

Kirtland Family Reunion 2025

Walk with God in the Covenant Path

But behold, for none of these can I hope, except they shall be reconciled unto Christ, and enter into the narrow gate, and walk in the straight path, which leads to life, and continue in the path until the end of the day of probation. **2 Nephi 15:10**

Repent, therefore, and enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat. Because **strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.** **Matthew 7:22-23**

Focus for the Week

Together, Let Us Walk with God in the Covenant Path

- Why the need for a “Covenant Path”
 - A Fall from God’s Presence
 - Walking in Darkness
 - God’s Great Love and Condescension
 - A Plan of Redemption
- Christ Walked in the Way
 - Waypoints along the Covenant Path
- Walking with God
 - In His wisdom
 - In His Illuminating Light

At the time of creation, Adam and Eve
Walked with God



They Were Walking in the Light

The Fall and Wisdom – A Tale of Two Trees

Genesis 2

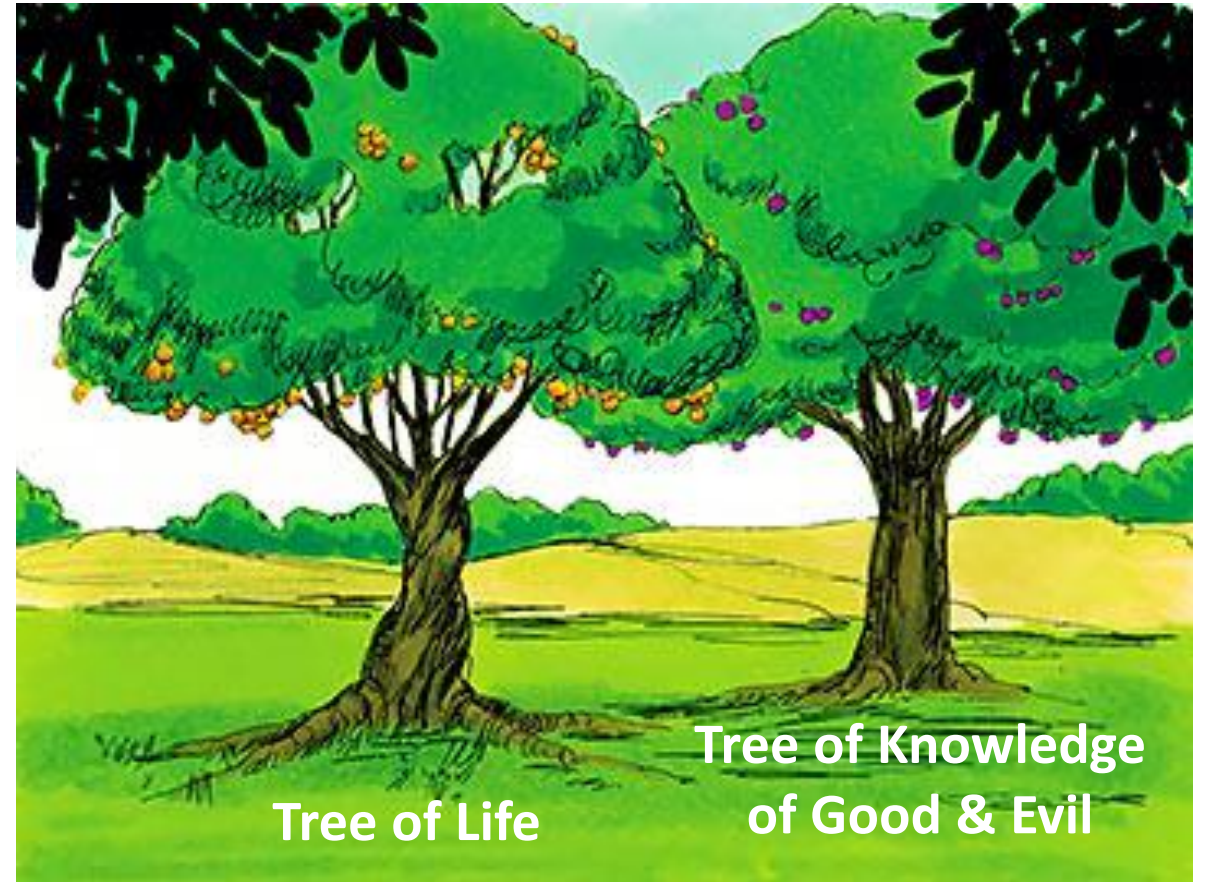
2:12 And I, the Lord God, **planted the tree of life** also, in the midst of the garden; and also **the tree of knowledge of good and evil**.

2:19 And I, the Lord God, commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat;

2:20 But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it;

2:21 Nevertheless, thou mayest choose for thyself, (Agency) for it is given unto thee; but remember that I forbid it; (God's Wisdom)

2:22 For in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.



Genesis 3:8 And he (Satan) said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden. And he spake by the mouth of the serpent. **3:9** And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which thou beholdest in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. **3:10** And the serpent said unto the woman, **Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**



What does this account of the Fall of Man help us understand about knowledge and wisdom?

What shifted in Adam and Eve's perception of the tree and God?

3:10 And the serpent said unto the woman, **Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.**
3:11 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it became pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make her wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat.

Satan's partial lies & truths?

Verses 3:8 & 10

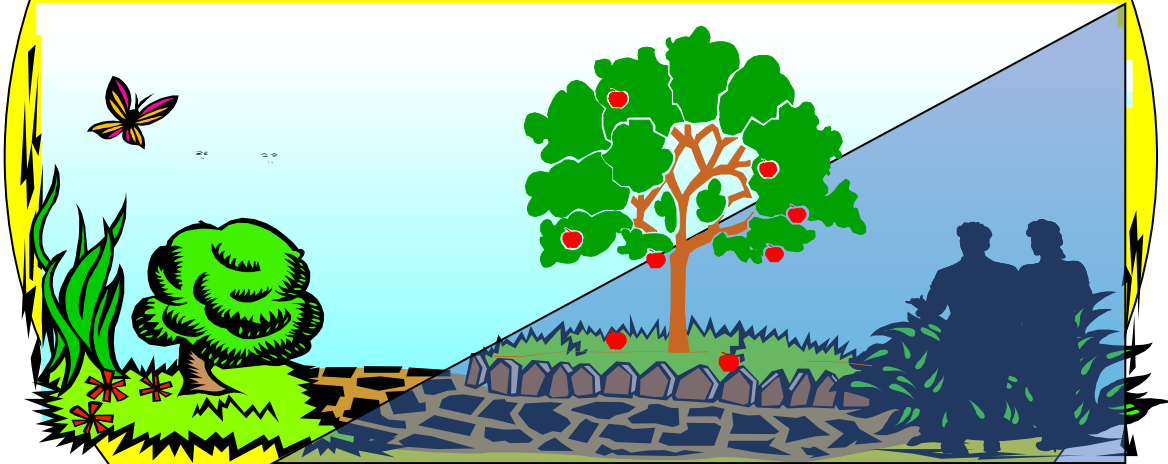
- That they would **not die** and they would **be as Gods** – they did come to **know** good and evil
- How does knowing *Good* and *Evil* make us Gods? – It does not say, Make them God – But says, Make them gods
- They gained knowledge and but ignored God's wisdom?
- God's wisdom dictated that there had to be a choice between life with God or death, a life without God.
- **They chose the lie, and were separated from God**

In verse 11 we see that Eve saw that the tree was:
**Good for food and it became pleasant to the eyes,
a tree to be desired to make her wise,**

In Eve's new found wisdom:

- What was once considered evil, became delightful in her eyes
- What was once ignored, now became desirable because it would make her wise
- Where God was once trusted and obeyed, now His love and wisdom were questioned

GOD



“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they had been naked; ...And they heard the voice of the Lord God, as they were walking in the garden, in the cool of the day. And Adam and his wife went to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord God, amongst the trees of the garden.”

Adam and Eve's first response when they new they had sinned was to hide –
Why?

WHY?

To escape from God's presence

WHY?

To walk in the light is to be fully exposed

To being fearful and ashamed of being in God's presence

To being fearful of what the light might reveal to those around them

So, they sought to avoid it.

Alma speaking to his son, [17:11-12] *Yea, I saw that I had rebelled against my God, and that I had not kept his holy commandments...Yea, and in fine, so great had been my iniquities, **that the very thoughts of coming into the presence of my God, did rack my soul with inexpressible horror.***

Adam and Eve Came to a Knowledge of Good and Evil

How did they come to that knowledge?

- **by experiencing evil – by rejecting that which was good**

Was the fruit of the tree of knowledge inherently bad?

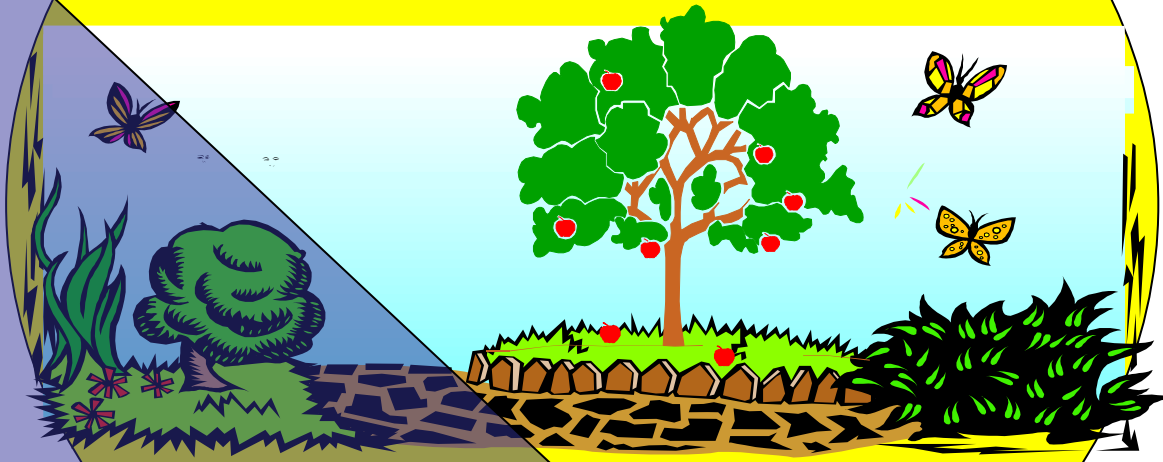
- **The fruit wasn't inherently bad – it was ignoring God's wisdom that was bad**

What was the consequence?

