

Good morning!

I was staying with some friends this morning and while we were having breakfast the topic of this talk came up. I asked for any advice or tips and of one my friends said that I should prophesy so here you go:

I prophesy that before the end of today, there is a better than average chance, that I will be sick to my stomach.

In addition, I know it's kind of bad form to start a talk off with an apology but I'm going to do it anyway. I'm a little bit rusty so I apologize if my speaking skills are a little bit rusty from lack of use. For some reason, I haven't been asked to speak in my church for about 7 years. So I don't know what, maybe it's just coincidence, maybe they think I'm crazy, I'll leave you all to decide that for yourselves. And then the last thing is, I actually served a mission in Sweden, I was there from 95 to 97 so if you come, you're Swedish, don't speak Swedish to me but let's talk afterwards.

Down to business, I'm here to deliver, "A Message of Peace from The Prince of Peace about Principles of Peace." The topic title I chose was 'Naturalization and the doctrine of Christ'. Naturalization is the legal process of becoming a citizen; it is the process of taking a foreigner and bestowing upon him the rights and privileges of a citizen. Maybe some of you have gone through that process. It can be very long. There is a lot of paperwork involved, but that's what naturalization is.

The doctrine of Christ, as most of us are aware, includes the following:

Faith. Faith requires a confidence in Christ and trust that He can do what He says He can. It requires a correct idea of His character and attributes.

Repentance. One thing we need to keep in mind with repentance is we are perfected in Christ not apart from Him. So repentance is one of the most important pieces because it requires diligence in always turning to Christ. Just like a flower tracks the sun throughout the day continually, we must always track and turn to Christ. Personally for myself, I can't manage to do it for a full day so I try to do it for five minutes at a time. That is my advice. The proper response for missing the mark is not to be discouraged, it is to retrieve the arrows and shoot again, take aim and shoot again. If we can't do it for 24 hours straight, maybe we can do the will of God, maybe we can turn to Him for five minutes straight. If you will take your day in five minute chunks, you'll be amazed. The main point of repentance though is that it requires the determination and the decision to keep trying and correcting, trying to correct no matter how many times we may miss.

Baptism. The next part of Doctrine of Christ is baptism which requires a desire to obey the command of Christ to be baptized in the waters. One note I wanted to make about baptism is that "God's children are always authorized to obey Him." We know that the Lord giveth no

commandments unto the children of men, so that he shall prepare a way for them that they may accomplish the thing which He commanded them (1 Nephi 3:7). As a child of God you always have the right to obey any command that God has given you. You should have confidence in Him to prepare the way for you and He will. 1 Nephi 10:18 'For he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; and the way is prepared for all men from the foundation of the world, if it so be that they repent and come unto him.'

Holy Ghost. The next piece here is receiving the Holy Ghost. I like to think of the Holy Ghost as a Liahona which guides you through the naturalization process. The Liahona guided Lehi, Nephi and their families through a wilderness. As they paid attention to it, as they were doing the things that they knew they were supposed to be doing, it worked, and when they weren't, it didn't. That's like our gift of the Holy Ghost. Each of us has that individual connection, that individual compass that guides us through this process that we're on.

I think most of us here have faith in Christ. Most of us have repented or are continually repenting. Most of us have been baptized, most of us have received the Holy Ghost so now we're getting to maybe the more interesting stuff - which is enduring to the end.

Enduring to the End. What is the end? The end is the goal. The goal of being redeemed from the fall. It is not just enduring a certain time period, killing time until you run out the clock. It is actually getting to the goal. My wife and I came here from San Antonio. Our journey involved a trip to Salt Lake, a drive to Boise, staying at a place overnight, and finally coming up here. If we had failed to reach this podium, which was the goal of our trip, then we would not have endured to the end. It wouldn't have mattered if we had got distracted and went gambling at a casino. Or if we had passed out because of weariness and just didn't make it on the path. The end of this journey was coming to this podium to deliver this talk.

So I'm almost actually at the end of this thing. I just have to endure through it. So that is what we are doing on this path of the Doctrine of Christ, is that we are trying to endure to the goal. And the goal is that Christ manifests Himself unto you. And I just want to make a point that in the temple we have a symbol of the things that we need to experience in our life and in a properly ordered endowment ceremony instead of crossing through the veil and sitting on some nice couches until some worker shushes you out of the room, you'd be pulled across the veil, taken into a sealing room because that's where sealings happen and there you're made first sons and daughters and then fathers and mothers. So there's a purpose to Christ's manifestation that isn't just for a nice thing. There's something that's important there.

