

added to the new one and the whole gets to be a heavy load" (*Miracle*, p.170).

## Sound unreasonable? Impossible?

If this sounds impossible, do not overlook the assurance the *Book of Mormon* gives: "...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" (1 Nephi 3:7). According to this, Heavenly Father has given us everything needed to keep his commandments. With this in mind, consider the words of his prophet: "*Trying is not sufficient*. Nor is repentance complete when one merely *tries* to abandon sin" (*Miracle*, p. 164). Thus, we are assured that we can and must become perfect, and in this we must not fail.

## The question remains...

Does this gospel sound like Good News to you? Do you know of anyone in the history of the world, aside from Jesus, who has ever reached perfection before he or she died? What do you think your chances are of achieving what no other human being has been able to accomplish? Is this burden too big for you? What then can you do?

There are two options: One is to continue earnestly practicing the gospel plan outlined above, trying with all your might, mind, and strength to achieve the impossible. But remember, "...whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). If you fail to keep your covenant to endure in complete obedience for the rest of your life, the best this gospel offers you is to forfeit eternal life with God and Christ and, after being adequately punished for your sins, settle for a lesser kingdom.

The other option is this: What has been presented here is not the real gospel. It is "another gospel" as warned about in Galatians 1:8, 9. It is an impossible plan of salvation because no

human can be perfect (see Romans 3). But do not despair—there is hope! Please read on.

## Good News!

Here is the good news of the genuine gospel of Jesus Christ. Even though God hates your sin, He loves you deeply, so much that He sent His son to pay your penalty on the cross (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

There are only two destinies after death: eternal life (one kingdom, not three) or destruction (Matthew 7:13-14). According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, the word for destruction in the original Greek, 'apollia' (word #684), means "perdition, outer darkness, ruin, damnation." If you are not given eternal life, the only remaining destiny is outer darkness, from which you can never return.

If you have been depending on "another gospel" instead of the genuine gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be disappointed for all eternity. You need to personally repent (change your mind) and accept the finished work of Christ's atonement (Romans 10:9; 1 John 1:9). It is a free gift and you cannot earn it (Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5-7).

When you trust Christ as your Lord and Savior, you have immediate assurance of eternal life and will live with God forever (1 John 5:9-13). Although yet a sinner, you are made perfect in Christ, while still being perfected, or sanctified, by the Holy Ghost (Hebrews 10:14). Good works are a natural part of a believer's life, but are only evidence of true faith, not a means of earning eternal life (Romans 6: 1-12; Galatians 2:20-21).

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For a more complete explanation of the biblical plan of salvation and its affect on your life, see our web site or call CRC for a free brochure titled *Heavenly Father's Plan for You...according to the Bible*.



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Is the  
Gospel  
Good  
News  
to you?

## The word *Gospel* means Good News

The gospel of Jesus Christ is appropriately called the *good news*. To those who believe and practice the gospel, it should really be good news. Jesus said he came to give us life, not heap heavy burdens on us (John 10:10, Matthew 11:29-30). Yet so many feel they cannot live up to Heavenly Father's standards. It worries them that they may forfeit eternal life and the celestial kingdom because they cannot "measure up." They may spend eternity in one of the lesser kingdoms, or outer darkness, as LDS leaders have taught. To those who are experiencing this, the gospel does *not* feel like good news.

Some Saints have a false sense of security, believing that if they do not prove their worthiness during this life, they will have an opportunity to improve and advance kingdoms in the next.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) asserts itself as "...the only true and living church upon the face of the whole earth..." (D&C 1:30), and the only one teaching the fullness of the gospel. So, it is important to understand what LDS leaders have taught and how that impacts one's ability to live the abundant life that Jesus promised, both now and for eternity.

Let us consider then, what Latter-day Prophets and scripture have taught about what we must do to participate in Heavenly Father's great plan of happiness.

## You have to perfect yourself

To gain eternal life and enter the celestial kingdom, you have to perfect yourself. LDS leaders have stressed the scripture to us: "Be ye perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). LDS revelation tells us that "...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" (Moroni 10:32). Notice that it says that we must first deny ourselves of all sin (all sin would have to include sins of omission as well as commission), and *only then* can Christ's atonement

be applied to our lives. President Kimball taught that "the repentance that merits forgiveness... is that the former transgressor must have reached a 'point of no return' to sin wherein there is not merely a renunciation but also a deep abhorrence of the sin... where the desire...to sin is cleared out of his life" (*The Miracle of Forgiveness*, pp.354-355).

## You must keep all the law until you die

In addition to this, we are taught that a sinless, perfected life is expected to be a perpetual way of life. "And, if you keep my commandments and endure to the end you shall have eternal life, which gift is the greatest of all the gifts of God" (D&C 14:7).

You have to sustain a complete state of sinlessness, or as *Gospel Principles* says, "keeping all the Lord's commandments until the end of [your] life on earth" (p.292, 1988). 3 Nephi 27:17 confirms this with a warning: "And he that endureth not unto the end, the same is he that is also hewn down and cast into the fire from whence they can no more return."

Have you cleansed yourself of every wrong action and thought? LDS revelation tells us how we can know: "By this ye may know if a man repenteth of his sins—behold, he will confess them *and forsake<sup>1</sup> them*" (D&C 58:43). According to this passage, one has not truly repented if the sin is repeated. A person has sincerely repented *only when he or she forsakes sin*.

## The time to reach perfection is during this life

The gospel plan does not stop there. Some may think that if they are not able to fulfill the requirements for the celestial kingdom in this life, they may be able to do more work in the next. Scripture says something different in this regard. "And it is requisite with the justice of God that men be judged according to their works; and if their works were good *in this life*...that they should also, at the last day, be restored unto that which is good. And if their works are evil, they

shall be restored unto them for evil" (Alma 41:3, 4).

We will be judged by the works we do in this life, and not by anything done in spirit prison or in one of the lesser kingdoms. "After a person has been assigned to his place in the kingdom, either in the telestial, the terrestrial, or the celestial, or to his exaltation, he will *never advance* from his assigned glory to another glory. That is eternal" (*Miracle*, pp.243-244). Scripture makes no allowance for works done in the next life. We will be judged solely on our works done in this life. *Gospel Principles* confirms this when it says "Latter-day Saints are taught *now* is the time to fulfill the requirements for exaltation" (p.303, 1995; Alma 34:31-35).

If you have not achieved perfection before you die, you will remain in your sins, and you will not enter the celestial kingdom—"...for the Lord redeemeth none such that rebel against him and die in their sins...these are they that have no part in the first resurrection" (Mosiah 15:26). LDS Apostle Bruce R. McConkie affirmed this when he wrote, "Those being resurrected with celestial bodies, whose destiny it is to inherit a celestial kingdom, will come forth in the morning of the first resurrection" (*Mormon Doctrine*, p.640).

## You cannot repeat sin

The last part of the gospel plan is found in D&C 82:7: "but unto that soul who sinneth shall the former sins return, saith the Lord your God." When we repeat sin, all of our previously forgiven sins are returned to us, never to be forgiven again. "Shall [God] save his people in their sins?...I say unto you he shall not, for it is impossible for him to deny his word...he shall not save his people in their sins. And I say unto you again that he cannot save them in their sins...no unclean thing can inherit the kingdom of heaven... Therefore ye cannot be saved in your sins" (Alma 11:34, 36, 37). President Kimball did not mince words when he wrote "Those who feel that they can sin and be forgiven and then return to sin and be forgiven again and again *must straighten out their thinking*. Each previously forgiven sin is

<sup>1</sup> To give up; renounce. To leave altogether; abandon.