- **They gained knowledge, but were separated from wisdom – God's wisdom**

What were some of the Offenses connected with their disobedience?

GOD



[Gen 4:4] And Adam called upon the name of the Lord, and Eve also, his wife; and they heard the voice of the Lord, from the way towards the garden of Eden, speaking unto them, and they saw him not; for they were shut out from his presence.



“Satan deceived Eve into believing disobedience was the path to wisdom when the opposite was, and still is, true. **Wisdom is not the cause of obedience as much as the result of obedience.**

We obey God not because we are wise enough to do so, but because we trust in God and His wisdom which is revealed in His commandments.

By disobeying God, Adam and Eve evidenced their distrust in God and His infinite wisdom.

Finally, **Adam and Eve could have become wise by eating of the fruit of that other tree**, just as prominently placed, perhaps even more prominently placed, in the center of the garden—**the tree of life.**”

(Source: *Let Me See Thy Glory - A Study of the Attributes of God* , <https://bible.org/seriespage/4-wisdom-god>)

The Tree of Life – Delightful and Desirable

Proverbs 3:18 She (wisdom) is **a tree of life** to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is everyone that retaineth her. **Wisdom is found in the tree of life.**

1 Nephi 4:62 Wherefore, the wicked are rejected from the righteous and also from that tree of life, **whose fruit is most precious and most desirable above all other fruits: 63 Yea, and it is the greatest of all the gifts of God.**

1 Nephi 3:69 And I also beheld that the tree of life was a **representation of the love of God. 70** And the angel said unto me again, **Look and behold the condescension of God! 71 And I looked and beheld the Redeemer of the world,** of whom my father had spoken;

**We were not created to be creatures of
darkness, but creatures of light**

**We were created to
live in the
knowledge and
presence of God**



What does it mean “to walk in darkness”?

Most of us think about it in terms of sinning

The reality is:

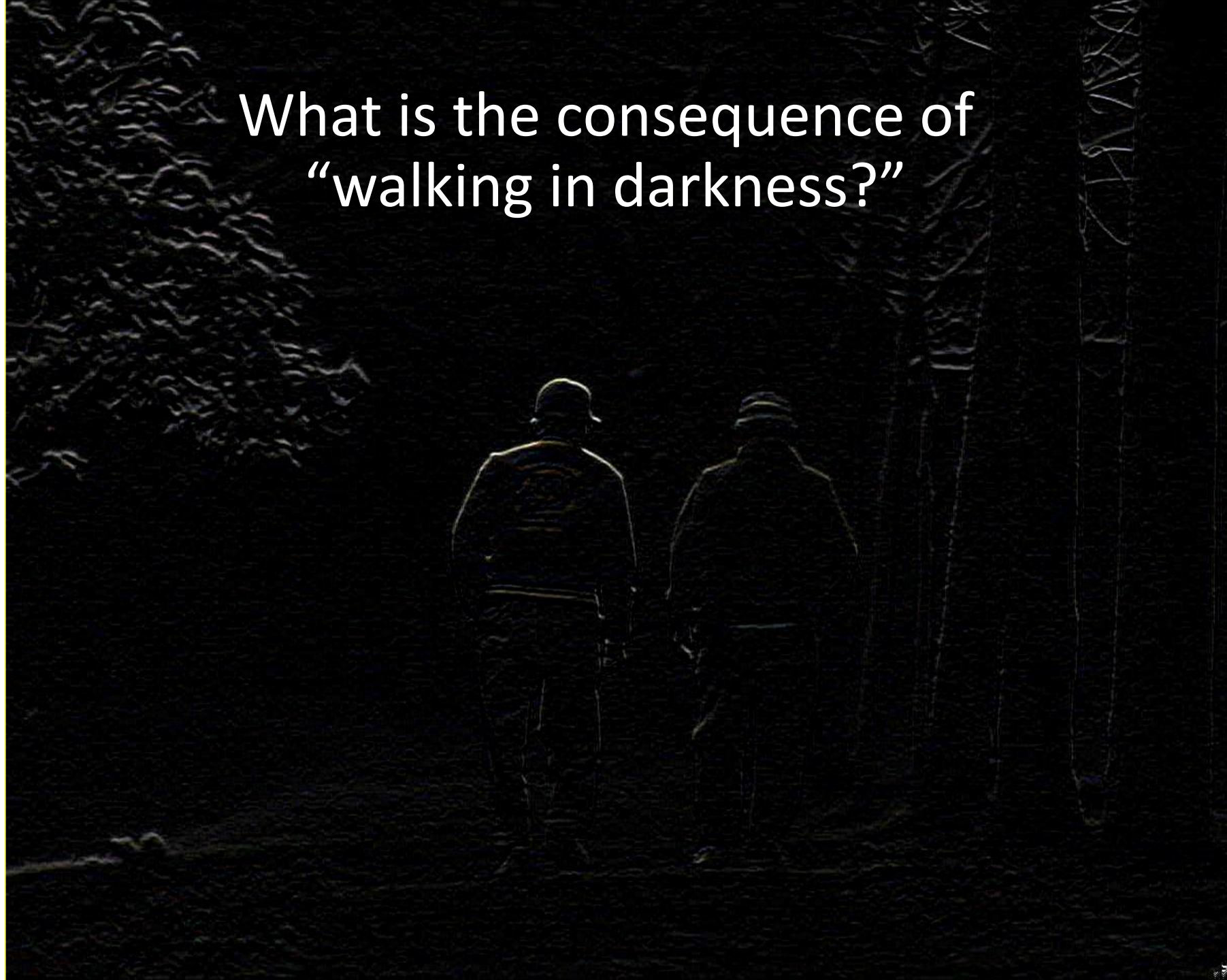
**We sin because we are walking in darkness –
We aren’t walking in darkness because we sin.**

Our natural condition/state is one of darkness
because of the Fall

We are confusing the “Cause and Effect”

To walk in darkness means to
walk without the light of God

What is the consequence of
“walking in darkness?”



Darkness Causes Us To Stumble

Isaiah 59:9 -10 ...we wait for light, but **behold obscurity**; for brightness, **but we walk in darkness**. We **grope for the wall like the blind**, and we **grope as if we had no eyes**; we **stumble** at noonday as in the night;...

1 John 2:9-10 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. **He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.**

John 11:9-10 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. **But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.**

Job 12:25 **They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to stagger like a drunken man.**

Light Illuminates

Psa 90:8 Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance.

Job 12:22 He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

Job 28:11 He bindeth the floods from overflowing; and the thing that is hid bringeth he forth to light.

Dan 2:22 He revealeth the deep and secret things; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.

1 Cor 4:5 Therefore I judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts; and then shall every man have praise of God.

Darkness Robs Us Of Direction and Vision

John 12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you; for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

1 John 2:9&11 He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. ... But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

Light Gives Us Vision

Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

DC 85:8b That which breaketh a law, and abideth not by law, but seeketh to become a law unto itself, and willeth to abide in sin, and altogether abideth in sin, can not be sanctified by law, neither by mercy, justice, or judgment; therefore, **they must remain filthy still.**

Psa 14:3-7 The Lord answered, and said, They are all gone aside, **they are together become filthy**, thou canst behold none of them that are doing good, no, not one.

Darkness Allows US To Get Mired in Filthy Things



Darkness Allows Us To Partake of Things That Aren't Good for Us

Consequence of Partaking

Alma 19:61

*But they are cast out, and consigned to
partake of the fruits of their labors or
their works, which have been evil; and
they drink the dregs of a bitter cup.*

