way of salvation, the expounders of doctrines that are not of God, and the proclaimers of every man-made system of religion on earth. They are the philosophers and sages who seek to explain God, existence, right and wrong, agency, immortality, and other religious concepts without reference to revelation." (*The Millennial Messiah*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1982, 70-71).

14. Hearing Alone contrasted with the Efficacy of Doing

3 Nephi 14:21-23	Matthew 7:21-23
<p>21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven.</p>	<p>21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven.</p>
<p>22 Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?</p>	<p>22 Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?</p>
<p>23 And then I will profess unto them: I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.</p>	<p>23 And then I will profess unto them: I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.</p>

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"To whom is he speaking? Is it not to those who have been baptized; those who have gained the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy; those who have received the holy priesthood and have cast our devils and worked miracles? ...He is speaking to saints who have not endured to the end, who have not kept the commandments, and who have not pressed forward with steadfastness in Christ in baptism...I never knew you, and you never knew me! Your discipleship was limited; you were not perfect members of

the kingdom. Your heart was not so centered in me as to cause you to endure to the end; and so for a time and a season you were faithful; you even worked miracles in my name; but in the end it shall be as though I never knew you." (*The Mortal Messiah: Book 2*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1980, 172-173).

It is not enough to become members of the Church of Jesus Christ and to receive his authority. We must be steadfast and endure to the end in obedience to the covenants we have made if we are to be numbered among his disciples.

15. Build Your House Upon the Rock

3 Nephi 14:24-27	Matthew 7:24-27
<p>24 Therefore, whoso heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock--</p>	<p>24 Therefore, whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:</p>
<p>25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.</p>	<p>25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.</p>
<p>26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man, who built his house upon the sand--</p>	<p>26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:</p>
<p>27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.</p>	<p>27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it.</p>

The rock is Jesus Christ and his doctrine.

Helaman 5:12

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

Monte S. Nyman states,

"Our eternal salvation is dependent on our building upon the rock of Christ by following his teachings...the rock that we are to build upon is the Rock of Christ. It is a testimony of his divinity as the Son of God. The rains, the floods, and the winds that come are the temptations of the devil and the philosophies of men that attempt to erode away the gospel of Jesus Christ. Those who have a testimony and continue to nourish it will endure in spite of those temptations. On the other hand, those who base their salvation upon the reasoning power of man, instead of upon the revelation of the Holy Spirit, will see their reasoning taken away by others more wise in the ways of the world, or more cunning in the deceptions of the devil. The foundation of Christ will stand. If we build upon it, we will endure." (*Book of Mormon Commentary: Divine Ministry--The First Gospel*. Orem, Utah: Granite Publishing and Distribution, LLC, 2003, 221-222).

V. 3 Nephi 15

3 Nephi 15:1

1 And now it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings he cast his eyes round about on the multitude, and said unto them: Behold, ye have heard the things which I have taught before I ascended to my Father; therefore, whoso remembereth these sayings of mine and doeth them, him will I raise up at the last day.

After Jesus had spoken these words to those gathered at Bountiful, he "perceived that there were some among them

who marveled, and wondered what he would concerning the law of Moses;" (3 Nephi 15:2). They had not fully understood his previous words regarding the fulfillment of the Law of Moses.

3 Nephi 15:4-5, 8

4 Behold, I say unto you that the law is fulfilled that was given unto Moses.

5 Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel; therefore, the law in me is fulfilled, for I have come to fulfil the law; therefore it hath an end.

8 For behold, the covenant which I have made with my people is not all fulfilled; but the law which was given unto Moses hath an end in me.

Joseph Fielding McConkie, Robert L. Millet and Brent L. Top state,

"These Nephites, and generations before them, had known no other system of gospel living than the Mosaic law. All of their worship, religious rites, and Church organization were built upon the law. In one marvelous moment the resurrected Lawgiver virtually changed their entire religious structure. It is no wonder that it was difficult for them to comprehend [fully] that the 'old things' (the law of Moses) had 'passed away' and 'all things had become new." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982, 99).

