

The Witness

Double Issue

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They were desirous to be baptized, as a witness and a testimony that they were willing to serve God with all their hearts.

Mosiah 9:179



FOUNDATION FOR RESEARCH ON ANCIENT AMERICA

The Witness

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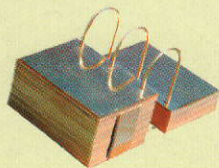
The Foundation for Research on Ancient America is a nonprofit corporation composed of individuals who desire to promote The Book of Mormon and its witness of Jesus Christ.

Through research, publications, seminars and related projects, members of FRAA seek to assist in bringing forth the light contained in the ancient Scriptures of The Book of Mormon. A contribution to the Foundation for Research on Ancient America is tax deductible.

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Front Cover: Baptismal scene in Kenya, Africa.



Message from

FRAA

The Lord has continued to bless the efforts of FRAA. In this issue we address many of the programs and activities being offered through the Foundation. The Firm (Former Intern Restoration Ministries), The Book of Mormon Conference, and the drive to raise funds to purchase copies of The Book of Mormon for missionary programs are but a few of the exciting projects now underway. The programs and activities, regardless of how fine they are, will be of no value without the participation and support of Book of Mormon believers like you. We ask that you financially and prayerfully support the Foundation so that the precious message of salvation may become a reality in your life and in the lives of people everywhere. Will YOU give it to the world?

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One of the most common words used in our church vocabulary is the word *gospel*. It is often incorporated into familiar phrases such as the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of Christ, the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ or the fullness of the gospel. The prophets have written extensively about this word which helps contribute to the importance it carries for those who seek to pattern their lives after the Lord's scriptural teachings.

For example, The Book of Mormon mentions the word *gospel* in about 50 verses. Almost half of the references are attributed directly to the teaching of Jesus Christ during his visit to this continent. The Bible references the word *gospel* in approximately 100 verses, many of which are also direct quotes from Jesus Christ. Coupled with the numerous references to the gospel within the context of other words, phrases, and examples, it becomes clear how much emphasis the Scriptures place upon its value.

It is interesting to observe how a single word, along with its associated phrases, can generate such a variety of meanings and interpretations among those to whom it means so much. These various interpretations and meanings bring confusion and inconsistency into the body of Christ which deeply affect the unity of the church and the missionary work as we witness of the gospel of Christ. We must then return to the source of truth found in the Scriptures to see what the Lord has to say about it. Specifically, our purpose is to identify and explore the plain and simple gospel defined in The Book of Mormon. Let us see what it actually says about this important truth.

The study of the gospel of Jesus Christ will have greater meaning if we first come to an understanding of the nature of God. This nature is presented in 2 Nephi which states: "And he cometh into the world that he may save all men, if they will hearken unto his voice" 6:45 (2 Nephi 6:45 RLDS; 2 Nephi 9:21 LDS).

The Lord has a single purpose for his creation, which reflects his work and glory. This single purpose is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. In other words, he provides a way for you and me to have eternal life with him. All things pleasing to God fall into submission to this purpose. The gospel of Jesus Christ then becomes the way for this purpose to be accomplished. We sometimes refer to

Plain and Precious Things

by Marlin Guin

this way as the plan of salvation or the plan of redemption.

We can examine The Book of Mormon to test the truthfulness of this claim by beginning with a historical synopsis. (See 1 Nephi 3 RLDS; 1 Nephi 10-14 LDS.) Each person is encouraged to read the entire chapter, but to gain an appreciation as to why the Lord brought forth The Book of Mormon and how it supports his purpose only the following sequence of scripture is quoted:

Yea, even six hundred years from the time that my father left Jerusalem, a prophet would the Lord God raise up among the Jews, even a Messiah; or, in other words, a Savior of the world. . . .

Wherefore, all mankind were in a lost and in a fallen state, and ever would be save they should rely on this Redeemer. (1 Nephi 3:4,6 RLDS; 1 Nephi 10:4,6 LDS)

The book [Bible] that thou beholdest is a record

of the Jews, which contains the covenants of the Lord which he hath made unto the house of Israel. . . .

And the angel of the Lord said unto me, Thou hast beheld that the book [Bible] proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew; and when it proceeded forth from the mouth of a Jew it contained the plainness of the gospel of the Lord, of whom the twelve apostles bear record. . . .

They [great and abominable church] have taken away from the gospel of the Lamb many parts which are plain and most precious; and also many covenants of the Lord have they taken away; and all this have they done that they might pervert the right ways of the Lord; that they might blind the eyes and harden the hearts of the children of men. (1 Nephi 3:161,165,168-170 RLDS; 1 Nephi 13:23,24, 26-27 LDS)

The Gate



Enter in by the gate.



The straight and narrow path

The Journey

Because of these things which are taken away out of the gospel of the Lamb, an exceeding great many do stumble, yea, insomuch that Satan hath great power over them. . . .

Neither will the Lord God suffer that the Gentiles shall for ever remain in that awful state of blindness, which thou beholdest they are in because of the plain and most precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which have been kept back by that abominable church. . . .

