

Possibilities



Lessons from the Spirit

By Doug Mendenhall

POSSIBILITIES. . .

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August 2002

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With this book I want to share the lessons that my family and I are learning from our Heavenly Father. I take sole responsibility for all the material contained in this work. Because I am LDS, my point of view and material used are mainly from that source. I suppose if I was a Buddhist or any other religion, my sources and point of view would be slanted that way. Nevertheless, it is my hope that the reader *will seek truth no matter where they may find it.*

All the experiences in this book have happened to us or those we know, it is not a work of fiction. No one can take these experiences away from us, whether they believe them or not. We have changed some names out of courtesy to those individuals that allowed us to use their story but not their name.

Doug Mendenhall

This book is dedicated to my Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, from both of whom I have experienced unlimited patience and unconditional love. I truly love them and pray that my will always matches theirs. I am so grateful to them for the lessons that our family has learned. Especially for the knowledge we have that they are real and do watch over and care for each of us. I am thankful to know that if we invite our Savior into our lives through gratitude, He will come in and “sup” with each one of us.

I am so grateful for Dianne, my eternal sweetheart. She is my joy and strength. I wish I had her faith. I want her to know I love her with all my soul.

My children are also my joy. I love each of them and thank them for putting up with me while I learn the lessons the Lord puts in front of me.

I appreciate the help of my friends with this book. Especially that of Rain, Rob, Colleen, and Judy.

A special thanks to John and Linda. Nothing more needs to be said.

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Prologue

My world had caved in.

On November 5, 1999 our little ten year old daughter, Denise, went into a diabetic coma. This story is covered in the book, *“My Peace I Give Unto You,”* in greater detail, so I will cover it very quickly here.

Denise went into the coma and we took her to Primary Children’s Medical Center. We were told that besides diabetes, she had suffered a major stroke at the base of the left brain. It had pretty much destroyed most of the left side of her brain. Her blood vessels and capillaries had fragmented like tissue paper. We were told that it was medically impossible for her to live and if by some miracle she did live, she would be a vegetable the rest of her life. They put a tube down her throat to breathe for her so they could harvest her organs for donation. They also inserted a bolt into her brain to monitor the pressure, as they were sure her brain would swell from the bleeding, the injury and the IV fluids they were giving her.

She never quit breathing and her brain didn’t swell. After three days she woke up from her coma. She progressed at a phenomenal rate. She went from not being able to speak, walk, or write (i.e. a true vegetable) to walking one thousand feet a few days after leaving the intensive care unit. Her first attempts at writing looked like chicken scratches. After twenty five days she walked out of the hospital. The day she was leaving the hospital, she was sitting on the floor tying her shoelaces and her doctor came in, took a look, shook her head and walked out, not saying one word. Denise really was a miracle! We went home figuring we had a little “miracle” kid and life would continue as before, but we soon found out that she had come back with many “gifts.”

Denise could see auras, the energy around our bodies. She showed us she was able to see the spirit world or those that had left this existence. While in her coma she spent those three days with Christ and saw His whole life, from His birth to resurrection. She talked of His birth, about how young Mary

was, and how old Joseph was. She described the stable where it occurred. She talked about the Garden where she watched Christ suffer for our sins, accomplishing the atonement, and she saw the cross where He experienced separation from His Father. We found out she could read minds if she chose. She was like those talked about in Ether where it says, “*And there were many whose faith was so exceedingly strong, even before Christ came, who could not be kept from within the veil...*”

Denise displayed many gifts, but she never said, “Look what I can do.” We would always find out about her gifts just by living life. In one way or the other, the gifts would come out. But the amazing thing was that she also came back with *no judgement*. I remember going over to my friend John’s house with her for the first time. His son, David, met her and made the comment to John that, “She will do whatever Christ tells her to do.” We have found that to be so very true. She is a “normal” young woman in every way. But she does have gifts and will follow her Best Friend, no matter what He tells her to do. This is something that might do all of us good to emulate.

We soon named our house the “Twilight Zone.” I would wake up each morning wondering what would happen that day or what lessons would be taught through her. Over the next few months I learned that our Savior, Jesus Christ, is real, and He is involved in this earth, His creation. He does not sit far off on some distant planet receiving reports every now and again about us. We are part of Him and He us. He stated that He stands at the door, knocking, and if we will open that door, He will come in to us and sup with us, and we with Him. We have learned that this statement is literal.

Our family has learned that the door He is standing at is opened by *gratitude*. We should be grateful for ALL things, even a young daughter/sister lying in the hospital in a coma. When gratitude is expressed from the heart, Christ then can give us His peace that goes beyond all understanding, a peace so pervasive that a new understanding comes with it. His hand is in all things, just as He has said. We experienced that moment of receiving His peace. It was OK if our daughter died, lived as a vegetable or fully recovered. The peace we received goes

beyond understanding. We had neighbors and relatives come up to us thinking we were in denial over the impending death of our daughter. They couldn't conceive of the peace we had received from a loving Father in Heaven through Jesus Christ.

We learned that Christ's atonement is real. We make it effective in our lives with the *personal sacrifice of a broken heart and contrite spirit*. That is what He requires. We learned that Denise's gifts are here to testify of our Savior, His goodness and benevolence. They are not to be manipulated by anyone.

We learned that we are not to judge (condemn) anyone. Many people told us of "righteous judgement," that it is OK to "judge righteously." Through our experiences we learned that Christ is the only "Righteous Judge." Only if we have, as the scriptures state, "the Mind of Christ" will we be able to see as He sees. He has descended below all things and therefore understands all our pain, motivations, actions, etc.

Only He would be able to offer a righteous judgement. Christ is unconditional love or love without judgement. People have also told us that God's love is conditional. But through our experiences we have felt his unconditional love. We know we are not "worthy" of the blessing for which He has blessed us, yet still He gives. I would always love my children, no matter what they have done. Am I better than God? I think not. So would He not love me, no matter what I have done? Therefore to *my* understanding, His love is unconditional.

