

living **all** the commandments? If not, how do you know you are forgiven?

When you were baptized a member in the LDS Church, you promised to keep all of the laws and commandments of God. You failed, so each week at sacrament service, you again commit to keep the commandments. Each week you fail. Even more disconcerting is the fact that if you are a temple Mormon, you are aware of the promise made by Lucifer when he said, "If they [you] do not walk up to **every** covenant they [you] make at these altars in this temple this day, they [you] will be in my power!" Yet you continue to promise and continue to fail. Kimball said members like you are covenant breakers (*Miracle*, pg. 57) and, as such, likened you to the wicked man of *D&C* 3:12-13. Let's face it, if Mormonism is true, you are doomed to failure and, accordingly, on the road to damnation.

### Conclusion

My friend, if the men quoted above are really prophets and apostles of God, then you, as a Mormon, have plenty to fear. You know yourself better than anyone else, and if you are honest, you know you will never live up to the requirements these men have set forth. It is impossible! That is why Romans 3:19 says that those who try to appease the God of the Bible by following the law are **guilty** before God. They cannot do it. Could it be that what your leaders have taught is not true? Could it be that the Bible offers a better way? It seems so.

The Bible declares that we are all sinners who are incapable of saving ourselves. Jesus did not die just to make our resurrection possible; rather, He came to take away all (not merely "some") of the believer's sins (Col. 2:13). It is our sin which separates us from God. Once that barrier has been removed, those who believe are declared righteous before God, thus making them eligible for all the blessings He has in store for those whom He has called. It is Christ's total obedience, not our partial obedience, that saves true Christians in God's sight (Rom. 5:19). When we come to Him by faith, His righteousness is "imputed" (or "added") to our account (Rom. 4:1-8). Only the righteousness of Christ will satisfy the demands of an all-Holy God. Nothing less will do. It is only when we rely on this biblical fact that we can have the assurance of God's forgiveness. As long as you insist that your exaltation is dependent on your good works and individual righteousness, you will

continue to be frustrated and bear the heavy burden of guilt.

Earlier I likened preparing for eternity to that of a long journey. Of course, the major difference is that while unseen circumstances might ruin a trip and force you to start over; there is no such luxury of starting over after death. To make the wrong preparations for eternity will be the worst mistake of your mortal life. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27).

My hope for you is that you will confess your inability to work your way into God's presence (Titus 3:5) and forsake instruction that causes you to err. If you hope to experience the peace that only the God of the Bible can give, you must fall upon His mercy; in doing so you can be assured He "will abundantly pardon" (Is. 55:7).

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[No] unfaithfulness, improvidence, hatred of God, lack of natural affection, high-mindedness, flattery, lustfulness, infidelity, indiscretion, backbiting, whispering, lack of truth, striking, brawling, quarrelsomeness, unthankfulness, inhospitality, deceitfulness, irreverence, boasting, arrogance, pride, double-tongued talk, profanity, slander, corruptness, thievery, embezzlement, despoiling, covenant-breaking, incontinence, filthiness, ignobleness, filthy communications, impurity, foolishness, slothfulness, impatience, lack of understanding, unmercifulness, idolatry, blasphemy, denial of the Holy Ghost, Sabbath breaking, envy, jealousy, malice, maligning, vengefulness, implacability, bitterness, clamor, spite, defiling, reviling, evil speaking, provoking, greediness for filthy lucre, disobedience to parents, anger, hate, covetousness, bearing false witness, inventing evil things, fleshliness, heresy, presumptuousness, abomination, insatiable appetite, instability, ignorance, self-will, speaking evil of dignitaries, becoming a stumbling block....

## Are You Abiding Celestial Law?

*The Miracle of Forgiveness, pg. 25*

**I**f you are like most Latter-day Saints, you are probably hoping with all your might that when you die you will be good enough to gain exaltation in the celestial kingdom.

You might say that planning for eternity is much the same as planning for a long vacation. You begin by designating your destination before making a list of those things you think are necessary in order to arrive at your goal. I think you are probably well aware of the frustration in setting out on a journey only to find you didn't have enough money or gas or finding out your reservations are invalid. How are you doing when it comes to your goal of reaching the celestial kingdom? Are you going to have "enough" of what it takes to get there?

First of all, the *Doctrine and Covenants* 88:22 states, “For he who is not able to abide the law of a celestial kingdom cannot abide a celestial glory.” If you are going to reach exaltation, you must live a life in compliance with celestial law. “What exactly is celestial law?” you might ask. Apostle Orson Whitney said, “It does not mean any one thing; it means **all things**. It is the **fullness of obedience**: it is living by **every word** that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Conference Report, October 1910, p.53).

President Brigham Young said, “If we obey this law, preserve it **inviolable**, live according to it, we shall be prepared to enjoy the blessings of a celestial kingdom” (*Discourses of Brigham Young*, p.404).

