

BM#48 "Come Unto Christ" - Moroni 7-8, 10

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I. Introduction

Two chapters in the writings of Mormon were written by Moroni. They are Chapters 8 and 9. Three chapters in the book of Moroni, were written by Mormon to his son, Moroni. They are Chapters 7 through 9. As Moroni, Chapter 9, had previously been addressed as part of the writings of Mormon [BM#43], the reader is referred to this lesson.

Moroni, Chapter 7 includes a talk by Mormon and Chapter 8 is a letter from Mormon to Moroni addressing the baptism of infants. Chapter 10 is Moroni's farewell address. It includes a promise to the sincere investigator, a discussion on spiritual gifts, an invitation to Come unto Christ, and his concluding witness.

Outline of Book of Moroni 7-8, 10

- "1. Moroni 7: Mormon's teachings on faith, hope, and charity.
- "2. Moroni 8: Mormon's pastoral epistle to Moroni concerning questions of repentance and baptism for little children.
- "3. Moroni 10: How to gain testimony concerning truth of Book of Mormon. Power of Holy Ghost. (Moroni 10:1-7)

The gifts of God. Exhortation to lay hold of every good gift. (Moroni 10:8-30)

Appeal to Zion of latter-days to arise and be no more confounded. Exhortation to come unto Christ and be perfected in him. (Moroni 10:31-33)

Moroni bids all men farewell. (Moroni 10:34)." (Sidney B. Sperry. *Book of Mormon*)

Compendium. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1968, 483).

II. Moroni 7

Moroni 7:1

1 And now I, Moroni, write a few of the words of my father Mormon, which he spake concerning faith, hope, and charity; for after this manner did he speak unto the people, as he taught them in the synagogue which they had built for the place of worship.

The topic of Mormon's address is faith, hope, and charity. It is noteworthy that the topic of charity had previously been addressed by the Apostle Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 13. He concluded his remarks, "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (1 Corinthians 13:13). We had also been taught from the writings of Ether, that "except men shall have charity they cannot inherit that place which thou hast prepared in the mansions of thy Father" (Ether 12:34). Mormon will teach us that "charity is the pure love of Christ" (Moroni 7:47).

Moroni 7:3-4

3 Wherefore, I would speak unto you that are of the church, that are the peaceable followers of Christ, and that have obtained a sufficient hope by which ye can enter into the rest of the Lord, from this time henceforth until ye shall rest with him in heaven.
4 And now my brethren, I judge these things of you because of your peaceable walk with the children of men.

Bryan Richards states,

"Could it be that these [members of the church at the time of Mormon] were the only people among the Nephites that were not continually fighting for their lives? Could it be that they were the only people among the Nephites who were not consumed with thoughts of death, revenge, and bloodshed? And how could it be that they had no fear of death? Apparently, their hope of eternal rest was a product of their faith and that perfect love which casteth out all fear (Moroni 8:16). Admist a society of bloodshed and

carnage, their 'peaceable walk' was evidence to Mormon that they had hope for a better world (Ether 12:4)."
(www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/Moroni-7).

Clyde J. Williams states,

"Mormon's challenge as a spiritual leader in a wicked world strikes a sad but familiar cord today. In Moroni 7, Mormon addresses his words to the 'peaceable follower of Christ (Moroni 7:3.) Just as in Mormon's day, to be such a 'follower' in our society is not an easy task...One who has a peaceable walk,' in the Savior's words, would 'Learn of me, and listen to my words; walk in the meekness of my Spirit, and ye shall have peace in me' (D&C 19:23)" ("Mormon's role unique among prophets: The Savior personally influenced abridgment," in *LDS Church News*. November 30, 1996).

Moroni 7:5-6

5 For I remember the word of God which saith by their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also.

6 For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good; for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with real intent it profiteth him nothing.

David O. McKay states,

"Mere compliance with the word of the Lord, without a corresponding inward desire, will avail but little. Indeed, such outward actions and pretending phrases may disclose hypocrisy, a sin that Jesus most vehemently condemned."
(*Conference Report*, October 1951, 6).

In the final analysis, it is our sincere intent, combined with our actions, that manifest our true belief. There are, however, those instances when we fulfill a responsibility, when our heart is not fully committed, and the Lord blesses us for our effort.

Thomas S. Monson states,

"May I provide a simple formula by which we can measure the choices which confront us. It's easy to remember; sometimes difficult to apply: 'You can't be right by doing wrong; you can't be wrong by doing right.'" (*Pathways to Perfection*).

Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1973, [Third Printing, 1976], 58).

Moroni 7:12-13

12 Wherefore, all things which are good cometh of God; and that which is evil cometh of the devil; for the devil is an enemy unto God, and fighteth against him continually, and inviteth and enticeth to sin, and to do that which is evil continually.

