

December 9–15: Moroni 7–9, “May Christ Lift Thee Up”

This weeks reading assignment includes a sermon delivered by Mormon and two epistles from Mormon to Moroni

The Light of Christ

Mormon tells us one way to judge if something come from God or if it is evil

Moroni 7:12-15

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.

14 Wherefore, take heed, my beloved brethren, that ye do not judge that which is evil to be of God, or that which is good and of God to be of the devil.

How can we evaluate a teaching or activity to determine if it is from the devil or from God?

Joseph B. Wirthlin

"Two mighty forces are pulling in opposite directions. On the one hand is the power of Christ and his righteousness. On the other hand is Satan and the spirits who follow him.... We can know which one to follow because God has given everyone the Spirit of Christ to know good from evil and to protect themselves from sin." (CR, April 1991)

Moroni 7:15-19

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 as 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.

17 But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.

18 And now, my brethren, seeing that ye know the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ, see that ye do not judge wrongfully; for with that same judgment which ye judge ye shall also be judged.

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.

What gift is given to everyone to be used to judge good from evil?

(Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil the light by which ye may judge, which light is the light of Christ search diligently in the light of Christ that ye may know good from evil)

Richard G. Scott

"The ability to have an unsettled conscience is a gift of God to help you succeed in this mortal life. It results principally from the influence of the Light of Christ on your mind and heart. The Light of Christ is that divine power or influence that emanates from God through Jesus Christ. It gives light and life to all things. It prompts all rational individuals throughout the earth to distinguish truth from error, right from wrong. It activates your conscience. Its influence can be weakened through transgression and addiction and restored through proper repentance. The Light of Christ is not a person. It is a power and influence that comes from God and when followed can lead a person to qualify for the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Ghost." (CR, Oct. 2004)

Faith

Mormon outlines the manner that the Father uses bring to pass the covenants that He has made to the children of men

Moroni 7:21-22,31-32

21 And now I come to that faith, of which I said I would speak; and I will tell you the way whereby ye may lay hold on every good thing.

22 For behold, God knowing all things, being from everlasting to everlasting, behold, he sent angels to minister unto the children of men, to make manifest concerning the coming of Christ; and in Christ there should come every good thing.

31 And the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance, and to fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.

32 And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the covenants which he hath made unto the children of men.

How do ministering angels “do the work of the covenants of the Father”?

(call men unto repentance
by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord
prepare the way among the children of men)

Who do you think the “chosen vessels” are who receive the word of Christ from the ministering angels?

Marion G. Romney

“In each succeeding gospel dispensation, it has been likewise revealed to ‘chosen vessels of the Lord’ that is, to his prophets.” (CR, Oct. 1978)

What responsibility is given to these “chosen vessels”?

(that they may bear testimony of him)

How does this prepare the way for us to develop faith in Christ?

(that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts)

2 Nephi 32

3) Angels speak by the power of the Holy Ghost; wherefore, they speak the words of Christ...

5) For behold, again I say unto you that if ye will enter in by the way, and receive the Holy Ghost, it will show unto you all things what ye should do.

Miracles are tied directly to faith

Moroni 7:37-39

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.

38 For no man can be saved, according to the words of Christ, save they shall have faith in his name; wherefore, if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also; and awful is the state of man, for they are as though there had been no redemption made.

39 But behold, my beloved brethren, I judge better things of you, for I judge that ye have faith in Christ because of your meekness; for if ye have not faith in him then ye are not fit to be numbered among the people of his church.

Why is it impossible for us to have any hope of being saved unless we have faith in Christ?

(no man can be saved... save they shall have faith in his name
awful is the state of man, for they are as though there had been no redemption made)

Hugh Nibley

“If men insist that there is no redemption, then, sure enough, ‘they are as though there had been no redemption made’. ‘If these things have ceased,’ says [Mormon] speaking of gifts of the Spirit, ‘wo be unto the children of men, for it is because of unbelief, and all is vain.’ This is no mere figure of

speech... and those who insist that all is vain are quite right.... Does God cease to do miracles? Indeed he does, ‘and the reason why he ceaseth to do miracles among the children of men is because that they dwindle in unbelief’ (Mormon 9:20). Anyone who says there are no miracles, therefore, can quote Mormon to prove that he is right.” (Since Cumorah, pg. 401)

Spencer W. Kimball

"The Lord will not force himself upon people; and if they do not believe, they will receive no visitation. If they are content to depend upon their own limited calculations and interpretations then, of course, the Lord will leave them to their chosen fate." (CR, Oct. 1966)

Hope

Mormon teaches about the spiritual blessings that come from hope

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.

How do we obtain the hope we need to “enter into the rest of the Lord”?

(followers of Christ)

When can we begin to receive the realization of this hope?

(from this time henceforth until ye shall rest with him in heaven)

Howard W. Hunter

“I promise you in the name of the Lord whose servant I am that God will always protect and care for his people. We will have our difficulties the way every generation and people have had difficulties. But... when we have faith in God we can hope for a better world—for us personally, and for all mankind. The prophet Ether taught anciently, ‘...hope cometh of faith, maketh an anchor to the souls of men, which would make them sure and steadfast (Ether 12:4.)’. (“An Anchor to the Souls of Men”, Ensign, Oct.1993)

What is an outward sign of those who are blessed with hope?

