

The Atonement Principle

This essay is a scriptural perspective and look at the atonement, the resurrection and meaning of God's NAME.

The literal translation of the word "atonement" means: "to be at-one with God." It therefore is the personal state of being at one with the nature of godliness. It is an active principle and requires constant vigilance at all times to maintain this integrity. ***The process of atonement begins when we begin to forsake our "sins" completely, then at-one-ment with God is felt, experienced and realized.*** We are truly at one with God when we completely give up all our carnal nature and all our false beliefs.

Every person regardless of where they are (pre-mortal world, mortality, spirit world or glory) has a disposition and potential to become divine and holy in their nature or to choose the opposite. No man can serve two masters, to do so is fulfilling the carnal nature within, which is laced with false beliefs.

In Jewish traditions the "Day of Atonement" is called "Yom Kippur" and is considered the most important holiday in the Jewish faith. This day marks the peak of the 10 Days of Awe, a period of self-examination and repentance.

The day of atonement is a day of cleansing one's thoughts, words and deeds, by bringing them into the divine realm of purity, virtue and holiness. Both ancient and modern Israel have many ceremonies and ordinances that symbolically teach the "atonement principle." I believe the real message of the scriptures in every religion is to teach and impress upon our minds and hearts the need to forsake our fallen and carnal natures and immerse ourselves completely into the divine and holy nature of godliness so that we may truly become "one" with God, in attribute and character! I think many religions have forgotten this simple faith connection to God, through godliness.

In reality, there is no ordinance or ceremony that can actually bring a person into the atonement principle of godliness, for they are all symbolic and teach deeper spiritual meaning on many personal levels. ***The atonement is a process of giving up individually all our fallen beliefs that damn us and all of our carnal nature that also damns us; these must be replaced by the attributes and character of***

godliness. This higher law is found in Lectures on Faith and teaches that all men have “authority by faith (alone) to lay hold upon eternal life, the richest boon of heaven because God is no respecter of persons, and that every man in every nation has an equal privilege” (Lectures on Faith 3:23) to become as God is by the “effects of faith” alone. This is an extremely hard concept to accept for most people. There are two aspects to the law, the letter and the spirit. God in his great condescension and mercy has given fallen man the “letter of the law” (outward ordinances and ceremonies) to point his mind and heart to the “spirit of the law” which is co-equal and co-eternal to all by the “effects of faith” alone. Christ taught the “higher law,” of divine love (salvation by the “effects of faith” alone) and was crucified for it. The prophet Joseph Smith also taught the “higher law” found in the character and attributes of godliness (salvation by the “effects of faith” alone) and he was murdered for it. The “affects” of faith are the “letter of the law” and come from outside us. The “effects of faith” is the “spirit of the law” and come from within us.

Hence, “fallen man,” who adheres to the “letter of the law” found in blood sacrifices and scapegoats of ancient Israel, which symbolically, is no different than the blood sacrifice of Christ in the Garden and on the cross. They both point to our personal sacrifice (found in the spirit of the law), symbolized by the bread and wine (or water) used in sacrament ordinances today. The “spirit of the law” teaches that we must sacrifice (give up) our false beliefs and our carnal nature for the divine nature of godliness. One of the purposes of scripture is to teach the atonement principle (found in the spirit of the law) through symbolism. **The “atonement” principle is the foundation of every ordinance, ceremony and priesthood taught in all religions.** The importance of the ordinances is to impress upon the mind and heart the absolute necessity of letting go of all our fallen false beliefs and carnal natures; for the divine nature of godliness and holiness of character! The struggle with both ancient Israel and modern Israel today, or any religion, is to recognize that we cannot serve two masters and be a godly people! (Matthew 6:24) This will become clear as we continue to learn through symbolism.

The reason “blood” was used anciently was to remind the initiate that a sacrifice is being made; it is to impress upon our minds and hearts the nature of “sin.” “Blood” is the symbol for sin and vice versa. “Sin” creates separation from God (or godliness of character). When an animal dies, its blood no longer flows. So, it

is with man. The symbolism teaches that when man completely dies from all his false beliefs and carnal nature it no longer flows in him, nor does it have a hold on him anymore, for he has created a “**new heart**” and a “**pure mind**” immersed in godliness and holiness, therefore he becomes one with God in attribute and character, which is further symbolized by the words “my spirit” is upon you or “receive the Holy Spirit or Ghost.” As man becomes “Holy” in attribute and character he moves forward in the principle of at-one-ment within himself, (this is the “effects of faith” working in him). God, who is an outward manifestation to us, is the “affect” of our faith in Him. It is important to understand the difference between the “effects of faith” and the “affect of faith.” Which one really saves us or changes us or Transforms us? The “effects of faith” is the “spirit of the law” and the “affects” of faith is the “letter of the law.” It is the “spirit of the law” that really, literally saves, changes and transforms us!

“Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a **new heart** and a **new spirit**: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Old Testament | Ezekiel 18:31). “For why will ye die?” What is the symbolism of “death?” It is giving up all our false beliefs and carnal nature!

“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A **new heart** also will I give you, and a **new spirit** will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put **my spirit** within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*.”
(Old Testament | Ezekiel 36:25 - 27).

“What? know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. **But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.** Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.
What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*
For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (New Testament | 1 Corinthians 6:16 - 20)

For ancient and modern Israel, the path to God always meant receiving a **“new name,”** which symbolized receiving the “character of godliness” that one was to immerse completely into, to experience atonement with God.

“And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a **new name**, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.” (Old Testament | Isaiah 62:2)

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh **[the fallen and carnal nature]** will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a **new name** written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.” (New Testament | Revelation 2:17)

“Him that overcometh **[the fallen and carnal nature]** will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, **[which is holiness of character]** and the name of the city of my God, *which is new* Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and *I will write upon him my new name [a divine and holy nature]*. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (New Testament | Revelation 3:12 - 13)

“And a white stone is given to each of those who come into the celestial kingdom, whereon is a **new name** [a divine and holy nature] written [in your continence], which no man knoweth save he that receiveth it. The **new name** is the key word.”
(Doctrine and Covenants | Section 130:11)

The essence of the **“new name”** is **“oneness with God,”** it is the feeling of unconditional love, a godly love that sanctifies the soul, producing a divine and holy nature. The **“new name”** should impress upon our minds and hearts the atonement principle, of oneness, and the mystery of it is to become “one” with it! **Only you can do this for yourself, hence the mystery!** No one can do it for you, no one can sacrifice your sins on an altar or on a cross and cleanse you from them, not even God, not even Christ! Every person must learn to repent of their own sins and learn to forgive, in order to become “one” with God and Christ! Hence, the symbolism found in all the acts and ordinances and ceremonies of religion. The

“letter of the law” points to the “spirit of the law,” which really saves us and sanctifies us.

“That they all may be **one**; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be **one** in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be **one**, even as we are **one**: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in **one**; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.” (New Testament | John 17:21 - 23)

“He that is joined unto the Lord is **one** spirit.”
(New Testament | 1 Corinthians 6:17)

“The **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”
(New Testament | Galatians 5:22 - 25)

“And without controversy great is **the mystery of godliness:**”
(New Testament | 1 Timothy 3:16) It is a “mystery” because only you can experience it!

“But thou, O man of God, ...follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.” (New Testament | 1 Timothy 6:11).

“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. **For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” (New Testament | 2 Peter 1:5 - 8).

When I take upon myself the name of Christ or call myself a follower of Christ, I have learned to take this very seriously. “Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2:19). **To take His name upon myself** is to clothe my thoughts, words and deeds in virtue and holiness of character. **To take His name upon myself** is to love as He loves, to be merciful and kind as He is. **To take His name upon myself** is to be **no respecter of persons** but of a godly

character as He is, knowing that by “faith alone” (the spirit of the law) any soul may lay hold upon eternal life and become as God is (Lectures on Faith 3:23).

Mankind, from the beginning has used the “NAME” of God for good and for evil. The “name” of God, or Christ throughout the centuries has been deluded and corrupted by many. Carnal man uses God’s and Christ’s name when angry, mad or upset. This is sad and shameful, that man has come so far as to not remember what the NAME of God and Christ really means and represents.

Christ’s and God’s name implies godliness of character.

Christ’s and God’s name implies oneness with our divine potential.

Christ’s and God’s name implies the need for constant repentance from our carnal nature.

Christ’s and God’s name implies the need for letting go of our false beliefs.

Christ’s and God’s name implies becoming one with Him in every divine and holy attribute.

Christ’s and God’s name implies thinking in holiness, walking in holiness and acting in holiness.