And after the Gentiles do stumble exceedingly because of the most plain and precious parts of the gospel of the Lamb which has been kept back . . . I will manifest myself unto thy seed, that they shall write many things which I shall minister unto them, which shall be plain and precious. . . . And in them shall be written my gospel, saith the Lamb, and my rock and my salvation. . . .

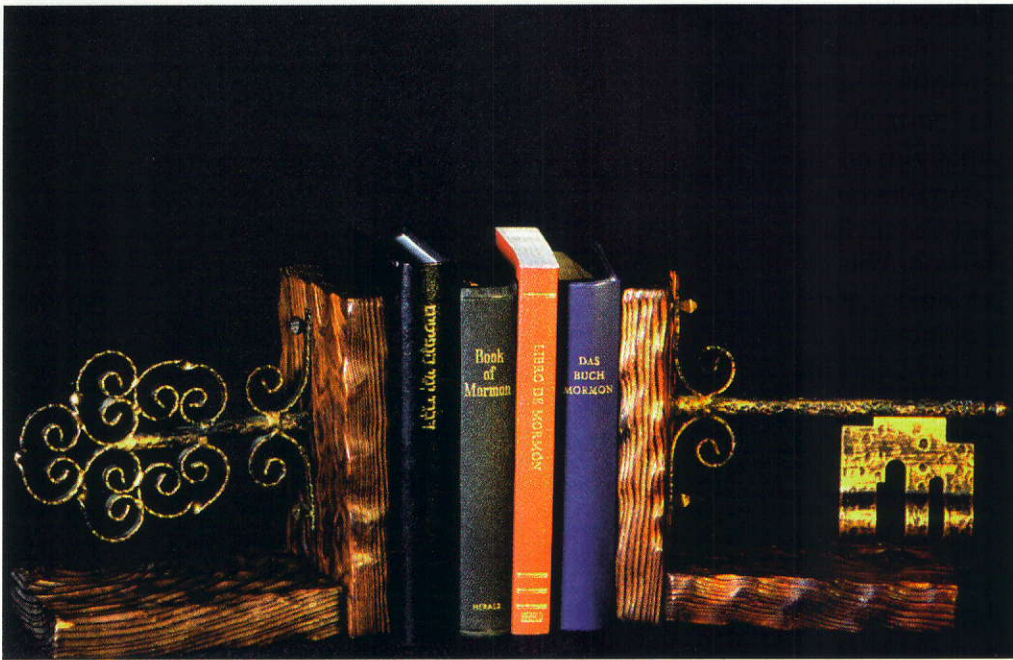
These last records [Book of Mormon] which thou hast seen among the Gentiles shall establish the truth of the first [Bible], which are of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, and shall make known the plain and precious things which

have been taken away from them. (1 Nephi 3:175,179,183-186,192 RLDS; 1 Nephi 13:29,32,34-36,40 LDS)

What are the plain and precious things The Book of Mormon would make known unto the world? To find out let us first make an important correlation found in Jacob 5 (RLDS; Jacob 7 LDS) which teaches us the words *gospel* and *doctrine* are synonymous and can be used interchangeably. The context of the account involves an antichrist named Sherem who comes among the people and challenges Jacob in his ministry with these words: "**Brother Jacob, I have sought much opportunity that I might speak unto you: for I have heard and also know, that thou goest about much, preaching that which ye call the *gospel*, or the *doctrine* of Christ**" (Jacob 5:9 RLDS [*italics added*]; Jacob 7:6 LDS).

Understanding this correlation allows us to study Book of Mormon scriptures which reference the "doctrine of Christ" to be the same as the gospel of Christ.

One of the most precise and profound Book of Mormon chapters to identify the doctrine of Christ is found in 2 Nephi 13 (RLDS; 2 Nephi 31 LDS). This key chapter systematically teaches the doctrine of



Bookend scriptures bracket a specific subject.

Christ in its simplest terms and fulfills the prophecy we reviewed earlier in 1 Nephi 3 (RLDS; 1 Nephi 10-14 LDS) concerning the restoration of plain and simple truths to be written in the Nephite records.

A unique characteristic of 2 Nephi 13 (RLDS [italics added]; 2 Nephi 31 LDS) is the use of bookend scriptures. These scriptures, like the actual bookends we use on our bookshelves, bracket each side of a specific subject. The first bookend scripture will be used to get our attention and then state the subject to be presented. The last bookend scripture will be used to insure we understood the importance of the subject just covered between the two bookend scriptures.

The first bookend scripture for this chapter is found in 2 Nephi 13:3-4 (RLDS [italics added]; 2 Nephi 31:2-3 LDS) which states: **“Wherefore the things which I have written, sufficeth me, save it be a few words which I must speak, concerning the doctrine of Christ; wherefore I shall speak unto you plainly, according to the plainness of my prophesying. For my soul delighteth in plainness: for after this manner doth the Lord God work among the children of men.”**

Jacob uses this beginning bookend scripture to grab our attention as he expounds on the plain and simple doctrine of Christ. He prepares us for something so simple and easy to understand that caution must be exercised so we are not surprised. This is the same warning that was given to the Jews. They were warned not to let pride and arrogance cause them to

reject the message because of its simplicity. He then immediately shows the ultimate example of the doctrine of Christ as lived out on this earth by Jesus Christ. In other words, Jesus Christ not only made the plan possible but also showed us its possibilities. **“Follow thou me”** was his admonition (2 Nephi 13:12 RLDS; 2 Nephi 31:10 LDS).