13 But behold, that which is of God inviteth and enticeth to do good continually; wherefore every thing which inviteth and enticeth to do good, and to love God, and to serve him, is inspired of God.

Gordon B. Hinckley states,

"How do we recognize the promptings of the Spirit? I don't think that's too difficult, really. When all is said and done it is a matter of a feeling we have in our hearts...

"Does it persuade one to do good, to rise, to stand tall, to do the right thing, to be kind, to be generous? Then it is of the Spirit of God. If it is dark, sinister, ugly, not good, then you may know it is of the adversary.

"You recognize the promptings of the Spirit by the fruits of the Spirit--that which enlighteneth, that which buildeth up, that which is positive and affirmative and uplifting and leads us to better thoughts and better words and better deeds is of the Spirit of God. That which tears down, which leads us into forbidden paths--that is of the adversary. (**Holy Ghost**. *Teachings of Gordon B. Hinckley*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 260-261).

Moroni 7:15-16

15 For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night.

16 For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ;

wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God.

It is the Spirit of Christ that helps us to discern between that which is good and of God and that which is evil and of the devil.

Moroni 7:19

19 Wherefore, I beseech of you brethren, that ye should search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil; and if ye will lay hold upon every good thing, and condemn it not, ye certainly will be a child of Christ.

Having learned to trust the promptings of the Spirit of Christ and not to reject it, we come to know for ourselves that by following the promptings of the Spirit, we are led to exercise faith in Christ.

Moroni 7:25-26

25 Wherefore, by the ministering of angels, and by every word which preceeded forth out of the mouth of God, men began to exercise faith in Christ; and thus by faith, they did lay hold upon every good thing; and thus it was until the coming of Christ.

26 And after that he came men also were saved by faith in his name; and by faith, they became the sons of God. And as surely as Christ liveth he spake these words unto our fathers, saying: 'Whatsoever thing ye shall ask the Father in my name, which is good, in faith believing that ye shall receive, behold, it shall be done unto you.'

Neal A. Maxwell states,

"By praying, we begin to experience what it is like when we see the interplay of man's moral agency and God's directing hand. These are things to be learned only by experience. We learn how important our intentions are, since we are instructed to pray for that 'which is right' (3 Nephi 18:20). Our prayers will be better if they are, in fact, inspired prayers.

"Thus worshipping, serving, studying, praying, each in its own way squeezes selfishness out of us; it pushes aside our

preoccupation with the things of the world." (*Men and Women of Christ*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1991, [6th Printing, 1997], 98).

Bryan Richards states,

"Faith is a principle of power. The greater one's faith, the greater is one's power for good. Like so much else in the gospel, the attainment of such power is a process...As the Bible Dictionary states: 'Prayer is the act by which the will of the Father and the will of the child are brought into correspondence with each other. The object of prayer is not to change the will of God, but to secure for ourselves and for others blessings that God is already willing to grant, but that are made conditional on our asking for them.'" (www.gosepeldoctrine.com/contents/Moroni-7).

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"It is the power of faith...And the extent to which we become like Him is the extent we gain His faith, acquire His power and exercise His priesthood. And when we have become like Him in the full and true sense, then we...shall have eternal life." ("The Doctrine of the Priesthood," in *Ensign*, May 1982, 32).

Moroni 7:29, 36-37

29 And because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased? Behold I say unto you, Nay; neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men.

36 Or have angels ceased to appear unto the children of men? Or has he withheld the power of the Holy Ghost from them? Or will he, so long as time shall last, or the earth shall stand, or there shall be one man upon the face thereof to be saved?

37 Behold I say unto you, Nay: for it is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister unto men; wherefore, if these things have ceased wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.

Moroni saw that in the latter days many would deny the existence of miracles. Mormon bears his witness that it

will be because of the lack of belief on the part of the people. However, wherever the Church of Jesus Christ is established, miracles and ministering angels will continue to exist in response to the faith of the people.

Mormon now addressed the principle of hope and its relationship to faith.

Moroni 7:40-42

40 And again, my beloved brethren, I would speak unto you concerning hope. How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope?

41 And what is it that ye shall hope for? Behold I say unto you that ye shall have hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of his resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise.

42 Wherefore, if a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope.

For many, hope is wishful thinking. In other words, I hope that it doesn't rain tomorrow...I hope I get an A in my class... Here, we are speaking of a theological hope, one that leads to eternal life.