We have learned many things from the Savior through Denise. Nearly all of them are lessons that have been taught through living, through example. It is our desire to share more of these experiences with you. I have found there are so many "possibilities" out there, things we never imagined possible. The weave of "*my basket of life experiences*" has been stretched, broken, and woven anew by the unconditional love of our Father in Heaven and Lord, Jesus Christ.

But I'm getting ahead of myself, Let me take you back five or six months.

Chapter One

*“But this shall be the covenant that I will
make with the house of Israel;
After those days, saith the Lord,
I will put my law in their inward parts,
and write it in their hearts; and will be their God,
and they shall be my people.*

*And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor,
and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord:
for they **shall all know me**,
from the least of them unto the greatest of them,
saith, the Lord”*

(Jeremiah 31:33-34)

The chest pain just wouldn't quit. The stabbing discomfort that started a short while after my Dad passed away had gotten continually worse. It started with a little pressure every once and awhile, and progressed to an almost constant pain that would shoot up and down my left arm. It seemed to really accelerate when I was forced out of a business I had spent years building, a business I enjoyed and had provided me with a substantial income. At the time all I felt was hate for those men who had taken it away from me; so much so, that whenever I thought about all the things I wanted to do to them, my chest started to hurt even more.

That wasn't the worst part. Because of the depression that encompassed me, I had gained some sixty pounds and counting. I became a slug. No more running with the Explorer Scouts, no more basketball, no running around with my kids.

What hurt even more than the weight gain was the fact that I had no insurance to cover anything that might happen to me or my family. Because of the many false accusations about me, my business was taken away, and I had lost almost everything I owned. For this reason I had no insurance. Given

this fact, I knew it was futile for me to go to a doctor. If he said I needed surgery, what would I do? I had no income and no way to pay for any surgery.

I had resigned myself to being a slug, just waiting to die. Somehow I had managed to hang onto a million dollar life insurance policy, so I figured my wife, Dianne, would be taken care of when I died. So I waited and stayed away from any exertion because of the pain it caused.

After experiencing the “peace” the Lord offers those that give thanks for what they are going through, I ceased hating the men who had destroyed me financially. But that didn’t seem to make the chest and arm pains go away. The pain continually got worse. Even though I felt at peace, my body seemed to be dying. I never told my family of my chest pain; I didn’t want to worry them. I really don’t think they had any idea why I had gained the weight and had become a recluse.

“Dianne, I’m heading down to Provo to do some business. I’ll be back in several hours,” I yelled to my sweetheart.

“OK, about what time do you think you’ll be back?” she asked.

“Oh, I don’t know, about three or four. In time for dinner anyway!” I responded.

I love to drive. It must be in my genes. My father was a truck driver for thirty years and I couldn’t get enough of it. I seem to “zone out” whenever I drive, it is so relaxing. The drive to Provo seemed too short.

Pulling up in front of the hotel, I wondered if David would be there yet. I had just met him, but he seemed sharp, someone I hoped to do a lot of business with. I walked in and there he was waiting for me. Seeing me, he jumped up. “Hi Doug, how are you today?” he asked.

“Good,” I replied in return. In reality a lie, as my chest was already hurting from the walk in from the car.

We conducted our business and afterward David asked me if I ever attended self-improvement seminars. I told him I

had attended many, and that I had many books and tapes to prove it. I even ordered tapes through the mail.

“Well, how would you like to attend a seminar called ‘*Crocodiles, Not Water Lilies?*’” he asked.

“I’ve never heard of such a thing,” I said.

“It normally costs three hundred dollars, but I feel I’m supposed to give you a free ticket to attend it,” he countered.

I really didn’t want to attend another self-improvement seminar. But, I did want to do business with David and felt that it was something I should do. “OK, I’d really like to attend it,” I replied. Dave seemed pleased with the prospect of me going to the seminar, so I thought it was a good decision. I then left for home.

The seminar started the following Saturday. I had to be in the Pleasant Grove City Library by eight, but had left in plenty of time to get there early. Upon entering the Library’s basement, I found David and exchanged pleasantries with him until the seminar started.

As far as seminars go, this one was fun, and I was learning some good principles. The seminar leader told us we needed to change seats during every break and at lunch in order to meet new people. That didn’t appeal to me; I stayed put. During the first break the Spirit told me to go sit by a man seated at a table in the center of the room. I declined. His name was John, and he never moved either. All day long the Spirit told me to go sit by him, but I wouldn’t do it. He was “different.” He seemed to have ADHD and was continually moving about. He was not to my liking. The seminar ended and I told David I’d see him the next Saturday (the seminar went for three Saturdays in a row).

The second week found me sitting in the same spot as the week before. The Spirit told me on the first break to go sit by John. I did. He was a former dentist living out of his car, a Lincoln. “At least he has a nice car to live out of,” I thought. Then he told me the rest of his story during lunch and the other breaks. He said that his wife had divorced him and he lost everything.

For some time, he had been living out of his car and staying at different friends' homes. He said he was involved in some kind of health project that I didn't understand or really care about.

John was great fun to talk to and much more interesting than most of the seminar attendees. During one of the breaks I was told by the Spirit to stay with him and not move again. This time I was happy to comply.

John told me about a group of people in Colorado that had developed what they called a bio-feedback device. He stated that one of the people couldn't sleep one night and went downstairs to put some of his thoughts down on paper.

He said that the man wrote most of the night, receiving what he said could be termed as a revelation about a way to construct a bio-feedback device. "He was amazed at what he had written," John said. According to this man, the programming in it would be done using a different numerical system, or "God's math" which used the Fibonacci sequence of numbers. The device could measure or test on two levels the organs and systems in our bodies. These levels were spiritual and physical.

