

Lesson 48: 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

Judge Between Good and Evil

Mormon judges the church members whom he is addressing to be righteous

Moro 7:3-6

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.

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.

How does Mormon judge that the those whom he is addressing are peaceable followers of Christ?

(I judge these things of you because of your peaceable walk with the children of men by their works ye shall know them; for if their works be good, then they are good also)

Mormon tells them how he is able to judge their works to be good

Moro 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.

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.

We know that good comes from God and evil comes from the devil, but....
How can we determine that what we are doing, or actions we are considering,

are good or evil?

(it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil)

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)

The Light of Christ Helps Us Judge

Mormon teaches us about the Spirit of Christ

Moro 7:16-19

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 ability does Light of Christ give to everyone?

(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)

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 a pattern we can use to help us develop faith in Christ

Moro 7:29-32

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.

30 For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness.

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.

What is the pattern Mormon outlines so “that the residue of men may have faith in Christ”?

Mormon is talking about ministering angels and states:

(the office of their ministry is to call men unto repentance,... by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord)

Ministering angels reveal the truth to people who have been chosen as witnesses of God

(that they may bear testimony of him)

These witnesses testify of the truths they have learned...

(by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ)

which enables their listeners to exercise faith

(that the Holy Ghost may have place in their hearts, according to the power thereof)

That faith opens their hearts and unlocks the power of the Holy Ghost in their lives.

Boyd K. Packer

"The Twelve Apostles 'are called to be... special witnesses of the name of Christ in all the world' (D&C 107:23). Each carries that certain witness that Jesus is the Christ.... Mormon told us that '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.' Mormon further explained that angels accomplish their ministry 'by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.'...

"There is a power of discernment granted 'unto such as God shall appoint... to watch over [his] church' (D&C 46:27). To discern means 'to see'.

"President Harold B. Lee told me once of a conversation he had with Elder Charles A. Callis of the Quorum of the Twelve. Brother Callis had remarked that the gift of discernment was an awesome burden to carry. To see clearly what is ahead and yet find members slow to respond or resistant to counsel or even rejecting the witness of the apostles and prophets brings deep sorrow." (CR, Oct. 2005)

Moro 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.

What great blessing totally depends on us having 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; if faith fulfills its own prophecies so does unbelief, and those who insist that all is vain are quite right; if men reject the gospel they will find everywhere powerful confirmation for their unbelief, and undeniable evidence to support their contention that the human predicament is hopeless. 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

Moro 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.

If we have hope when will we “enter into the rest of the Lord”?

(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 with the gospel of Jesus Christ, you have every hope and promise and reassurance. The Lord has power over his Saints and will always prepare places of peace, defense, and safety for his people. 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 (and he knew something about troubles): ‘...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)

Lets read about how faith, hope, and charity are tied together

Moro 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 us receive and grow in charity?

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

It is clear that faith, hope, and charity all build from, and strengthen each other

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

Moro 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

Moro 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

Moro 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.

Why does Mormon state that he is not afraid of what man can do?

(for perfect love casteth out all fear)

This is another attribute of charity

Neal A. Maxwell

"We are told that 'perfect love casteth out fear' (1 John 4:18; Moroni 8:16). 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

Moro 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.