Most do not fully comprehend that the **“atonement”** means all this and more. The literal implication is to "be at one with godliness." Christ "fully" embraced this principle for himself; that is how He became **"one"** with His Father; this was honoring the **“will”** of His Fathers! **The “atonement” is the "price" that must be paid by every individual to become one with Him.** It is impossible for God or Christ to do it for you, for that would take away our agency. So, what do these words or metaphors from scripture mean:

“how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;
(New Testament | 1 Corinthians 15:3)

Christ died for the ungodly.
(New Testament | Romans 5:6)

while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us.**
(New Testament | Romans 5:8)

If we do not understand the NAME of CHRIST and what it really implies, then the **“blood”** sacrifices of ancient Israel will not correctly be understand, nor will the sacrifice of Christ and the **“blood”** he spilt and its meaning be correctly understood in the sacrament of today. **“How He died for us”** is a phrase that actually means,

“let our carnal nature die in us so that we may live a “new” life “in Christ,” or in other words, “in godliness and holiness!” Through symbolism, the principle of the atonement is taught! How to become **“one”** with God! There is only one way! For *“strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”* (New Testament | Matthew 7:14). *“but wide is the gate, and broad the way which leads to death, and many there be that travel therein”* (Book of Mormon | 3 Nephi 27:33).

That **“one way”** is simple, even for a child to understand. We **“repent,”** of all our sins, of all our ungodliness and put on a **“divine nature,”** in thought, in word and in deed, which, to use another scriptural metaphor, is the same as being **“born of God,” or “born again”** in a newness of life. There are so many metaphors, so many ordinances, so many priesthoods ceremonies, so many commandments, so many parables that all teach the very same lesson over and over again... but mankind continues to make a struggle out of it. ***Carnal man wants to “control” the process of salvation, create a religion that separates the saved from the unsaved. Carnal man thinks that if he controls the “letter of the law” he can control the “spirit of the law” and that is impossible!*** I understand the purpose of “organized religion,” in a world of chaos, sin and corruption. But even in “organized religion” you will find chaos, sin and corruption, **because mankind is continually serving two masters, and that does not work.** “No servant 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” (New Testament | Luke 16:13).

God and Christ have taught all to trust in Him only! “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding [meaning our fallen and carnal nature]. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (Old Testament | Proverbs 3:5 - 6).

The word “LORD” or “GOD” has become just a word for most, unless we take it to heart and not just give “lip” service to the word “God,” “Lord” or “Christ.” The real meaning of LORD or GOD is to learn to TRUST only in the divine attributes **of** godliness and holiness of character, for that is how Jesus became “the Christ,” and that is how “the Christ” became the Son of GOD. If **“godliness of character”** was the only religion for all people, it would not fail, ever! “Godliness” is the only true religion that is **“no respecter of persons,”** for it is principle based, and **all people have access to it innately!** But when mans ego gets into religion, he creates separation instead of “oneness,” division instead of atonement! I’m grateful for the deeper spiritual meaning of the NAME of God and that “pure religion” is not

“organized religion,” but “pure religion” is to keep oneself unspotted from the world and to feed and clothe the fatherless and widows in their affliction (James 1:27).