Needless to say, I was blown away. I had never heard of "God's math" before, Fibonacci numbers, or anything even close to what he was telling me. I had heard of bio-feedback machines though. I asked John to tell me more. He said that during their research the group had asked many "professionals" in the medical and scientific fields for help and advice in developing their theories, however, they were told that programming a computer using that math would be difficult, and they were told to basically get lost. Going back to Colorado, they raised more than a million dollars and developed the machine. They now had a thriving business in Colorado selling the machine all over the country along with many homeopathic remedies they manufactured. They had helped many people.

To say I was a little bit interested in this “device” was a major understatement. I felt that I really *needed* this machine. “Where can I get tested on one of these,” I asked John.

“Well, there is a practitioner in Bountiful or you can go to Colorado,” he answered. “They both charge around \$125.00 per hour,” he added.

“Whoa,” I said. “I don’t have that kind of money. In fact I don’t have any money at all.”

“Well, I do have a portable version of their machine. I can bring it here next week. I could test you then,” he said.

“That would be incredible,” I nearly yelled, not wanting him to know the real reason I wanted to be tested. I really wanted to know how bad my heart and lungs were.

That next week went by slower than any other in my life. It seemed to never end. Finally, Saturday came and I headed down to Pleasant Grove, extremely excited. If I thought the week would never end, the seminar was worse. I could hardly wait to be tested on the bio-feedback machine. Finally the seminar ended and John went out and got it.

When I saw it I wasn’t impressed, it was quite small. But I still could hardly wait for him to test me. “Let me get this set up,” he said. He plugged in two different wires; one had a brass “handle” on one end, the other had a small brass tip. I figured it ran on batteries; there was no electrical plug. He informed me that it ran on our bodies’ energy. It did have a battery, but that was for the light and “buzzer.” He said, “The needle starts at zero and can go up to 100. You want to be at 50, that is in balance. If you are using energy in the organ or system we test, it will go above 50, and that means you are taking energy from somewhere else in your body, that isn’t good. Anything from 40 to 50 is good. Below 10 is basically death. 70 or above means you’re going to pop! Now let’s test you!”

John had me hold the brass handle. He held my other hand and told me he would put the brass tip on certain points on my fingers, each point corresponding to a part of my body. He then pulled out a chart that showed me this. “First, I like to test

the area around your teeth and mouth,” he said. Of course, I thought, being the dentist he is. But I could hardly wait for him to do my heart and lungs, but I didn’t say anything. I didn’t want to appear anxious. I had not told him about my chest pains; I wanted to see what he found out, without any bias. The needle went to nearly fifty. “Just what I like to see,” he said, “fairly healthy mouth.”

“Let’s do your heart now,” he offered. He placed the tip on the spot that was for the heart. It went to 19. He looked at me with a frown on his face and did it again. Still 19. “I want to test your lungs,” he quietly said. The needle went to 18. John looked at me and very seriously said, “Are you having chest pains?”

“Yes,” I answered.

“Pain down your left arm,” he queried.

“Yes, continually,” I responded somewhat meekly. “I have had pain for the last eight months. It seems to be getting worse,” I said.

“You need to see a doctor, now! You have heart and lung disease!” he nearly yelled. I told him I had no insurance and couldn’t afford what a doctor might tell me. If he wanted to operate, what would I do? I had no options. John simply confirmed what I had known for many months. “Doug,” he said, “Do you know what the first sign of heart disease is in about forty percent of the people who have it?”

“No,” I replied.

“Sudden death!” he firmly answered. “You really need to see a doctor,” he said again.

“John, I have no money or insurance,” I countered, not knowing what else to say. He took a long look at me and said he had “something that might help me.” He gave me a phone number of where he was sleeping and told me to call him. Then he left.

From the constancy of my chest and left arm pain, I knew I was in trouble. Now I had it confirmed by John’s bio-feedback machine. I had not told a soul about it until now. The thing that amazed me was he said he had something that might

help me. So I called and called the number he gave me. It took almost three weeks before he finally called me back. I didn't know if he was seeing if I was genuine or what. But I didn't care, he was my last hope, I had no rich Uncles to bail me out.

"Dianne, I'm heading down to Spanish Fork City Park to meet a guy. I will be back late," I said, hoping she wouldn't ask why.

"Why are you going there?" she answered. Shoot, I thought, I won't lie to her, but I don't want her to know about my heart yet. (Sometimes we husbands can be real insensitive).

"I'm meeting a guy I met at the Croc seminar, to see if I can do some business with him," I said, all of which was the truth.

"OK," she said.

Was I glad I had married Dianne. She is so incredible I thought to myself, hoping I would not die and be with her a long time. But I knew if I did die, she would be taken care of with the life insurance money.

The drive to Spanish Fork was interminable. I had waited for three weeks and now was going to find out what John could do to help me. Having no idea what he would say, I should have been apprehensive, but I wasn't, I was at peace. That was strange for me.

John was waiting in the park with his son. They had brought the bio-feedback machine. We sat at a picnic table and John started talking. He wanted to tell me an interesting story about an experience his Uncle had a few years ago. I couldn't figure out what that had to do with why I was here, but it was his show at this point. So I sat back and listened to the strangest story I had ever heard, at least to that point in my life.

John told me his uncle had been asked to serve as leader of his church congregation in a neighboring state some fifty years ago. He had a young wife and a couple of young kids. He and his partner owned a service station. Being the leader of his congregation, he sometimes had people come to him for help with food and other welfare items. He helped them through his church. A man came in one morning and gave him

some papers to read. The papers told him of a plant that could be made into a homeopathic remedy to help heal people. He never did anything about it. In fact he lost the papers.

John's uncle served in many leadership positions in his church. Finally he was asked to be a leader of some missionaries. John told me many more things about his uncle's life. He even went to the head of his church and told him of his experience. He was given a blessing by his Church President.

John said that finally his uncle went back East to get this plant in the eighties, some thirty plus years after he was told about it. After he returned with some of the plant, he rented lab space at a University and hired a scientist to begin the research. They discovered that the plant was everything they were told and more. They would give cancer to rats and the plant extract would make it go away. The scientist tried to synthesize the active ingredient in the plant. It's hard to patent a plant, but you can patent a process for synthesizing an ingredient of a plant. They asked John if he would be willing to go out and raise money for the research. He agreed.