Nephi uses two real-life experiences to place the simplicity of the gospel into our understanding. These are entering a gate and making a journey down a path until the end is reached. Both are described as being strait and narrow. There is no easier way to express it than to quote the

few scriptures that precisely define it. We read from 2 Nephi 13:

For, for this cause have they been shewn unto me, that ye might know the gate by which ye should enter. . . .

For the gate by which ye should enter is repentance and baptism by water: and then cometh a remission of your sins by fire, and by the Holy Ghost. . . .

And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life; yea, ye have entered in by the gate; ye have done according to the commandments of the Father and the Son. . . .

And ye have received the Holy Ghost, which witnesses of the Father and the Son, unto the fulfilling of the promise which he hath made, that if ye enter in by the way, ye should receive. . . .

And now, my beloved brethren, after ye have gotten into this strait and narrow path, I would ask, if all is done? . . .

Behold, I say unto you, Nay; for ye have not come thus far, save it were by the word of Christ, with unshaken faith in him, relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save. . . .

Wherefore, ye must press forward with a steadfastness in Christ, having a perfect brightness of hope, and a love of God and of all men. . . .

Wherefore, if ye shall press forward, feasting upon the word of Christ, and endure to the end, behold, thus saith the Father: *Ye shall have eternal life.* . . .

He writes: “And now behold, this is the *doctrine of Christ*, and the only and true doctrine of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, which is one God, without end. Amen” (2 Nephi 13:32 [italics added] RLDS; 2 Nephi 31:21 LDS).

The key points of this scripture form what some have called the basic principles of the gospel. They are listed below in outline form.

The Gate

- 1) Faith
- 2) Repentance
- 3) Baptism (water) by authority (See also 3 Nephi 5:18-49 RLDS;
- 4) Baptism (Spirit) by authority 3 Nephi 11:18-12:2 LDS)

“Ye have not come thus far save it were”:

- a) “By the word of Christ”
- b) “With unshaken faith in him”
- c) “Relying wholly upon the merits of him who is mighty to save” (2 Nephi 13:28 RLDS; 2 Nephi 31:19 LDS)

The Journey

- 5) “Endure to the End”

- a) “Press forward with a steadfastness in Christ”
- b) “Having a perfect brightness of hope”
- c) “A love of God and all men”
- d) “Feasting upon the word of Christ”

(See also 2 Nephi 14:1-7 RLDS; 2 Nephi 32:1-6 LDS)

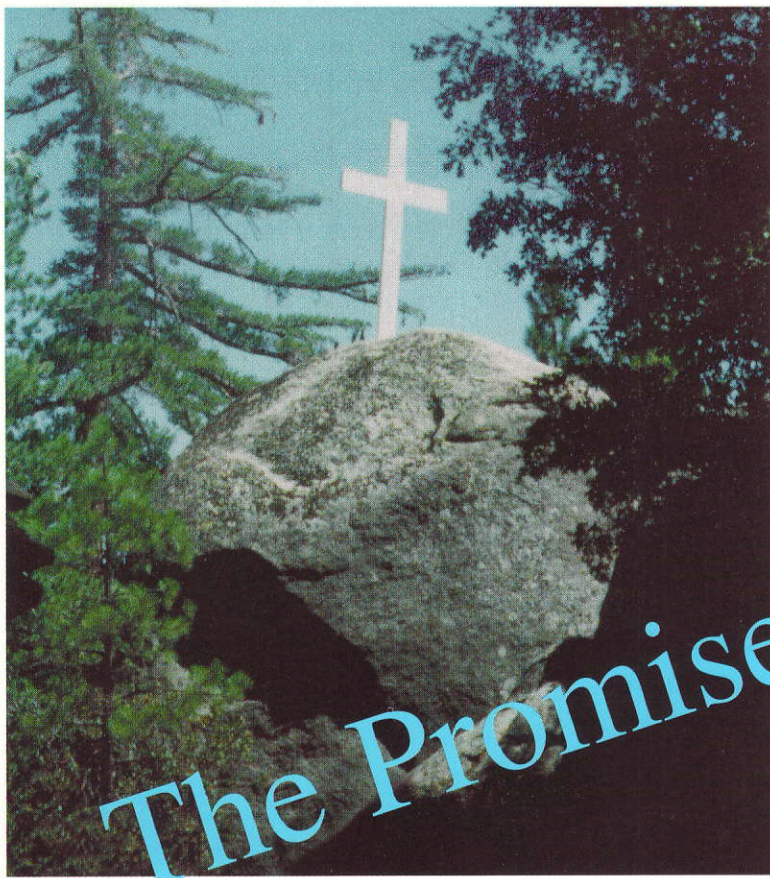
The Promise

- 6) “Ye shall have eternal life” (2 Nephi 13:30 RLDS; 2 Nephi 31:20 LDS)

And now behold, my beloved brethren, this is the way; and there is none other way nor name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved in the kingdom of God. (2 Nephi 13:23-30 [italics added]; 31 RLDS; 2 Nephi 31:17-21 LDS)

Nephi then writes the ending bookend scripture to insure the reader understands the importance of the “doctrine of Christ” and the consideration it deserves.

