

The Branch Newsletter

December

2000

Zion's Outpost of the Church of Jesus Christ
6300 Tarrytown Park City, KS 67219

Central Missouri State University is the home of many Restoration youths while obtaining an education. There are 50 or more students meeting together for fellowship and service at the university located in Warrensburg, Missouri. Eleven of these college students traveled to Zion's Outpost for a weekend of service, fun and worship. They visited on November 18 and 19 and were accompanied by Rob Bird.



After arriving they enjoyed a meal with some of the saints here. the next several hours were spent re-painting the walls in the basement. this was a long overdue project that has really improved the appearance of the basement.

Later that evening the youth met with families of the church at the KGE gymnasium for volleyball, basketball, pizza and an indoor campfire-type worship.

The students provided ministry for the congregation on Sunday morning at the 11:00 am service. Several of them gave testimonies of their walk with Christ. They also provided ministry

through song and instrumental music. It was an excellent time of encouragement and worship.

Thanksgiving Dinner was served at the potluck following the service. With the willing help of these students, very little food was left over and everyone had lots to eat.

The Operation Christmas Child shoe box drive was bolstered by the 19 shoe boxes contributed by the members of Zion's Outpost. These shoe boxes will join millions of others that will be distributed to children across the world. Thank you for your generosity and care.

Operation Mossy Foot is a new project to us. It recently came to the attention of Sister Burford. I will let Sister Pam Burford describe the mission of this effort:

"I was reading an article to the kids for devotions this morning from the Sept/Oct issue of Elisabeth Elliot's newsletter. She writes:

'Our friend Betty Wagner of Wayfarers Ministries, Inc. has alerted us to the great need for socks, new or used, any color, thick or thin, for patients in Ethiopia who are suffering from a

disease called Mossy foot, which comes from going barefoot. Pictures show hideously swollen feet, some with small warty nodules, others which remind one of elephants' feet. If socks are new, it is best to wash them. So far sixteen patients have been taught to make shoes. They can carry on the trade in their villages. Each one needs a set of tools, which costs \$410. As possible, tools and leather are being supplied and subsidized. It is planned to have a rotating stock of leather. Surgery runs about \$100 per patient, and now all are being cured. Thank you for helping and praying.'

I suggested to our kids that they could each find at least one pair of socks in their drawers that they would like to contribute. But I got to thinking a little later that I would like to extend this invitation to the Saints here."

Look for announcements about sock collection in the Sunday bulletin.

Many of the branch youth attended weekend retreats at the end of October and early November. These were held at the campground in Odessa, MO.



UPCOMING EVENTS

- December 2 Department Head Budget Planning meeting at 9:00 am at the church
- December 3 Advent Worship with Women's Department: 6:30 pm
- December 10 Branch Budget Meeting: 5:00 pm
- December 24 Christmas Worship at 11:00 am

The Virgin Mary, . . . being obedient to His word, received from an angel the glad tidings that she would bear God. – St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*.

December 2000: Charity Scripture Calendar Reading Assistant

Below are brief comments and impressions about the daily scripture portions for each day of the worship calendar. I wanted to be able to show why these scriptures were selected and what they meant to me. Perhaps this will assist you in your daily study. – GRW

DECEMBER 1 1 Timothy 1:5

Every commandment of God is designed to develop within us charity. Thus, when we act in pure love to one another, we are fulfilling all the commandments of God. Try looking for the seeds of charity in every passage you read and every act that you perform. When we act contrary to the principle of charity we are acting in sin.

DECEMBER 2 John 3:16

The ultimate signature of charity is a self sacrificing love for others. God has demonstrated this perfect love for us in the humble and magnificent death of Jesus Christ on the cross. What is the charitable response to such an act of love? It is to believe that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, including you and I (and our neighbors and enemies).

DECEMBER 3 1 John 4:9, 10

Charity was shown to us in the atonement of Jesus Christ. It was the first showing of that love to us. Without the cross we could not know charity. It would be impossible for us to know or understand love without the mercy of Christ. He first loved us.

DECEMBER 4 1 John 4:11, 12

Love one another because God first loved us. Having faith (believing in God) is equated with charity. If we believe that God died for us, then we must love one another. This devotion to serve one another in love is the testimony of the love of God living in us.

