



# That Ye Do Always Remember Him

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ON APRIL 1 OF THIS YEAR, I was in Salt Lake City to attend general conference. I awoke early and read the scriptures. My mind was drawn to the Savior’s introduction of the sacrament in 3 Nephi. That morning I read these words in the 18th chapter, beginning in verse 7:

And this shall ye do in remembrance of my body.... And it shall be a testimony unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.

And this ... ye shall do ... in remembrance of my blood, which I have shed for you, that ye may witness unto the Father that ye do always remember me. And if ye do always remember me ye shall have my Spirit to be with you.

...And if ye shall always do these things blessed are ye, for ye are built upon my rock (3 Nephi 18:7, 11-12).

Two things in this passage struck me. First, I had never before connected partaking of the sacrament and remembering the Savior with building on the rock of Christ. But they are so clearly connected! Secondly, the Savior placed great emphasis on remembering. It was, in fact, the whole point of taking the sacrament: to bear witness that we do always remember Him, that we might have His Spirit to be with us.

In the conference sessions on that Saturday, there were three talks that addressed what I had read that morning. Elder Eyring spoke about the rock of Christ and becoming as a child; Elder Bednar spoke about always having the Spirit to be with us; and Elder Perry spoke about the sacrament. Three talks—all connected to the sacrament, all connected to remembering the Savior, and all connected to building on the rock of Christ. I had been prepared to see those connections and prompted in a way that helped me pay close attention to them.

In the weeks that followed, I studied and prayed about the principles taught in those talks—particularly the process of remembering the Savior. I would like to talk today about what it means to “Always Remember Him” and what we can do to make that commandment a reality in our lives.

## REMEMBER

My starting point today is the word *remember*. The word “remember” comes from the Latin word *memor* and means mindful, remembering, grateful, thoughtful, or prudent. In modern usage it is most often associated with recalling something from memory or retaining something in memory. This kind of remembering happens many times each day. (Actually, if you are over 50 it happens less than you would like!) But there is a kind of remembering that is much deeper and requires much more of us. In this deeper sense, we use “remember” to mean: hold in the mind for consideration or attention; commemorate, and give honor, respect or reverence to someone or something. Abraham Lincoln used this sense of remember in his Gettysburg Address when he said: “The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here” [Gary Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words that Remade America* (Touchstone, New York, 1992), p. 263. Note that Lincoln was dead wrong about the memory of his words].

This deep remembering begins with a recalling to mind, not just of facts, but also of experiences. We recall what we have seen and heard and felt. But deep remembering goes beyond recall. As we reflect and ponder, we forge a bond that connects our memories to our emotional commitments and our sense of honor and reverence. We focus on the meaning and purpose of what we have experienced and what we have learned. This is deep remembering.

I believe it is this meaning that we ought to apply when we speak of remembering the Savior. I believe that what the Lord wants us to do is to “deeply remember” Him. Deep remembering requires that we bring to mind and commemorate what He has done and will yet do, that we might honor Him and reverence Him. Deep remembering engages our emotions, our spirits, our desires, and our commitments. It is all about who we are and what we want to become. Deep remembering requires that we bring the Savior—His suffering and sacrifice, His glorious resurrection, His mercy and grace and power, and all that we have experienced through Him—into that central part of ourselves wherein lies motivation, commitment, desire, faith, hope, and love. The command is to get the Savior in there, to invite Him

into that part of us, to deeply remember Him and all He is and does—there, deep in the very heart of who we are and what we hope and what we want.

Listen to the way the Lord describes this remembering. In the second verse of the 27th section of the Doctrine and Covenants He says:

For, behold, I say unto you, that it mattereth not what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink when ye partake of the sacrament, if it so be that ye do it *with an eye single to my glory—remembering unto the Father* my body which was laid down for you, and my blood which was shed for the remission of your sins (Doctrine and Covenants 27:2, emphasis added).

The remembering here is not simply recall. This remembering has purpose and focus and motivation; it is remembering to bring commitment and honor and glory to the Lord. This remembering is “unto the Father”—an expression of gratitude for the mercy and forgiveness and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is deep remembering.

Compared to the mirror of Christ, the mirror of the world is a poor counterfeit of the real thing, the real remembering.

