

**Sacramento Meeting Talk—Suzan Lake**  
**October 27, 2019**

Pretend you and a friend are standing at the edge of a lake, watching the sun set. You say, "Oh, look. The sun is setting." Your friend, with great emotion says, "Can you believe the beauty that sunset painted across the sky? Those pinks and golden yellows take my breath away."

Both give information about the sunset. However, one is a fact, a truth simply stated while the other is full of feeling and emotion. A man can compliment his wife's meal by saying, "That was a very nutritious meal" as he walks away. A second man licks his lips, beams as he says to his wife, "That glorious meal makes me purr! The steak just melted in my mouth!" The first response, a fact, gives the wife information about the meal. The second description is full of feeling and touches the heart and soul of the second wife.

Meaning comes in both FACTS and FEELINGS. Lately I have been pondering how FACT vs. FEELING plays out in my own life, especially in my spiritual life. I've been thinking about this dichotomy in my own life all this week. Let me give you some examples.

- My baptism—fact (My sins would wash away, so I swore to get sins)
- My scripture reading—fact (Read 30 seconds. I did. No comprehension)
- Late church attendance—fact (I attended. Came late because I wanted to)

All three of these examples lacked positive emotional feeling. That led me to wonder why I felt no feeling to expand the facts. I have always been grounded in the church, so why didn't I have more feeling, more heart about my factual actions? Part of the answer lies in my immaturity and part in my shallow way of being obedient. How had I missed the MEANING the church had in my life and the depth of feeling I could have pondered.

These thoughts centered on the word MEANING and I remembered the strong impact the book, *Man's Search for Meaning* by Viktor Frankl, had on my life. Frankl a Jew and a psychiatrist who lived in Austria Arrested by Nazis. Lived in three concentration camps for over three years. Problems he faced:

Lack of food

Beatings for no reason

Physical problems: feet, emaciated

Typhus

Frankl then focused on himself and pondered what he had learned in those horrendous circumstances. He came to realize that his sufferings did not kill him but elevated him to a level of MEANING he had not experienced before.

Listen to some of his poignant discoveries about his experiences in camp and within himself.

- Forces beyond your control can take away everything you possess except one thing, your freedom TO CHOOSE how you will respond to the situation. You cannot control what happens to you in life, but you can always control what you will FEEL and DO about what happens to you.

- The consciousness of one's inner value is anchored in higher more SPIRITUAL THINGS, and cannot be shaken by camp life.

- It is this SPIRITUAL FREEDOM—which cannot be taken away—that makes life meaningful and purposeful.

- The truth—that LOVE is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Yes, the salvation of man is through LOVE and in LOVE.

- No one can become fully aware of the very essence of another human being unless he loves him.

Now we return to FACT vs. FEELING. Frankl believes that MEANING is a SPIRITUAL FEELING that we each must find within ourselves. Frankl may be in a concentration camp—FACT. But he discovers that that FACT does not define him. The FEELING of LOVE overshadows his surroundings in that brutal camp—LOVE for others and for himself. LOVE cannot exist without deep feelings that are SPIRITUAL. He told one example of the Nazi cook that he would talk to and that cook would lovingly scoop out Frankl's soup from the bottom of the pot so he could have the small potatoes and peas in his bowl. LOVE in a quiet way.

So now the segue to our lives—yours and mine. Especially our lives in the Church. I want to concentrate on the MEANING the Church and Jesus Christ has in our daily lives. How often do you live in the FACTS of the Church? That means you and I know the Joseph Smith story, we sustain a prophet, we go to meetings, we pay our tithing, we attend the temple, but we do these things without much conscious FEELING. The last two times I have attended the temple, I have CHOSEN to listen with my heart and soul to the words and have FELT more than I have for a long time. Other times I can remember sitting in a temple session and dissecting the art work on the walls instead of HEARING WITH MEANING the words presented about the Lord and His caring for us. That was easier than dedicating myself to learning to LOVE the Lord's patterns I have heard so many times. I have chosen to FEEL the FACTS about the gospel and to realize the meaning LOVE has in our worshipping Christ.

Christ is the center of our lives, not just a non-emotional FACT. He is the center of our FEELINGS, every day, every moment. His love sustains us when we FEEL Him and CHOOSE to make Him our MEANING, filled with our OVERT LOVE.