Light reveals that which
is in the darkness



Darkness Causes Us To Miss That Which Is Beautiful

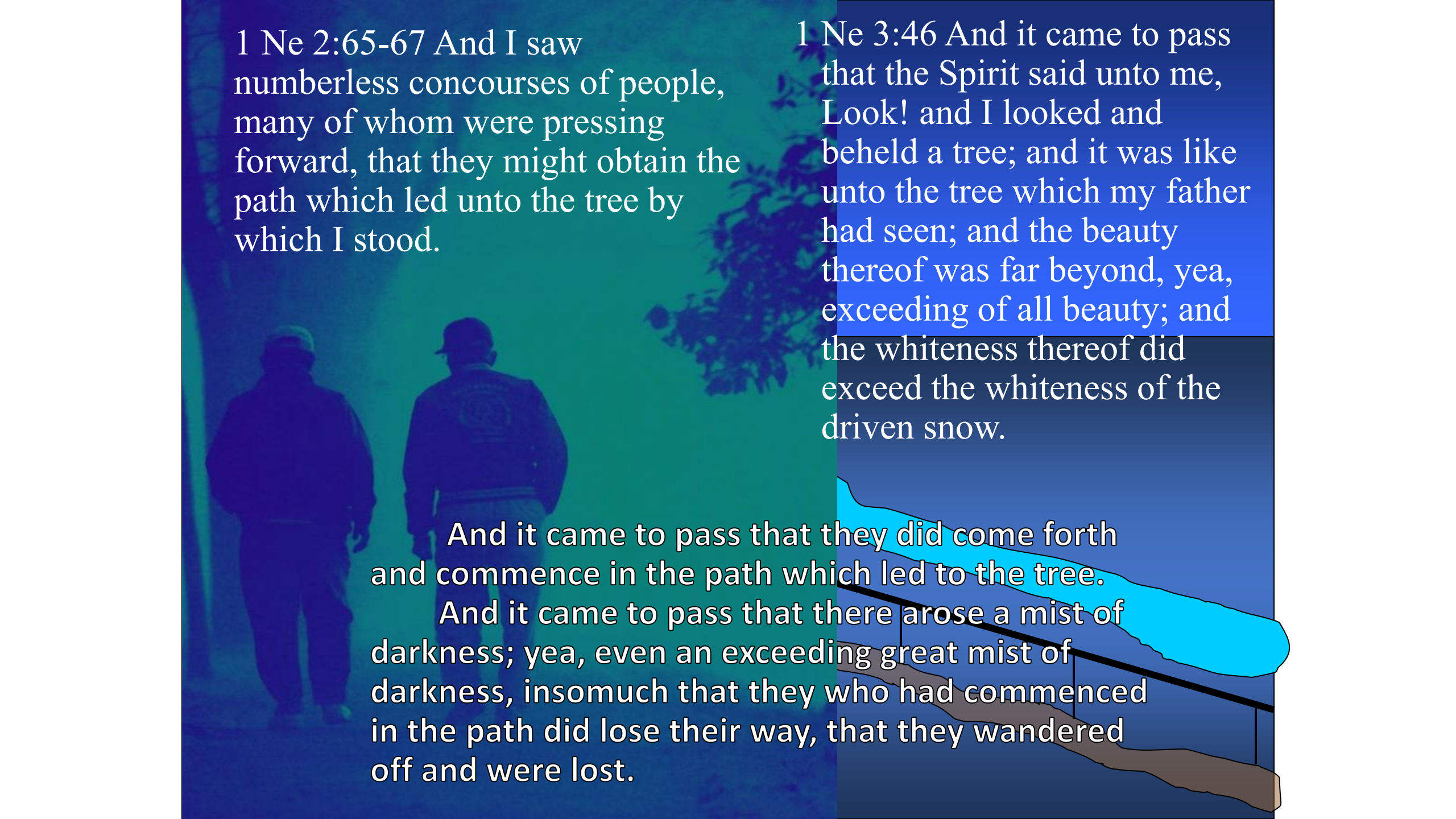


1 Ne 3:46 And it came to pass that the Spirit said unto me, Look! and I looked and beheld a tree; and it was like unto the tree which my father had seen; and the beauty thereof was far beyond, yea, exceeding of all beauty; and the whiteness thereof did exceed the whiteness of the driven snow.

1 Ne 2:65-67 And I saw numberless concourses of people, many of whom were pressing forward, that they might obtain the path which led unto the tree by which I stood.

And it came to pass that they did come forth and commence in the path which led to the tree.

And it came to pass that there arose a mist of darkness; yea, even an exceeding great mist of darkness, insomuch that they who had commenced in the path did lose their way, that they wandered off and were lost.

The background of the entire slide is a photograph of two men walking away from the camera on a dirt path. They are walking towards a large, leafy tree on the right side of the path. The man on the left is wearing a dark jacket and a cap, and the man on the right is wearing a dark jacket with a circular logo on the back and a cap. The path is slightly curved and leads towards the tree. The overall tone of the image is somewhat somber and contemplative.

1 Ne 2:65-67 And I saw
numberless concourses of people,
many of whom were pressing
forward, that they might obtain the
path which led unto the tree by
which I stood.

1 Ne 3:46 And it came to pass
that the Spirit said unto me,
Look! and I looked and
beheld a tree; and it was like
unto the tree which my father
had seen; and the beauty
thereof was far beyond, yea,
exceeding of all beauty; and
the whiteness thereof did
exceed the whiteness of the
driven snow.

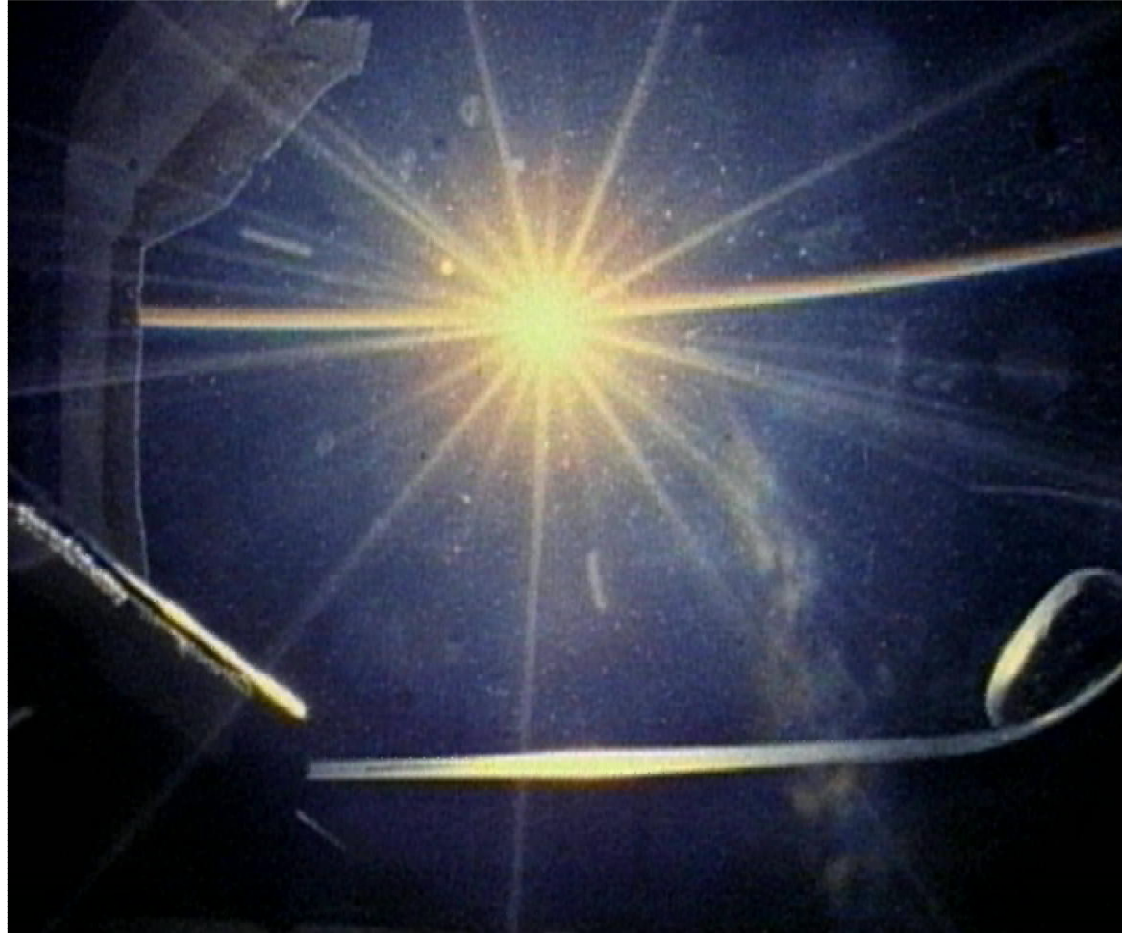
And it came to pass that they did come forth
and commence in the path which led to the tree.

And it came to pass that there arose a mist of
darkness; yea, even an exceeding great mist of
darkness, insomuch that they who had commenced
in the path did lose their way, that they wandered
off and were lost.

Light rules over darkness - Why?

Darkness is
structurally weak
– it is the absence
of light

Light is something;
darkness is not



Turn on the lights and darkness flees



**Turn on the lights
all that was in darkness is revealed**

So, it is with God's revealing light



And, we don't like it when it shines on us.
In fact, we spend our lives trying to
perfect ways to escape
His revealing light.

DC 3:3a

Verily, verily I say unto you, that Satan has great hold upon their hearts; he stirreth them up to iniquity against that which is good, and their hearts are corrupt, and full of wickedness and abominations, **and they love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil;**

DC 28:12d

For they can not be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not, **for they will love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil,** and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey.

Sin Needs The Darkness

Job 24:13,15&17 They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof. ...The eye also of the adulterer waiteth for the twilight, saying, No eye shall see me; and disguiseth his face....For the morning is to them even as the shadow of death; if one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of death.

Isa 29:27&28 And woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord. And their works are in the dark; and they say, Who seeth us and who knoweth us? And they also say, Surely, your turning of things upside down shall be esteemed as the potter's clay... For, shall the work say of him that made it, He made me not?

Nothing Can Be Kept A Secret From the Light

Psa 139:7,11&12 Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me.

Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to thee.

Mark 4:19 For there is nothing hid which shall not be manifested; neither was anything kept secret, but that it should in due time come abroad. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

Nothing Can Be Hid

Mark 4:19

There is nothing which is secret, save it shall be revealed; **there is no work of darkness, save it shall be made manifest in the light;** and there is nothing which is sealed upon the earth, save it shall be loosed.

Luke 8:16-17

For no man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, that they who enter in may see the light.

For nothing is secret, which shall not be made manifest; neither hid, which shall not be made known, and go abroad.

We Harden Our Hearts



DC 45:2a Hearken, *O ye people of my church, and ye elders, listen together,* and hear my voice, while it is called today, and harden not your hearts;

DC45:2b for verily I say unto you that I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, [I Am] the light and the life of the world; a light that shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.

We Love Darkness

DC 3:3a Verily, verily I say unto you, that Satan has great hold upon their hearts; he stirreth them up to iniquity against that which is good, and their hearts are corrupt, and full of wickedness and abominations, and **they love darkness rather than light**, because their deeds are evil; therefore they will not ask of me.