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

What is the relationship between faith and hope? "It is certainly much more than wishful thinking. It is to have 'hope through the atonement of Christ and the power of the resurrection, to be raised unto life eternal, and this because of your faith in him according to the promise' [Moroni 7:41]. *That* is the theological meaning of hope in the faith-hope-charity sequence. With an eye to that meaning, Moroni 7:42 then clearly reads, 'If a man have faith [in Christ and his atonement] he must needs [as a consequence] have hope [in the promise of the Resurrection, because the two are inextricably linked]; for without faith [in Christ's atonement] there cannot be any hope [in the Resurrection]" (*Christ and the New Covenant*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 334-335).

Neal A. Maxwell adds,

"Christ-centered hope, however, is a very specific and particularized hope. It is focused on the great realities

of the resurrection, eternal life, a better world and Christ's triumphant second coming—'things as they really *will be*.'" (Jacob 4:13, Italics added.)

"Thus gospel hope is a very focused and particularized hope that is based upon justified expectations. It is a virtue that is intertwined with faith and charity, which virtues are not to be understood either when they are torn apart from each other *or apart from the Lord Jesus Christ*, without whom they are all vague virtues. Doubt and despair go together, whereas faith and hope are constant companions." (*Notwithstanding My Weakness*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1981, [Second printing August 1981], 40-41).

Moroni 7:43

43 And again, behold I say unto you that he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek and lowly of heart.

Ulisses Soares states,

Meekness is "the quality of those who are 'Godfearing, righteous, humble, teachable, and patient under suffering. The meek are willing to follow gospel teachings.'" [*Guide to the Scriptures, 'Meek, Meekness'*; scriptures.lds.org]. Those who possess these attributes are willing to follow Jesus Christ, and their temperament is calm, docile, tolerant, and submissive..

"Being meek does not mean weakness, but it does mean behaving with goodness and kindness, showing strength, serenity, healthy self-worth, and self-control." ("Be Meek and Lowly of Heart," in *Ensign*, May 2001, 9).

Moroni 7:44

44 ...if a man be meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ, he must needs have charity; for if he have not charity he is nothing; wherefore he must needs have charity.

We may ask, What is charity?

H. Dean Garrett states,

"Faith and hope lead to the development of charity, the third part of the triad of spiritual growth. Charity, which is focused on the Savior and our love for him, cannot be developed in any sense without the foundation of faith and hope. By definition, charity is 'the highest, noblest, strongest kind of love not merely affection' (*LDS Bible Dictionary*, 632.) This love is more than just a willingness to share time or possessions with another human being; rather, it is a deep and lasting devotion for and to God and his Son (Mormon 7:47). Thus, more than an act, charity is an attitude, a state of heart and mind that accompanies our works and is proffered unceasingly (1 Cor 13:4-7; D&C 121:45). It follows faith and hope, but surpasses them in importance (1 Cor 13:13; *Encyclopedia of Mormonism* 1:264). Charity is best illustrated by Christ's own actions, for he so loved his Father that he did whatsoever his Father required, even to the suffering and giving of his own life for the spiritual lives of his Father's children. Mormon characterizes charity as 'the pure love of Christ' (Moroni 7:47)." ("Light in Our Vessels: Faith Hope, and Charity," in *The Book of Mormon: Fourth Nephi Through Moroni, From Zion to Destruction*, Vol. 9. Edited by Monte S. Nyman and Charles D. Tate, Jr. Provo, Utah: Religious Studies Center, Brigham Young University, 1995, 86).

Moroni 7:45-47

45 And charity suffereth long, and is kind, and envieth not, and is not puffed up, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, and rejoiceth not in iniquity but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, and endureth all things.

46 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, if ye have not charity, ye are nothing, for charity never faileth. Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail--

47 But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him.

Why is it so important that the followers of Christ seek to gain charity?

Moroni 7:48

48 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love [charity], which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son, Jesus Christ; that ye may become the sons of God; that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is; that we may have this hope; that we may be purified even as he is pure. Amen.

Bruce C. Hafen states,

"The purpose of charity is not merely to cause a proper motivation for charitable acts towards other people...The ultimate purpose is to make Christ's followers *like him*...

"The ultimate purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to cause the sons and daughters of God to become as Christ is. Those who see religious purpose only in terms of ethical service in the relationship between man and fellowmen may miss that divinely ordained possibility. It is quite possible to render charitable—even 'Christian'—service without developing deeply ingrained and permanent Christlike character...We can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving. If our vertical relationship with God is complete, then, by the fruit of that relationship, the horizontal relationship with our fellow beings will also be complete. We then act charitable toward others, not merely because we think we should, but because that is the way we are." (*The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement To Life's Experiences*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989, 196-197).

When King Benjamin speaks on the importance of our "being born again" and Mormon and Paul speak of our obtaining "Charity," we tend to underestimate what that really means in our lives.