DECEMBER 5 Matthew 22:35-38

When Paul wrote his letter to Timothy (1 Timothy 1:5) he simply was restating what Jesus had spoken during his ministry. Love towards God and love for each other is the keeping of every law of God. The Mosaic Law had to do with relationships

between the people of Israel and God, their neighbors, the strangers among them and the Gentiles. In every aspect of their lives, the people of God were to honor all these relationships as a way of honoring the love which God had shown to them. So charity is obedience, faith, service and kindness.

DECEMBER 6 1 John 4:7, 8

Love is the fruit and testimony of our knowledge of God. If we have love for one another and live in love, we can know that we are living in the presence of God. The absence of this love means that we do not know our God. If that is the case, we must repent and call on God to cleanse us and fill us with his love (his presence).

DECEMBER 7 Alma 5:39

Although not specifically stated, Alma was calling the people to charity. Compare this list with the descriptions of charity in 1 Corinthians 13 and Moroni 7. It is plain that Alma is describing the perfect love of God operating in each life. Charity is thus very practical, down to earth and useful in our daily life.

DECEMBER 8 Romans 12:3

Every person is given gifts and duties as a part of the body of Christ. Charity keeps us in balance by turning our hearts to honor the work that each one is given to do. We honor others by prayer, encouragement and receiving with thanksgiving the labor they perform according to the grace of God given to them. In so doing, we are kept from pride and haughtiness.

DECEMBER 9 Romans 12:9

Dissimulation means to disguise or feign. Love that is feigned is faked. It is not real love, but something else dressed up to look good but it is a fake inside. Charity is unfeigned love. It is not a show put on to look good or to avoid hurting someone's feelings. It is a heartfelt, true bond of fellowship where the benefit of others is uppermost in the mind of the saint of God. Just so we understand, Paul adds, abhor what is evil and cling to the good. thus love is pure and genuine.

DECEMBER 10 Mosiah 1:48, 49

Mosiah loved his people with all of his heart. In no way did he attempt to take advantage of them

or make them do for him what he could and ought to do for himself. He had learned that the key to good leadership is service. His example was God, the Father. Mosiah learned from God's example and word that by serving others he was fulfilling the will of God in his life. Loving others pleased God and served the Lord. This is still true today.

DECEMBER 11 Romans 13:9

In this passage, Paul was reviewing some of the basic commandments of God. He concluded by saying that any other commandment is briefly comprehended by loving your neighbor as yourself. In other words, Paul said that all of the law can be summarized by this short phrase. We could also say that if there is any question what ought to be done, just remember to love your neighbor as yourself.

DECEMBER 12 Mormon 4:94

Living wisely requires that we keep and obey the commandments and will of God. Charity, because it is the end of the law, would be the ultimate act of wisdom. Pride, lusts and other temptations lead away from charity to selfishness. Keeping from temptation and living wisely are elements of charity.

DECEMBER 13 Colossians 3:12-14

Charity is the outward garment of the saint of God. It is the identifier of those who are the true followers of God. Paul writes that we must choose charity, like putting on a garment. If we choose charity then we must act in certain ways that are consistent with Christ. Identifying with Christ in charity means we adopt the code of his conduct. This is similar to the demands on a person who wears the uniform of a country in the military. Wearing the uniform requires certain behaviors. Charity is the uniform of the Christian and requires behavior (meekness, forgiveness, humbleness, etc) consistent with the one whose name we bear.

DECEMBER 14 1 Corinthians 13:1-3

These opening verses of chapter 13 have their context in the previous chapter (remember, Paul did not write in chapters). He has just finished a discussion of spiritual gifts. He finishes speaking about these gifts with the admonition to seek the best gifts. In this chapter he identifies three, faith, hope and charity. Of these charity is the chief or best gift. Without charity all of our good deeds are of no

eternal value. We may garner the praise of men and bolster our self esteem through these deeds, but without charity they are worthless. It is like salt to food, color to photography, icing to cake. Charity is the key to true service.

