

## My Testimony: I Replaced Criticism with Prayer

In the devotions from last year on the action page for January 2015 it said, "This Month I Plan to stop being critical of others. I will **pray** for them instead of criticize them. I will look for the good in my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ."

I testify to you that the action of praying for people who I might otherwise criticize works!

Last fall (2015) I noticed Satan would tempt me to have critical thoughts of my brothers and sisters in the faith and a general disgruntled feeling about the congregation and the church as a whole. In December (2015) I decided to follow the Patriarch's advice and **pray** for people instead of judging them.

**Pray** in all kinds of situations. It really works!

1) Love and concern quickly replaced my judgmental thoughts, and I began to **pray** for my brothers and sisters in ways I would not have thought to do before,

2) Satan's temptations to cause me trouble in my relationships with others stopped when loving **prayers** were faithfully offered for God's people and for His purposes--to build up Zion. To God be all praise, honor and Glory!

**1 Nephi 1:65-66 And it came to pass that I, Nephi, said unto my father, I will go and do the things which the Lord hath commanded, for 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.**

*We hope you will actually be inspired to re-read the full devotionals from last year. See [www.ogrb.org](http://www.ogrb.org) Resource Page. May we continue to put the actions the Patriarchs recommended into our daily lives--for the cause of Zion!*

by Pat Chadwick, Women's Leader, 2010-2016

## Stepping Stones for Spiritual Growth



**God is Calling Us to Come Up Higher!**

### Preparation Guide for January Women's Devotionals:

**This was the challenge placed before us in 2015. Have we grown spiritually this past year as individuals and as a congregation? May we review this Challenge anew and commit to help lay the foundation of Zion in 2016--let us be ready for His return!**

### Zion is beginning when we love God and we love each other.

**Let us be loving, kind, tenderhearted, forgiving, and not judging one another. Let us look for the beautiful and the true instead of looking for faults in each other.**

**Love is a true catalyst, it changes everything it touches. If we work on keeping the two great commandments as found in **Matthew 22:34-39**, we would soon see great changes for good taking place.**

**Fourth thing listed in the guide prepared by the Patriarchs of the church: "Do I make righteous judgments?"**

**Action = "Cease to be critical of others. Instead, pray for those that seem to make poor decisions."**

**[Read Romans 12:5-10](#)**

Week #1                      January

Let us start our New Year with a “Spiritual Resolution” to Prepare, to Change, to Grow Spiritually!

1. Keep commandments.
2. Study God’s revelations.

2 Peter 3:1-3 The second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance; that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandments.

Revelations (prophecy) are being fulfilled in our day and age right before our eyes!

F. Henry Edwards, in his commentary of the Doctrine & Covenants, lists reasons for revelation/prophecy:

1. increase understanding
2. correct errors
3. instruct wisdom-seekers
4. stimulate repentance
5. humble and strengthen
6. power to translate Book of Mormon
7. authorize and inspire the foundation/development of the church
8. bless/give knowledge

Spend much time in study of the scriptures!

Also read D&C 1:5-8

Week #2                      January

Read Hymn #180:

“Admonition”

“Love ye me and love all people; love as I have loved you. This your calling, this My purpose; thus be My disciples true. Then in this exalted station, your companion I will be. Every promise of My Scriptures will be verified in thee.

“Get ye up then to your mountain, Zion of the closing day! For the glory of My coming, waits to break upon your way! Forth from hence your testimony, shall to trembling nations go; and the world confess that with you God has residence below.”

D&C 140:5c The work of preparation and the perfection of My Saints go forward slowly, and Zion conditions are no further away nor any closer than the spiritual condition of My people justifies.

We are told to pray unto the Father that we might be filled with love and if we have love it will be well with us in the last days!

Spiritual Condition matters!

Also read Hebrews 6:1

Week #3                      January

Read Hymn #63:

“Let Us Pray for One Another”

“It is waning on t’ward midnight; soon we’ll hear the watchman say, ‘See the Son of God is coming; go and meet Him on the way!’ That our lamps may then be burning, bright enough to guide our way, and that we may share His glory, for each other let us pray.”

D&C 65:1d Pray unto the Lord; call upon His holy name; make known His wonderful works among the people, call upon the Lord, that His Kingdom may go forth upon the earth.

Excerpts from a message given through Elder Rob Bird at the CMRB Reunion at Odessa Hills in 2013: “... Don’t ever underestimate the value of the gift of My Holy Spirit, or the power of a fervent prayer, or fail to treasure up and feast upon the promises found in My Word, or the strength found in obedience to my two greatest commandments.”

Pray and be prepared for the coming of the Lord!

Also read Matthew 22:34-39

Week #4                      January

D&C 85:38a-c Jesus instructs us in the ways of living, and above all things how to love and pray until He comes to receive us unto Himself.

Moroni 7:53 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, pray unto the Father with all the energy of heart, that ye may be filled with this love which He hath bestowed upon all who are true followers of His Son Jesus Christ.

The Lord would have us to be kind and tenderhearted to each other and not gossiping or saying hurtful things about each other. Let us speak words that will edify all those around us.

Ephesians 4:29-32 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

Let us love one another in word and deed!

Also read 1 Corinthians 13:1-13