The phrase “Ye shall have eternal life” is an imperative statement meaning that when the conditions are met, the promise from God is absolute and unchallenged. From this we realize that there is no power under heaven, except the power of agency, that can prevent us from inheriting eternal life when we follow the plain and simple plan. Salvation depends only on the relationship between our personal choices and the grace of God through Jesus Christ as the way, the



The plain and simple gospel stands solid as a rock upon the foundation of Jesus Christ.

truth, and the life.

Why has the simple plan of salvation become so complicated in the minds of many today? The primary cause is our pride and arrogance which replaces or attaches to the simple plan other things more important to us. In other words, our basic human tendency is to create complexity rather than believe simplicity. In so doing, we find ourselves presenting our own version of the plan of salvation. The Book of Mormon

describes this as to “**declare more or less than this.**” To support this we read the following from 3 Nephi: “**And whoso shall declare more or less than this, and establish it for my doctrine, the same cometh of evil, and is not built upon my rock, but he buildeth upon a sandy foundation, and the gates of hell standeth open to receive such, when the floods come, and the winds beat upon them. Therefore go forth unto this people, and declare the words which I have spoken, unto the ends of the earth**” (3 Nephi 5:42-43 RLDS; 3 Nephi 11:40-41 LDS).

The plain and simple gospel stands solid as a rock upon the foundation of Jesus Christ—ever timeless in its simplicity and always available to any who will listen and follow, even a little child. The Lord never designed the gospel to be a complex puzzle that would take our entire life to understand and just before death say, “I finally get it!” Instead, it was presented to the world as both easy to comprehend and easy to declare unto others. Would a loving heavenly Father, who is desirous to save every soul, want it any other way?

The Book of Mormon, as a fulfilled prophecy, truly has a message for the world in our day. The sharing of the plain and simple gospel found within its pages rests with those who recognize it as a spiritual treasure and are willing to make it known to others. May God bless us as we look upon the fields ripe already to harvest is my prayer.

Marlin Guin has served three years as a member of The Witness editorial committee. He is a high priest in the Restored Church of Jesus Christ. Marlin has served as a branch president and a district president.

Subscription Renewal

FRAA's commitment is to provide our readers with the finest Book of Mormon magazine possible. However, fewer than eight percent of those who receive *The Witness* have actually paid for their subscription. If FRAA is to continue to provide this ministry, it is essential that we have your financial support. If you have not subscribed to *The Witness*, please do so today. A subscription envelope is included with the magazine. We appreciate the support of those who have paid their subscriptions and who have written to share with us how important the magazine is in their lives.



GROWTH



Brings Change at FRAA

This is an exciting time, and many changes are taking place at FRAA. Because of the amazing growth and success of the Tree of Life Bookstore, it has become a separate entity from FRAA. The FRAA Board of Directors will no longer give direction to the Tree of Life Bookstore. The bookstore is joining the Coile Foundation and will receive its direction from that organization. Michael Gatrost has stepped down as president of FRAA. This will allow him to more fully devote his time and attention to the bookstore and the planning of a Book of Mormon visitors' center currently being developed by the Coile Foundation. The bookstore will remain in its present location at this time.

The FRAA Board of Directors has elected Dale Godfrey to serve as president. Dale has served as vice president for the past eight years. Tom Mitchell has been elected vice president. Tom has served on the board for six years. As the list at the end of this article indicates, a number of new members have been added to the board.

FRAA is renewing its efforts in the areas of congregational Book of Mormon Days, FRAA sponsored Book of Mormon classes, and Book of Mormon outreach programs. The Board has approved, and planning is underway, for a General Book of Mormon Day to be held in Independence, Missouri, September 26, 1998. We will share more information on this exciting event as it becomes available.

We are establishing the Former Intern Restoration Ministries (FIRM) group. This organization is made up of former FRAA Interns (65 young people have completed the program). They will share in fellowship, study, and worship. In addition we anticipate that this group will become a resource for groups seeking teachers—including Church School teachers—and speakers on various Book of Mormon related topics.

We are reviewing the possibility of several additional exciting programs including: tours to Book of Mormon lands, publishing The Book of Mormon to make it available for outreach at a reduced cost, expanding the internship program to two years, and developing videos for missionary and home ministry efforts. Our primary focus, however, remains the same—sharing the message of Jesus Christ found in The Book of Mormon.

We look to the future with anticipation and excitement. As we grow into the future, FRAA continues to need your prayers and support as we, together, seek to share the redeeming Book of Mormon message.