John told me that contrary to their agreement, one of the scientists took it upon himself to publish papers about the research. They formed a corporation to market it. As stated above, they tried to synthesize the ingredients in order to secure a patent. Somewhere along the line, it seems they forgot what they had been taught, that this sacred plant was not to be used to get gain, i.e. for money, praise or honor for themselves.

John proceeded to tell me that because of all that had happened, he felt it would be important for someone else to go back East and get some more of the plant. The problem was he was almost penniless and didn't have a clue as to how he could afford to go. However, as sometimes happens, things began to fall into place and a friend was able to get round trip plane tickets and he and his son were able to fly back there for free.

After they arrived they were "shown" where the plant was located and were able to secure some of it. They felt they should take some to the people in Colorado who had the bio-feedback machine. The people from Colorado put it in a

greenhouse and grew it. They found it is a very unusual plant; for instance, it seems to prefer classical music, children, roses, and seems to pick up the emotions of those around it. They put a mark on the wall and watched the plant grow one inch in one hour! They put the plant on their bio-feedback machine, and they saw what it could do for many diseases. They were so excited about the prospects of what this could do for everyone.

Then without warning they stopped calling John altogether. Phone calls, faxes, everything he tried elicited no response from them. John didn't have the funds to go to Colorado and find out what happened, so he just waited. In his opinion he felt they realized they couldn't sell the remedy made from this plant and that their other homeopathic remedies would be worthless to them if the plant did what they were seeing it do. So they simply decided to quit.

At his point in his story I was a little perplexed. All this and these people simply walk away from it. Why did John tell me all this? So I asked him, "Why the long story, and where's the plant?"

He then proceeded to tell me he had been given one bottle of the homeopathic remedy which they first processed from the plant. He pulled it out of his pocket and put it on his bio-feedback machine.

"Let's see how much you would need to take to balance you at fifty." He grabbed my hand and tested me on the machine. He tested until it showed that twelve drops three times per day would eventually balance me.

"John, I can't afford this. I have no money."

"It's OK Doug, it comes from God, it's free," he responded. I couldn't believe my ears. He had one bottle and was giving it to me.

"But John, it's a small bottle. What happens when it runs out?"

His comment really caught me off guard, "When it gets down to half full, fill it up again with spring water and shake it and it will renew itself. It is a never ending supply, it never will run out. That's how it seems God works."

I was completely blown away. I had just heard the most incredible story and now he was telling me that this bottle of homeopathic drops would heal me. My basket of experiences was being severely stretched; it was about ready to break. Then the Spirit whispered to my heart that what he had just told me was true. If I took the drops with gratitude, having faith in Christ, He would heal me. At that point I figured I had nothing to lose. The Spirit then told me to give him the ten dollars I had in my pocket.

After giving John and his son the ten dollars, they told me they were grateful. They had not eaten all day because they were so poor. I wished I had more money. I then drove home, wondering about an amazing story, trying to put it all together in my mind, all the while clutching a little bottle of homeopathic drops that I hoped would be my often prayed for miracle.

From that point on I took the drops three times per day, every day. Twelve of them, I never missed. Many times when I was in the kitchen taking them, my ten year old daughter, Denise, would come walking through the kitchen. She would walk up to me like a little bird with her mouth open wanting some of the drops. I would squirt some into her mouth. She took them many times during the next several months.

During the next few months I read much in the scriptures about faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and gratitude, realizing these were the principles on which these “drops” worked. I remember reading what Moroni had said, *“And now, I, Moroni would speak somewhat concerning these things; I would show unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for you receive no witness until after the trial of your faith.”*

In the Old Testament it talks about the Israelites who were bitten by fiery serpents. *“. . . He sent fiery flying serpents among them; and after they were bitten he prepared a way that they might be healed; and the labor which they had to perform was to look; and because of the **simpleness** of the way, or the **easiness of it**, there were many who perished.”* (1 Nephi 17:41)

Moses was told to erect a brass serpent on a pole and have the people look at it and they would be healed. But as the scripture says, the “cure” was so easy they many refused to look and live. As a result, many perished. At first I couldn’t understand why they would not look.

“But few understood the meaning of those things, and this because of the hardness of their hearts. But there were many who were so hardened that they would not look, therefore they perished. Now the reason they would not look is because they did not believe that it would heal them.”

Wow, because of the “hardness of their hearts” few understood the meaning of what Moses told them to do. Even more incredible were the “many who were so hardened that they would not look.” Little did I know I was to experience this on a smaller scale.

After several months of taking the drops and being healed, I approached friends about the possibility of the Lord using “means” to accomplish His work. I tried to tell them about the plant and the story behind it. The reactions varied from, “That’s great, can I have some?” to “That’s OK Doug, you can believe what you want,” to outright hostility! Some of the reactions reminded me of another story from the Old Testament about Naaman and the prophet Elisha.

*“And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan **seven times**, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, **I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the water of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.***

*And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father **if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing**, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then he went down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of*

the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.” (2 Kings 5:8-14)

It has been my experience that many of us deny ourselves the blessings of God because we harden our hearts, or like the Syrian noble, *we have preconceived notions about how God may do something*. Just because the “means” the Lord uses may be “simple” or sound strange or may not be the way we would do it, it does not mean it doesn’t come from the Lord. I feel we should exercise our faith in Christ as He has said, then He can perform the miracle. Would I have received the miracle of being healed if when John placed that little bottle of homeopathic remedy on the table after telling me the most unbelievable story I had ever heard, I had said, “that’s it? You expect that little bottle of whatever to heal me?” Gratefully I was out of options and had to put my faith in Christ.

I kept taking the plant. When the amount of drops in the bottle got down to half full, I would pour spring water in it and shake it up. After one month the pains started to subside. After three months, they were gone completely. I was so very grateful, I wanted to share it with the world. I gave gratitude to the Lord for what had been given, for the miracle I had experienced. I was so grateful to John, for everything he had endured to get this plant here. I was feeling so incredibly good, my life had been given back to me.