Bryan Richards states,

"To those raised in the tradition of the Law of Moses, the Lawgiver was also the Lord God Almighty. He was the God of Abraham, Issac, and Jacob. He was the creator of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, for the Lord to say I am he that gave the law defines his divine role as dramatically as anything else he could say. Jesus Christ is none other than the God of the Old Testament.

"In contrast to his humble Old World beginnings, Christ's dramatic entrance in the New World left little doubt about his divinity. The Nephites wondered how it was that the old things had passed away, but they never questioned the

identity or authority of the Lawgiver. If He said the law was fulfilled, that was enough for them."

(www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/3Nephi-15).

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

"Clearly the Nephite congregation understood more readily than did the Jewish world, partly because the Nephite prophets had been so careful to teach the transitional nature of the law. Abinadi had said, 'It is expedient that ye should keep the law of Moses as yet; but I say unto you, that the time shall come when *it shall not more be expedient to keep the law of Moses.*' (Mosiah 13:27, italics added.) In that same spirit Nephi emphasized, 'We speak concerning the law that our children may know the deadness of the law; and they, by knowing the deadness of the law, may look forward unto that life which is in Christ, and know for what end the law was given. And *after the law is fulfilled in Christ, that they need not harden their hearts against him when the law ought to be done away.*' (2 Ne. 25:27, italics added.)

"That kind of teaching--a caution against hardening one's heart against Christ in ignorant defense of the law of Moses--could have served (and saved) so many living in the Old World then and living throughout the world now. Or if, as is probable, this clear doctrine was taught emphatically in the Old World, then more is the pity that such 'plain and precious things' were lost or taken from the pristine teachings of the Old Testament." (*Christ and the New Covenant*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 156-157).

3 Nephi 15:9-10

9 Behold, I am the law, and the light. Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live; for unto him that endureth to the end will I give eternal life.
10 Behold, I have given unto you the commandments; therefore keep my commandments. And this is the law and the prophets, for they truly testified of me.

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

"The old law that all the branches of the house of Israel had been living...was now fulfilled, completed, ended...He was [now] teaching them a higher law, as illustrated in the Sermon at the Temple. The law of Moses could not provide

salvation, only the atonement, or redemption, of Jesus Christ can save and exalt (Mosiah 13:27-32)...The [higher] covenant consisted of all the commandments, plus the promises and responsibilities of a covenant people." (The Book of Mormon: Verse-by-Verse, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2011, 180).

The purpose of the doctrine of Christ is not to make us more obedient, as desirable as that may be. It is to permanently change our natures, so that we become like Our Savior in both word and deed.

Jesus now speaks directly to the twelve disciples or apostles.

3 Nephi 15:12-13

12 Ye are my disciples; and ye are a light unto this people, who are a remnant of the house of Joseph.

13 And behold, this is the land of your inheritance; and the Father hath given it unto you.

Kenneth W. Anderson states,

"Both the Jerusalem apostles and the Nephite disciples were to be the channel of light through which Israel would receive Christ's true doctrinal word and the ordinances of his gospel...

"For today's technological world, the light of the Twelve might be thought of as something like a laser. The Light of Christ through the Twelve emits a coherent beam of one color directed on a salvational path. This light is emitted so precisely that it marks a glowing course of safety for Israel. In the hierarchy of available light of this life, that light from the Twelve stands supreme next to Christ's." ("The Twelve: A Light unto This People," in *The Book of Mormon: 3 Nephi 9-30, This Is My Gospel*, Vol. 8. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993, 150-151).

Jesus now shares with the twelve that, under the commandment of his Father, he had told those of the Old World that he had "other sheep...which were not of this fold, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." (3 Nephi 15:16-17; John 10:16).

3 Nephi 15:18-20

18 And now, because of stiffneckedness and unbelief they understood not my word; therefore I was commanded to say no more of the Father concerning this thing unto them.

19 But, verily, I say unto you that the Father hath commanded me, and I tell it unto you, that ye were separated from among them because of their iniquity; therefore it is because of their iniquity that they know not of you.

20 And verily, I say unto you again that the other tribes hath the Father separated from them; and it is because of their iniquity that they know not of them.