Scriptural metaphors have deep spiritual meaning. Every person will believe what they choose and the journey does not have to be confusing, it is simple and can be an upward spiral. I know that God and Christ as a person cannot remove sin from us, that is impossible. We have to apply the principles of repentance and forgiveness in our lives to have our sins remitted. We are punished for our own sins and not for Adam’s transgressions or sins (Article of Faith 1:2). God the person does not do this for us, that was Satan's plan. ***There is no "free" gift! "Freedom" always comes with a price. The "price" is giving up our fallen beliefs and carnal nature.*** The "gift of the Atonement" is a principle innate to all people... the “gift” has to be "opened" like any gift to be realized and perceived. To "open the gift" of the atonement is to become one with the gift, which is godliness of character! That is the secret, that is the mystery! Once you begin this process, you will begin to understand the "mystery" of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:26-29). Which is "Christ in you" Not the person but the attributes of godliness or Christliness in you (Ephesians 3:4; Colossians 4:3). "Christ’s name" is a metaphor and He is the literal example for becoming godly in our thoughts, words and deeds...this only happens when we personally repent and forgive ourselves and others. We must first apply the principle of repentance and let go of our fallen nature (our false beliefs) and carnal desires (or lusts of the flesh) and ***"put on" the "new man" of "divine nature" and become a "new creature" in Christ ("Christ" is the metaphor for godliness) all through the scriptures.*** This is the only way reconciliation can take place in our lives and we become ***one*** with Christ and Father, true friends forever! Christ, the person did not invent the atonement, He fulfilled it in His own life, as we must do to become ***one*** with Him. Hence, we are literally saved by the atonement of godliness and holiness of character as Christ was! Which is the “mystery” of Christ in you! Again, this is a "mystery" that many do not understand, because you have to “become” the mystery! (1 Timothy 3:15-16; D&C 19:8-22). A deeper meaning into the atonement reveals how literally we are all connected ***(through the same divine attributes)*** to every person and creature in creation, hence when one enters this dimension of the atonement principle it can be said "wherefore he (meaning Christ and you and I) suffered (let go of) the pain (of sin) of all men" (2 Nephi 9:20-24; D&C 18:11-12). No one in there fallen or carnal state can enter this realm of the atonement. But if you do enter this realm of the atonement principle you will understand and know what “the pain of all men” symbolizes, as Christ did. You will see the connection; you will really understand what it means, when He said: “Come follow me,” and “what

manner of men ought ye to be? Verily I say unto you, even as I am” (Luke 18:22; 3 Nephi 27:27) and if we become like Christ, we will understand perfectly “the pain of all men,” and the process that will absolutely remove that pain of sin (is called the atonement principle).

The Resurrection Principle

Now let’s explain how the “atonement” and the “resurrection” connect! They are not separate from each other, they are interwoven principles that connect to our obedience to (God) godliness of character. In other words, the resurrection is only for those who apply the principles of the atonement in their lives first. This is when it we truly become “free” from sin.

When we say the resurrection is a free gift to all men, what are we really saying? When our Spirit and body become resurrected in a Celestial, Terrestrial or Telestial State/Glory/condition, what is really taking place? There really is no such thing as a “free gift;” all types of “freedom” come with a price, let me explain.

To earn or receive a resurrection we must pay a price. Part of that price was paid when we chose the “plan of happiness” (letting go of our pride and fallen nature) in the pre-mortal world and became (past tense) **"one"** (in the atonement principle) with Christ and Father by being **"born again"** in godliness of character (by overcoming, repenting) of our fallen nature and embraced our divine nature **in our first estate!** This enabled us to receive a mortal experience (a body of flesh and blood). Satan and his 1/3 never overcame their "fallen nature" and remained prideful, angry, upset, mad and unforgiving in their first estate, therefore they could not become **"one"** with the "mortal element" as we have experienced because of our obedience in our first estate. This concept may be new to you. When we understand the symbolism of words and the metaphors woven into scripture “when the morning stars sang together, and **all the sons of God** (the obedient of God in our first estate) shouted for joy” when the foundations of the earth were laid (Job 38:4-7) the whole “plan of happiness” becomes more clear.

This same process is taking place here in mortality, our second estate. We become the “sons and daughters” of Christ (Mosiah 5:7-8) when we are **"born again," "born of God"** in godliness of character and continue on to the next phase, which will be a resurrection. Those who do not pay the price of being **"born again"** in godliness of character in the mortal element experience, will not resurrect until they are **"born again"** in godliness of character; that is how simple it really is (Philippians 2:8-12; Mosiah 27:31; D&C 76:109-111). **"For as in Adam all die,**

even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). Put in spiritual terms... "For as in Adam (meaning in our fallen and carnal nature) we all die, even so in Christ (meaning in our divine and holy nature we are all made alive." That is the meaning of "Adam" and "Christ," when we liken the scriptures unto ourselves. Hence there really is no free gift unless we pay the price through repentance and forgiveness (this is applying the divine attribute of mercy innate to all). It is then that the divine attribute of "justice" (innate to all) kicks in and enables us to progress into God's realm/glory with a resurrected body. There is more to these principles of the resurrection, for all the glories, that I will not go into right now, other than to say that it is our own "false beliefs" that damn us, when it comes to the degrees of glory. Something to ponder. The apostle Paul was clear on this, he said: "corruption" cannot inherit "incorruption." "Corruption" is when we are in our carnal and fallen nature. "Incorruption" is when we are in our divine and holy nature, therefore, the innate divine attributes of mercy and justice enables the principles of the resurrections to take place and work within us.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; **it is raised in incorruption**: It is sown in dishonour; **it is raised in glory**: it is sown in weakness; **it is raised in power**:

It is sown a natural body; **it is raised a spiritual body**. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit [He became "born again," "born into godliness of character"].

Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly [godly in nature].

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; **neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.** [we must be "born again"] (New Testament | 1 Corinthians 15:42 - 50)

What Paul is saying is that "corruption" (which symbolizes our carnal nature) cannot inherit "incorruption." (Incorruption symbolizes our "divine nature," at-one-ment with godliness, which is our redeemed and resurrected state).

"Corruption" and "incorruption" "cannot inherit" at the same time, the same space.

First “corruption,” which symbolizes our carnal nature, must be repented of and completely forsaken before we can receive a resurrection in any glory (which is the state of “incorruption.”)

I hope this helps in clarifying the principles of the resurrection and how it is tied to the principles of righteousness and holiness through the atonement principle that we must each immerse ourselves into personally to be worthy of a resurrection.

When the scriptures speak of being "free" it is referring to really knowing the "truth" (or immersing ourselves into the truth found in the attributes of godliness) which will make us "free" (John 8:32). True "freedom" is found only when one obeys the principles of the atonement, becoming one with godliness (or God) it is the same experience. Another way to look at it is to understand that the opposite of "freedom" is "bondage," which is some form of personal damnation. We damn ourselves when we choose to be prideful or immoral. The Prophet Joseph said: "Our own mind damns us" and in opposition to that, our own mind can exalt us, if we make the right choices through the principles of the atonement (godliness of character) by repenting completely.

Alma understood this principle of the atonement and its connection to the principles of the resurrection. Listen to the literal logic:

“But there is a law given [this is the divine innate law within each soul], and a punishment affixed, and a repentance granted; which repentance, mercy claimeth; otherwise, **justice** claimeth the creature and **executeth the law**, and the law inflicteth the punishment; if not so, the works of justice would be destroyed, and God would cease to be God. But God ceaseth not to be God, and **mercy claimeth the penitent**, and mercy cometh because of the atonement; and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead; and the resurrection of the dead bringeth back men into the presence of God; and thus, they are restored into his presence, to be judged according to their works, according to the law and justice.”

(Book of Mormon | Alma 42:22 - 23)

Follow the logic or literal meaning:

1. **“and mercy claimeth the penitent,”** in other words, mercy literally is the principle of repentance and forgiveness [of which all are innately endowed], therefore when we are “penitent” (repentant) mercy claims us. There is no other way, this is the law [and our divine potential]!

Now the next phrase:

2. ***“and mercy cometh because of the atonement,”*** in other words, to apply the “atonement” in our lives we must “repent of our carnal nature and as the word “atonement” literally means, we replace our carnal nature with our “divine nature” so that we can become “one with God” in attribute and character. There is no other way, this is the divine law within us all! (D&C 130:20-21).

Now the next phrase:

3. ***“and the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead,”*** in other words, if we follow this process, using our agency, steps 1-3, we receive a resurrection [this is the divine law with us all]. Those who do not follow this process will not receive a resurrection until they do. (Read D&C19:15-18) for greater clarity on this. We must pay a price to be resurrected, because “freedom” only comes by obedience to the principles of the atonement (by being one with god/God) and the principles of the resurrection, of mercy and justice in our personal lives. There is no other way, this is the law within us all! (D&C130:20-21).

Remember what the principle of the “atonement” means when reading the scriptures and incorporating its principles into our lives. Christ himself had to immerse himself into these same principles to fulfill His mission and become one with His Father through the attributes and principles of godliness. When reading the scriptures recognize the fact that “mercy” and “justice” are attributes of godliness innate to every person; we are all endowed with them, and must ***“act upon”*** them individually so that they work in our lives to bless us and bring us back into Gods presence.

“Mercy” is literally the principle of repentance and forgiveness!

“Justice” is literally the executer of the law, the principle of a just reward, either to our salvation or damnation, the choice is ours!