#### THE SALIENCE AND POWER OF REMEMBERING

The Lord puts so much emphasis on deep remembering because it is so powerful and so fundamental to who we are and what we do. Deeply remembering something or someone or some principle motivates much of what we do in our daily lives. Because deep remembering is so powerful, and so ingrained in us, Satan works hard to counterfeit and corrupt it. Our Heavenly Father wants us to always deeply remember the Savior instead of all the other things that might take His place.

The prophets have repeatedly warned us about the counterfeit and corrupt objects of our deep remembering. The Old Testament is full of stories of the children of Israel forgetting the Lord and remembering instead the false gods and dumb idols of the Egyptians, or the Philistines, or the Canaanites.

In the New Testament, the Savior said of the Pharisees: they “... love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues” (Matthew 23:6). They deeply remembered the rules and procedures, the ceremonies, and the rituals “... to be seen of men ...” (Matthew 23:5); but they forgot “... judgment, mercy, and faith...” (Matthew 23:23). In Luke 16:15, He said: “... Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15).

In the Book of Mormon, the prophets warned the Nephites repeatedly about setting their hearts on wealth

and power, costly apparel, the pleasures of the flesh, and their own wisdom. In Alma 4:6-8 Mormon describes such wickedness in these words:

...the people of the Church began to wax proud, because of their exceeding riches ... and in all these things *were they lifted up in the pride of their eyes* ... and ... began ... to set their hearts upon ... the vain things of the world... (Alma 4:6, 8, emphasis added).

This phrase “*lifted up in the pride of their eyes*” underscores the power of “*being seen of men*.” Behind such behavior lies deep remembering.

In our day President Spencer W. Kimball spoke forcefully against such idolatry among the Latter-day Saints. In his talk “The False Gods We Worship,” he said:

The Lord has blessed us as a people with a prosperity unequaled in times past. But I am afraid that many of us have been surfeited with flocks and herds and acres and barns and wealth and have begun to worship them as false gods.... Many people spend most of their time working in the service of a self-image that includes sufficient money, stocks, bonds, investment portfolios, property, credit cards, furnishings, automobiles, and the like to *guarantee* carnal security throughout, it is hoped, a long and happy life (Spencer W. Kimball, “The False Gods We Worship,” *Ensign*, June 1976, p. 3).

If we fall into the trap that President Kimball describes, we serve an image of ourselves defined by the world’s version of the good life. It is as if the standards of society and the ways of the world create a mirror in which we examine our dress, our possessions, our behavior, and our activities to find what is accepted and validated. The “mirror of the world” (see endnote) throws up an image of what is fashionable and popular and attractive, and it is this image that becomes the focus of our deep remembering. It is in the mirror of the world that we are “... *lifted up in the pride of [our] eyes...*” (Alma 4:6).

An experience I had early in my life may help to illustrate the power of the mirror of the world. When I was 12 years old, I attended Sacajawea Junior High School in Spokane, Washington. I had moved to Spokane the year before, and my sixth grade year had been wonderful. I enjoyed school, did well, and played a lot of sports. I had been ordained a deacon, and I enjoyed church. Seventh grade, however, was a very difficult experience. It all started with the first report card. I had worked hard and enjoyed that first term, and I got straight A’s. I was off to a good start. But once the kids in my grade found out I got straight A’s, the scorn and ridicule began. They called me names; made fun of me; and most painful of all, they would not have anything to do with me. Who were these people, and why did I care so much?

In that first term I had gravitated toward what seemed like the really “cool” kids—the kids who were “in,” the

kids who were “popular.” In our school, if you wanted to be cool, you needed to remember the cool kids and their ways when you decided what to wear, how to act, where to go, and what to do. In effect, the cool society at Sacajawea Junior High School created a social standard those who wanted to be like them had to follow. It was as if there was a constant message on the school’s loudspeaker system: “If you want to be cool, deeply remember who the cool kids are. Remember how they dress and talk, where they go, and what they do. If you want to be cool, you must remember to be like them. Look into the mirror of the world, and you will see what you can be if you remember to be cool.”

Well, straight A’s was not on the list and I was definitely not cool. But the mirror of the world, the lure of the “in group,” and the process of remembering them and trying to pattern myself after them remained with me until the middle of my senior year in high school. It was also true, I am grateful to say, that the Church and the gospel and remembering the Savior were important parts of my life. There was, in a very real way, something like a battle going on inside of me during my teenage years.

That battle was all about the focus of deep remembering in my life. It was all about deciding which mirror I would look to for guidance and direction: the mirror of the world or the mirror of Christ. Paul taught this concept of the mirror of Christ in 2 Corinthians 3:18 (note here that the word glass is used to mean mirror): “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18).