The Board, Officers, and Staff of FRAA

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While I was in Kenya, Africa, you might not believe who I saw there. It was my best friend, you know, the one who is a carpenter. He's got a job over there right now building himself a church. Things had been a little slow until recently. He's been a little shorthanded on qualified workers. Some have been picking up the work recently, especially in the last twenty months or so. They've been assisting him in getting the foundation laid.

You might think, "Twenty months to get a foundation laid? That's a long time." Well, for the amount of qualified workers he's had over there and the time he's had to work with them, he's accomplished quite a bit. He's a perfectionist, you know. When he builds something, you know it's good. When

he puts things together, nothing can destroy his work. Some things take more time than others. He has to make sure all things are proper and just. He's put his life in this work. He wants it done right. I don't blame him one bit. Besides, have you seen the plans for his church? Talk about "a great and marvelous work," (1 Nephi 3:214 RLDS; 1 Nephi 14:7 LDS) this is a pearl. When it's complete what a priceless treasure it will be.

I would suggest to anyone to invest all they have into his plan. The results are so rewarding. I've already seen some of the benefits, and they just keep getting better all the time.

K. J. Eichhorn

Reflections on Kenya

by K. J. Eichhorn

Words are unable to describe my feelings on all that was gained in my short trip over the massive waters of the Atlantic. This was one of the greatest growing experiences of my life. I never fathomed what was possible to happen in a two-week span of time. I was not prepared for what was to take place, neither do I think I could have been. It was only by the grace of God I was able to take part in and receive such blessings.

What a beautiful thing it is to see the gospel going forth and being received the way it was designed to be. If I learned nothing else from my trip than how easy the gospel is, it was worth every minute of it but that was not all I learned. We make things so difficult and so sophisticated that we overlook the simplicities of the beautiful gospel story. We play too many games with our words and twist things instead of taking them at face value. Christ told us we must be like little children or in



K.J. in Kenya.



Above: "And he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth" 1 Nephi 7:56 RLDS; 1 Nephi 22:25 LDS.



Left: School children's book bag tree

our prideful ways.

Another thing I learned on this little adventure is how big this work of his is. The Lord isn't bound to need us when we are disobedient. If we will not follow, he has no other choice but to find a people who will obey. All

that he gives and commands is done for a reason. He does this because he loves us. Why don't we understand this? We can't even comprehend the kind of love he has for us. The laws and statutes are for our own good. If we won't receive him, he will go to those who will. His hands are still outstretched to us if we will just repent. Repentance is a gift! Must we continue to shun our Creator, our Father, our King, our God? How much longer will he continue to hold out his hand?

We could learn so much from our brothers and sisters in these foreign lands, especially the ones we consider Third World or poorer countries. They may be in bad shape in all the ways of the world, but they have much more going for them in the spiritual ways of God. We have much to offer them as well. We are educated, we do understand many mysteries of the Kingdom. The problem is that we are just book smart and in many cases have swelled heads. We need to work on these things. We must learn to care for each other. We need to do this, not only for the sake of each other, but for the sake of the whole world.

Our caring may be necessary for the well-being of the woman down the street who has no husband, no job, and three kids to raise. Concern and help could make the difference to the man who has lost all hope and is debating whether or not to take his life. The lonely widow who has lost the will to live needs our support. We must be ready to assist the family who

no way could we inherit the Kingdom. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:2 IV; Matthew 18:2-3 KJ). Our world here in the United States is full of such doubt and disbelief. It's really sad to see. In the lives we live we make things so difficult for ourselves. Why do we do this? We have so much, yet we, by our lack of faith and lack of trust, destroy many of the wonderful blessings we could have.

The people in Kenya are not a prideful people. They are not hard-hearted either. They, like the Hondurans, are a humble and meek people. They have many of those childlike characteristics we as a nation have lost for the most part. Sometimes I think we make ourselves too educated, too smart for our own good. We become independent and trust in ourselves only. We, as Nephi said, need to put our trust in God. "O Lord, I have trusted in thee, and I will trust in thee for ever. I will not put my trust in the arm of flesh; for I know that cursed is he that putteth his trust in the arm of flesh" (2 Nephi 3:61-62 RLDS; 2 Nephi 4:34 LDS). Lack of trust in God leads to destruction. Oh why, oh why, do we continue in our stubborn ways? What have we brought upon ourselves? How do we fix our lives? What is the remedy? Only by submitting ourselves to the Lord, calling upon his name, and trusting and listening to him, will we overcome

has just found out their child has terminal cancer and has only a short time to live. A caring attitude may make the difference to the family who has been trying to decide what church they should attend. These concerns are everyday life situations we may find ourselves facing from time to time.

The Lord has given us each other and that includes the best and worst of each of us. We've wasted so much time being pessimists. Don't you think it's time we become optimists and build the Kingdom of God? It's so easy to see the negative in people and push them away instead of helping them become better by seeing the good.