DECEMBER 15 1 Corinthians 13:8

Charity never fails. Everything else, even good and profitable things like prophecy will one day fade away, but charity will never go away. It endures because it is the very nature of our God. If we have charity, we are of God and God is in us and we too will endure even as our Lord lives eternally.

DECEMBER 16 Moroni 10:15

Charity is closely linked to faith and hope. It is the capstone of a life of faith and hope. They are the necessary foundation upon which charity is established. To appear before the throne of God and remain in peace requires charity. Otherwise, we must surely be cast away. Celestial glory is being filled with charity because charity is God.

DECEMBER 17 John 13:34, 35

Jesus wants his disciples to be identified with charity. So often Christians are known for what they are against or their infighting. Even the disciples were bickering amongst themselves not long before Jesus spoke these words. The fellowship of Christians must be marked by love for each other. This is to be a major witnessing tool. It is to be our identifier to the non-Christian world. It will be the mark of Zion.

DECEMBER 18 Moroni 7:50

Charity and the testimony of Jesus Christ are gifts of the Holy Ghost. They do not occur independently of one another. To have charity is to have the testimony of Jesus. These arise out of meekness and lowliness which are also the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of one who has entered into the covenant of Christ by faith, repentance and baptism (see Moroni 8:29). These gifts cannot come unless a person is willing to come to the Father through Jesus Christ, or in other words, to enter in at the gate.

DECEMBER 19 Galatians 5:22

The apostle Paul understood many things

about charity. His testimony agrees with Mormon. charity is a gift of the Holy Spirit of God. It does not appear alone in the life of the true believer, but it is the best of the gifts that the Lord gives to his children.

DECEMBER 20 2 Nephi 11:106-109

The stark difference between the life of charity and selfishness is plainly shown in this passage. Nephi states that without charity no one can enjoy Zion. The lack of charity disqualifies one from being a part of Zion. If a person has charity he will work for the welfare of Zion. Without charity each person seeks his own welfare. In fact, it makes a person the enemy of Zion, for only charity keeps the laborer in Zion from perishing. All who fight against Zion will be destroyed.

DECEMBER 21 Ether 5:29

Faith, hope and charity will bring a person to God. He is the fountain of all righteousness. But no person may enjoy these things without first having their weaknesses exposed to them by God. In this all men and women are equal, whether Jew or Gentile. Thus the need for revelation (showing our weakness and God's greatness), repentance and humility in the process of receiving the gift of charity.

DECEMBER 22 3 Nephi 14:2, 3

Not all of the Book of Mormon is written for the descendants of Jacob. Some of it was written specifically with us in mind. This passage is definitely one of those. It calls us to repentance and to come unto Christ. This calling is for the intent that we may have the gift of the Holy Ghost and thus charity. Charity begets charity and labors so others may have charity.

DECEMBER 23 1 Peter 4:8

Peter exhorts us to have fervent charity. He was one of those disciples striving for position in the kingdom of God and received the rebuke of Christ through the washing of feet.. Jesus responded to their striving with charity and thus rebuked them. Now Peter knows that their striving and jealousy were sins. All sin is selfish. Peter then, exhorts us not to dabble in charity, but to have fervent charity.

DECEMBER 24 Moroni 7:52

Remember Peter's call to fervent charity

yesterday? Mormon follows us with a plea to cleave to charity. This means to hang on to it with all your might. Only charity will allow us to have the confidence of eternal rest. Charity is the pure love of Christ. It endures because Christ is eternal.

DECEMBER 25 Section 85:38c

On Christmas we remember the birth of Jesus Christ. His advent paved the way for us to know charity. His gift to us is the mantle of charity. It is the wedding garment. No greater gift could be given to anyone else than to have charity one for another. In a sense putting on the garments of charity is receiving and giving a gift at the same time.

DECEMBER 26 Matthew 25:32-41

This is a familiar scripture. It describes the fruit of charity. Charity serves others to their benefit. It serves without any thought except that glory might be given to God. It is not a forced response and not one calculated to do anything but to minister to a need. It is often out of sight and quietly given. Yet to the Lord it is a beautiful gift that he counts as given directly to him. Charity is a beautiful thing of inexpressible quality.