Listen to Matthew 22:36-40: Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt LOVE the Lord thy God with all thy HEART, and with all thy SOUL, and with all thy MIND. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt LOVE thy neighbour as thyself.

I ask, Do you love the Savior openly to yourselves every day? When you wake up in the morning, do you think about Christ before you look at your phone or before you turn on the TV? Do you FEEL your bonding with the Savior to let Him know He is your MEANING in life, or do you recognize Him as a FACT you remember mainly on Sunday?

When we LOVE the Lord, we immerse ourselves in the scriptures and in the Come Follow Me studies. We FEEL the prophets preaching about Christ and understand the LOVE that Christ has for us. We all know so many FACTS about Christ. Go home today and FEEL THE MEANING Christ has for you and pledge to LOVE Him openly and with a heart that causes tears.

This last General Conference in October began with the Saturday session flooding us with soul-stirring talks about Christ and how He is the center of our own personal universes. Notice the feeling of JOY that Christ brings to our lives:

#### QUOTES ABOUT CHRIST FROM GENERAL CONFERENCE OCTOBER 2019

**Elder Jeffrey R. Holland**: In spite of everything else this conference tradition may offer us, it will mean little or nothing unless we find Jesus at the CENTER of it all. To grasp the vision we are seeking, the healing that He promises, the significance we somehow know is here, we must cut through the commotion—joyful as it is—and fix our attention on Him.

Sisters and brothers, through the incessant din and drumbeat of our day, may we strive to see Christ at the CENTER of our lives, of our faith, and of our service. That is where true MEANING lies.

**Elder Terence M. Vinson**: We can FEEL enduring JOY when our Savior and His gospel become the framework around which we build our lives. However, it's so easy for that framework to become, instead, the things of the world, where the gospel sits as an optional extra or as simply attending church for two hours on Sundays.

Giving our all doesn't mean that we will be continually enveloped in blessings or always have success. But it does mean that we will have JOY. . . . So, the question for each of us is, are we also "committed" about the gospel? Because being half-hearted is not being "committed"! And God is not known for showering praise on the lukewarm.

**Stephen W. Owen**: Where do we find true spiritual nourishment? Most often, it is not trending on social media. We find it when we "press [our] way forward" on the covenant

path, “continually holding fast to the rod of iron.” **This means that we must deliberately take time each day to disconnect from the world and connect with heaven.**

**Elder D. Todd Christofferson:** “The JOY we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with **the focus of our lives.**

**“When the focus of our lives is on God’s plan of salvation ... and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel JOY regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. JOY comes from and because of Him.**

I believe that the ultimate “JOY of the saints” comes in knowing that **the Savior pleads their cause,** “and no one can conceive of **the JOY which [will fill] our souls [as] we [hear Jesus] pray for us unto the Father.**”

**Elder L. Todd Budge:** In a paradoxical way, **afflictions and sorrow prepare us to experience JOY if we will trust in the Lord and His plan for us.** . . . The good news of the gospel is not the promise of a life free of sorrow and tribulation but **a life full of purpose and MEANING—a life where our sorrows and afflictions can be “swallowed up in the JOY of Christ.”**

**Elder Neil L. Andersen:** “The JOY we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives.

**“When the focus of our lives is on God’s plan of salvation ... and Jesus Christ and His gospel, we can feel JOY regardless of what is happening—or not happening—in our lives. JOY comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all JOY. ...**

Go home and read these quotes and thank the Lord for guiding your life.

May I leave you with my testimony:

My heart is full of the love of Christ. I have learned to study and savor His words in a new and meaningful way and to think of Him before I make any kind of a mundane decision in my daily life. I am beginning to FEEL the Atonement in the most rudimentary way, and I have made a beginning. I am choosing to feel Christ instead of rehearsing only the facts I remember about Him. I am thankful to Joseph Smith for having the courage and direction to pray for and receive the Father and the Son for all of us. I know that this church is directed through the holy priesthood and that Christ is our head and heart. This church is the true and only path that leads to the Lord and Jesus Christ. I ask the Lord to bless me to center my life, thoughts, FEELINGS and behaviors in the life of Jesus Christ. I am thankful for the knowledge of His divine nature, for our bishopric, for our prophet, and the plan of salvation. My deep gratitude for the Lord’s love allows me to function on a spiritual, not just a FACTUAL, level. I am filled with love for this knowledge, and I say this in the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

## My Testimony:

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