2 Cor 6:14 ...For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

There can be
no fellowship
between light
and darkness



1 John 2:8 Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing was of old ordained of God; and is true in him, and in you; because the darkness is past in you, and the true light now shineth.

So, Adam and Eve began to walk in darkness – Separated from the Light.

- They Were Beings, created for the light - Walking in darkness
- It became their natural condition - and is ours also.
- The Good News is that it doesn't have to be.
- God has provided a way for us to return to walk with, and in the
LIGHT

God's Love - A Plan of Redemption

Genesis 4:5 And he gave unto them commandments, that they should **1) worship the Lord** their God; and should **2) offer the firstlings of their flocks** for an offering unto the Lord. **[1st Ordinance]**

4:7-8... This thing is a similitude of the sacrifice of the Only Begotten of the Father, Wherefore, thou shalt do all that thou doest, in the name of the Son. And **thou shalt repent, and call upon God, in the name of the Son for evermore. [1st ordinance was an ordinance of blood Sacrifice]**

4:9 And in that day, the Holy Ghost fell upon Adam, which beareth record of the Father and the Son, saying, I am the Only Begotten of the Father from the beginning, henceforth and forever; that, **as thou hast fallen, thou mayest be redeemed, and all mankind, even as many as will.**

4:10 And in that day Adam blessed God, and was filled, and began to prophesy concerning all the families of the earth; saying, Blessed be the name of God, for, because of my transgression my eyes are opened, **and in this life I shall have joy, and again, in the flesh I shall see God.** **[Repentance, Obedience, Redemption]**

We Are Free to Chose the Covenant Path

II Nephi 1:115-20 Adam fell, that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy. And the Messiah cometh in the fullness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall, **they have become free for ever**, [now knowing] good from evil; To act for themselves, and not to be acted upon, save it be by the punishment of the Lord, at the great and last day, according to the commandments which God hath given.

Wherefore, **men are free according to the flesh**; and all things are given them which are expedient unto man. **And they are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great mediation of all men, or to choose captivity and death, according to the captivity and power of the devil:**

OUR Choice – OUR Condemnation

DC 90:5c-d

Behold, here is the agency of man, and here is the condemnation of man, because that which was from the beginning is plainly manifest unto them, and **they receive not the light**.

And every man whose spirit receiveth not the light is under condemnation, for man is spirit.

Our Probation

DC 28:12b-d – “and thus did I, the Lord God, appoint unto man the days of his probation; that by his natural death, he might be raised in immortality unto eternal life, even as many as would believe, and they that believed not, unto eternal damnation; for they can not be redeemed from their spiritual fall, because they repent not, for they will love darkness rather than light, and their deeds are evil, and they receive their wages of whom they list to obey.

Foolishness of Man

They are slow to walk in wisdom's paths

Helaman 4:53 O how foolish, and how vain, and how evil, and devilish, and how quick to do iniquity, and how slow to do good, are the children of men;

54 Yea, **how quick to hearken unto the words of the evil one**, and to *set their hearts upon the vain things of the world*; yea, how *quick to be lifted up in pride*; yea, how *quick to boast*, and *do all manner of that which is iniquity*;

55 And how *slow are they to remember the Lord their God*, and *to give ear unto his counsels*; yea, how *slow to walk in wisdom's paths*!

56 Behold, they do not desire that the Lord their God, who hath created them, should rule and reign over them; notwithstanding his great goodness and his mercy towards them; they do set at nought his counsels, and they will not that he should be their guide.

SO, God in His Love provided a way for us return into His Presence

The way involves:

- a gate, that is the entrance to a redemptive path,
 - that leads to a condition and a place,
- where we once again can live eternally in His presence – His Kingdom.

There are conditions [relational and other]
to enter and walk on God's redemptive path.

Because of these conditions the path is known as the COVENANT PATH
& God promises to assist us in finding the gate, and walking this Path

Christ Walked the Way of the Covenant Path

- Christ humbled himself & took on the form of a man
- **Jesus came to the narrow gate walking on the straight and narrow path**
- Jesus walked with God on the Path
- Jesus obeyed the command to enter through the gate to continue his walk on the path
- Jesus began his walk though a wilderness
- Jesus began to minister to those around him
- Jesus set his face towards Jerusalem to fulfill the reason he came
- Jesus went to the garden
- Jesus stood before his accusers who scourged him
- Jesus went to Calvary and died on a cross
- Christ rose from the tomb and went to His Father
- Christ returned on the road to Emmaus and His disciples and others
- **Christ continues to offer intercessory ministry on our behalf**

Waypoints Along the Covenant Path

- I. Finding the gate and choosing the Path**
- II. The strait and narrow gate – baptismal covenant**
- III. Believers, now members, prepare to walk the path
or remain living and wandering in the wilderness at the gate**
- IV. Pressing forward on the path**
- V. If we choose to be his disciples, the path leads to Calvary and the Tomb**
- VI. It leads to living, through Christ, a new and resurrected life, disciples who are ambassadors and witnesses of Christ**
- VII. Which leads, through enduring to the end, to eternal fellowship with the Father, the Son and the Saints of the Church of the first born.**

One Summation of the Covenant Path?

The Covenant Path is the Way of Holiness and Righteousness:

- *It is the divinely established way to enter into, and live eternally in God's presence*
- *It begins with baptism and includes other sacred ordinances*
- *It's not just about fulfilling requirements but about being in relationship with the Father and the Son*
- *Once entered, the path is a lifelong journey of discipleship of obedience, service, and sanctification*
- *Only Those that become more like Christ and less like the world are able to walk and stay on the path*

I. FINDING THE GATE AND CHOOSING THE PATH

Involves leaving the broad way to find THE strait and narrow gate that leads to THE straight and narrow path of eternal life with God

Repent, therefore, and enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat.

*Because **strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*** [Matthew 7:22-23](#)

Thoughts concerning a Broad and Narrow Way

In the modern era – the classical belief of one God, infinite and eternal, all powerful and all knowing, purveyor of all wisdom and truth, including that which is right and wrong, is soundly rejected by many.

This perspective is best represented
by the famous declaration by Nietzsche in 1882

GOD IS DEAD

What happens when God is Dead?
When He is no longer at the center?

When we lose “God” – We become god

We go from 1 God, to over 8 billion gods in the world, or 335 million gods in the US

- When we are no longer God-Centered -- We are Self-Centered
- When we are no longer God-referenced but Self-referenced in relation to truth – we go from 1 Truth (Absolute Truth) to many truths

In our postmodern era – Not only is *GOD* dead, but *TRUTH* is dead as well

- *Why is there a broad way?*
 - *Because it is made up and defined by many*
- *Why is there a narrow way?*
 - *Because it is defined by One - God*

The Gate is Strait and Narrow

Jacob preaching unto his brethren, *O then, my beloved brethren, repent ye, and enter in at the **strait gate**, and continue in the way which is narrow, until ye shall obtain eternal life. **O be wise: what can I say more?** - Jacob 4:16-17*

Jesus speaking to his disciples, *Repent, therefore, and **enter ye in at the strait gate**; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat. - Matthew 7:22*

Jesus teaching in a village, *And there said one unto him, Lord, are there few only that be saved? and he answered him, and said, **Strive** to enter in at the **strait gate**; for I say unto you **Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able**; for the Lord **shall not always strive** with man. - Luke 13:23-24*

Reflecting on the meaning of *Strait and Narrow* ***STRAIT is the gate, and NARROW is the way***

STRAIT, *adjective*

1. Narrow; close; not broad.
- 2. Close; intimate.**
- 3. Strict; rigorous.**
4. Difficult; distressful.
5. Straight; not crooked.

God desires us to find the path

[Psalms 25:4](#) Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.

5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

8 Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

9 The meek will he guide in judgment; and the meek will he teach his way.

10 All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

But few there be that find it – Why?

Matthew 7:23 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and **few there** be that find it.

3 Nephi 6:26 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few there** be that find it.

3 Nephi 13:11 And it came to pass that when Jesus had ended these sayings, he saith unto his disciples, Enter ye in at the strait gate; for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leads to life, and **few there be** that find it, but wide is the gate, and broad the way which leads to death, and many **there be** that travel **therein**, until the night cometh, wherein no man can work.

The Strait Gate – [Close; Intimate; Strict; Rigorous]

Mosiah 9:36-41 Yea, all were gathered together that believed on his word, to hear him.[Alma 1] And he did teach them, and did preach unto them **repentance**, and **redemption**, and **faith on the Lord**. And it came to pass that he said unto them, Behold, here are the waters of Mormon; for thus were they called. And now, as ye are:

- **desirous to come into the fold of God**, and
- **to be called his people**, and
- **are willing to bear one another's burdens**, that they may be light; and
- **are willing to mourn with those that mourn**; and
- **comfort those that stand in need of comfort**, and
- **to stand as witnesses of God at all times, and in all things, and in all places** that ye may be in, **even until death**,...

Now I say unto you, **If this be the desire of your hearts**, *what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord*, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, *that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?*

Questions Concerning Being Baptized

Alma 3:27-32:

27 And now behold, I ask of you, my brethren of the church,
Have ye spiritually been born of God?

28 Have ye **received his image** in your countenances?

29 Have ye **experienced this mighty change in your hearts**?

30 Do ye **exercise faith in the redemption of him** who created you?

31 **Do you look forward with an eye of faith, and view this mortal body raised in immortality**, and this corruption raised in incorruption, to stand before God, to be judged according to the deeds which have been done in the mortal body?