C.S. Lewis states,

"Christ says 'Give me All. I don't want so much of your time and so much of your money and so much of your work: I want You. I have not come to torment your natural self, but to kill it. No half-measures are any good. I don't want to cut off a branch here and a branch there, I want to have the whole tree down. I don't want to drill the tooth, or

crown it, or stop it but to have it out. Hand over the whole natural self, all the desires which you think innocent as well as the ones you think wicked--the whole outfit. I will give you a new self instead. In fact, I will give you Myself: my own will shall become yours." (*Mere Christianity*. New York City: Walker & Co., 1987, [Large Print], 301).

As Bruce C. Hafen states, "The ultimate purpose of the gospel of Jesus Christ is to cause the sons and daughters of God [each of us] to become as Christ is." As we develop the qualities as taught by Mormon of faith-hope-charity, we become like Him.

III. Moroni 8

This is the first of two letters sent by Mormon to his son, Moroni. They make up Moroni, Chapters 8 and 9 of the book of Moroni. We have previously addressed Chapter 9. (see BM#43.) We will now address Moroni 8.

This letter was sent to Moroni, by his father, soon after Moroni's call to the ministry.

Moroni 8:2-3

2 My beloved son, Moroni, I rejoice exceedingly that your Lord Jesus Christ hath been mindful of you, and hath called you to his ministry, and to his holy work.
3 I am mindful of you always in my prayers, continually praying unto God the Father in the name of his Holy Child, Jesus, that he, through his infinite goodness and grace will keep you through the endurance of faith on his name to the end.

Mormon is pleased with the call to serve that his son had received and encouraged him to be faithful in fulfilling his responsibilities throughout his life. Mormon knows the challenges his son will face as well as the joy that will come to him as a servant of Jesus Christ.

Mormon now addressed a disputation that has arisen within the members of the church that has given him great concern.

Moroni 8:4-5

4 And now, my son, I speak unto you concerning that which grieveth me exceedingly; for it grieveth me that there should disputations rise among you.

5 For, if I have learned the truth, there have been disputations among you concerning the baptism of your little children.

Not only is Mormon concerned that disputations have arisen in the church for as we know contention is of the devil and when contention is present, the Holy Ghost departs. (see 3 Nephi 11:29-30.) He is greatly concerned the disputation is regarding infant baptism. He states, "I desire that ye should labor diligently, that this gross error should be removed from among you; for, for this intent I have written this epistle" (Moroni 8:6).

The fact that Moroni chose to include his father's teachings regarding infant baptism, may be due to the fact, that he knew this doctrine would also be taught in many of the churches in the latter days.

The teaching of Mormon regarding this matter is based upon his inquiring "of the Lord concerning this matter [whereby] ...the word of the Lord came to me by the power of the Holy Ghost,..." (Moroni 8:7). This is a simple example of the need for continued revelation in the church. Here, the prophet made a request on behalf of the church and the Lord revealed his will. The doctrine is of God, not of man.

Moroni 8:8

8 Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore, little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them; and the law of circumcision is done away in me.

The word of the Lord is clear. Little children are not capable of committing sin until the age of accountability. Also, because the consequence of the sin of Adam is swallowed up in Christ's atonement, little children have no need of baptism.

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

"It should not be thought that this verse teaches that little children of the mentally deficient are incapable of doing anything wrong, mean, or dishonest. They are 'whole' and incapable of committing sin not because of any inherent perfection or goodness on their part but by reason of the Atonement. They are incapable of sinning because they are not accountable for their actions. This means that whatever actions they may do that are mean or dishonest are not counted against them as sins." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 351).

Moroni 8:10-11

10 Behold I [Mormon] say unto you [Moroni], that this thing shall ye teach--repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children.

11 And their little children need no repentance, neither baptism. Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins.

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

"In the pattern set by the Savior's own teachings, it is telling that both of these declarations invite adults--Mormon says specifically 'parent'--to become more like little children, not the other way around. An infant's purity and innocence, a baby's sense of wonder, a little one's willingness to believe, a toddler's inherent trust in a Father and Mother, a child's ability to almost instantly forgive and forget, to laugh again and see the very best in the world--these are just a few of the ways adults need to be more like children. Truly 'of such is the kingdom of heaven' (Matt 19:14)." (*Christ and the New Covenant*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 217).

The purpose of baptism is to cleanse the individual from previous sins after they have demonstrated their repentance. We learn that little children are not capable

of committing sins due to their limited mental or spiritual capacity. The sins of Adam also have no effect upon them until they reach the age of accountability. This is a result of the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Moroni 8:12-13

12 But little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world; if not so, God is a partial God, and also a changeable God, and a respecter to persons; for how many little children have died without baptism!

13 Wherefore, if little children could not be saved without baptism, these must have gone to an endless hell.

For many who practice infant baptism, their actions are an effort to protect their infants from a supposed endless hell. Many suffer greatly when their child dies prior to having been baptized. They have been told that there is no redemption for them! Fortunately this not true and is contrary to the mercies of a loving God. Many do not understand that their infants do not need baptism for they are in truth already saved as a result of the atonement of Jesus Christ.

Moroni 8:19-21

19 Little children cannot repent; wherefore, it is awful wickedness to deny the pure mercies of God unto them, for they are all alive in him because of his mercy.

20 And he that saith that little children need baptism [after they have been taught the truth] denieth the mercies of Christ, and setteth at naught the atonement of him and the power of his redemption.

21 Wo unto such, for they are in danger of death, hell, and an endless torment. I it speak boldly; God hath commanded me. Listen unto them and give heed, or they stand against you at the judgment-seat of Christ.

Those individuals who continue to hold to the necessity of infant baptism, after they have been taught the truth, are in danger of punishment. It is a doctrine propagated by the devil in order to undermine the belief of the people in the magnitude and purpose of Christ's atonement on behalf of

all of God's children as well as his great love for little children.

Moroni 8:22

22 For behold that all little children are alive in Christ, and also all they that are without the law. For the power of redemption cometh on all them that have no law; wherefore, he that is not condemned, or he that is under no condemnation, cannot repent; and unto such baptism availeth nothing--

Joseph Fielding Smith states,

"We may be sure that the Lord would do all things according to the law of eternal justice and that he would not punish people who in ignorance sinned and violated his commandments. It is one of the most glorious principles of truth and justice that was ever revealed that men are to be punished according to their disobedience to divine commandments, but not when they have acted innocently in ignorance of those divine edicts." (*Answers to Gospel Questions*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1963, [Second Printing], 77-78).

Moroni 8:23-24

**23 But it is [a] mockery before God, denying the mercies of Christ, and the power of his Holy Spirit, and putting trust in dead works.
24 Behold, my son, this thing ought not to be; for repentance is unto them that are under condemnation and under the curse of a broken law.**

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

"Several important aspects of the doctrine of the Atonement and the ordinance of baptism are emphasized and clarified by Mormon in this epistle.

- "1. Baptism is for the remission of sins. In order for baptism to be of efficacy there must also be faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and complete repentance.
- "2. Since little children and those who because of mental or physical deficiencies never mature in the moral or

spiritual sense are not accountable (see D&C 20:71; 29:49-50; 68:25-27), it is impossible for them to sin. Without accountability there is no sin. Without sin there is no need for repentance and baptism.

- "3. Because little children cannot sin they cannot bring about their own spiritual 'fall' or estrangement from God. The only spiritual death they experience, therefore, is that which comes upon all mankind by reasons of the fall of Adam. Thus they are 'alive in Christ' because the atonement of Jesus Christ had redeemed all, including little children, from the effects--both temporal and spiritual--of the fall of Adam. Those, then, who die without achieving personal accountability are redeemed and saved by the mercy, goodness, and pure love of Christ as evidenced by his atoning sacrifice. They become heirs of the celestial kingdom." (*Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, Vol. 4. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1992, 350-351).

Moroni 8:25-26

25 And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism comes by faith unto the fulfilling the commandments; and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins;
26 And the remission of sins bringeth meekness and, lowliness of heart; and because of meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost, which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love, which love endureth by diligence unto prayer, until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God.

Mormon sets forth the first principle and ordinances of the Gospel. They are Faith in Jesus Christ, which leads to the recognition of sins and the need for personal repentance; Baptism by immersion which acts to wash away all prior sins; followed by the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. As the individual continues in prayer and diligence in keeping the commandments until the end, they will, through the grace of Christ, enter into the kingdom of God.

Moroni 8:28-29

28 Pray for them [Nephites], my son, that repentance may come unto them. But behold, I fear lest the Spirit hath ceased striving with them; and in this part of the land they are also seeking to put down all power and authority which cometh from God; and they are denying the Holy Ghost.

29 And after rejecting so great a knowledge, my son, they must perish soon, unto the fulfilling of the prophecies which were spoken by the prophets, as well as the words of our Savior himself.

Mormon concluded his letter to his son, Moroni, by expressing his grief regarding his people. He had sought to teach them by word and example the truth, but they would not hear his words. When an individual or group knowingly rejects the words of God, the spirit withdraws and they are then left to their own will. Without their requisite repentance, they then become influenced by the devil and his minions and their destruction is imminent. Before the destruction comes, we know that Mormon will send one last letter to his son.

IV. Moroni 10

Moroni 10:1-2

1 Now I, Moroni, write somewhat as seemeth me good; and I write unto my brethren, the [future] Lamanites; and I would that they should know that more than four hundred and twenty years have passed away since the sign was given of the coming of Christ.

