

August Week #1 Devotionals and Consideration

Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.



Revelation 19:5-9

And a Voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His saints, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. **And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.** And He saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And He saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

We are required to seek out righteousness.

We speak of Zion. We pray for Zion to come. We desire Zion to be here within our hearts. But what are we doing about it now? What are we doing to bring about the cause of Zion?

We can't just talk about Zion. We must be actively preparing for it. We must seek righteousness, which is simply choosing what is right in the sight of God.

Are we praying every day for God to reveal our sins so that we can repent of them now?

Repentance is the path to righteousness. It is acknowledging to God that we have unrighteousness in our life and we are making an effort to remove it from our life.

Once we have removed unrighteousness, it must be replaced with righteousness. If we've made poor decisions in the past (chosen unrighteousness), then we must make a conscious effort to choose what is right in the sight of God now.

Every decision we make from this moment forward, we must consult the Lord as to whether it meets His approval. Once we know His will, we must do it! This is righteousness. Step by step we will learn to listen to God's leadings and obey them. This has to become a habit if we want to be in His kingdom.

The great thing about righteousness is that it can be contagious. When we choose what is right, others will want to do the same thing. Our righteousness will not only affect our lives but other people as well.

2 Nephi 14:12 But behold I say unto you, that ye must pray always, and not faint: that ye must not perform anything unto the Lord, save in the first place ye shall pray unto the Father in the name of Christ, that He will consecrate thy performance unto thee, that thy performance may be for the welfare of thy soul.

Righteousness is also a way to overcome the temptations of the devil. How would you like to not be tempted anymore? Choosing what is right according to God's will is the way to fight the devil's temptations.

1 Nephi 7:62 For he (Satan) hath no power over the hearts of the people, for they dwell in righteousness, and the Holy One of Israel reigneth.

When we choose what is right, we have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and Satan has no power over us.

From time to time some of us have individually experienced this freedom from Satan's temptations and instead enjoy the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is so powerfully present in our lives that we don't even have a desire to sin. The problem is as soon as we choose to sin again we are open territory for the devil to tempt us.

Choosing righteousness and experiencing the indwelling of the Holy Spirit must become a way of life moment-to-moment for us.

When we choose God's will above our own will in every situation, the devil loses his power over us because our focus is on Christ who reigns in our lives.

August Week #2 Devotionals and Consideration

Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.



Hymns of the Restoration #84: “Prayer for Zion”

**We’ll go forward unto Zion, We will pledge our lives to Thee;
May Thy gentle Spirit’s whisper lead Thy saints to victory.**

We are required to dwell in righteousness.

To dwell in righteousness truly is Zion living. Why do we struggle with this so much in this life? The answer pure and simple is that we are selfish.

If you want to know if you meet the qualifications for living in Zion, read Psalms 15:

Psalms 15:1-5 Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill of Zion? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is condemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord; sweareth not falsely to hurt any man, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

The standards for Zion are very high, but they are obtainable. Mark down the sins in Psalms 15 you are having trouble with:

Now, ask the Lord every day to help you overcome these sins. Work on them one at a time if it seems overwhelming. God will give you the power to overcome them if you desire it. It’s not by our own strength that we can repent.

Once you have removed a sin, replace it with something good. For instance, if you have trouble with saying something negative about a person, force yourself to say something nice about that person instead. If you have trouble with thinking bad thoughts about someone, force yourself to think something good about that person instead. We must consciously choose to do what is right if we want to live in Zion.

We must practice dwelling in righteousness now. This is our preparation time for being able to dwell in righteousness in Zion. How do we dwell in righteousness?

Genesis 7:23 And the Lord called His people, Zion, because they were of one heart and of one mind, and dwelt in righteousness; and there were no poor among them.

We must be of one heart and of one mind. Sometimes we look at this as being impossible. Everyone has a different opinion or belief about something. How can we be of one heart and of one mind? Love is the answer – not our own love but God’s love dwelling in our hearts.

Do you love everyone in the church?
Do you love everyone in your family?
Do you love everyone in your workplace or school?

Is it possible to love God and not others? Let’s look at I John 4:20-21:

I John 4:20-21 If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God loveth his brother also.

Some people would say that hate is a strong word but one of the definitions for hate is “loving less.”

Picture someone in your mind that you avoid or just don’t want to be around. Perhaps this person irritates you with their words or actions. The amount of love you feel for that person is how much you love God.

How do we obtain this love of Christ?

Moroni 7:52-53 Wherefore, cleave unto charity, which is the greatest of all, for all things must fail; but charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth for ever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with them.

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, that ye may become the sons of God, that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is, that we may have this hope, that we may be purified even as He is pure.

The answer is found in God’s Word. We must pray to the Father every day that we will be filled with His love. His love conquers all things.

Zion will be built by those who have learned to dwell in righteousness **before** it physically comes.

God’s love unifies us so we can be “of one heart and of one mind.”!