D. Kelly Ogden and Andrew C. Skinner state,

"Jesus first spoke of 'other sheep' when He was in Jerusalem (see John 10:16) and confirmed who they were when He was in America. The 'other sheep' referred to in these verses and the first verse of Chapter 16 are the Nephites, who were Israelites guided by the hand of God to the Western Hemisphere, as well as other groups of Israelites among the 'lost tribes' of Israel. The revelations--ancient and modern--do not give us much information regarding the whereabouts of these 'other sheep, nor details about exactly who they are." (The Book of Mormon: Verse-by-Verse, Vol. 2. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 2011, 181-182).

3 Nephi 15:22-24

22 And they understood me not, for they supposed it had been the Gentiles; for they understood not that the Gentiles should be converted through their preaching.

23 And they understood me not that I said they shall hear my voice; and they understood me not that the Gentiles should not at any time hear my voice--that I should not manifest myself unto them save it were by the Holy Ghost.

Joseph Fielding McConkie states,

"Those in the Old World supposed that Christ was referring to the Gentiles in his reference to 'other sheep.' This indicates that they did not fully understand the implications of the Abrahamic covenant. In the divine

economy of things, those of Israel were to be accorded the privilege of his personal appearance while others [Gentiles] were to obtain their assurance of saving truths by and through the Holy Ghost." ("Doctrine of a Covenant People," in *The Book of Mormon: 3 Nephi 9-30, This Is My Gospel*, Vol. 8. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1993, 170).

3 Nephi 15:24

24 But behold, ye have both heard my voice, and seen me; and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me.

Book of Mormon Student Manual [2009] states,

"Jesus Christ is often called the Good Shepherd (see D&C 50:44; John 10:7-18; Alma 5:38-60; Helaman 7:18). The metaphor of the shepherd and his relationship to his sheep connotes personal care and concern. One modern commentator spoke of the personal care involved in the work of the shepherd:

"By day and by night the shepherd is always with his sheep...This was necessary on account of the exposed nature of the land, and the presence of danger from wild animals and robbers. One of the most familiar and beautiful sights of the East is that of the shepherd leading his sheep to the pasture...He depends upon the sheep to follow, and they in turn expect him never to leave them..." (*Book of Mormon Student Manual*. Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2009, 313).

VI. Conclusion

We have not yet concluded the words of the Savior to those gathered at Bountiful during the first day and already we have been taught much.

In 3 Nephi, Chapters 11 and 12, we were taught twelve differences between the Law given to Moses and the higher law of Christ. Those differences include: (1) Murder and anger; (2) Profanity; (3) Reconciliation between brethren; (4) Avoiding legal entanglements; (5) Adultery; (6) Casting sin away; (7) Divorce; (8) Gospel oaths; (9) Retaliation; (10) Persecution by legal process; (11) The law of love;

and, (12) Perfection. It is important that we not become overwhelmed with the requirements of the higher law, but that we daily strive for improvement. If we continue along the gospel path, seeking the strength and support of our Savior, we will change.

In 3 Nephi, Chapters 13 and 14, fifteen areas of improvement were taught that would bring improvement in our relationship with our fellowmen and God. These include: (1) Ostentation and hypocritical display; (2) Prayer; (3) Forgiveness; (4) Fasting; (5) Worldly wealth and Eternal treasures; (6) The Light of the eye; (7) Not serving two masters; (8) Apostles to forsake all in missionary cause; (9) Judging others; (10) Disseminating sacred truths; (11) The Golden Rule; (12) Strait is the way; (13) Beware of False prophets; (14) Hearing alone contrasted with the Efficacy of doing, and, (15) Building your house upon the rock. Included in these fifteen areas are those where we are doing well and those areas where we still need further work and effort.

In 3 Nephi, Chapter 15, Jesus taught that the Law of Moses had been fulfilled by his atonement and resurrection. We were to no longer offer animal sacrifices on the altar, but to offer the animal in us that was impeding our total consecration to his mind and will. It is essential that our nature changes so we may partake of the greater light we may yet receive. How blessed we are to be numbered among his sheep. We could not have a better shepherd to lead and guide us as we travel the path that He has marked to lead us back to His presence as well as the Father.

Our next lesson [BM#39], will continue to focus on the Savior's visit to the Nephites. At the conclusion of his first day, he will heal the sick and bless the children. 3 Nephi, Chapter 19, marks the beginning of his teachings on Day Two.