2 And I seal up these records, after I have spoken a few words by way of exhortation unto you.

It has been approximately thirty-five years since the destruction of the Nephite nation [A.D. 385] at the hand of the Lamanites. The year is A.D. 421. The life of Moroni is now drawing to a close. Following his final words of exhortation to us, he plans to seal up the records.

Words to the Reader

Moroni 10:3-7

3 Behold, I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things, if it be wisdom in God that ye should read them, that ye would remember how merciful the

Lord hath been unto the children of men, from the creation of Adam even down until the time that ye shall receive these things, and ponder it in your hearts.

4 And when ye shall receive these things, I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

5 And by the power of the Holy Ghost ye may know the truth of all things.

6 And whatsoever thing is good is just and true; wherefore, nothing that is good denieth the Christ, but acknowledgeth that he is.

7 And ye may know that he is, by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore I would exhort you that ye deny not the power of God; for he worketh by power, according to the faith of the children of men, the same today, and tomorrow, and forever.

Moroni's words are initially directed to the reader of the Book of Mormon. Typically, the individual has obtained a copy of the Book of Mormon, and has a desire to know if the record they have is of God. The first step is to read the book with an open mind remembering how merciful God has been with his children. Next, is to ask God in sincere prayer if what they are reading is true. As they do so it is necessary that they reflect or ponder upon the words they are reading. It is also important to pay close attention to the feelings they are experiencing and the thoughts that are coming into their mind. Do they cause the individual to feel good and to want to be a better person? Last, they act upon the spiritual promptings they have received and seek to learn more about the teachings of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. The steps are: 1. Read; 2. Remember God's mercies; 3. Ponder upon what you have read; 4. Ask with a sincere heart; 5. Have a real intent to know the truth; and, 6. Exercise your faith in Jesus Christ. It is important not to be discouraged if the answer does not come immediately. As you continue to read and pray and apply the teachings you are learning in your life, the answer will come. This is the Lord's promise to you.

Gifts of God

Moroni 10:8

8 And again, I exhort you, my brethren, that ye deny not the gifts of God, for they are many; and they come from the same God. And there are different ways that these gifts are administered; but it is the same God who worketh all in all; and they are given by the manifestation of the Spirit of God unto men, to profit them.

Bruce R. McConkie states,

"By the grace of God--following devotion, faith, and obedience on man's part--certain special spiritual blessings called *gifts of the Spirit* are bestowed upon men. Their receipt is always predicated upon obedience to law, but because they are feely available to all the obedient, they are called gifts.

"Moroni says that the gifts of God come from Christ, by the power of the Holy Ghost and by the Spirit of Christ. (Moroni 10.) In other words, the gifts come by the power of the Spirit who is the Holy Ghost, but the Spirit of Christ (or light of Christ) is the agency through which the Holy Ghost operates. Their purpose is to enlighten, encourage, and edify the faithful so that they will inherit peace in this life and be guided toward eternal life in the world to come." (*Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 314).

A list of these gifts is found in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Doctrine and Covenants 46:17-25, as well as in Moroni 10:9-16. They include: (1) Teach the word of wisdom; (2) Gain the word of knowledge; (3) Exercise great faith; (4) Gifts of healing, both to heal and be healed; (5) Perform mighty miracles; (6) Prophecy concerning all things; (7) Behold angels and ministering spirits; (8) To be able to discerning spirits; (9) Gift of tongues, both to speak and interpret when one is speaking in tongues, and (10) Interpretation of languages.

Matthew B. Brown states,

"Another group of four gifts has been identified in the sayings of Jesus Christ and the writings of the Prophet Joseph Smith (revelation, dreams, visions, and casting our

evil spirits).” (*Receiving Gifts of the Spirit*. American Fork, Utah: Covenant Communications, Inc., 2005, 3).

We learn from the Doctrine and Covenants,

Doctrine and Covenants 46:11-16

11 For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts and to every man/woman is given a gift by the Spirit of God.

12 To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby.

13 To some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he was crucified for the sins of the world.

14 To others it is given to believe on their words, that they also might have eternal life if they continue to be faithful.

15 And again, to some it is given by the Holy Ghost to know the differences of administration [of the gifts]...

16 And again, it is given by the Holy Ghost to some to know the diversities of operations, whether they be of God,...

Bruce R. McConkie states,

“And these are by no means all of the gifts. In the fullest sense, they are infinite in number and endless their ministrations.” (*Mormon Doctrine*. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1966, [Second Edition], 315).

These are noted in the scriptures so that we may know some of the various gifts the Lord has to offer us and that if we will seek after them, we may receive them.

