

# Gospel Doctrine Lesson 42: "This Is My Gospel"

(3 Nephi 27-30, 4 Nephi 1)

**LESSON GOAL:** To help us understand the fundamental doctrines of the gospel of Jesus Christ and to teach us that living the gospel is the only way to true and eternal happiness.

What would you write if a friendly Christian publication invited you to prepare a one-page summary of the fundamentals of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints from your point of view?

## 1. The Savior commands Nephite disciples to call the Church after His name. He expounds His gospel.

**President Boyd K. Packer:** "Every prayer we offer is in His name. Every ordinance performed is in His name. Every baptism, confirmation, blessing, ordination, every sermon, every testimony is concluded with the invocation of His sacred name. It is in His name that we heal the sick and perform other miracles of which we do not, cannot, speak. In the sacrament we take upon ourselves the name of Christ. We covenant to remember Him and keep His commandments. He is present in all that we believe" ("The Peaceable Followers of Christ," *Ensign*, Apr. 1998, 64).

**Neal A. Maxwell:** "When the Lord used the designation 'true,' he implied that the doctrines of the Church and its authority are not just partially true, but true as measured by divine standards. The Church is not, therefore, conceptually compromised by having been made up from doctrinal debris left over from another age, nor is it comprised of mere fragments of the true faith. It is based upon the fullness of the gospel of Him whose name it bears, thus passing the two tests for proving his church that were given by Jesus during his visit to the Nephites. (3 Nephi 27:8)" (*Things As They Really Are*, 46).

**Joseph Fielding Smith:** "If a man fully realized what it means when he partakes of the sacrament, that he covenants to take upon him the name of Jesus Christ and to always remember Him and keep his commandments, and this vow is renewed week by week—do you think such a man will fail to pay his tithing? Do you think such a man will break the Sabbath day or disregard the Word of Wisdom? Do you think he will fail to be prayerful, and that he will not attend his quorum duties and other duties in the Church? It seems to me that such a thing as a violation of these sacred principles and duties is impossible when a man knows what it means to make such vows week by week unto the Lord and before the saints" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:346).

### Definition of His gospel:

- a. Jesus' submission to the will of the Father (3 Nephi 27:13)
- b. The Atonement (3 Nephi 27:14)
- c. Resurrection (3 Nephi 27:14–15)
- d. Judgment (3 Nephi 27:14–15)
- e. Repentance (3 Nephi 27:16, 19–20)
- f. Baptism (3 Nephi 27:16, 20)
- g. Faith in Jesus Christ (3 Nephi 27:19)
- h. Gift of the Holy Ghost (3 Nephi 27:20)
- i. Enduring to the end (3 Ne. 27:16–17, 19)

### 3 Ne 27:19 nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have WASHED THEIR GARMENTS IN MY BLOOD

Who would ever wash their clothes in blood? What stains are removed with blood? Unfortunately, the stains of sin cannot be cleaned with water. The only solution capable of removing the stain of sin is blood—but not just any blood, it must be the blood spilt by the Only-Begotten. Though our sins are as crimson, we can still put on white robes, if we have washed them, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:14).

Interestingly, it is us who must do the washing. We must be willing to remove our stained garments, soak them in Christ's blood, and then scrub out the stains, one by one. Christ can't do it for us. He has provided the amazing cleaning solution, but his sanctifying soap must be used in order for us to cleanse ourselves and enter into his rest. The scripture tells us that we use His soap when we exhibit faith, repentance, and faithfulness unto the end.

"We cannot cleanse our sin-stained lives by mere washing in the strong detergent of self-discipline. It requires a celestial cleanser, one which we cannot purchase for ourselves but is purchased for us by the grace of God—the blood of Christ." (McConkie, Millet, and Top, *Doctrinal Commentary on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 4, 180).

### Consider the phrase from 3 Ne. 27:7:

"Whatsoever we do should be in Christ's name."

On any given day, what would this mean if "whatsoever" we did was done in His name???

What would happen if in our morning prayers we said this:

"Today I offer up my day on the altar in the Name of Christ. Please guide me."

## 2. The Savior grants the desires of His twelve disciples. Three of the disciples choose to remain on the earth until His Second Coming.

The account in 3 Nephi 28 teaches about translated beings:

- **Translated beings never taste of death** or endure the pains of death (3 Nephi 28:7–8, 3 Nephi 28:38).
- When the Savior comes in His glory, they will be **“changed from mortality to immortality”** (3 Nephi 28:8).
- Except for sorrow they feel for worldly sins, they experience **no pain or sorrow** (3 Nephi 28:9, 3 Nephi 28:38).
- **They help people become converted to the Lord** (3 Nephi 28:9, 18, 23, 29-30).
- **They cannot be killed or harmed** in any way (3 Nephi 28:19–22).
- **Satan cannot tempt them** or have any power over them (3 Nephi 28:39).