We are all endowed with agency, the ability to choose the thoughts and feelings which create our character. What kind of character we develop depends upon each person individually? This is the most important lesson that the Prophet Joseph taught in the restoration process! This is why the church had ***“Lectures on Faith”*** in the beginning of the restoration, and why they were called “The Doctrine of Christ;” (Lecture on Faith 1:1) because they instructed us in “how” to become like the Father and Christ in plain simple words, no symbolism was implied by or through ordinances. The Prophet Joseph Smith said that: “the Father and the Son...are just and holy beings; and that if they were lacking in one attribute (of

godliness) or perfection which they have, the glory which they have never could be enjoyed by them, **for it requires them to be precisely what they are in order to enjoy it** (Lectures on Faith 7:15-17). That is true of Them, and it is also true for all mankind. The prophet Joseph also said:

“The **first principle of the gospel is to know** for a certainty the character of God.” (WJS pgs., 340-362). “Few beings in the world understand the character of God and [therefor] do not comprehend their own character” (WJS pg. 356). “**My first object** is to find out **the character of the true God**” (WJS pg. 349) “There are very few who understand rightly the character of God” (WJS pg. 348). “If men do not comprehend the character of God, they do not comprehend themselves” (TPJS, pg. 343).

What happened to the “Lectures on Faith?” Why are they not the “Doctrine” of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints anymore, bound within our scripture covers? Is it because we have treated lightly the plain and simple truth of How to be a godly people through divine attributes alone? And so, they were removed and we were left with the **“lesser portion”** (Alma 12:10-11) of the word, symbolized by the “ordinances and ceremonies of the gospel, to remind us of the “truth” found only in a “godly character!”

“And therefore, he that will harden his heart, the same receiveth the **lesser portion** of the word; and he that will not harden his heart, to him is given the greater portion of the word, until it is given unto him to know the mysteries of God until he know them in full.

And they that will harden their hearts, to them is given the lesser portion of the word until they know nothing concerning his mysteries; and then they are taken captive by the devil, and led by his will down to destruction. Now this is what is meant by the chains of hell” (Book of Mormon | Alma 12:10 - 11).

Have we become a rebellious house in some ways? “Which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house” (Ezekiel 12:2). See LDS Bible Dictionary, the meaning of the word “Holiness.” Have we become like Ancient Israel in some ways? Yes!

“The Law of Holiness (Lev. 17–26) shows how the attempt was made by means of ceremonial observances to secure this holiness of character. The attempt failed because the later Jews observed the letter and neglected the spirit; they attached more importance to the ceremonial than to the moral; and the result was a lapse into formalism. But in the writings of the Prophets it is clearly laid down that the

value of worship in the eyes of God depends upon the personal character of the worshipper.” <https://www.lds.org/scriptures/bd/holiness?lang=eng&letter=H>

Our innate potential declares the truth if we have eyes to see and ears to hear and the courage to seek to understand and “assimilate” all the divine attributes that Lectures on Faith reveals; by immersing ourselves into the true character of God; as we do this, we are on the right path to overcoming our fallen and carnal natures and sanctifying ourselves, following the council of the Lord:

“Ye shall therefore **sanctify yourselves**, and ye shall **be holy**; for I *am* holy”
(Old Testament | Leviticus 11:44)

“Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall **be holy**: for I the LORD your God *am* holy.” (Old Testament | Leviticus 19:2)

Both the principles of the atonement and the principles of the resurrection are tied together through a godly “character.” Take away just one divine attribute from God’s character and He would cease to be God! And so, it is for man, for we could never become a god without our complete immersion/baptism into our divine character! That is how important the attributes of godliness are! If you analyzed and ponder all the teachings of Christ, his parables, his name, and all his commandments, they are all pointing our minds and hearts to the attributes of godliness so that we may become like Him. “This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you...Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you...He that abideth in me [His divine attributes], and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit” (John 15). **How does He abide in us?** It can only be through the attributes of godliness that we share together in the principle of being “one!” **And what is the fruit we must bring forth?** It is innate to all people regardless of race or religion, all have the same potential to **act upon** our divine fruit no matter who we are or where we are.