DECEMBER 27 1 Corinthians 13:13

Faith hope and charity are the greatest of the spiritual gifts bestowed upon the faithful followers of Christ. Among these, the greatest is charity. Charity encompasses all of the gifts of God and it is the fulfillment of everything Jesus expects of us. We were created in the image of God. Charity is the restoration of that first image and is the reason Jesus went to the cross.

DECEMBER 28 Philippians 4:8, 9

Paul calls us to action. Charity is the design of God. It is the chief goal of holiness. Nothing is more virtuous or lovely than charity. If that is our goal, our hope and if it consumes our thoughts and drives our activities, the God of peace will attend us.

DECEMBER 29 1 Corinthians 16:14

All that we do ought to be done within the framework of charity. All that Jesus has done has been done out of charity. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. There is no greater pattern for us to emulate. We do this by reliance on the living Word of God each day.

DECEMBER 30 2 Timothy 2:22

Lusts, youthful and otherwise, are anti-charity. True repentance from our sins involves following the way of charity. But it is not a solitary life. No, we are to seek and keep company with those who love the Lord and call on him out of a pure heart. Charity is a gift to and of the body of Christ. Individuals are benefactors of this corporate gift through faith and service.

DECEMBER 31 Moroni 7:53

This scripture is more that capable of speaking for itself.

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.

Some Thoughts On Love

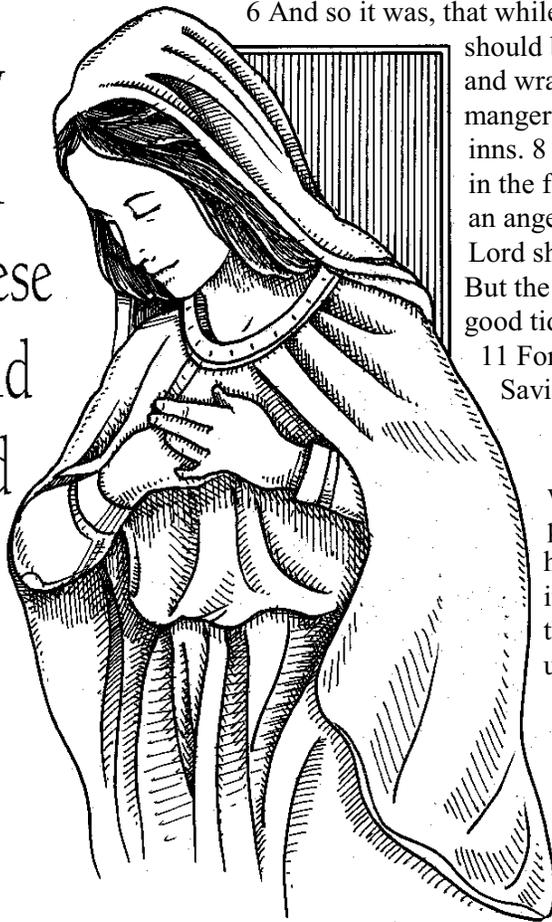
William Jennings Bryan told of a farmer boy who, after months of bashfulness, finally said to the girl he loved: "Mary, I've been lovin' you for a long time. I can't talk much, but will you be my wife?" Mary replied, "Yes, John, I've been loving you, too. I'll be happy to be your wife." Late that night when John was alone, he looked up at the stars and was heard to say: "O Lord, I ain't got nothin' 'gin nobody now."

"What we love we shall grow to resemble."
– Bernard of Clairvaux

"A bell is no bell 'till you ring it.
A song is no song 'till you sing it.
And love is not love until you give it away."
– Oscar Hammerstein II
(the last lines he wrote)

But Mary
treasured
up all these
things and
pondered
them
in her
heart.

Luke 2:19



6 And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was none to give room for them in the inns. 8 And there were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. 9 And lo, an angel of the Lord appeared unto them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. 10 But the angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 And this is the way you shall find the babe, he is wrapped in swaddling clothes, and is lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest; and on earth, peace; good will to men. 15 And it came to pass, when the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go, even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord has made known unto us. 16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17 And when they had seen, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18 All they who heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds; (Luke 2:6-19)

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Park City, KS 67219

MONTH NEWSLETTER YEAR

TO: