

# **The Atonement – Hope Because of Him**

Cooper Mountain Ward Sacrament Meeting April 20, 2014 (Easter)  
Mike Baird

## **Intro**

- On this Easter Sunday it is my opportunity to speak about the Atonement.

## **Hope**

- If I had been asked today to stand up and give a one-word sermon on the Atonement I would simply say the word “Hope”
- There are many facets of the atonement which bring hope
- I don’t have time to talk about them all
- In the few minutes I have I would share some of my feelings about two facets that have deeper meaning because of personal experiences

## Hope in the resurrection

- Job asked that age old question that confronts us all  
“If a man die, shall he live again” (Job 14:14)
- We know that because of Christ we all shall live again
- Alma 42:23  
“the atonement bringeth to pass the resurrection of the dead”
  - Resurrection is a gift to all regardless
- This became very personal to me when for the first time with the death of my mother I came face to face with that question – will I see her again?
- My mother passed away a little over 1 year ago
  - It was my mother who taught me faith as a young boy
  - Much of who I am today I attribute to my mother’s influence
  - She was still teaching me about faith as she was facing her immanent passing to the other side.
  - My mother had cancer and about the time it was clear that her days left were few I would visit her and we would talk about many things
    - Her faith was burning just as bright as it ever was and was reflected in the things she would say to me
    - Her faith in the afterlife
      - That she was going to meet her loved ones
      - We agreed that she would greet our Norwegian ancestors for me
      - That we would be together again
    - I am grateful for the hope that my faith in the Atonement gives me that one day I’ll be with my mother again
    - Because of that hope while there is sorrow in the parting with her, death has no sting

## Hope when things are broken

- Another hope provided us by the atonement is when things in our lives are broken
- Joseph B Wirthlin  
"Each of us will have ... those days when the universe itself seems shattered and the shards of our world lie littered about us in pieces. We all will experience those broken times when it seems we can never be put together again. " ("Sunday Will Come," *Ensign*, Nov 2006, 28–30)
  - We may feel this way because of the loss of a loved one
  - We may feel this way because we don't feel that we can measure up and perhaps never can measure up
  - We may feel this way because we have been wronged most horribly
  - We may feel this way because of hurtful words of another
  - We may feel this way because of tragedy
  - Perhaps we contemplate our future and wonder if things might ever be better
- In the synagogue at Nazareth Christ read some verses from Isaiah and declared "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears"
- Isaiah 61:

The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to *them that are bound*;

... to comfort all that mourn;

... to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;....

- How – Christ – explained by Alma
- Alma 7:11-12

And he shall go forth, suffering pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind; and this that the word might be fulfilled which saith he will take upon him the pains and the sicknesses of his people.

And he will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities.

- Another free gift – yet we must meet the criteria to receive this gift
- What is it we must do?
  - Faith that he can and will succor us
  - Turn away from bitterness and sorrow toward the Savior and cast our burdens at his feet
- Christ’s invitation:
- D&C 19:23  
“walk in the meekness of my spirit and you shall have peace in me
- I would like to share how my daughter found peace through Christ’s atonement
  
- Some of you know our daughter Jennifer – she grew up in this ward
- Jennifer – 35 years old, married for ~13 years
- Discuss something she has made public - posted on her blog on the internet
- Jennifer – Struggle – Infertility
- **Jennifer talk** she wrote for Mother’s day 3 years ago

Having a doctor tell you that there is a zero percent chance of getting pregnant on your own is devastating. And devastated is what I have been for so long. After surgeries and crazy menopausal drugs and knowing that in the end it didn't matter we decided to try in vitro. We were so blessed to have it work our first try. But after the next two rounds failed I was still a girl who couldn't have kids.

Last Mothers Day was that lowest moment when not even having (my daughter) Ivy made me happy. I remember being at the park about a month after Mother's Day and watching a mom with 3 little boys probably under three. I watched her and I got mad. When she put Coke in her little boys bottle I was angry. Why could this mom who wasn't doing a good job, get to have kids and I didn't? Didn't I deserve it more than she did? I was a way better mom than that. It wasn't fair.

Right after that I had a big long talk with my Grandma at a Family reunion. After talking about how life isn't perfect and that life is hard she told me... If we were all to hang our troubles out on the line, you would pick yours and I would pick mine. And that was from the lady that was dying from cancer.

Some time after that I started making a conscious effort to be happy. I decided to be thankful and grateful for the things I did have. I finally realized after all those years of praying for things to be different, for God to help our family grow and to just make it so I could have kids that I had been praying for the wrong thing. I started praying for peace. Peace for my heart to accept the

circumstances I had been given. I also started praying more for others and wishing peace for so many others struggling with hard things. And as I opened my heart to others and tried to lift people up instead of worrying about my own trials, my burden became so much lighter.

- “Because of Him” social media effort by the Church.
- Jennifer’s Facebook post on Friday:  
“#becauseofhim I can be a better me. Getting to the other side of heartache is difficult. But once I got there I realized how strong I really am. But I also recognize that I didn't do it alone. The Savior was and is with me every step of the way. #infertility #movingon
- “Because of Him” my daughter was able to find peace

## **Garden of Gethsemane**

- Garden of Gethsemane experience on first trip to Israel where I had the Garden to myself for about 30 minutes

## **Because of Him**

- Church Easter Video – “Because of Him”  
“It was unthinkable, impossible, unfathomable, unprecedented.  
A single act that changed history, possibility and destiny.

He was a carpenter, a teacher, an outcast, a leader.  
Yet he did what no carpenter, teacher, outcast, leader had ever done.

Like all who preceded Him he lived, and he died.  
But unlike all who preceded Him he rose from the dead.  
He lived again.

He lives.  
And because He lives, you, you, and you, and she and he and they and we all  
will live again.

Because of Him death has no sting, the grave no victory.  
Because of Him, we can start again, again, and again.

Because of Him, guilt becomes peace. Regret becomes relief. Despair  
becomes hope.

Because of Him, we have second chances, clean slates, new beginnings.  
There is no such thing as the end, because of Him”

## **Testimony**

- My testimony of Christ is that He lives. He wrought the atonement, which makes all things possible that we hope for – Because of Him