This trip was the most humbling experience I've ever had. I now know and understand him in a way I never knew before. I in no way have anything to boast about from this trip. Yes, there were many converted and baptized. Yes, there were healings and the gift of tongues. Yes, I had opportunities to take part in many great things, but it was the work of the Lord. It was his timing for these things to happen. I just hap-

pened to be one of the instruments he chose to use in this place at this time. In many ways this is no different than other situations some of us are involved in on a daily basis. The small things we do are just as important as the big deeds. If it is all for the cause of the Kingdom, it matters not who does which part. It is all for one cause and one purpose. It's not so much important which part is your work, but the spirit in which you do your part makes the difference.

Please take to heart all I've shared. Even though we may be in different places doing different things, using our various gifts and talents, we are all in this together. May the Lord bless you and be with you. May unity and everlasting life for our brothers and sisters be our goal.

K.J. Eichhorn holds the office of priest. He recently returned from Oaxaca, Mexico, concluding his service for the last two years as a member of the Youth Missionary Corp.

A F R A Challenging Life

by Di Smith

"You can never 'out give' the Lord," my mother used to say. It's true. Whenever I try to do something for him, I'm the one who always gets the blessing.

Going to Kenya was just such a blessing. I went there to be with the women and to share my testimony of the Lord and my love for him. But I was the one who was richly blessed every time I tried to share.

The women of Kenya are beautiful of soul, very industrious, and devoted to the Lord. Even though these women usually work from daylight to dusk under trying circumstances and with little physical help, they never talked about, or asked for, financial help or physical relief.

Oh yes, they do need physical and financial help. Life is difficult and challenging. Esther's children cannot go to school because there is not enough money to pay the small school fees each semester. Rebecca might have lost her toe to infection if Dr. Doug had not taken care of it along with other health concerns of people there. Doctors are few, far away, and expensive.

Many times each day water is carried on the women's heads, sometimes for long distances. Even in the capital city where they have running water and electricity, either utility may be unexplainably cut off for weeks at a time. When water does not come

through a tap, it is scooped up from ponds or puddles where people bathe and do laundry and where cattle wallow. Women bend from the waist many hours of each day cooking over an open fire, sweeping floors that are perhaps made of dried mud, doing laundry by rubbing their hands together with the material in



Everything is extremely labor intensive. Water has to be carried from a well.

between, or washing dishes in cold water by rubbing a cloth on a bar of soap and then scrubbing the pots. Almost everything is done at floor level. Everything is extremely labor intensive.

"Mom" gets up at 6:00 A.M., lights a fire, puts a pot of water on to heat, sweeps the dirt path and kitchen, starts dishes from the night before (it's too dark to wash after supper), starts breakfast, carries water from the well, and so on with other tasks. After dishes are done, they are put on the table for breakfast. After serving the guests, the women and children eat what may be left. With the completion of more dishes and cleaning, laundry is begun. Someone goes out to the garden to get *sukum wiki* (broccoli leaves) and



Di Smith and Pam Odida

potatoes. Someone else may go to get cornmeal at the market several miles away. This whole cycle begins again as lunch is started and goes on all day long with no rest until about ten o'clock at night.

I tried to keep up with the women by pulling my share of the load. I carried water from the well, tried to chop firewood, washed dishes, went to the garden for vegetables and helped cook over the open fire on the ground. "Dad" said that I had become one of them when I successfully cooked *quan*, their main staple, for the second time. (*Quan* is cornmeal cooked in boiling water until it can be formed into a loaf.) I could not hope to keep their pace. I had been too spoiled by my stove, microwave, refrigerator, running water, electricity, and supermarkets.

One day I couldn't cope with the guilt I felt at having so much while they had so little. I watched as they counted out pennies for eggs at market while we had been concerned about how many hundreds of dollars to bring with us. As a flood of tears wouldn't seem to leave me that morning, Pam was kind in her assurance that they were used to their way of life. I can't believe that God ever intended for such inequity among his creation, but I never heard even one woman complain about her lot in life or wish aloud for something better. Instead, almost every woman I met told me of God's endless goodness to her and her family, or she asked to hear more about the Lord and the Scriptures.

Margaret

When Margaret came over to Eric's house, he instructed me to sit down and tell her about The Book of Mormon. She was so open and receptive to the book and what I told her that I almost didn't know

what to say. After speaking briefly about The Book of Mormon and pointing out some of my favorite scriptures, I gave her a copy and asked if she would like to take it and read it. She immediately said yes. I showed her the promise in Moroni 10:3 and asked her to pray each time before reading it by asking God to show her the truth of the book. She agreed to do so and asked to meet again to talk about the gospel.

I am so used to defending the Lord, his church, and my beliefs that I was absolutely flooded with joy when the people I met accepted the gospel and The Book of Mormon with an open heart and mind. I never felt I had to defend what I said or believed, nor go through a lengthy differentiation between Mormons and RLDS, RLDS and Restorationists, or the Bible and The Book of Mormon.

The people there are hungry. Yes, food is in short supply. It broke my heart to see children and adults sifting through the smoldering garbage heaps by the side of the road and to see young and old alike curled up in a blanket by those same piles or on a doorstep for the night. But the greatest hunger I saw was for the gospel.