When Alma asked the people of Zarahemla, “Have ye received his image in your countenances?” (Alma 5:14), he was asking them about looking into the mirror of Christ. James used the same metaphor when he taught the importance of putting faith into action. In James 1:23-25 we read:

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway *forgetteth* what manner of man he was.

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a *forgetful* hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed (James 1:23-25, emphasis added).

Taken together, these two passages teach us that we create the mirror of Christ by deeply remembering Him and that, when we look for guidance in the mirror of Christ, the Light of Christ illuminates the choices we face and the Holy Ghost brings to our remembrance (see John 14:26) the words of Christ and the voice of Christ—as well as feelings, insights, and inspiration centered on Him. We see ourselves in the mirror of Christ as He sees us, and we see our actions and our behavior as He sees them and as He would have them be. We see Him as He really is; and we, therefore, see ourselves as we might really become. Moreover, as we act on what we see, as our deep remembering

moves us to do what is right, we become more like Him.

The mirror of the world that I paid so much attention to at Sacajawea Junior High School pales in comparison to the mirror of Christ. Consider the differences I saw when I was 12 years old. In the mirror of the world, I saw myself in the inner circle. I saw how to act and what to wear and what to do to be accepted and popular and cool. I saw the junior high version of the great and spacious building. What would I have seen in the mirror of Christ, if I had looked? I would have seen a young man, a child of God, born in the covenant of wonderful parents, blessed with the gift of the Holy Ghost, holding the Aaronic Priesthood, preparing to become an elder in Israel. I would have seen the Savior with the arm of mercy extended to me. I would have remembered His voice and felt the echoes of heaven where I knew Him and followed Him. I would have seen repentance and forgiveness and the power of the Atonement. If I had looked even harder, I would have seen myself serving a mission, endowed with power from on High. I would have seen myself kneeling at the altar of the temple with a righteous, faithful, glorious daughter of God. I would have seen children and grandchildren; and service in the Kingdom; and joy untold; and peace, and knowledge, and power through Christ.

Compared to the mirror of Christ, the mirror of the world is a poor counterfeit of the real thing, the real remembering. It is like the difference between a set of flashing neon lights and the light of the sun. The neon lights are colorful and catchy, but ultimately artificial, cold, shallow, and dead. The light of the sun is rich and bright, warm, deep, and full of life. I am so grateful that I discovered that difference in my teenage years. I had both mirrors before me, and there was a struggle. But I looked to Christ and remembered Him and chose the Light.

#### DEEP REMEMBERING

How do we make the commandment to “*always remember Him*” a reality in our lives? It is so all encompassing! Think of what it means to deeply remember the Lord Jesus Christ and all that He is, all that He has done and will do, at all times, in every circumstance, in all of our ways, without fail. What can we do to create the mirror of Christ and make it a central part of how we choose and act and decide?

Alma addressed just this question in his masterful interview with his son Helaman. His words in Alma 37:36-37 give us the pattern we need to follow to “always remember the Savior”:

Yea, and cry unto God for all thy support; yea, let all thy doings be unto the Lord, and whithersoever thou goest let it be in the Lord; yea, let all thy thoughts be directed unto the Lord; yea, let the affections of thy heart be placed upon the Lord forever.

Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings, and he will direct thee for good; yea, when thou liest down at night lie down unto the Lord, that he may watch over you in your sleep; and when thou risest in the

morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God; and if ye do these things, ye shall be lifted up at the last day (Alma 37:36-37).

There are four, interrelated elements in Alma's pattern for deep remembering:

- Cry Unto God for All Your Support
- Let All Your Doings Be Unto the Lord
- Let Your Thoughts and the Affections of Your Heart Be Upon the Lord Forever
- Let Your Heart Be Full of Thanks Unto God

Let's examine each one of them in turn.

#### CRY UNTO GOD FOR ALL YOUR SUPPORT

To cry to the Lord for our support involves both our regular, everyday lives, and the significant, challenging episodes we all encounter as part of mortal existence. We are after the Lord's help in matters temporal and spiritual, and we seek that support through prayer. Amulek taught us to pray about everything—crops and fields, all of our household, against the power of our enemies, for mercy and salvation (see Alma 34:18-25). In Alma 34:37 he also taught that those prayers ought to never end: "Yea, and when you do not cry unto the Lord, let your hearts be full, drawn out in *prayer unto him continually* for your welfare, and also for the welfare of those who are around you" (Alma 34:27, emphasis added).