“the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth”
(New Testament | Ephesians 5:9)

“the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And **they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”
(New Testament | Galatians 5:22 - 25)

I marvel at this metaphor: ***“they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” Christ’s crucifixion is the symbol of how each of us are to “repent” of our own sins and bring ourselves into a new life of holiness.***

So how can or how does “God” abide in us? How does the atonement come to pass in our lives? How does the resurrection come to pass in our lives? It can only happen when we develop the same divine attributes of a godly character... there really is no other way! (Alma 38:9; Helaman 5:9). If we do not understand the meaning of His “Name” or understand the meaning of His “blood.” Then his Name and acts He performed are empty, and we are empty. To understand the symbolism of the “blood” and “sacrifice” in ancient and modern scripture, is to understand that the atonement must become an active principle in our daily lives and that the resurrection is the reward of overcoming our carnal and fallen natures as Alma teaches in (Alma 42:22-23).

“For behold, justice exerciseth all his demands, and also mercy claimeth all which is her own; and thus, ***none but the truly penitent are saved.***” (“saved,” meaning resurrected in a glory) (Book of Mormon | Alma 42:24). Other scriptural synonyms for resurrection and atonement are: redemption, redeemed, redeem and it is all connected to the “NAME” of Christ, which is an “active name,” an “active principle” to be applied in our individual lives for it to work, purify and sanctify. “For the Lord redeemeth none such that rebel against him [His divine nature] and die in their sins” (Book of Mormon | Mosiah 15:26). All must repent to receive a resurrection in any glory!

“I, the Lord, am bound when ye do what I say; but when ye do not what I say, ye have no promise.” (Doctrine and Covenants | Section 82:10)

The Principles found in the Name of God

This is a concept that has been forgotten. Most people who use God’s name do not see the covenant relationship we make with God, by just using His NAME. Any time the NAME, meaning the FATHER or JESUS CHRIST or the HOLY SPIRIT is used in our personal prayers or in congregational prayers, or in blessings over our food, or in ordinances and ceremonies, or in administering to the sick, or dedicating a gravesite, a temple, a chapel, a home, ourselves. The NAME carries with it a responsibility, a stewardship and a covenant! Did you know that? For example, when we end a prayer “in the name of Jesus Christ” we are committing ourselves to the attributes of godliness, that we might receive the blessings of the atonement and resurrection. His NAME literally means:

1. Be virtuous and pure in thought as He would be. (Positive Affirmation: I am virtuous with everyone including myself)
2. Be merciful (repentant and forgiving) as He would be. (I am merciful to all: feel it flowing in you, let it become you!)
3. Be just as He would be. (I am Just to all: feel it flowing in you, let it become you!)
4. Be perfect in love as He would be. (I am love: feel it flowing in you, let it become you!)
5. Be truthful as He would be. (I am truthful to all: feel it flowing in you, let it become you!)
6. Be honest as He would be. (I am honest to all: feel it flowing in you, let it become you!)
7. Be no respecter of persons as He would be. (I am respectful to all and non-judgmental: feel it flowing in you, let it become you!)

If we immersed ourselves into these divine attributes daily, (using positive affirmations for each one and really feel them flowing in and through us, and for everyone, in deep communication with our Father and Christ) our fallen and carnal natures would disappear! Again, when we use the NAMES of God in any capacity it carries with it a responsibility, a stewardship and a covenant. If this is not happening in your life, then make it happen! For example, the motto of the United States of America is **"In God We Trust."** This is suggesting to our minds and hearts to commit ourselves to the same personal responsibility and covenant to be "one" with God, (E Pluribus Unum, meaning **"from many, one,"** which is printed on all our coin and paper money). The "many" are to abide in Him (in these divine, holy attributes) becoming "one" with Him, hence, He is the "one" we, become "one" with! When presidents, magistrates and any person, places his hand on the Bible, it is yet another way, we commit ourselves to the same personal responsibility, stewardship and covenant, to immerse ourselves into Gods character and attributes and become **"one"** with Him.

As you see, the world in general has forgotten this sacred knowledge and commitment. If people around the world really thoughtfully and respectfully lived up to the name of God that they take in their lips in every religion, we would not be at war within ourselves or others, we would be moving into a millennial condition of obedience and peace. I really can't wait until we are **"One Nation Under God"** and we live its principles, for they are "inseparably connected" to the atonement and resurrection principles (D&C 93:33; 121:36), instructing us to **"abide in**

Christ,” (John 15:1-11) the only NAME that carries with it a covenant and a promise, if we choose to become **“one”** with Him in attributes and character!

This essay can be downloaded at the bottom of the “Home Page”ⁱ

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ⁱ www.MarriageAndPolygamy.com