32 I say unto you, **Can you imagine to yourselves that ye hear the voice of the Lord, saying unto you, in that day, Come unto me ye blessed, for behold, your works have been the works of righteousness upon the face of the earth?** [Also see Mosiah 3:27-32]

Conditions for Entering the Strait Gate

DC 17

7a And again by way of commandment to the church concerning the manner of baptism:

7b All those who ***humble themselves before God and desire to be baptized, and come forth with broken hearts and contrite spirits, and witness before the church that they have truly repented of all their sins,***

7c and are ***willing to take upon them the name of Jesus Christ, having a determination to serve him to the end,***

7d and ***truly manifest by their works that they have received of the Spirit of Christ unto the remission of their sins, shall be received by baptism into his church.***

Covenant Conditions

- *Always remember God's love*
- *Always remember the Price He paid for us*
- *Take upon us the name of Christ*
- *Repent and be baptized*
- *Keep his commandments*
- *Bear witness of him*
- *Promise to love God and no other God*
- *Draw close to Him – have a relationship with Him*
- *Love one another*
- *Be of one heart and one mind*
- *Bear one another's burdens*

Christ is the Keeper of the Gate

2 Nephi 6:79 O then, my beloved brethren, come unto the Lord, the Holy One. 80 Remember that **his paths are righteousness.**

81 Behold, the way for man is narrow, but it lieth in a straight course before him, and the **keeper of the gate is the Holy One of Israel: and he employeth no servant there:**

82 And there is none other way, save it be by the gate, for he can not be deceived; for the Lord God is his name.

83 And whoso knocketh, to him, will he open; and the wise, and the learned, and they that are rich, who are puffed up because of their learning, and their wisdom, and their riches; yea, they are they, whom he despiseth;

84 And save they shall cast these things away, and consider themselves fools before God, and come down in the depths of humility, he will not open unto them.

85 But the things of the wise and the prudent, shall be hid from them for ever; **yea, that happiness which is prepared for the saints.**

II. THE STRAIT AND NARROW GATE – BAPTISM

Moroni 8:29 And THE FIRST-FRUITS OF REPENTANCE IS BAPTISM;
and baptism cometh by faith, unto the fulfilling the commandments;
and the fulfilling the commandments bringeth remission of sins;
and the remission of sins bringeth meekness, and lowliness of heart;
and because of meekness and lowliness of heart, cometh the visitation of
the Holy Ghost,

 which Comforter filleth with hope and perfect love,
 which love endureth by diligence unto prayer,
until the end shall come, when all the saints shall dwell with God.

Why Baptism?

To testify we have entered into a Covenant with God

Mosiah 9:41 & 44 (Alma 1 at the waters of Mormon):

*. . . Helam, I baptize thee, having authority from Almighty God, **as a testimony that ye have entered into a covenant to serve him until you are dead, as to the mortal body . . .***

Christ Entered the Covenant Gate and Fulfilled All Righteousness

2 Nephi 13

7 And now if the Lamb of God, He being holy, should have need to be baptized by water to fulfill all righteousness, O then, how much more need have we, being unholy, to be baptized, yea, even by water!

8 And now I would ask of you, my beloved brethren, **wherein the Lamb of God did fulfill all righteousness in being baptized by water** - Know ye not that He was holy? *[He walked on the straight and narrow way to the gate]*

9 But notwithstanding He being holy, **He sheweth unto the children of men that according to the flesh He humbleth Himself before the Father**, And witnesseth unto the Father that He would be obedient unto Him in keeping His commandments;

Christ Showed the Straightness of the Path and Narrowness of the Gate

And the Master saith unto the children of men: "Follow thou Me."

2N:13 Wherefore my beloved brethren, can we follow Jesus save we shall be willing to keep the commandments of the Father?

14 And the Father saith: ***"Repent ye! Repent ye! And be baptized in the name of My beloved Son!"***

15 And also the voice of the Son came unto me, saying: ***"He that is baptized in My name, To him will the Father give the Holy Ghost, like unto Me; Wherefore, follow Me and do the things which ye have seen Me do."***

Baptism Changes Our Position in Life

We are free - No longer in bondage to sin

Romans 6:3-6: Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? **Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.** For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, **we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection**; knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, **that henceforth we should not serve sin.**

Christ Shows Us the Way to the Gate

2N 13:22 Wherefore, do the things which I have told you that I have seen that your Lord and your Redeemer should do;

23 For, for this cause have they been shown unto me: That ye might know the gate by which ye should enter.

24 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,

25 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,

Through the Gate Believers become members of his church

Acts 2:41-42 & 47 (NT church on the day of Pentecost):

Then they that gladly received his word were **baptized**; and the same day there **added unto them** about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers . . . And the Lord **added to the church** daily such as should be saved.

Mosiah 9:50 (Alma 1 at waters of Mormon):

. . . whosoever was **baptized** by the power and authority of God, was **added to his church**.

3 Nephi 12:13 (Jesus to larger multitude on second day):

And **they who were *baptized*** in the name of Jesus, **were called the church of Christ**.

God Promises to Assist Us in Our Walk on the Path

Psalms 142:3 When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, then **thou knewest my path.**

Psalms 16:7-11 I will bless the Lord, who hath given me counsel...**I have set the Lord always before me; *because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*** Therefore my heart is glad...**my flesh also shall rest in hope.** For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. **Thou wilt show me the path of life; *in thy presence is fullness of joy;*** at thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore.

Psalms 23:3 He restoreth my soul; **he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness** for his name's sake.

Philippians 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you **both to will [desire] and to do [accomplish]** of his good pleasure.

Trust God to lead you on the Way

Psalms 25:1-14

Unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. O my God, I trust in thee...

Show me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths.

Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day...

Good and upright is the Lord; **therefore will he teach sinners in the way.**

The meek will he guide in judgment; and **the meek will he teach his way.**

All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.

For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great.

What man is he that feareth the Lord? **him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose.** His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and **he will show them his covenant.**

Delight in God's Covenant Ways

[Psalms 119:30-37](#)

I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgments have I laid before me.

I have stuck unto thy testimonies; O Lord, put me not to shame.

*I will run the way of thy commandments, **when thou shalt enlarge my heart.***

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes; and I shall keep it to the end.

Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight.

Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.

Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.

III. BELIEVERS/MEMBERS PREPARE TO WALK THE PATH OR REMAIN LIVING AT THE GATE

Some prepare for the path, move out, and journey on the path.

Some prepare and take steps, but return to the gate

Some don't prepare and remain at the gate

Some don't prepare, reject the covenant path,
and return to continue to walk on the broad way

Remaining at the Gate

What is the condition that causes us to remain at the Gate?

I Corinthians 3:1

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual,
but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

Who is Paul speaking to?

He is speaking to members of the Corinthian church - Christians

He is speaking of two classes of Christians

Those who are Carnal & Spiritual

Two Classes of Christians

Andrew Murray

*“Some have lived many years as believers, and yet always remain babes;
others are spiritual men, because they have given themselves up to the power,
the leading and to the entire rule of the Holy Ghost.*

*If we are to obtain a blessing,
we must first decide to which of these classes we belong.
Are we, by the grace of God, in deep humility living a spiritual life,
or are we living a carnal life?”*

Those who are living a carnal life are believers/members,
who remain at the gate wandering,
some looking backward through the gate towards the world
others looking forward at the path,
some starting to walk, but returning to the gate

Four Marks of a Carnal State Christian

Andrew Murray

1. Condition of protracted infancy
2. There is sin and failure continually
3. Using God given gifts, but not having the graces of the Spirit
4. Lives are unchanged, unaffected by spiritual truths

1. Condition of protracted infancy

What might this look like?

Now this is just the condition of many believers. They are converted; they know what it is to have assurance and faith; they believe in pardon for sin; they begin to work for God; and yet, somehow, there is very little growth in spirituality, in the real heavenly life. [A.M.]

What are the marks of “babes”?

- They cannot help themselves
- They are self-focused
- They don't help others
- [In regards to *Members*] They show little evidence of spiritual growth

Hebrews 5 speaks to those who are yet “babes”

12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

13 For everyone that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe.

14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

As Path Walkers how do we overcome our lack of momentum?
How do we assist those who walk the path with us?

2. There is sin and failure continually

I Cor. 3 – For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, [Insert other sin indicators] **are ye not carnal, and walk as men?**

I John 3:6-9 speaks to how we need not continue in sin:

Whosoever abideth in him [Christ] sinneth not; *whosoever continueth in sin hath not seen him, neither known him.*

7 Little children, let no man deceive you; he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. 8 He that continueth in sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

9 WHOSOEVER IS BORN OF GOD DOTH NOT CONTINUE IN SIN; *for the Spirit of God remaineth in him; and he cannot continue in sin,* because he is born of God, having received that holy Spirit of promise.

Walking under Grace not the Law

Andrew Murray

We no longer walk under the Law, but under Grace

Difference between walking on the path under the “Law” and “Grace”

- LAW demands; GRACE bestows.
- LAW commands, but gives no strength to obey;
GRACE promises, and performs, does all we need to do.
- LAW burdens, and casts down and condemns;
GRACE comforts, and makes strong and glad.
- LAW appeals to self, to do its utmost;
GRACE points to Christ to do all.
- LAW calls to effort and strain, & urges us something we never can reach;
GRACE works in us all God’s blessed will.

We must move out in faith from walking under the law and self-effort,
And, place ourselves under grace, allowing God to do all

3. Using God given gifts, but not having the graces of the Spirit

*There is a difference between gifts and graces...The graces of the Spirit [love, humility] **are to make a man free from self**; the gifts of the Spirit **are to fit a man for work**.*

I may be a minister of the Gospel; I may teach God's Word beautifully; I may have influence, and gather a large congregation, and yet, alas! I may be a carnal man; a man who may be used by God, and may be a blessing to others, and yet the carnal life may still mark me. [A. Murray]

*...spiritual men are not called so because there is no flesh in them, **but because the Spirit in them has obtained dominance, and when you meet them and have intercourse with them, you feel that the Spirit of God has sanctified them**. Ah, let us beware lest the blessing God gives us in our work deceive us and lead us to think that because he has blessed us, we must be spiritual men. **God may give us gifts that we use, and yet our lives may not be wholly in the power of the Holy Ghost**.*

1 Corinthians 2 – an Example

1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.