Moroni 10:19

19 And I would exhort you, my beloved brethren, that ye remember that he [Jesus Christ] is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and that all these gifts of which I have spoken, which are spiritual, never will be done away, even as long as the world shall stand, only according to the unbelief of the children of men.

As noted, these gifts are given for blessing of the faithful and to give strength and blessing to all.

Importance of Faith, Hope and Charity

Moroni 10:20

20 Wherefore, there must be faith; and if there must be faith there must also be hope; and if there must be hope there must also be charity.

Russell M. Nelson states,

"Have you noticed in the scriptures that hope seldom stands alone? Hope is often linked with faith. Hope and faith are commonly connected to charity. Why? Because hope is essential to faith; faith is essential to hope; faith and hope are essential to charity. They support one another like legs on a three-legged stool. All three relate to our Redeemer.

"*Faith* is rooted in Jesus Christ. *Hope* centers in his Atonement. *Charity* is manifest in the 'pure love of Christ.' (Moroni 7:47). These three attributes are intertwined like strands in a cable and may not always be precisely distinguished. Together they become our tether to the celestial kingdom." ("A More Excellent Hope," in *Ensign*, February 1997, 61).

Bryan Richards states,

"It is faith, hope, and charity which bring the power of atonement into full force in our lives. Without these three, all the rest is inadequate."
(www.gospeldoctrine.com/contents/Moroi-10).

Given the importance of our developing faith in Jesus Christ, hope in the atonement, and charity as manifested in our lives and in our relationships with others, it is no wonder that Moroni included his Father's talk in his writings.

Moroni's Witness

Moroni 10:27-29

27 And I exhort you to remember these things; for the time speedily cometh that ye shall know that I lie not, for ye shall see me at the bar of God; and the Lord God will say unto you: Did I not declare my words

unto you, which were written by this man, like as one crying from the dead, yea, even as one speaking out of the dust?

28 I declare these things unto the fulfilling of the prophecies. And behold, they shall proceed forth out of the mouth of the everlasting God; and his word shall hiss forth from generation to generation.

29 And God shall show unto you that that which I have written is true.

After our departure from this mortal world, we will stand before the bar of God to be judged according to the life we have lived and the choices we have made. We will be required to give an accounting for our receipt of the Book of Mormon and how we responded to its teachings. We cannot afford to take this book lightly. It is important that we read it and once having gained a testimony of its truthfulness, live its principles in our daily lives. If we fail to give it importance in our lives, or worse, reject its message, we will be held accountable before God for our decision.

Come Unto Christ and Be Clean

Moroni 10:30

30 And again I would exhort you that ye would come unto Christ, and lay hold upon every good gift, and touch not the evil gift, nor the unclean thing.

In this verse, Moroni pleads with us to "come unto Christ" (Moroni 10:30), and seek after the gifts that he has to offer. As we do so, we will be able to hold firm to the iron rod, that will lead us back to our Father in heaven.

Moroni 10:31

31 And awake, and arise from the dust, O Jerusalem; yea, and put on thy beautiful garments, O daughter of Zion; and strengthen thy stakes, and enlarge thy borders forever, that thou mayest no more be confounded, that the covenants of the Eternal Father which he hath made unto thee, O house of Israel, may be fulfilled.

Moroni is quoting from Isaiah 52:1, as he refers to our arising from the dust, and putting "on thy beautiful garments" (Moroni 10:31).

Ezra Taft Benson states,

"The phrase 'put on her beautiful garments' refers, of course, to the inner sanctity that must be attained by every member who calls himself or herself a Saint. Zion is 'the pure in heart' (D&C 97:21). ("Strengthen Thy Stakes," in *Ensign*, January 1991, 2).

The ultimate purpose of every member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is to qualify and then enter the House of the Lord. It is only in the Lord's house that we make sacred covenants that enable us to gain strength as we strive to live pure lives in an ever increasing world of wickedness. Only as we truly become pure in heart, mind, and action, will we be able to live worthy of the Lord's Spirit. In this manner, we daily strive to build our house upon the rock of Jesus Christ so that when the winds blow and the storms come, we will stand faithfully. (see Heleman 5:12.)

Moroni 10:32-33

32 Yea, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if ye shall deny yourselves of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may be perfect in Christ; and if by the grace of God ye are perfect in Christ, ye can in nowise deny the power of God.

33 And again, if ye by the grace of God are perfect in Christ, and deny not his power, then are ye sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, which is in the covenant of the Father unto the remission of your sins, that ye become holy, without spot.