Brian and Felix, young men fourteen and thirteen years old, sat for hours asking questions and listening, and then they asked for a Book of Mormon of their own to read.

Betty

Betty and I shared many testimonies of God's love during our hours of washing dishes together outside. During this time, I could see that Betty's faith was strong and her love for the Lord was quite evident.

Betty was upset as we did the dishes on Saturday night. She said "Mom" had told her she could not go to Mass the next day because she had to stay home and help take care of the guests. She really wanted to go to church because she desired to take Holy Communion. I assured her that we would just work extra fast and hard in the morning so that we could get everything done in time for her to go. She was not convinced since she knew better than I how long everything takes.

Sunday morning Leah came to wash the dishes with me. Betty had been up sick most of the night. She later came out, and I told her about the Lord's instructions to call upon the elders whenever we are



A sick. After talking to her about the Lord's promises and administration, I asked if she would like the elders to administer to her. She responded with a definite yes. After the administration, she stated with conviction that the Lord would heal her now. Sure enough she was not sick any longer and was able to come to church services with us in the compound. The next morning she told her uncle, Sam, that she wanted to be baptized.

Heryne

R Heryne had heard that Ron Smith and his brother, Doug, had come to Kenya and were at Sam and Judith's compound. Excitedly, Heryne and Ben, her husband, came to see them. The day before, Heryne had fallen and sprained her ankle. It was quite swollen and painful, but she stood on the crowded transport for two hours and then walked the last half-mile.

C Ron had shared the gospel and The Book of Mormon with Heryne during his last trip, and now she was eager for him and his brother to share the gospel with

her husband. They were disappointed not to find Ron and Doug there. However, Heryne and I were able to have a good talk together as we shared the good news of the gospel and testimonies of God's love. Ben listened attentively as we talked about the promises in The Book of Mormon. Heryne's ankle was getting worse, so I told her about administration and the Lord's promise. She agreed to have the elders administer to her. By the time Ben and Heryne left, her ankle was almost normal size, and the pain had gone away.

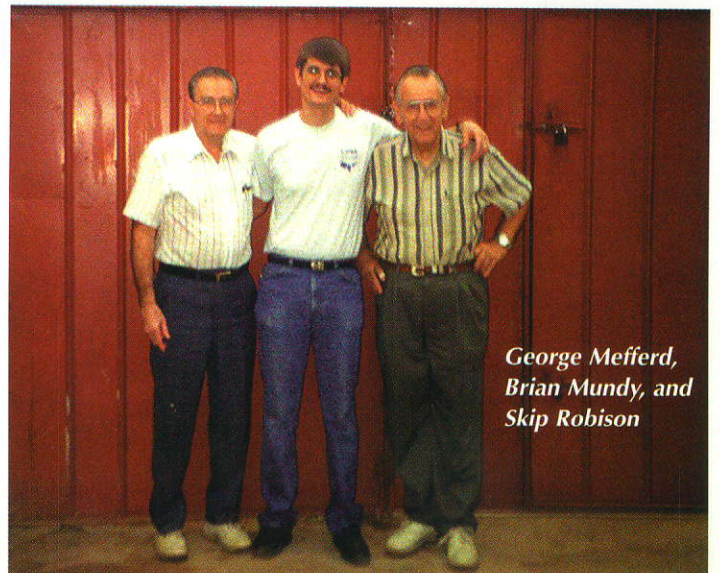
Even though most of the time I was the only white skinned person around and the only one who could not speak any of the native languages, I never felt left out, afraid, or like I didn't belong. The people loved me and accepted me.

Was I blessed? Oh yes, many times over! Before going to Kenya, I had many concerns and had taken them to the Lord in prayer. During my stay there I kept a list, which eventually numbered twelve, of the prayers the Lord had answered for me personally on that trip. The faith, generosity, and love of the people of Kenya also blessed me. My faith was strengthened as I witnessed the deep devotion of the ladies, men, and children to the Lord. Their testimonies have added assurance to mine and to others that I have heard in the past. I was blessed with friendships that I will cherish for a lifetime.

Di Smith, her husband Ron, and two sons live in Lamoni, Iowa. She teaches English as a secondary language at Graceland College. Di attends the Church of Jesus Christ Mt. Ayr Restoration Branch.

A Missionary Trip to Nigeria

On January 20, 1998, Skip Robison, Brian Mundy, and George Mefferd left Kansas City International Airport for Nigeria, West Africa. George and Skip each carried a Book of Mormon in their carry-on bag to give away before reaching Nigeria. While sitting in the Frankfurt, Germany, airport with approximately twenty minutes left before boarding a plane to Nigeria, George spotted a young man sitting by himself. He prayed, "Lord, is he the person to receive my Book of Mormon?" George spoke to him and invited him to come visit while waiting. Within ten minutes George gave Victor O. Dillie, a native Nigerian, now



*George Mefferd,
Brian Mundy, and
Skip Robison*

a citizen of the United States, his copy of The Book of Mormon. Skip gave his Book of Mormon to a husband and wife, Sonny and Evelyn, while flying over the Sahara Desert enroute from Frankfurt, Germany, to Lagos Airport in Nigeria.