4 And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

4. Lives are unchanged, unaffected by spiritual truths

1 Corinthians 3:1-2

*And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with **milk**, and not with **meat**; for hitherto ye were not able to receive it, neither yet now are ye able.*

We find the carnal state not only at Corinth, but throughout the Christian world to-day.

*Many Christians are asking, "**What is the reason there is so much feebleness in the Church?**" We can not ask this question too earnestly, and I trust that God Himself will so impress it upon our hearts that we shall say to Him, "**It must be changed. Have mercy upon us.**" But, ah! that prayer and that change can not come until we have begun to see that **there is a carnal root ruling in believers; they are living more after the flesh than the Spirit; they are yet carnal Christians.***

Andrey Murray

Four ways to enter the Spiritual State

Andrew Murray

1. We must know there is such a life to be lived
2. We must recognize and acknowledge the shame and guilt of having lived a carnal life – We are not converted until we have are convicted of our sin
3. We must understand that to move from the carnal to the spiritual is but one step – do not confuse this step with spiritual maturity – we do not grow out of the carnal state into the spiritual state. **Paul says that the carnal life must be cut out. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh."**
4. We must take the step

1. We must know there is such a life to be lived

It is not just about Spiritual moments, but a Spirit filled life.

Do we believe this is possible?

Do we believe this could be our everyday experience?

If we doubt such a life is possible, we will strive to attain it?

How can we ask God to guide us into spiritual life, if we have not a clear, confident conviction that there is such a life to be had?

2. We must recognize and acknowledge the shame and guilt of having lived a carnal life –
We are not converted until we are convicted of our sin

Mosiah 2:1-3...behold they had fallen to the earth, for the fear of the Lord had come upon them; And they had **viewed themselves in their own carnal state**, even less than the dust of the earth. And they all cried aloud with one voice, saying, O have mercy, and apply the atoning blood of Christ, that we may receive forgiveness of our sins, and our hearts may be purified...

Alma 10:2-5 ...It was on account of their exceeding faith and repentance, and their righteousness before God, they choosing to repent and work righteousness, rather than to perish; Therefore they were called after this holy order, and were sanctified, and their garments were washed white, through the blood of the Lamb. Now they, after being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, having their garments made white, being pure and spotless before God, could not look upon sin, save it were with abhorrence...

2 Nephi 3:31-45

Nevertheless, 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. I am encompassed about because of the temptations and the sins which doth so easily beset me. And when I desire to rejoice, my heart groaneth because of my sins; nevertheless, I know in whom I have trusted.

My God hath been my support...He hath filled me with his love, even unto the consuming of my flesh. ...Behold, he hath heard my cry by day, and he hath given me knowledge by visions in the night time. And by day have I waxed bold in mighty prayer before him; yea, my voice have I sent up on high; and angels came down and ministered unto me.

And upon the wings of his Spirit hath my body been carried away upon exceeding high mountains. And mine eyes have beheld great things; yea, even too great for man...

O then, if I have seen so great things; if the Lord in his condescension unto the children of men, hath visited me 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? 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?

Awake, my soul! No longer droop in sin...

3. We Must Understand That To Move From The Carnal To The Spiritual Is But One Step

Andrew Murray warns us to:

*...not confuse this step with spiritual maturity – we do not grow out of the carnal state into the spiritual state. **Paul says that the carnal life must be cut out. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh."***

What do you think he mean by this?

Romans 12:1-2 states that we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice, and be not conformed but transformed

- From the scriptures, we know it's not enough to simply pick up the cross and carry it.
- We know we must pick up the cross and crucify "Self" upon it.
- We must crucify self, so that we can be transformed from our temporal, selfish state, to an eternal, selfless one
- We must place our pride, our self-centered nature upon the cross, if there is any hope for us to become selfless, to become Christ Minded or Christ-Centered.

When we become **Christ-Centered**, then we are **converted**,
Only then can we get beyond our **personal condition**,
Only then will we be **in a position to strengthen our brethren**,
and be able to fulfill **the measure of our creation**

I want to illustrate points 2 and 3 by exploring the life of the
Apostle Peter, his crucifixion and resurrection,
not in a literal sense, but in a spiritual one

From the accounts, We know that Peter was a work in progress

We know that Jesus rebuked him several times,
But, we also know that Jesus never rejected him

Pattern of Christ: Mark 10:15-21 – Rich Young Ruler

19 Then Jesus beholding him, loved him, and said
unto him, One thing thou lackest;

We know that Jesus loved Peter
And because he loved him he rebuked him

Like Peter, We are all a work in progress



In **Mark 8:33** we find Christ telling of his death and resurrection, and other events that would be transpiring.

Peter responds by rebuking Christ –

He tells him that this won't be done to Him (**Mark 8:34**)

Peter's nature, his self-will are openly being expressed,

He rejects what Christ says—and Christ rebukes him for it

Christ turns and says - **Get thee behind me Satan; thou art an offense to me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those of men. (Matthew 16:24)**



Bold, Passionate, Impetuous Peter was undoubtedly simply trying to protect the one he loved and worshiped

However, in the process he was proposing a stumbling block to the work of the Lord.

- His desires and actions were not in accord with the will of God.

How often do we find ourselves, because of our passions, our desire to move out; responding in ways that aren't helpful to God's work?

After rebuking Peter—Christ takes the opportunity to teach the people and His disciples:

*All who desire to come after Him, **will have to deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Him.** All who would save their life, must needs be willing to lay down their life for His sake, and the sake of the Gospel*

Moving Forward to another Scene:

After participating together in the Lord's Supper, Christ tells His disciples that this night all will be offended because of Him.

Peter says - **Although all men shall be offended because of thee, I will never be offended.** (Mark 14:33)

(Luke 22:31-32) The Lord said - **Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired you, that he may sift the children of the Kingdom as wheat. But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not and**

When You Are CONVERTED Strengthen Your Brethren.

And he (Peter) said unto him, being aggrieved, - **Lord, I am ready to go with you, both into prison and unto death.**

**Christ's next statement must have been incomprehensible to Peter —
Christ tells him that this night, before the cock crow twice,
Peter you will deny me three times.**

Peter is a proud, capable man -

One who thinks well of himself;
One who was gifted in many ways;
One who relies on himself;
One who was fiercely devoted to the Christ;
One who had many marvelous experiences with Christ;



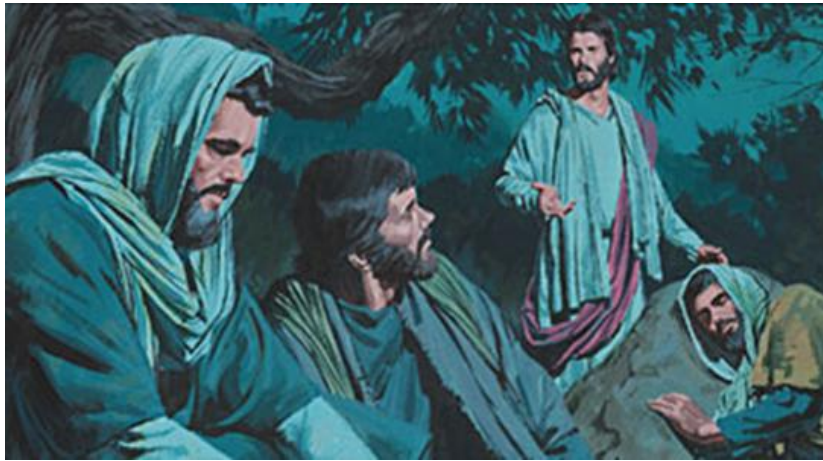
**And yet Jesus, very straight forwardly, rebuked Peter,
telling him that he has yet to be converted.**

But he doesn't reject Peter:

**For in the same statement he exclaimed to Peter that, He has prayed for him, and that
when he is converted, he ought to strengthen his brethren.**

**Immediately following the Last Supper &
Peters' bold response to Christ;
Christ invites Peter, James & John to go with Him while he prays.**

He tells them to **"Pray that ye enter not into temptation"**
While he moves off a ways to pray.



He returns to find Peter, and the others sleeping;
Christ says to Peter – **Couldst not thou watch with
me one hour?**

He went away to pray some more; When he came back,
Peter and the others were asleep once more; and He went
away a third time and found them asleep again.

It's hard to know what Peter was thinking at this point,
But he certainly is **not drawing a parallel** between his earlier bold claims,
and this opportunity to not allow Christ to face this moment alone.

Our next scene is found in Luke 22:54-62

Jesus is taken to the house of Caiaphas the High Priest, where the scribes and Elders are assembled. All of the disciples have fled, Except Peter.

He followed Jesus from afar to the High Priest's house and while he sat warming himself:

56 ...a certain maid beheld him, as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth, this man was also with him; for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest.

And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter.



**And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him,
Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.
And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.**

And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter

**Can you imagine what Peter must have seen in that look;
I imagine it was a look of loving sorrow;**

Christ knowing what Peter would be going through,
and yet not being able to comfort Him as in other times

What must Peter have felt under the gaze of the Master?

Bold, proud, impetuous Peter - full of confidence –
Cut down in **His Estimation** of who he really was;

At that moment, I believe that Peter was spiritually crucified

He must have doubted himself completely

His self-concept must have been completely destroyed

The crucified Peter must have been a totally dejected person



In that moment, and the days that followed,
I think Peter stood poised on the brink of disaster,
or greatness

**-It Was His Time To Choose-
To Settle in His Heart**

whether

To walk according to his will and be lost forever

OR

To be converted, and
walk according to Christ's will,
and Fulfill His Calling

We know how the story ends, but Peter doesn't;

A lesser man may have crumbled completely.



