

"Simpleness of the Way"
Ward Conference
Mike Baird – July 16, 2006

Introduction

- Liken 3 scriptures unto ourselves

#1

"The things of my soul"

- 2 Nephi 4:15-16

15) *And upon these I write the things of my soul*, and many of the scriptures which are engraven upon the plates of brass. For my soul delighteth in the scriptures, and my heart pondereth them, and writeth them for the learning and the profit of my children.

16) Behold, my soul delighteth in the things of the Lord; and my heart pondereth continually upon the things which I have seen and heard.

- On the other plates were a "more history part"
- On these plates were written "the things of my soul"

"O wretched man that I am"

- 2 Nephi 4:17-19

17) Nevertheless, notwithstanding the great goodness of the Lord, in showing me his great and marvelous works, my heart exclaimeth: *O wretched man that I am!* Yea, my heart sorroweth because of my flesh; my soul grieveth because of mine iniquities.

18) I am encompassed about, because of the temptations and the sins which do so easily beset me.

19) And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins;

- We are sometimes shocked that Nephi would feel this way – yet ...
- Have you ever felt this way?
- Where did Nephi turn from here?

"Nevertheless I know in whom I have trusted"

- 2 Nephi 4:19-25
19) ...nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.
- Here is first guidance we can take from Nephi
 - Nephi knows whom he trusts and to whom he can turn
 - He has a grateful heart

"Why should my heart weep and my soul linger in the valley of sorrow... because of mine afflictions"

- 2 Nephi 4:26
O then, if I have seen so great things, if the Lord in his condescension unto the children of men hath visited men in so much mercy, why should my heart weep and my soul linger in the valley of sorrow, and my flesh waste away, and my strength slacken, because of mine afflictions?
- Have you ever felt this way?
 - Why do I let the things that happen to me get me down?
 - Why can't I just let things go?
 - Why do I let the things others do decide how I react and feel?
- 2 Nephi 4:27
And why should I yield to sin, because of my flesh? Yea, why should I give way to temptations, that the evil one have place in my heart to destroy my peace and afflict my soul? Why am I angry because of mine enemy?
- Have you ever felt this way?
 - Why do I keep committing this sin?
 - Why am I angry?
 - Why can't I just stay away from this problem?
 - Why do I just follow the wrong crowd/person?
 - Why can't I just do what is right instead of what is wrong?

- I think most of us feel this way sometimes – what can we do?
 - Again let's look to Nephi
- 2 Nephi 4:27
 Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin. Rejoice, O my heart, and give place no more for the enemy of my soul.
 Do not anger again because of mine enemies. Do not slacken my strength because of mine afflictions.
 Rejoice, O my heart, and cry unto the Lord,
- Nephi exhorted himself to turn and trust in the Lord
 - How do we do that?
 - How do we no longer "linger in the valley of sorrow, waste away and slacken because of our afflictions"?
 - How do we no longer "droop in sin"?

#2

The Straight & Narrow Path

- Hiking – Eagle Creek – take the trail – know where it leads
- We have all been baptized – entered the gate and are on the straight and narrow path
- Where does the path lead?
 - 2 Nephi 31:18
 "And then are ye in this strait and narrow path which leads to eternal life..."
- What do we do once we are on the path – is that all – get on the path?
 - 2 Nephi 31:20
 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.
 - Faith in Christ
 - Nephi: "I know in whom I trust"
 - Keep the commandments
 - Scripture study (feast on the word of Christ)

- Endure to the end
 - What does it mean to endure to the end?
 - Keep your covenants you have made – every day

How do we keep our covenants and not droop in sin?

- The answer is the same in either case

The basics

- Repent
- Scripture study
- Prayer
- Family Home Evening
- Church attendance
- Temple attendance

Consistency

- Lord would like us to be consistent
- Elder Neal A Maxwell:

"Given our weaknesses, however, paced progress is essential, much as God used six measured and orderly creative periods (followed by respite) in preparing man and this earth. There is a difference, therefore, between being steadily and effectively or "anxiously " engaged, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, being frantically engaged one moment and being passive and detached the next." (Notwithstanding My Weakness, pg 3)
- Be consistent to make steady, measured progress
 - Hike up Eagle creek
- Be consistent to not droop in sin or have our souls linger in the valley of sorrow because of our afflictions

#3

Perish because of the simpleness of the way

- When I asked of the Lord what I should speak on today – the following scripture in conjunction with the principle of consistently doing the basics just outlined is what was given to me by the Spirit
- 1 Nephi 17:41
And he did straiten them in the wilderness with his rod; for they hardened their hearts, even as ye have; and the Lord straitened them because of their iniquity. He sent fiery flying serpents among them; and after they were bitten he prepared a way that they might be healed; and the labor which they had to perform was to look; and because of the simpleness of the way, or the easiness of it, there were many who perished.
- If we are to keep our covenants and endure to the end
- If we are to not have our hearts "weep and our souls linger in the valley of sorrow, and our flesh waste away, and our strength slacken, because of our afflictions "
- If we are to "no longer droop in sin"
- We must consistently do these basic things and not be as those children of Israel who because of the simpleness of the way did not perform the labor of looking and thus perished

Promise

2 Nephi 4:15-30
2 Nephi 31:14,20
1 nephi 17:41