I knew it wasn’t the plant or “means” that had healed me, it was the Lord. It is He who is the Healer, but I learned that Heavenly Father can use different ways to do it, *if* it is His will that we are to be healed. What if He had told someone to erect a serpent on a pole and have me look at it in order to be healed? What would I as a latter-day “Israelite” have done or said? Could a “priesthood blessing” have done the same? You bet it could, or any number of ways or “means” He provides. It is my feeling that we ought to remain open to any possibility the Lord may use to heal us, because He does use many different “means” to do so.

I have learned we need to remain open minded to what the Lord tells us and to our experiences. We ought to look at

them as exciting possibilities. It is our faith in Christ that is important, not the “means” that He may use to help us or to answer our petitions. He may use a priesthood blessing, the homeopathic drops from a vine or a serpent on a pole, it doesn’t matter, as long as it comes from Him and we keep our hearts open with faith.

In the scripture at the start of this chapter the Lord says He will put His “law in our inward part, and write it in (our) hearts.” If we are hard hearted, as some of ancient Israel appeared to be, how can the Lord write anything in our hearts? It is my understanding that if we want Him to be our God and we want to be His people, we ought to remain “open” hearted. Is this possibly what the Savior meant when He said that He requires a “broken heart?”

The Lord states that when we get to this point that we “*shall no more teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying Know the Lord: for they shall all know me.*” This is a wonderful statement, not because I am tired of being taught by my neighbor in Sunday School, but because the Lord has declared that we ALL shall know Him. If He is writing on our hearts, is He not the one that is now teaching us?

I attended a priesthood meeting where my church leader said that we shall all know the Lord and be taught by Him. We were told to go home and “study it, ponder it, and ask the Lord to help us understand it.” We were also told to “prepare ourselves and our families for that day.”

This is so exciting to me. The first foundational gospel principle is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I believe now is the time to develop faith in Christ sufficient enough that our hearts will be open to what the Lord wants to tell us individually. He has declared that He will write His law in our hearts in these last days, that we all shall know Him and not teach neighbor to neighbor, we won’t have to if we know Him and His Son. The bottom line, I believe, to accomplishing this is to develop sufficient faith in Christ that we are open to anything He may want us to do. With that kind of faith we will not harden our hearts.

For me this was the beginning of a most incredible journey of discovery and developing faith in Christ, a journey that I could not have made up in my wildest dreams. This part of my journey started with a man telling me an incredible story. But it was a story of hope, at least for me. This was a journey of having sufficient faith in Christ to put what I was told to the test. A journey of having faith enough in my Heavenly Father to turn to Him when there was no one else to get answers from and finally realizing that He will write His will on our hearts.

It was at this time that our daughter, Denise, went into her coma and our home became quite different than what it used to be. But what an exciting journey it has been to discover Christ, to know him and our Heavenly Father. It is my testimony that this journey starts with the first principle of the gospel, faith in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

I remember sitting with Denise once discussing the pre-existence. Though she offered very little in the way of things I wanted to know, the conversation was still interesting.

“Denise,” I asked, “why am I your dad? Did we decide that before we came here?”

“Yes, Dad, I chose you,” she said while patting my head.

“Why?” I asked.

“Because,” she said, “you were the only one that would believe a ten year old.”

Chapter Two

*Behold, I stand at the door, and knock:
if any man hear my voice,
and open the door,
I will come in to him,
and will sup with him, and he with me.*

(Revelations 3:20)

It was just after Christmas and the roads were icy. I didn't seem to notice, though, as I was deep in thought, wondering what in the world we were doing. I found the house and was amazed at how tiny and cute it was.

I kept telling myself to have an open mind, or even better yet, to have a "not knowing" mind, to put all in the Lord's hand (as His hand is in all things). My mind drifted back to the e-mail I had received.

"Dear Doug Mendenhall,

My name is Sue. . . I have always had an interest in near death experiences and have read quite a few books on the subject. I had a really strong prompting that I needed to read your book when I saw it in the book catalogue. I went to buy it that day, but it wasn't in stock yet, so I asked them to reserve a copy for me. I went home and forgot about it. A week later I received a phone call that the book was in, and again, I felt I needed to read this book. I had no idea why, because I thought it was going to be just another near death experience, just like all the others I read before. After reading it, I felt I should write you this letter.

I am thirty six years old, . . .and am studying at a local college . . . to become an elementary education teacher. I can't say that I know what you say is true, but I hope it is. There is nothing in what you say that is contrary to my personal beliefs. I have never written a letter like this before. Please know that I

am a sincere person. I have desired a long time to find His peace.

I have a problem that I have been dealing with for a long time. I have prayed, . . . received blessings, met with counselors, and worked through the legal system. The problem only gets worse. I have long felt that no one besides Jesus can help me, but I don't know how to receive it or how to know what He wants me to do. I need help before this problem swallows me up and destroys me. I can't keep going on like this.

My feeling in my heart is that through the gifts you have been blessed with you may have the insight to help me know what to do. I'm asking you to pray and ask if we may meet together so I can tell you about my situation in more detail. Please know there is no pressure here. If you do not feel comfortable in meeting me, say so and I'll never bother you again.

I have a very old car, but I would be willing to come where you are, or if you are ever in my town . . . you would be welcome in my home. I have final exams this next week, but I'm out of school for Christmas break after that, and will have time to meet with you then.

I appreciate your time and hope to hear from you soon. Thank you for sharing your story.”

I had sent her a return e-mail and set up an appointment to see her today. However, during the drive I felt as if Satan was working on me, telling me that I didn't know a thing. I kept wondering what I was doing here, thinking I could help this woman? Was I way in over my head? Who am I to think I can do anything for her?