To paraphrase Paul, 'In the past you were dead because you sinned and fought against God. You follow the ways of this world and obeyed the devil and now through the doctrine of Christ, you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners, you are citizens and members of God's household.' (Ephesians 2:19) So the purpose of the doctrine of Christ, is to take a foreigner and an alien to the nation of heaven, bring you first as a citizen and then as a member of the household of the family of God, moving from a condition of a complete estrangement, to fellow citizen, to member of the Lord's family.

We're going to talk more about that process and I want to start off by reading the Lord's prayer, Matthew 6:9 'Therefore after this manner shall ye pray saying, Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is done in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And suffer us not to be led into temptation but deliver us from evil for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.'

I think there's a lot we can learn about heaven, our Father, our Savior, ourselves, just in this little prayer. First thing that I want to mention is implicit in the idea of asking for God's will to be done on Earth as it is in heaven, is the idea that generally, normally speaking, God's will is not done on Earth as it is in heaven. His kingdom comes as individuals decide to do His will on Earth as it is in heaven. So just as he gives us our daily bread, it's His will that we follow that example and give others their daily bread. Just as He forgives us, we forgive those who trespass against us. That is his will on Earth that isn't being done most of the time. As an aside on this topic 'fatherhood in Zion'; the house of order, members of the family of God, work to bring order to chaos. 'Behold, mine house is a house of order, saith the Lord God, and not a house of confusion.' (D&C 132:8) To do and bring His will on Earth as in heaven is the goal of the citizens of heaven. They bring understanding to confusion, they act and leave things better, know God said a word and waited until things were organized and He took things that was unorganized and it became something beautiful and wonderful and that is what we do, that is His will as it's done in heaven.

I can tell a good dad, even at my workplace. If there's a mess they pick it up, you know it's little things like that, that really is the house of order. They take chaos and make order out of it. I like to think of that, you know there's a lot of things in the scriptures, a lot of symbols in the scriptures, have multiple meanings, so I present that as one of them to you.

So members of the house of order, act upon the world first in their own lives, then on their family and outward from there according to their sphere of influence so that heaven's will is brought on to the Earth as it is done in heaven. I wanted to make one little note about what this order is like. This order is not like the borg where you come in, you take someone's individual distinctiveness and turn them into something that services the collective. This is not like making a bunch of Pringles where you take a potato, you slice it, dice it, mash it, put it into a mold and it all comes out looking exactly the same, tasting exactly the same.

Yesterday we spent time in this conference in a group of trees and if you notice the order of God's creation, the things that He has made, there are patterns and there are rules but there is individual agency and uniqueness in every little thing. And as I listened to the speakers, I couldn't help but watch those trees and from the tree, everyone was different but each one was a tree. The leaves, each leaf was different but each was a leaf. And that is the type of order that He has done on this Earth. Contrast that to where I'm standing right now, concrete forms with straight lines to the type of order that we saw yesterday. Even the smallest particles that we find in science only have probabilities of location. They have freedom of position and sometimes

they can be found in surprising places and this is just scientific fact. Sometimes even the electrons, there's a chance that they could be anywhere. There's a great probability where they're going to be but they can be anywhere. There's some really interesting things that we have found about God's creation through discovering these things. This is the order that exist in heaven that we're trying to bring to Earth. He does not bear responsibility for the hell of this world, He doesn't bear responsibility for the troubles that we point at and all of the problems of evil that I talked about with some of my friends. That is not His responsibility because it's not His will. He gives us that agency and we are responsible for rising up, it's our job to rise up and do His will.

True doctrine can be taught in an intensive weekend and I'm convinced of that. I don't know for sure but I think that we could have every single question, I mean I have a million of them, that we can have them answered in one single weekend. What's really lacking though in my opinion is, a people with concrete, charitable, qualities of doing his will on Earth as it is in heaven. So again as I said, His kingdom comes as people align their will with Him, becoming heaven's citizens that establish a heavenly beachhead on the Earth.

With that kind of introduction, I might have to speed along things along here.