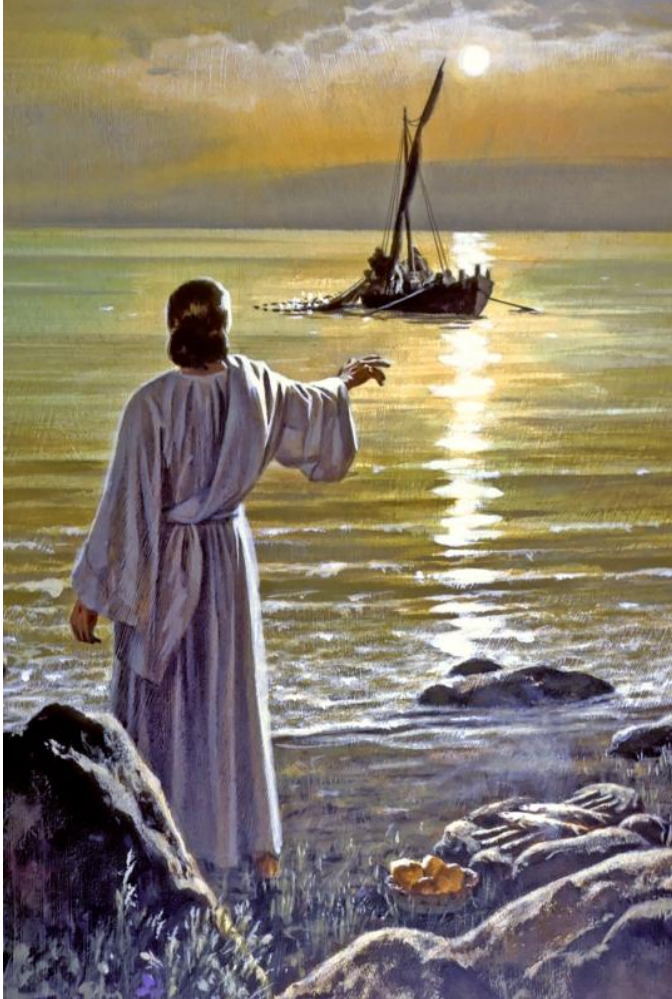
What may have made it bearable to Peter, is the fact that Jesus had told him it was going to happen, and yet had not rejected Him;

In fact, Christ told him-

“But I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not and when you are converted strengthen your brethren.”



Moving forward, we find that Peter and some of the others have gone fishing. They fished all night and caught nothing.



- In the morning Jesus is on the shore and hails them. They don't immediately recognize him. He asks if they have meat.
- They tell him no and he suggests they cast their nets on the right side of the ship. They catch more fish than they can handle.
- John begins to get a suspicion that it is Jesus and tells Peter.
- Now when Peter hears this, he doesn't wait for the boat to get back to shore; rather he dives into the water as he is and swims to shore.
- So they pull in the Fish and all dine together.

After the meal, the stage is set for Peters' final confrontation with his self-concept



John 21:15-17

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Take a moment, and reflect on how you would respond if you were asked this question three times.



I imagine Peter was astutely aware of the parallel between having denied Christ three times, and Christ asking him three times if he loved him.

I think Peter at that moment relived the grief that he felt at the time of his denial of Christ, and could hardly bear it.

And states it emphatically when he exclaims-

**Lord, thou knowest all things;
thou knowest that I love thee.**

As is the way of the Master –

Peter was *rebuked* but not *rejected*

Instead Jesus enjoins Peter to Feed His sheep.

In The Book Of Acts, We Find A “Converted” and “Spiritually Resurrected” Peter.



Standing with the Apostles
He Strengthens His Brethren

Hiding No Longer
**He Preaches Christ to the Men of Judea,
and All at Jerusalem**
[Acts 2:22-24; 36-39]

Hiding No Longer
He Stands Boldly Before the Rulers
[Acts 4:7-14 and 18-23]

– Because of Peter’s Conversion –
He was in a Position to Strengthen His Brethren, and
Accept Christ’s Commission to Feed His sheep.

Like Peter, each of us comes to points in our lives, where we stand on the brink.

When we must choose to do God’s Will, or Our Own Will??

When we must choose to be Converted or Not??

**When we must choose whether to be Transformed, or Remain
Conformed??**

When we must Settle these things in our Hearts

When we are in those moments – Christ stands ever ready to uphold us.

**Remember, Though He May Rebuke You—
His Purpose Is Not To Reject You, But To Transform You**

4. WE MUST TAKE THE STEP

That Puts Us On The Covenant Path

We Must Press Forward and Not Look Back

Like Peter – we must settle in our hearts to
follow the master and take up our cross and sacrifice self

In the “Wilderness”, We must decide to leave the world behind us
[Luke 14:28]

and firmly place our feet on the Path that leads to the Cross

THE CROSS BEFORE ME – THE WORLD BEHIND ME

Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough,
looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

[Luke 9:62]

He brought us out, that he might bring us in!

Deuteronomy 6:23

*And he brought us out from thence,
that he might bring us in,
to give us the land which he swore unto our fathers.*

He brought us out of Egypt that we might enter Canaan
Not to wander the shores of the Red Sea looking back to Egypt
Not to wander indefinitely in the Wilderness
But to cross the river Jordan
And walk in the promised land of Canaan

To find rest on the path We must choose - The Wilderness or Canaan

It involves One Choice –
whether to remain and wander in the wilderness
or to cross the river Jordan onto God's promised way

- In the wilderness we wander backward and forward – being led astray, returning to the world, turning away, repenting and coming back, only to be tempted again and led astray once more.
- Canaan represents a land of rest and peace – no longer warring within ourselves – We have learned to trust and allow God to lead and walk with us on the way.
- In the wilderness there is a life of want, in Canaan a life of plenty

Five actions to help us maintain positive spiritual momentum

The Power of Spiritual Momentum

LDS President Russell M. Nelson

- I. Get on the covenant path and stay there.
- II. Discover the *joy* of daily repentance.
- III. Learn about God and how He works.
- IV. Seek and expect miracles.
- V. End conflict in your personal life.

IV. PRESS FORWARD on the COVENANT PATH

2 N 13:27 And now my beloved brethren, **after that ye have got into this strait and narrow path, I would ask if all is done.**

28 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.

29 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.**

30 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."**

31 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.

Covenant Path Roles

- **Believers** – Entering through the gate we start as believers on the path
- **Disciples** – Walking on the path following Christ's example we become disciples
- **Ambassadors/Witnesses** – Continuing as disciples – we take upon a more involved role as Ambassadors/Witnesses for Christ

[2 Corinthians 5:20](#) Now then we are **ambassadors** for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

[Ephesians 6:20](#) For which I am an **ambassador** in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Romans 12:1-2 states,
we are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice,
and be not conformed but transformed

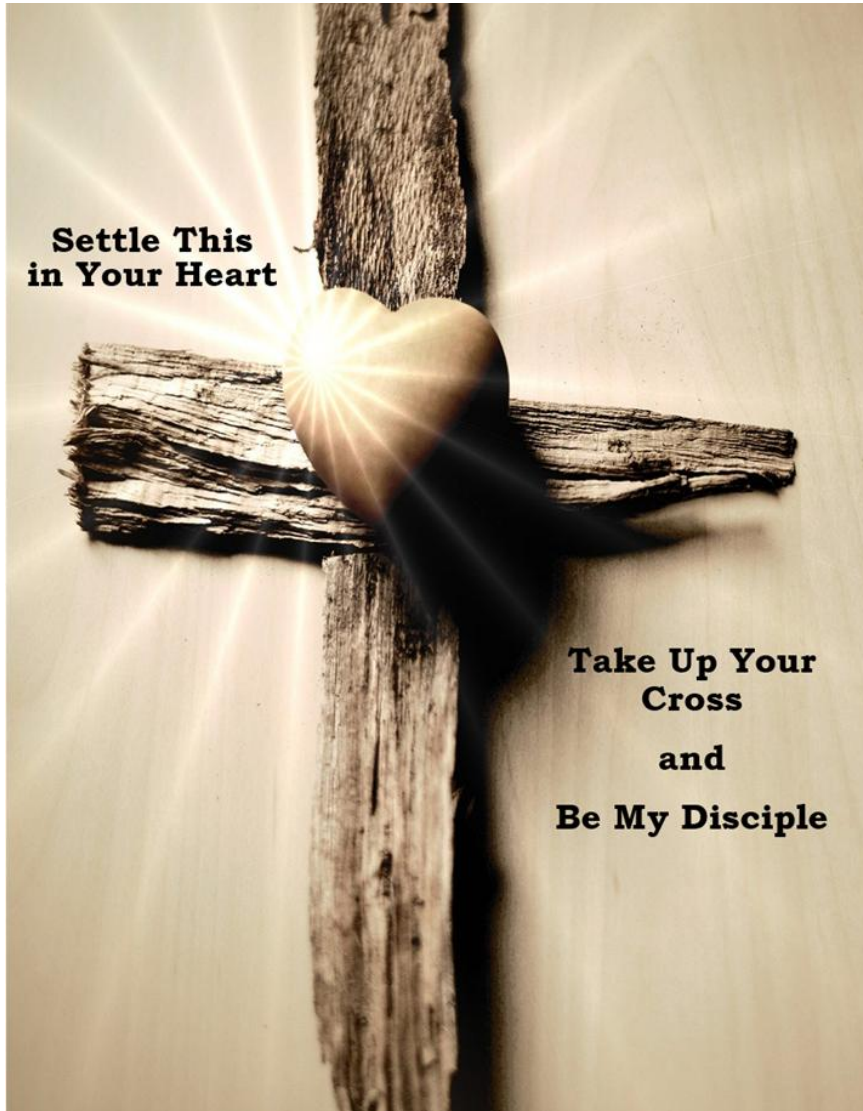
From the scriptures, we know that it is not enough to simply pick up the cross and carry it.