The prophets have taught us that the Lord hears and answers such prayers, both about daily life and about the burdens and challenges we face. Such prayers and such reliance grow out of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and trust in His power and love. As Alma said in Alma 36:3: "... for I do know that whosoever shall put their trust in God shall be supported in their trials, and their troubles and their afflictions, and shall be lifted up at the last day" (Alma 36:3).

The Lord taught the Prophet Joseph Smith the same principle with these words in Doctrine and Covenants 3:8: "Yet you should have been faithful; and he would have extended his arm and supported you against all the fiery darts of the adversary; and he would have been with you in every time of trouble" (Doctrine and Covenants 3:8).

Part of deep remembering in the mirror of Christ is to see and know the Savior as one who knows us, loves us, and extends "... the arm of mercy towards them that put their trust in him" (Mosiah 29:20). He, indeed, is with us in every time of trouble and in every other time as well. To deeply remember Him is to turn to Him for all our support.

#### LET ALL YOUR DOINGS BE UNTO THE LORD

All our doings encompass our every waking hour—at home, at work, at school, at play, in the neighborhood, running errands, whatever we do, wherever we go. Doing all of this "unto the Lord" is, in the first instance, all about priority and obedience. It is about making all our doings consistent with what we know to be true—the gospel and the Lord's commandments. It is all about repentance and putting our lives in order. It is about building an eternal family

and being part of the Kingdom of God—going to church, magnifying callings, bringing up "... children in light and truth" (Doctrine and Covenants 93:40). But secondly, it is all about humility and a willingness to listen. It is about the guidance of the Spirit and being directed in what we do. It means listening to the voice of the Lord.

The Holy Ghost gives us the capacity to hear the voice of the Lord. To help us remember Him, the Savior speaks to us and calls us to follow Him and to do His work. That call comes not once but many, many times. It is not limited to only one part of our lives or to certain times in the day. It is comprehensive and complete and all encompassing. If we hear that voice and deeply remember Him and heed that call, we will be in the service of the Lord. As we look into the mirror of Christ, we will come to know His voice and to know Him. He will qualify us for His work and magnify us in our capacity, and all of our doings will be unto the Lord.

#### LET YOUR THOUGHTS AND THE AFFECTIONS OF YOUR HEART BE UPON THE LORD FOREVER

In His earthly ministry, the Savior taught that the first and great commandment is to love God with all our hearts, might, mind, and strength. His invitation to "come unto me" is an invitation to give our hearts and minds to Him. In deeply remembering the Savior, the life of the mind and the life of the heart must be deeply connected in Him.

Directing our minds to the Lord is all about seeking truth. The gospel encompasses all truth, and the Lord has commanded us to "... seek learning, even by study and also by faith" (Doctrine and Covenants 88:118). This means, first and foremost, searching the scriptures and the words of the prophets. It means seeking words of wisdom out of the best books and searching for truth wherever it may be found (see Doctrine and Covenants 88:118). It means that we are to "teach [one another] ... all things that pertain unto the kingdom of God" (Doctrine and Covenants 88:78). It means doing all this under the direction of the Holy Ghost, whose ministry is to "... teach you all things" (John 14:26).

Placing our affections upon the Lord is about the desires of our hearts and our deepest commitments. It is about making eternal covenants through sacred ordinances to serve Him, to be a witness for Him, and to keep His commandments. We make those promises at baptism and in the temple. The Lord has made it possible for us to renew those covenants regularly through the ordinance of the sacrament and through participation in the ordinances of the temple on behalf of those who have died. If those covenants become our deepest commitments, if we are true and faithful to them, we come to truly love the Lord. Thus, we place our affections upon the Lord forever by making and keeping sacred covenants.

We also gain access to the power and influence of the Holy Ghost. When we are true and faithful to our covenants, the Holy Ghost ignites the Light of Christ in us. Our minds become enlightened and our understanding quickened. Thus, the life of the mind and the life of the heart are deeply

connected in Christ. Indeed, the Lord has promised us that those who are true and faithful "... [receive] truth and light, until [they are] glorified in truth and [know] all things" (Doctrine and Covenants 93:28). This is what we see in the mirror of Christ. Seeking truth and keeping covenants are thus integral parts of deeply remembering Him.