Let's talk about the trick and this is my opinion, that maybe the biggest problem is how do we discern what His will is? There are a million voices out there, there's people talking, there's people who write, there's people that say this is the right way, you know lo here, lo there. Christ said, Verily I say unto you, that 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.' (3 Nephi 14:21, Matt 7:21)

Among all of these outside voices that are competing for our attention, we have this warning that there are people that will claim to be doing the will of the Lord who aren't. So we need to be wary of deception, we need to be wary of those that sow chaos when they say they are serving the God of order. So I'm going to go through a few of the keys that we may have to judge the way. And I'm going to start with Moroni 7:15-17 'For behold, my brethren, it is given unto you to judge, that ye may know good from evil; and the way to judge is as plain, that ye may know with a perfect knowledge, as the daylight is from the dark night. For behold, the Spirit of Christ is given to every man, that he may know good from evil; wherefore, I show unto you the way to judge; for every thing which inviteth to do good, and to persuade to believe in Christ, is sent forth by the power and gift of Christ; wherefore ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of God. But whatsoever thing persuadeth men to do evil, and believe not in Christ, and deny him, and serve not God, then ye may know with a perfect knowledge it is of the devil; for after this manner doth the devil work, for he persuadeth no man to do good, no, not one; neither do his angels; neither do they who subject themselves unto him.'

So I submit to you, that any standard of discernment, any standard of truth, any method that we use to measure what is good and evil, needs to apply to Christ and He needs to come across with the answer, 'that's the Savior.' So if you have been an average resident of the city of

Jerusalem in AD 30-33, and you had a certain standard of belief about the way God works in the world, if that standard were applied today and if you were that average citizen and you would apply that standard and it would have caused you to reject Christ, then that is not a standard of God, that is the standard of the devil.

We can learn one of the keys of discerning by thinking of that and thinking how did Christ come, who was He when He was here? Alma 13 talks about how true priests ordained after the holy order were done in a manner or in the same manner as Christ so that the people prior to Christ's mortal ministry would know who to look for. I believe that now that Christ has come we can apply that same standard to his true messengers. I think God is the same today, yesterday and forever and that He follows the same patterns.

So again the question is where did Christ come from?

Well He came from a town that wasn't on any map, He had an accent that the cosmopolitan Judeans considered hickish. You could tell who Galileans were when they spoke. He came from a family with no authority, with no name, with no recognition. It's like he was a hillbilly from La Verkin who walked in to Salt Lake City, took a whip, drove people out of Temple Square, hung out with the poor and prostitutes, the tax collectors, the people that everyone else rejects and those are the ones that he taught and were his friends.

So that is one standard that we can use to discern His will, is we can look at the circumstances of Christ's mortal ministry and develop personal tests as led by our Liahona for what the standards of truth are, what is good and evil and you can apply that against Christ and play 'what if' and say that 'if I was the average guy in Judea, would this standard have led me to Christ and would it cause me to reject Him?' There obviously is something more to the message of truth than just a pedigree of authority.

So another method to judge whether something is of God, is to have a correct knowledge of Christ's character and attributes. In my opinion again, when a friend of God like Joseph Smith spells out 12 principles of righteousness in a letter of the great high priest, this is an excellent key we have to learning who Jesus is and when we know who He is, we can tell more easily whether something comes from Him, what His will is.

Consider this, 'No power or influence can or ought to be maintained by virtue of the priesthood, only by persuasion, by long-suffering, by gentleness and meekness, and by love unfeigned, by kindness and pure knowledge, which shall greatly enlarge a soul without hypocrisy and without guile. Reproving betimes with sharpness when moved upon by the Holy Ghost and then showing forth afterwards an increase of love towards Him, whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy.' (D&C 121:41-43)

That is the priesthood manual from the great high priest. That is the example, He lives that, and we can see how He lives that in this day. He does not intervene, He does not compel, He persuades and invites, He loves. I think one of the most important pieces of that is the

unfeigned love. I think we have all felt feigned love maybe, I would prefer no love than feigned love, I think. Consider this standard of priesthood authority, against the idea of an ad hoc authority-based claims supported by an ad hoc internal logic that demands and can only survive within immunity from critical evaluation, compared to who Christ is and His characteristics and attributes. Authority based on long-suffering, patience, meekness, and unfeigned love along with the other principles of righteousness. It is heaven's will that we be those people, not suicide bombers, not contending with others, not building temples to consumerism, carnal security, revitalizing downtown districts, none of that is what He cares about. He cares about how we treat each other even when we disagree and maybe especially when we disagree.