We know we must pick up the cross and crucify “Self” upon it.

We must crucify self, so that we can be transformed from our temporal, selfish state, to an eternal, selfless one

We must place our pride, our self-centered nature upon the cross, if there is any hope for us to become selfless, to become Christ Minded or Christ-Centered.

Before we fully commit to the path,
we must count the cost of walking the path



Luke 14:29 For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have money to finish his work. 30 Lest, unhappily, after he has laid the foundation and is not able to finish his work, all who behold, begin to mock him, 31 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. And this he said, signifying there should not any man follow him, unless he was able to continue; saying, ?...34 **So likewise, whosoever of you forsaketh not all that he hath he cannot be my disciple.**

Preparing for the Journey

- Learning to communicate with the creator of the Path
 - Prayer
- Learning to fear, love, and trust the creator
- Learning God's markers/indicators to stay on the path
 - knowing His word
- Learning how to walk with others on the way

Helps along the path

- God walks with Us
- God's word is a lamp unto my feet
- God's wisdom – Where wisdom can be found
- We have a guide in Jesus, who not only knows the path, but knows those who walk on the path

Christ is the Perfect Guide on the Path

*Jesus meets us where we are because He walks with us
– sometimes we lag behind, sometimes we run ahead,
much of the time we run sideways.*

*Christ desires to walk with us – side by side
– in that way his support is ever present and available*

*This is the why of the garden, the cross, and the tomb.
The Savior was sent to help us overcome.*

[Quote: Unknown]

Christ not only knows the way
but knows the needs of all who walk the path

[Hebrews 2:18](#) For in that he himself [Christ] hath suffered being tempted, he is able to **succor** them that are tempted. – [He can guide us]

[DC 62:1a](#) Behold, and hearken, O ye elders of my church, saith the Lord your God; even **Jesus Christ, your Advocate**; who knoweth the weakness of man and how to **succor** them who are tempted;

[**SUCCOR** *noun* - Aid; help; assistance; particularly, assistance that relieves and delivers from difficulty, want or distress.]

Christ is the Great Intercessor

Christ's work as Redeemer, to secure salvation was completed as evidenced by His cry, "It is finished" [John 19:30]

Isaiah 53:12 - Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made **intercession** for the transgressors.

2 Nephi 1:76 - Wherefore, he is the first fruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make **intercession** for all the children of men;

Mosiah 8:35 - And thus God breaketh the bands of death; having gained the victory over death; giving the Son power to make **intercession** for the children of men:

However, His work as intercessor continues...

Hebrews 7:24 - Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make **intercession** for them.

Romans 5:10 - For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, **we shall be saved by his life.**

Romans 8:34 ...Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, **who also maketh intercession for us.**

2 Nephi 1:76 - Wherefore, he is the first fruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make **intercession** for all the children of men;

1 John 2:1 ... if any man sin and repent, **we have an advocate with the Father**, Jesus Christ the righteous;

1 Timothy 2:4-6 ...Christ Jesus, who is the Only Begotten Son of God, **and ordained to be a Mediator between God and man;** ... For there is one God, **and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;** Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

Intercession is the Way of the Covenant Path

Christ makes intercession for us

The Spirit makes intercession for us

Romans 8:26 - Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh **intercession** for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:27 - And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh **intercession** for the saints according to the will of God.

His Disciples [WE] make intercession for others, the world, the Kingdom

1 Timothy 2:1 - I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving thanks, be made for all men;

The Main Stumbling Block on the Path

First and Primary Stumbling Block to Walking on the Path

Is not acknowledging that it's God's Path – Not OURs

This leads to us trying to redefine the path by:

- Broadening the narrow Path
- Un-straightening the straight Path

THE SELF LIFE

*Matt. 16: 24.—If any man will come after me, let him deny himself,
and take up his cross, and follow me.*

Three SELF stumbling blocks on the path:

1. Self-Will/Self-Interest - antidote - Self-Surrender
2. Self-Confidence/Self-Reliance – antidote – Self-Sacrifice
3. Self- Exaltation/Self-Aggrandizement – antidote – Self-Deprecation

Not I, but Christ liveth in me

When we choose to walk on the covenant path alone, we will encounter and struggle with these stumbling blocks continually, and in the end, will not enter into eternal life in His presence

If we choose to walk on the path with Christ, following His way, exchanging our way for His way, exchanging the self-life with the Christ Life, he will show and remove the stumbling block of a self-life

The Denial Of Self Is A Life Long Process

Are we Pondering the Path and how to walk on it?

Proverbs 4

25 Let thine eyes look right on,
and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

**26 Ponder the path of thy feet,
and let all thy ways be established.**

27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left;
remove thy foot from evil.

Evaluate our walk on the path

**Each of us needs to evaluate
where we are on the path**

- Are we walking or wandering
- Are we sitting – do we have momentum
- How are we walking – walking intentionally, with purpose
- Who are we walking with
- What and Who is guiding us

Guardrails along the Path

Indicators that assist us to evaluate our walk on the Path

1. Are we walking in ways consistent with what is found in scripture?
2. Are we experiencing the love of God in our life?
3. Are we experiencing the love of others in our life?
4. Are we experiencing an increased measure of the Holy Spirit in our life?
5. Are the fruits of the Spirit evident in our lives?
6. Are we expressing love and concern for others? – [bearing their burdens; mourning with them; sacrificing for them; etc.]
7. Are we forgiving one another?
8. Are we experiencing peace, joy and rest in our lives?
9. Are we peacemakers?
10. Are we witnessing to others concerning the Gospel – the Kingdom?

Some question MARKERS to Ponder along the Path

- **How do we handle calamity on the way?**

Job 30: 13 They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper.

- **Do we have ought with someone – ought with one another?**

DC 64:2c My disciples, in days of old, sought occasion against one another, and forgave not one another in their hearts, and for this evil they were afflicted, and sorely chastened;

- **What is our response to those we find struggling on the way side?**

Luke 10:34 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him.

Mosiah 2:28 And also, ye yourselves will succor those that stand in need of your succor; ye will administer of your substance unto him that standeth in need;

- **What is our response to our fellow travelers?**

Question MARKERS continued –

- **Are we willing to *enlarge our coast*?**

1 Chronicles 4:10 And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.

- **Do others see Christ in our life?**

For the Lord Jesus Christ lies imprisoned in the midst of this people. He is weak and feeble, because we have bound him within our souls by our preference of secondary things, by our indifference, and by our love of the things of this world. A. Oakman – *He Who Is*, pg 108

- **How do I identify myself? – in my own self-concept and with others?**

What identity am I/we willing to give up to be transformed?

Am I seeking *transformation* or *affirmation*?

Question MARKERS continued –

Do others see you/us as a peculiar person/people?

Exodus 19:5-6

*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, **and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people;** for all the earth is mine;*

And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation.

These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

*This is the Church of Jesus Christ. To no other people has been committed the task of the redemption of Zion, and neither shall be. But there are people who are not yet members of our church whom God cannot bring into it because we are not worthy of them. **The quality of our testimony, the quality of our fraternity, the quality of our intelligence, the quality of our achievements have not been of such high order as to attract their attention, and invite their imagination, and enlist them in the cause of Jesus Christ.** Zion will not be redeemed by the people we have in the church today. [A. Oakman – He Who Is, pg. 109]*

What is our primary – peculiar identity?

1. We are children of God,
2. We are children of the covenant, and
3. We are disciples of Christ,
members of His restored Church.

When we begin to think of ourselves in other ways,
or identify with other ways than these 3 ways,
it is a warning that we are straying from the path.

Question MARKERS continued –
When we do not see the way, or the path,
do we trust God to lead us?

Psalm 77:19-20 Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Question MARKERS continued – Whoes hand are we holding as we walk on the covenant path?

We have sought to walk the pathway of God, holding Christ in one hand and Babylon in the other, and this ultimately is impossible. The day now is when our Lord Jesus Christ seeks to free himself from the bonds by which we have bound him, and come forth again out of the tomb of our sinful humanity, as he came forth on that day so many years ago by the power and the strength of his spirit.

A. Oakman – *He Who Is*, pg 108

Proverbs 1:10-16 My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not...My son walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path; For their feet run to evil...

Proverbs 4:14-15 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

The Resurrected Christ is Our Perfect Guide

[Matthew 5:50](#) Ye are therefore commanded to **be perfect**, even as your Father who is in heaven is **perfect**.

[3 Nephi 5:92](#) Old things are done away, and **all things have become new**; therefore I would that ye should **be perfect even as I**, or your Father who is in heaven is **perfect**.

Moroni 10:29-30

Perfect in Christ

Yea, come unto Christ, and **be perfected in him**, and *deny yourselves* of all ungodliness, and if ye shall *deny yourselves* of all ungodliness, and love God with all your might, mind and strength, then is his grace sufficient for you, that by his grace ye may **be perfect in Christ**; and if by the grace of God ye are **perfect in Christ**, ye can in no wise deny the power of God.

And again, if ye, by the grace of God, are **perfect in Christ**, and *deny not his power*, then are **ye** sanctified in Christ by the grace of God, through the shedding of the blood of Christ, **which is in the covenant of the Father**, unto the remission of your sins, **that ye become holy without spot**.

Focus for the Week

Together, Let Us Walk with God in the Covenant Path

- Why the need for a “Covenant Path”
 - A Fall from God’s Presence
 - Walking in Darkness
 - God’s Great Love and Condescension –
A Plan of Redemption
- Christ Walked in the Way
 - Waypoints along the Covenant Path
[Partially completed]
- Walking with God *[Only touched on briefly]*
 - In His wisdom
 - In His Illuminating Light