Bruce C. Hafen states,

"We know very little about this process of sanctification, but it is clear that we do not achieve perfection solely through our own effort. Knowing just that much is enough to give us a new perspective. Because so many of us feel

overwhelmed with the scriptural injunction to be perfect, the idea that divine grace is the final source of our perfection may seem too good to be true. That is how Christ's grace appears to those carrying the burden of truly serious sins. Honest people who carry the burden of being called 'saints' may feel the same way, as they stumble daily through the discouraging debris of their obvious imperfections. But the gospel has good news not only for the serious transgressor, but for all who long to be better than they are. We truly become saints 'through the atonement of Christ, the Lord,' which, after all we can do, has the power to help us become 'as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, *full of love.*' (Mosiah 3:19; emphasis added)." (*The Broken Heart: Applying the Atonement To Life's Experiences*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1989, 18).

Moroni's Farewell

Moroni 10:34

34 And now I bid unto all, farewell. I soon go to rest in the paradise of God, until my spirit and body shall again reunite, and I am brought forth triumphant through the air, to meet you before the pleasing bar of the great Jehovah, the Eternal Judge of both quick and dead. Amen.

Jeffrey R. Holland states,

"Thus the Book of Mormon ends, flying as it were with Moroni, on the promise of the Holy Resurrection. (Rev 14:6) That is most fitting, for this sacred testament--written by prophets, delivered by angels, protected by God--speaks as one 'crying from the dead,' (vs.27) exhorting all to come unto Christ and be perfected in him, a process culminating in the perfection of celestial glory. In anticipation of that triumphant hour, God has set his hand for the last time to gather Jew, Gentile, Lamanite, and all the house of Israel.

"The Book of Mormon is his New Covenant memorializing that grand latter-day endeavor. All who receive it and embrace the principles and ordinances it declares will one day see the Savior as he is, and they will be like him. They will be sanctified and redeemed through the grace of his innocent blood. They will be purified even as he is pure.

They will be holy and without spot. They will be called the children of Christ." (*Christ and the New Covenant*. Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1997, 339).

V. Conclusions

We have been taught by both Mormon and Moroni, two of the Lord's most choice servants. Without their combined effort, we would not have the Book of Mormon. Due to their vision of the latter days, their words have even greater importance for us.

In Moroni, Chapter 7, Mormon admonishes us to become peaceable followers of Jesus Christ. It is through the application of faith-hope-charity in our lives that we become like Christ that we may have His Spirit to be with us. This will be especially important during the latter days. It will be imperative that we learn to recognize the promptings of the Spirit in our lives. All have been given the Spirit of Christ to help them discern between good and evil. Through our obedience to the principle of the gospel, we may also receive the gift of the Holy Ghost to be our constant companion.

We learned from Mormon regarding the principles of faith-hope-charity. Faith is a principle of power. It is through faith that miracles occur. Jeffrey R. Holland teaches us, "If a man has faith [in Christ and his atonement] he must needs [as a consequence] have hope [in the promise of the Resurrection, because the two are inextricably linked]; for without faith [in Christ's atonement] there cannot be any hope [in the Resurrection]" (*Christ and the New Covenant*. 334-335, bracket in original). Through faith and hope, we are led to charity as we truly become, through his grace, as Christ is. Our very nature having been changed.

In Moroni, Chapter 8, Mormon addresses the baptism of infants that has led to much dissention during his day. He inquired of the Lord, and received through revelation that little children are whole and are not capable of committing sin. (see Moroni 8:8.) The sin of Adam had been taken away from little children by Christ's atonement. Those who continue to hold to the necessity of infant baptism, once they have been taught the truth, are in danger of punishment themselves. It is a false doctrine, propagated by the devil and his servants to undermine the magnitude and purpose of Christ's atonement.

Moroni, Chapter 10, contains Moroni's final words of exhortation to the reader of the Book of Mormon. He speaks initially to the reader of the Book of Mormon and shares how they may learn the truth of his words. He states the gifts of God are for all who are faithful and obedient to obtain, however, they must seek after them. Each individual, we learn by modern revelation, has been given at least one gift to bless their life and those around them. He shares his insight regarding the importance of faith-hope-charity and the necessity of developing them in our lives for they will ultimately lead us to becoming like Christ.

Moroni testifies that he will be present at the judgment bar to stand as a witness that the words found in the Book of Mormon are true. He invites all to Come unto Christ and be clean. Not to touch that which is evil and is of the devil. As we put on our "beautiful garments" and are faithful and true to our covenants, we will be protected from the wickedness of the world in which we live. Our ultimate goal is to Come unto Christ and be saved in Him.

This concludes the final lesson of the Book of Mormon. I hope that you have gained much from your reading. I want each of you to know that my life has been greatly blessed by their preparation. I personally know, through the Spirit of the Holy Ghost, that the Book of Mormon is true. It is truly another witness, with the Holy Bible, of Jesus Christ and his gospel. May you continue to benefit from the knowledge you have gained and the spirit you have felt.