(because of your peaceable walk with the children of men)

Mormon teaches how faith, hope, and charity are tied together

Moroni 7:40-44

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.

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

44 If so, his faith and hope is vain, for none is acceptable before God, save the meek and lowly in heart; and 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.

What can help our faith grow?

(How is it that ye can attain unto faith, save ye shall have hope)

What can help our hope grow?

(if a man have faith he must needs have hope; for without faith there cannot be any hope)

What is needed to develop faith and hope?

(he cannot have faith and hope, save he shall be meek, and lowly of heart)

What helps charity to develop and grow?

(meek and lowly in heart, and confesses by the power of the Holy Ghost that Jesus is the Christ)

Dieter F. Uchtdorf

“Faith, hope, and charity complement each other, and as one increases, the others grow as well. Hope comes of faith, for without faith, there is no hope. In like manner faith comes of hope, for faith is 'the substance of things hoped for.'

“Hope is critical to both faith and charity. When disobedience, disappointment, and procrastination erode faith, hope is there to uphold our faith. When frustration and impatience challenge charity, hope braces our resolve and urges us to care for our fellowmen even without expectation of reward. The brighter our hope, the greater our faith. The stronger our hope, the purer our charity.

“The things we hope for lead us to faith, while the things we hope in lead us to charity. The three qualities - faith, hope, and charity - working together, grounded on the truth and light of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ, lead us to abound in good works.” (CR, Oct. 2008)

Charity

Lets read some of the blessings and attributes of charity

Moroni 7:45-48

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, 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.

48 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, 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.

In verse 47, how does Mormon define charity?

(the pure love of Christ)

Dallin H. Oaks

"We are challenged to move through a process of conversion toward that status and condition called eternal life. This is achieved not just by doing what is right, but by doing it for the right reason—for the pure love of Christ. The Apostle Paul illustrated this in his famous teaching about the importance of charity. The reason charity never fails and the reason charity is greater than even the most significant acts of goodness he cited is that charity, 'the pure love of Christ', *is not an act but a condition or state of being*. Charity is attained through a succession of acts that result in a conversion. *Charity is something one becomes.*" (CR, Oct. 2000)

What must we do if we want to make charity a part of our life?

(pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love, which he hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of his Son)

Bruce C. Hafen

“We apparently cannot develop a complete and permanent Christlike love for other people on our own, even though we must qualify as ‘true followers of his Son’ in order to receive this love.... Charity in its full-blown sense is ‘bestowed upon’ Christ's righteous followers. Its source, like all other blessings of the Atonement, is the grace of God...

“The purpose of charity, however, is not merely to cause a proper motivation for charitable acts toward other people - though that is of course one important result. The ultimate purpose is to make Christ's followers like him.” (The Broken Heart, pg. 196)

Mormon teaches that little children are alive in Christ and don't need to be baptized

Moroni 8:10-12

10 Behold I say unto you 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.

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!

It's a great blessing that the Book of Mormon teaches so much about baptism

Mormon uses this occasion of talking about children to teach us more about charity

Moroni 8:16-17

16 Wo be unto them that shall pervert the ways of the Lord after this manner, for they shall perish except they repent. Behold, I speak with boldness, having authority from God; and I fear not what man can do; for perfect love casteth out all fear.

17 And I am filled with charity, which is everlasting love; wherefore, all children are alike unto me; wherefore, I love little children with a perfect love; and they are all alike and partakers of salvation.

What is an attribute that we can be blessed with if we have “perfect love”?

(for perfect love casteth out all fear)

Neal A. Maxwell

“We are told that ‘perfect love casteth out fear. For all of us who still have some fears, how can this really occur?

“If our love of God is sufficiently deep, then we will be sufficiently assured

of His enveloping loving-kindness. With this perspective, our fears can shrink. Dread can dissolve. Additionally, there need be no ultimate fear for mankind's future solely because of proximate circumstances, vexing and besetting as the latter may be.

“Amid our ‘small moment,’ we can know that what we are passing through can be ‘for [our] good’ (D&C 122:4,7). We thus love God sufficiently to trust in His perfect love for us even when we do not know the full meaning of the difficult moment.” (That Ye May Believe, pg. 57)

Mormon tells us some things we must do to obtain faith, hope, and charity

Moroni 8:24-26

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.

25 And the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh 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.

What is the process Mormon outlines for us to be “[filled] with hope and perfect love”?

(the first fruits of repentance is baptism; and baptism cometh by faith
fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins
remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart
meekness and lowliness of heart cometh the visitation of the Holy Ghost
Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love
love endureth by diligence unto prayer)

Alma tells us something similar

Alma 13:28-29

28) But that ye would humble yourselves before the Lord, and call on his holy name, and watch and pray continually, that ye may not be tempted above that which ye can bear, and thus be led by the Holy Spirit, becoming humble, meek, submissive, patient, full of love and all long-suffering;

29) Having faith on the Lord; having a hope that ye shall receive eternal life; having the love of God always in your hearts, that ye may be lifted up at the last day and enter into his rest.