All the other Books of Mormon and Inspired Versions were in Brian's large suitcases. Luggage included five suitcases plus carry-ons. These were filled with travel clothes, twenty-three Inspired Versions, thirty Books of Mormon, tracts, teaching materials, priesthood manuals; as well as medicine, toothbrushes, toothpaste, and food.

Customs at the Lagos International Airport was a notable experience. On a previous visit in 1993, the men encountered great difficulty at customs. In addition, the men had been warned that there would be no protection for Americans at the Lagos International Airport. The prayers of the men, their families, and friends were answered. As the first suitcase was opened for inspection, Henley Mbanaso, the Restoration contact minister who



came to meet them at the airport, told the inspectors "I am a minister for the Lord." The two customs inspectors stood there without saying another word as the suitcase was closed, and all four men passed by them without the opening of another suitcase.

There were several experiences with the police and military authorities. On a trip returning from Abakaliki, they were stopped and detained for approximately one hour. The intent was to take them back to Abakaliki and develop their film to determine if a photo had been taken of military personnel. If a photo was taken, the authorities could prosecute the offender and possibly others in the vehicle. One armed soldier got in Hensley Mbanaso's car and three police officers and one additional soldier followed behind in a second car. Much prayer and pleading took place. The soldier in Hensley's car finally had them pull over, and a settlement was agreed upon.

On the trip to Umuahia, George, Brian, and Skip

left in one car. Hensley and others followed in an old rented van to carry the entire luggage. The police stopped the van in Aba to inspect the luggage. Unfortunately, the luggage was locked. George, Brian, and Skip, who had gone on ahead in the other vehicle, had the keys with them. The van was detained for several hours. Finally, one policeman broke a lock on the luggage. Upon seeing Scriptures in the suitcase he stated he wanted a copy. Hensley gladly gave him a



Above: "And they who were baptized in the name of Jesus, were called the church of Christ" 3 Nephi 12:13 RLDS; 3 Nephi 26:21 LDS.

Left: Children in the streets of Nigeria

book. After insuring that the luggage contained no weapons, the van was allowed to proceed. The next day while traveling in the opposite direction toward Abakaliki, the same policeman stopped them. His superior officer was with him and apologized for the delay the night before. She then requested a personal copy of the Bible that was different from hers. She actually came to the church to get her copy, but each time the Bibles were in another location. A copy of The Book of Mormon and an Inspired Version were later left for her at the police station. The officers at the station were invited to church. The missionary effort is to plant seeds, nurture, and feed if possible.

The Lord richly blessed the efforts of those who traveled to Nigeria. Classes were held to assist and train the priesthood and other interested persons. During their stay twenty persons were baptized, fourteen were confirmed, one baby was blessed, and two men were called and ordained to the priesthood. Several more are preparing for baptism. They are a loving, joyous people who love to hear about the Lord Jesus Christ.

The branch in Nigeria has increased tenfold. God is blessing the missionary outreach in these last days.



Will you give it to the world?

In 1997 the Foundation for Research on Ancient America challenged many of you to renew your interest and study of The Book of Mormon with an invitation to read it cover to cover. Many responded! Lists of their names and a variety of testimonies were printed in *The Witness*, rekindling the fire and excitement of this holy resource of the restoration.

We, at FRAA, are now asking our friends and co-workers in the causes of Christ to join us in an even greater calling and challenge. We need you to help us bring this same testimony of Jesus Christ to many who do not have an opportunity to know the fullness of the gospel and to invest some of the abundance the Lord has entrusted to you in an effort that brings tangible results.

Many Christian organizations and faiths have responded to a great need to send thousands of Bibles overseas to exploding frontiers of converts to the teachings of Christ. In many areas, missionaries divide sections of scripture among the new Christians because there are not enough to go around. They treasure these small sections and read and study the gospel often under the threat of ridicule and punishment.

In the restoration movement today, missionaries

cry out with a similar need. Many missionaries here and abroad have expressed concern with the great shortage of Scriptures, especially reasonably priced missionary copies of The Book of Mormon, to be shared with those who are seeking to know Christ and understand the fullness of the gospel found within the covers of this great book. Many small organizations and individuals must purchase copies at their own expense while also bearing the greater financial burdens of the missionary work.

We are asking you to join with us in a new, exciting endeavor at FRAA to **provide copies of The Book of Mormon at no charge** to those individuals and organizations evangelizing around the world. Every dollar that you donate to this program will go directly to purchase missionary copies of The Book of Mormon at the most cost-effective basis for this missionary effort.

Will you stand with us in this great cause to proclaim the words of Christ found in the pages of The Book of Mormon? Will you make the small sacrifice to do for others what many cannot do for themselves? Let us be a powerful influence for good by making this resource available to the world.

Please send your financial donations to FRAA—Give it to the World, 210 West White Oak, Independence, MO 64065.