I agreed with most of my thoughts. I really *was* wondering what I was doing here. I knew I didn't know a whole lot and probably was in way over my head. But, I did know this, it didn't matter. I felt that Christ had told me to come. If I went in with a “not knowing” mind, (not knowing beforehand what I should do), kept my ego out of it and let Him do whatever He wanted, it would all work out for the best.

So with as much faith as I could muster, I knocked on the door hoping His peace would be with us. Denise was with me, along with Chad, a friend from Idaho.

“Hello, my name is Sue, come on in,” she said opening the door. We walked into a tiny living room. We introduced ourselves and Sue introduced us to her mother. “My kids are off with my ex-husband,” she said. I noticed her lower jaw was quivering. It appeared that she was either nervous or scared; I didn’t know exactly.

We got the pleasantries out of the way. As both Sue and her mother shared their stories their lips quivered. The thought came to me that I might do the same if I was about to bare my soul to three strangers.

Sue told us her story of abuse from her ex-husband, of going to court, restraining orders against him, fights, and arguments. She described how it all destroyed her life. She was at her wit’s end. She received counseling, blessings, etc. However, she said nothing had helped her. As she was saying all this I was wondering why we were here. We didn’t know about abuse, except that Chad was a victim of abuse. But we certainly were not counselors. How could we ever help this poor woman?

However as she finished her story, we opened our mouths hoping that the Spirit would speak through us. The Spirit told her that Christ stands at the door knocking, waiting to be let into our lives. However, He has said that it is up to us to open the door. We all seem to make opening that door so complicated, though it really is so simple that *anyone* can do it. It is opened with *gratitude*. We told them of a Methodist Chaplain that has talked of this principle for decades. If someone goes to see him with a problem, he will open the Bible and have them read all the scriptures which tell about gratitude and praising God for ALL things. Then he has them pray a simple prayer of thanksgiving, thanking God for the situation they are in, for the experience they are having. Then it seems that the miracles begin to happen.

I told her of Denise and her coma. The night she was admitted into Primary Children's Hospital we were told she would not live more than twenty-four hours. If by some miracle she did live, they said at best she would be a vegetable the rest of her life. I told her how I went outside and found my way to the back of the Hospital to be alone. There I had a long conversation with God. "How come my daughter?" I had asked. Why didn't all the medical people we had talked to see the signs of diabetes? All I was told by the Spirit was to be grateful. "How!?" I cried. "How could I possibly be grateful?" The still small voice said that I should express gratitude for the experience I was going through. In despair, I finally succumbed to the idea and offered a prayer of gratitude for the experience, for the experience of the pain, the experience of my fears, for my family and much, much more. As I did so, a feeling of warmth and peace began to permeate every cell of my body. I felt that I had received His peace, even the peace that goes beyond understanding.

I told Sue I knew all this seemed like a huge paradox, but I had experienced that it was a true principle nevertheless. In order to receive His peace, I explained that I felt Christ wants us to express gratitude for the experience of what we are going through. She still seemed doubtful. "How can I be grateful for the awful things done to me and my children?" she asked. Just then Chad spoke up and told his story.

"I'm eighteen years old. A friend of mine gave me Doug and Denise's book a month or so ago. I had read about half of it. It offered concepts I hadn't thought about before. It talked of receiving Christ's peace, something I wanted, but could not understand how I could ever receive it.

You see, I am a victim of Satanic Ritual Abuse or SRA for short. The perpetrator was my grandma and her new husband. I 'woke' up to it several years ago and have been healing from it ever since. I have been angry for many years with these relatives who had done these awful things to me. Countless times I have tried to completely forgive them of all the havoc and heartache they have caused me and my family.

That anger and hate has been churning in my gut for the past years now and I have attempted many times to just leave them in Christ's hands, but I knew I was missing an important element, that of forgiveness. I have never been able to forgive them. I can't even call her grandma.

Anyway, I had read about half of the book, "My Peace I Give Unto You" and was sitting in Church one Sunday. About twenty minutes into the meeting, the Spirit told me to leave and finish reading the book. I mentally argued with the feeling for a few minutes and finally left for my car.

I sat out in the car and finished the book over the next few hours. As I read how Doug had lost his business and how his daughter was almost taken from him, I learned the great principle of gratitude for all things from Jesus. It gave me renewed power of hope and a key of knowledge, that of how to forgive those who had wronged me. I was told by the Spirit to pray and express gratitude for what my grandma had done to me. I had determined to do this, hoping that by expressing gratitude, all these years of anger, hatred, and tears would go away and I would receive His peace.

*So I went home and got on my knees. **It was like chipping concrete out of my mouth**, getting the words out. But I did it. As I continued to pray, my confidence and faith in the Lord grew stronger. I felt anger, hate, and bitterness leave my heart and stomach and I felt love and forgiveness replace them. I can't express with words the feeling that came over me. Every cell of my body experienced the most profound peace. All the hatred and anger that I had harbored for these past years left! I was free of it. All from a prayer of gratitude."*

We offered several verses from the scriptures about gratitude:

"Thou shalt thank the Lord thy God in all things." (D & C 59:7)

"And in nothing doth man offend God, or against none is his wrath kindled, save those who confess NOT his hand in all things. . . (D & C 59:21)

We then told Sue that we would love to kneel down with her and her mother to offer a prayer of gratitude to our Heavenly Father for the experience of ALL the things she had gone through. We asked if she and her mom would kneel down with us right then? We knelt and they knelt with us.

I was in awe over the prayer that Sue offered. She was so specific about the experiences of abuse and *thanked* Heavenly Father for them, for each experience. She had been told that the more specific she was, the more powerful her prayer would be. It was indeed a very powerful prayer. She was weeping all the way through it, as was her mother. She also thanked Him for the experiences her children had gone through. She then ended it.

Afterwards Sue's mother prayed. I could tell she was more doubting than Sue, but that was all right. She was at least doing it. What an exercise of faith!

After the prayers were completed we stood up. Sue looked at Denise and asked, "Is that Jesus that I feel standing next to me?" Denise confirmed that it was Him. I realized Sue had just opened the door He had been standing at. She stood there and cried, with joy and gratitude for every experience she had been through. She had received His peace.

We quickly left, giving them both hugs and asking that they keep in contact with us.

Nearly a week later, this e-mail arrived:

Hi Doug,

Just a quick note to thank you and to let you know how I'm doing since I met with you. Thank you for being the instrument through which I received the gift of the Savior's presence. After you left, I realized I had felt His peace before and heard His voice before, but I never knew that He was continually with me, or that I could have His peace with me always. The knowledge that He is with me has changed my life. Christ says that it is my job to teach my family. I was able to help Mom feel His Presence, and I have begun to teach my

children about gratitude. I feel so good that I just had to share it with them, so they can have this experience for themselves.

Thank you for bringing your friend. He said things to me that let me know God really does know me and hears my prayers. Abuse changes you. Therefore, there is a special connection between those that have been abused. Even though I don't know a lot about him, I felt that bond with him.

I still have so much to learn, but I have noticed some things that I'd like to share with you. For one thing, that awful "dead" feeling is gone, and I can feel Christ's love for me. Indeed, it feels like I am being filled with His love. My eyes and my ears are different – I can hear truth in music and when people speak to me, and I see people more like Christ sees them and I treat them more kindly. Even people who I had previously found difficult, I find myself feeling the Savior's love for them and they don't bother me like they used to. Church is a totally different experience – not only do I get more out of the talks and lessons, but words can not describe the feelings that overcame me as we sang "I Know My Redeemer Lives" and I could feel the Savior beside me.

Monday I began to come down with a bad cold. I wanted to enjoy Christmas with my kids and not be sick, so I told Christ. He said I would not be sick very long and he would strengthen me so I could get all my preparations done. I did get everything done, and my children never knew I was sick. Before, when I caught a cold, I'd be sick for a week or more. When I opened my Christmas gifts, I could feel the love that came with them.

We're trying to live in His Peace, and we look to the future with faith and confidence. The problems with my ex-husband haven't changed, but everything will be all right. It will be interesting to see how Christ will help us. That He will help us, I have no doubt. . .

Thank you and Denise for sharing your story and being my friends and helping me see the truth. I will always think of you as my very special friends. May God bless you as you continue to do His work.

Your Friend,”

The transformation from a frightened woman whose problems were about to “swallow” her up and “destroy” her to an incredibly “confident” person that now knows her Savior, feels His peace and is willing to do His will, still amazes me. All this and more came from simply kneeling down with a broken (open) heart and a contrite (teachable) spirit, expressing gratitude to her Father in Heaven for the experiences she had endured!

The Lord said in Matthew 11:28-30:

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden light.”

I have experienced the lightness of His burden and the easiness of His yoke when I offered prayers of gratitude for experiences I have gone through. It works with both the little day-to-day experiences and the “horrible” ones as well. He truly has experienced all things, descended below all things. Perhaps, that is **WHY** He is able to succor us perfectly.

Denise, Rob and I found ourselves going out and giving “book reviews” for people in their homes. When we went to a home we had no idea who would be there or what would happen. The idea is to go in, share our story, testify of Christ, give away our book and go home. We let Christ accomplish whatever He wants.

On one occasion we had been invited to a home in Orem. This particular home was a modest one. We had met a man who asked us to give a book presentation to his daughter and her friends. There were many little kids running around and it was a little chaotic. We finally got the book review going.

My friend Rob started the review first. He wrote our first book, *“My Peace I Give Unto You.”* As he was talking, I noticed a young woman crying. As he finished I stood up and went to the front of the room. This young mother was wiping tears from her eyes. I wondered what Rob had said that touched her so much.

I did my part of the presentation, describing how Denise went into her coma and subsequent recovery, how she came back with so many gifts and what they were. I testified of Christ to them. As I did, I noticed this same woman crying even harder.

As the meeting ended, I looked at her and asked her if she could feel Him there. She started crying even harder and nodded her head, yes. She asked if she could talk to Denise for a minute. We normally don't allow that, but the Spirit said it was all right and so did Denise. They talked outside for a few minutes. Then we packed up and went home. The next week I received an e-mail from this young woman. It read:

Dear Doug,

Hello. . . I met you . . . last week. I was the one who was really depressed. That night with you guys was the beginning of many blessings and amazing experiences. This whole thing has kicked me into high gear spiritually. I've been inactive and disfellowshipped from my Church since 1992. I've made a couple of feeble attempts at going back to Church, but never followed through with it. When we lived in this area a couple of years ago, I went maybe twice each year. I haven't stepped foot in the Church since I moved here April of last year.

I've never lost my faith through all of this. I encouraged my daughter to go with her teacher and she decided to get baptized when she turned eight two years ago. My son has only gone to Church a couple of times. . . During these long years of inactivity, I've made a lot of wrong choices in my life. I've continued to pray and ask for strength and direction and He always came through. But, I still felt like I had totally screwed up my life and my salvation. I was so overwhelmed by the love Christ gave to me that night you were here. I thought he was

disappointed in me. I thought it would be a long process to be worthy of His love. I've been so weighed down by my guilt that I never thought I'd feel so loved by Him that night. He wasn't just present that night. At the end of your talk, you asked me if I felt Him and where He was? All I could do was answer "Very close." At the time you asked me if I felt Him, He was radiating a wonderful heat right in front of me. And when you asked where He was, he totally consumed me with that heat and love and I couldn't say much because it was so wonderful I couldn't control the tears. I closed my eyes, missing the end of what you were saying, and just enjoyed His overwhelming love and warmth and acceptance that I was longing to feel. I have felt His calming peace numerous times over the years, but this was the first experience where I felt him as physically as I did at that moment. All my doubts about what I have done with my life were taken away. I didn't feel bad in His eyes. He had such a complete acceptance within Him that I needed so badly. I have felt Him with me ever since that night. . .

I have not felt the binds of my depressions since the day after. I came home that night and re-read what was written in the book about gratitude and then asked Him for guidance during my prayer to teach me what He was asking from me. It was a wonderful feeling when I reached the point of complete gratitude. It gave me so much peace.