Another method is to listen to the sayings of Christ and this might be the easiest one and I can sum this up with one verse. 'And behold, I tell you these things that ye may learn wisdom; that ye may learn that when ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God.' (Mosiah 2:17)

Think about your family. Who does the most work? Who is serving the most? It's probably the mom. It's probably the mom and dad together, working together, serving the most and that is who our Father in Heaven, that is who our Saviour, that is the characteristic and quality they have. They love you just as much as you love your children.

And so, to start in the home stretch here, my enduring is almost over for this end anyway. Doctrine and Covenants 45:68 'And it shall come to pass among the wicked, that every man that will not take his sword against his neighbor must needs flee unto Zion for safety.'

As I was preparing this talk, the phrase came to me, "Residents of the city, citizens of the mountain, sons and daughters of the family of God." We first approached the city of Zion as refugees, people who are escaping the evils and violence of this world, and violence and the swords that we're talking about don't need to be literal swords they can be words which are just as dangerous. Those that approach are those that have taken an oath of pacifism, they won't take up sword against their neighbor, they gather in the city from every nation, there only those residents will be at peace but they will be taught and healed in the mountain of the Lord's house. Whereas they came first as refugees, they join as citizens then they are adopted as family. Naturalization and then adoption and is sent to become members of the family of God.

When is task accomplished? In one sense, could we consider it done the moment the decision has been made to finish the task?

When you decide...when my wife and I decided to come here, we made the decision to come and do whatever it took to get to this moment, and in a way we could think of that decision being sealed as soon as we decided that nothing would persuade us to change our mind.

Psalms 48, 'I delight to do your will oh my God, yea your laws are written within my heart.'

Doctrine and Covenants 58:31, 'Who am I, saith the Lord, that have promised and have not fulfilled?'

At its core, exaltation is a choice. It's a choice to never give up, never surrender. It is a choice to be healed from the poison of fiery, flying, snakes by looking to the body nailed and lifted up for us. And the labor which they had performed was to look and because of the simpleness of the way or the easiness of it, there are many who perished. No matter where you are, no matter who you are, decide today that as long as I can stand, I will walk, as long as I walk I will run, to the goal of knowing and being healed by our Savior. Submission to the will of God is bringing heaven into Earth, not an acquiescence and surrender to this hell on Earth. It is our job as seekers of righteousness to actually do heaven's will in our own lives. We can always start, no matter where we are with ourselves and from there just go on out to your family, to your spouse, to your community, to your sphere of influence. Do it in that order.

So I've wrote online my witness of Christ. I won't repeat a lot of what was written there, you can look it up later. I put it back up. There really isn't much special about being a messenger or a witness. As near as I can tell the main advantages is you have a little bit more time to think about the message, a little bit more time to miss the mark of the message and a little bit more time to try again. So I might have had maybe two or three shots here more than you guys. Many firsthand know that my most common response to most questions is a combination of either, 'wow, I didn't ever thought of that,' or 'that is very interesting,' or 'I don't know.' I really do have more questions than I have answers. I tend to be, if some people are 'why,' if some children of God ask why incessantly, I tend to be the one that asks 'what and how.'

For what it's worth I will share this, Christ is a real person. Do not believe anyone or anything that will discourage you from knowing him. Our job, just like Christ's job, you know when He comes, do you notice in the scriptures almost the first time, almost the first thing He says is that he did the will of the Father. That's what He did when he came as a mortal and that is what we do. Our job is to do His will, His job is to bring the pass our eternal life and exaltation. Please trust His methods, please trust His timing. He has the ability to accomplish much more than we give him credit for. The timing is His. He sees a bigger picture than any of us realize. Even when we might be ready, He might have different plans for us. Perhaps our family, perhaps our neighbors, perhaps there's something that will happen that he thinks it would be better to wait. Time is subject to Him and there's no impediment for Him to accomplish whatever it is He wants. So whatever you think He needs to do, He can do it in the last breath of your life. What you need to do is take His message, His sayings and His will and do it on earth as it is done in heaven.

So this is the message of peace. Thanks to the Father who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore my beloved brothers and sisters be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work and will of the Lord because we know, we all know, that our labor is not in vain when done in Christ Jesus. Thank you. Amen.