President Joseph Fielding Smith wrote, “To enter the celestial and obtain exaltation it is necessary that **the whole law be kept**...Do you desire to enter the celestial Kingdom and receive eternal life? Then be willing to keep **all** of the commandments.” (*The Way to Perfection*, p. 206).

The above statements cannot be set aside as mere personal opinions since they concur with *Doctrine and Covenants* 25:15, 16: “Keep my commandments **continually**, and a crown of righteousness thou shalt receive. And except thou do this, where I am you cannot come. And verily, verily, I say unto you, that this is my voice unto all.”

#### Let me ask you:

- Are you fully obeying every law God has given you?
- Are you living by every word that proceeds from God’s mouth?
- Are you preserving the law inviolate (unbroken)?
- Finally, if you desire to obtain exaltation in the celestial kingdom, are you continually keeping all the commandments?

If you are not doing these things, you cannot know if you will ever make it to your desired goal. In fact, if you are not keeping celestial law, at best you are only keeping a terrestrial law. The most you would then be able to hope for is entrance into the terrestrial kingdom. Once there, you can forget any chance of eventually achieving celestial glory since there is “no progression between kingdoms. After a person has been assigned to his place in the kingdom, either in the terrestrial, the terrestrial, or the celestial, or to his exaltation, he will

never advance from his assigned glory to another glory. That is eternal!” (*The Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, p.50.)

#### “I Can Do It Later”

Perhaps you are thinking that God will allow you to make up for your disobedient acts after you die. That doesn’t seem likely. Elder Bruce McConkie stated: “One of the great purposes of this mortal probation is to test and try men, to see if they will keep the commandments and walk in the light no matter what environmental enticements beckon them away from the straight and narrow path” (*Mormon Doctrine*, p. 229).

Speaking of “mortal probations,” President Joseph Fielding Smith said that if you refused to comply with the provided laws and ordinances during this lifetime, you will be “assigned, after the resurrection, to some inferior sphere” (*Doctrines of Salvation* 1:69). On the same page he said, “**This life** is the most vital period in our eternal existence.”

President Spencer Kimball admonished Latter-day Saints not to “postpone action” or “ignore direction.” He said “the time to act is now, **in this mortal life**” (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp. 9-10).

To emphasize this warning, President Kimball referred to Alma 34:32-33. “For behold, **this life** is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of **this life** is the day for men to perform their labors... And now, as I said unto you before, as ye have had so many witnesses, therefore, I beseech of you that ye do not procrastinate the day of your repentance until the end; for **after this day of life, which is given us to prepare for eternity**, behold, if we do not improve our time while **in this life**, then cometh the night of darkness wherein there can be no labor performed.” It seems clear that waiting until after you are dead to get things right would be a foolish decision.

#### “What About Repentance?”

Repenting of your sins sounds like the logical remedy, but doesn’t the fact that you have to repent prove that you are not obeying celestial law? Why repent if you are already obeying? Every time you repent, you do nothing more than admit your disobedience. With each cry for forgiveness you demonstrate how short you have fallen of the requirement for exaltation. Furthermore, have you really repented according to the definition given by LDS leaders? Spencer Kimball said

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**President Spencer W. Kimball**

that the “repentance which merits forgiveness” is the kind in which “the former transgressor must have reached a ‘point of no return’ to sin wherein there is not merely a renunciation but also a deep abhorrence of the sin – where the sin becomes most distasteful to him and where the desire or urge to sin is cleared out of his life” (*Miracle*, pp.354-355). Have you reached the point where the desire or urge to sin is cleared out of your life? If not, how do you know if you have truly repented? In the pamphlet entitled *Repentance Brings Forgiveness*, President Kimball taught, “The forsaking of sin must be a permanent one. True repentance does not permit making the same mistake again.” Have you permanently forsaken sin?

#### “But I’m Trying!”

Trying your best may seem commendable... except for the fact that President Kimball said trying is not good enough! He wrote, “**Trying is not sufficient**. Nor is repentance complete when one merely tries to abandon sin.” He went on to say, “To ‘try’ is weak. To ‘do the best I can’ is not strong. We must always do better than we can” (*Miracle*, pp.164-165). You may be thinking, “Well, I do my best and Jesus does the rest.” That might be a catchy saying, but the fact is, if you are obeying celestial law, outside of your physical resurrection, there is nothing left for Jesus to do.

1 Nephi 3:7 states, “I know that the Lord giveth no commandments unto the children of men, save he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which he commandeth them.” If keeping all the commandments is really possible, why aren’t you keeping them?

#### Are you forgiven?

President Kimball said that His God forgives only after a person totally repents and meets “all the requirements.” Forgiveness, he said, “is not granted merely for the asking” but is dependent on “your humility, your sincerity, your works, your attitudes.” (*Miracle*, pp. 324-325). “Living **all** the commandments guarantees total forgiveness of sins and assures one of exaltation” (*Miracle*, p. 208). Are you