#### LET YOUR HEART BE FULL OF THANKS UNTO GOD

Over and over again the prophets throughout the ages have joined with Alma to admonish us to give thanks to God. The Lord himself gave perhaps the most powerful statement of the paramount importance of gratitude in the 59th section of the Doctrine and Covenants. After commanding us to "... thank the Lord thy God in all things," (Doctrine and Covenants 59:7) the Savior commands us to keep the Sabbath day holy, and promises that "... inasmuch as ye do these things with thanksgiving, with cheerful hearts and countenances ... the fulness of the earth is yours..." (Doctrine and Covenants 59:15-16).

But in verse 21 those who do not keep the Sabbath and do not give thanks to God are warned: "And in nothing doth man offend God or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess not his hand in all things..." (Doctrine and Covenants 59:21).

I believe that the central importance of gratitude grows out of the process we go through when we express our thanks to our Heavenly Father. When I was a little boy, my mom and dad taught me to say my prayers. They taught me to thank Heavenly Father for my blessings—for them, for Jesus, for my new bike, for my little sister, for my new baby brother. That pattern has stayed with me to this day. If that expression of thanks in my prayers is not mechanical, or done by rote, it becomes a time of reflection, of recognition, and affirmation. It becomes a time of deep remembering in the mirror of Christ. When I thank my Heavenly Father that I have the great blessing of being married to Sue, I not only affirm my love and gratitude for her, but I recognize the Lord's hand in bringing us together, His mercy and grace in providing us with temples and the sealing power of the priesthood, and His many tender mercies in helping us and supporting us in our marriage over these many years.

When I thank my Heavenly Father for the plan of salvation and for the marvelous blessing of the Atonement of the Savior, I affirm my faith in Jesus Christ. But I also recognize my true relationship to Him. He is the Creator; the Savior and Redeemer; the only source of salvation, healing, and forgiveness. He is the way to life, peace, joy, and exaltation. Without Him there would be no hope, no light, no life. The good things of the earth and the good things of heaven come to us through Him. Well did King Benjamin say, "... O how you ought to thank your heavenly King!" (Mosiah 2:19).

This is the power of gratitude and thanksgiving. If we seek to find and express thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father and to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, we will see and understand our true relationship to Them and, through the

Holy Ghost, we will receive a witness of that truth. That witness will burn within us. That is deep remembering in the mirror of Christ. And that is why Alma said to Heman: "...when thou risest in the morning let thy heart be full of thanks unto God..." (Alma 37:37).

#### TESTIMONY AND CONCLUSION

Now, my dear brothers and sisters, I would like to close with a word of testimony. I hope and pray that deep remembering in the mirror of Christ will be a reality in our lives. It is my hope that the very next time we take the sacrament, when we reach to take the bread and the water, that we say in our hearts: "I take this bread and water as a witness to my Heavenly Father that I actually do always remember His Beloved Son. There is nothing else in His place—not the "in crowd" at Sacajawea Junior High School, not fine-twined linens, or the vain things and the false gods of the world. I call on Him for all my support, all my doings are unto Him. I search the scriptures to hear His voice. I renew my covenants with Him, and I am true

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and faithful to them. I give thanks unto Him all the days of my life. He is at the center of my life; He is my Savior, my Redeemer. In Him I have light and life, faith and hope. I love Him and honor Him and praise His name. In very fact, in every way, the mirror of Christ is before me always; I always remember Him."

I pray that it may be so for each one of us. I bear witness of the Lord Jesus Christ. I know He lives. This is His church and kingdom, restored through the Prophet Joseph Smith. His arm of mercy is extended to us. I know that mercy. The Atonement is real. He is real. May we always—*always*—remember Him. In the sacred name of Jesus Christ, amen. SM

#### ENDNOTE:

*I am indebted to my friend Tony Kimball's long ago Sunday School lesson on responsibility for the notion of a personal mirror—one version of which I have called the "mirror of the world." Carl Rogers' work on the self suggests that one's self-image is like looking in a social mirror. Rogers developed the idea that individuals create a self-concept that involves perception (and thus an image) of one's relationship to others and to other things (see: Carl Rogers, On Becoming a Person (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961)). For additional work along these lines, see Kenneth E. Boulding, Image: Knowledge in Life and Society (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956); and S. I. Hayakawa, Symbol, Status and Personality, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1963.*