They remain in a translated state until the Judgment Day when they will be resurrected, received into the kingdom of God

## 3. After years of peace, the majority of the people dwindle in unbelief and reject the gospel.

**4 Nephi 1:2—“There were no CONTENTIONS and no DISPUTATIONS among them.” NO PRIDE.**

Mormon outlines a pattern of decline, which should be a solemn warning to us:

- a. **Division and the creation of classes** (4 Nephi 1:20, 26, 35)
- b. **Pride and greed** because of riches; wearing of costly apparel (4 Nephi 1:23–25, 41, 43; 3 Nephi 27:32)
- c. **Churches** that professed to know Christ but **denied most of His gospel** (4 Nephi 1:26–29, 34)
- d. **People divide into social classes** (4 Nephi 1:26)
- e. **False churches** built up to help people get gain (4 Nephi 1:26–29, 41)
- f. **People did harden their hearts** (4 Nephi 1:31)
- g. **Persecution** of Christ’s followers (4 Nephi 1:29–34)
- h. **Parents taught children to reject the gospel** and belief in Christ (4 Nephi 1:38)
- i. **Wicked became more numerous** than the righteous (4 Nephi 1:40)
- j. **Righteous became proud** and sought things of the world (4 Nephi 1:43-45)
- k. **Secret combinations** and Gadianton conspiracy overran the land (4 Nephi 1:42, 46)

## 4. Conclusion

**Richard L. Evans:** "It is how we live, how we serve, how we teach our children, **what we do from day to day** that both **indicate** what we are and **determine** what we are; and all the theory and all the speculation, all the quoting of scripture, all the searching of the mysteries, and all the splitting of hairs, and all the knowledge of the letter of the law don't in the final and saving sense amount to very much **unless we live the gospel, unless we keep the commandments, unless we prove the principles, unless we live lives of effectiveness, sincerity, and service**" (CR, Apr 1966).

**Henry B. Eyring:** “The temptation to delay repentance comes not only at the end of the world as suggested by those scriptures but goes on throughout our lives. In youth we may have thought: ‘There will be time enough to worry about spiritual things just before my mission or before marriage. Spiritual things are for older people.’ Then, in the early years of marriage, the pressures of life, of jobs, of bills, of finding a moment for rest and recreation seem to crowd us so closely that delay in meeting obligations to God and family again seems reasonable. It is easy to think, ‘Perhaps there will be more time for that in the middle years.’ But the compression of time does not ease in the years that follow. There is so much to do, and time seems to shrink... Finally, **we are personally accountable** because the Lord has given us ample warning... Even the acceptance of personal responsibility may not overcome the temptation to believe that now is not the time to repent. ‘Now’ can seem so difficult, and ‘later’ appear so much easier. The truth is that **today is always a better day to repent than any tomorrow... The very faith we need to repent is weakened by delay**” (CR, Nov. 1999 *Ensign*).

**Spencer W. Kimball:** “[As a guide to becoming a Zion Society] First, we must **eliminate the individual tendency to selfishness** that snares the soul, shrinks the heart, and darkens the mind... Second, we must cooperate completely and **work in harmony one with the other**. There must be unanimity in our decisions and unity in our actions... Third, we must **lay on the altar [of] sacrifice whatever is required by the Lord**. We begin by **offering a ‘broken heart and contrite spirit.’** We follow this by **giving our best effort in our assigned fields of labor and callings**. We learn our duty and execute it fully. Finally **we consecrate our time, talents, and means** as called upon by our file leaders and as prompted by the whisperings of the Spirit” (*Conference Report*, Apr. 1978).

**Ted Gibbons:** “The tragic ending of 4th Nephi sends a solemn warning across the centuries to those of us who long to establish Zion in our own communities. **After decades of undiluted righteousness, the decline began. And where did it begin? In the same spot where the ascension began—in the hearts of the people.** We know that even the in the Millennium men will ultimately begin to deny their God. (see D&C 29:22.) Since we know that Lucifer is the Emperor of erosion, **let this be our determination:**

*The departure from Zion will not begin with me.  
I will become pure in heart and I will remain pure in heart. I will give all of my heart to Christ.  
I will walk in the commandments of the Lord. I will be filled with the love of God,  
and I will live in unity with those around me.*

**WHAT IF WE TREATED PRIDE THE SAME WAY WE TREATED ANTHRAX?**

**---An immediate evacuation of all surrounding areas.**

**---A complete examination and treatment to those possibly infected.**

**---Warnings and a call for vigilance to all other places that could be in danger.**

**--A federal investigation of the incident with criminal charges even for "fake anthrax."**

***Which is ultimately more deadly?????***