I woke up the next morning wondering what the change would consist of. I felt lighter all over. I sat there looking at the valley, like I always do, and I couldn't stop smiling and giggling because everything seemed so different to me. I sat there and found myself saying that I was so happy to be alive and I could see beauty in everything. I went inside to my kids and the love I could feel for them, without the depression blocking it, was so wonderful. I couldn't stop smiling. My daughter picked up on my change right away and started asking questions. She loved the change in me so much that she wouldn't leave my side all day. She just took it all in. I finally was able to show and feel the love for my kids that I have been

longing for, for a long time. All three of my kids enjoyed the change and I loved being a mom, finally.

The next day was different. Christ warned me the night before that all days wouldn't be this enjoyable. Satan would continue to wear me down. Satan came after me from all directions. Every one of my kids was in an awful mood. My husband did whatever he could to hurt me. I kept looking to Him to remind myself that it would be over by the time the day ended. He reminded me that He would bring me peace again. . . I escaped into my bedroom and knelt in prayer to receive the peace again. He taught me so many things. Today, I got to wake up without Satan coming at me. I was able to feel Christ's peace and ponder things throughout the day. I have had so many lessons crammed into the last three days. . .

I sat and marveled at what the Lord can do and how He does it. We have shared this principle of gratitude so many times since. Many have told us of their experiences with the Lord and the "peace" He has given them. The Lord stated through one of his Prophets:

*"Verily I say unto you my friends, fear not, let your hearts be comforted; yea, rejoice evermore, and **in everything give thanks;***

Waiting patiently on the Lord, for your prayers have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, and are recorded with this seal and testament – the Lord hath sworn and decreed that they shall be granted.

Therefore, he giveth this promise unto you, with an immutable covenant that they shall be fulfilled; and all things wherewith you have been afflicted shall work together for your good, and to my names glory, saith the Lord."

We all find ourselves in many different situations in life. Chad from Idaho is a victim of SRA, Sue is a victim of spouse abuse, our friend in Orem was depressed and abused. I have experienced having my livelihood taken and a daughter spending three days in a coma nearly dying. Without exception each of us can begin praising God or giving gratitude for whatever experience we are having at this very moment and for

all of our past “experiences,” however terrible we feel they may have been. When we do we have an “immutable covenant” from the Lord with the promise that “all things wherewith (we) have been afflicted shall work together for (our) good” and to God’s glory. What a promise that is!

Through all of this I learned that the gratitude we express should be free of any thoughts of reward from God. We simply offer gratitude to Him with “real intent.” In the dictionary, *real* is defined as genuine, pure or true. So with this in mind, we wouldn’t go before the Lord saying, “Now that I have thanked you in the middle of this mess, it’s time to get me out!” Gratitude or praise is not a bargaining tool, it must be done with pure intent, or in other words, with a pure heart.

I believe we must let God cleanse our hearts from impure motives and hidden designs. Our heart must be pure, genuine and true. I’ve experienced that this is accomplished by becoming a “new” man in Christ (being reborn), letting the old self die so we can live in Christ, in newness of mind and spirit. I feel this is accomplished with a broken heart and contrite (teachable) spirit. We should be willing to endure all things (experiences) with an attitude of gratitude. The common denominator with my friends was a broken heart and a willingness to be taught, to let Christ into their lives, to believe Him when he says to give thanks for all things. Then they were able to get on their knees and DO it.

“In EVERY THING give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” (I Thessalonians 5:18)

“By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” (Hebrews 13:15)

I believe Paul is telling us that God is calling us to praise or thank Him. The sacrifice of praise is offered when all is darkness around us and it is offered when all is light around us. It is offered when our hearts are heavy, when we don’t think we can bear it anymore, or when the hatred is so strong it consumes us.

We then thank God for our experience, for only He knows His designs and has declared that all things “shall work together for (our) good” and to His names glory. Is it possible that we got off course when we try to figure it out with our finite “human” mind or when we come to our own “hardened conclusions” about what God is doing to “refine” each of us? Do we transgress (misunderstand) when we try to reconcile in our mind the events that have transpired, forgetting that God has declared they “shall work together for (our) good.” I’ve found that when passing through “bad” experiences, many times we “think” that His hand could not possibly be in what we have endured. However, He has declared over and over again that His hand is in ALL things and that we must be grateful for ALL things. I’ve asked many of those with whom we’ve worked, how much is ALL?

I’ve experienced that as we begin to praise or give gratitude to Him, with pure intent, His Holy Spirit will fill our beings with a peace that passes understanding. To continually praise Him, I believe, means a steady decreasing of self (understanding our “nothingness” in Gods way) and an increase of Christ’s presence within us until we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. I believe this is the joy experienced and expressed by my friends and is available to everyone. But I’ve found that it can’t be experienced until we affirm His hand in our lives and give thanks for the experiences of life. Again through all of this, I’ve experienced that as Christ’s presence increases in us, we truly become “like Him.”

A friend called me several months later to relate this experience:

“I had gone to court last week to try and win full custody of my children from my ex-husband. Doug I lost, but it was OK. I had His peace.

As I left the courtroom and walked out into the hallway, I saw my ex-husband standing there. I felt the Spirit tell me to go up to him and extend my hand and apologize for everything I had done to wrong him. I did it. He immediately started in with

a verbal barrage of how awful I was. I just stood there and took it. It didn't hurt. It just 'bounced' off. I just turned and walked away, full of love and peace."

I believe as she stood there in the majesty of Christ's peace and love that the fiery darts of Satan could not harm her. What could have been a hateful verbal battle turned into an incredible experience for her of Christ's love. She had experienced what Paul said: ***"It is no longer you, but Christ who lives in you."***

Sometimes the anger and hate has lasted so long and is so imbued within our soul, we can't seem to get ourselves on our knees. Perhaps, that is what has happened with a wonderful woman I met several months ago.

I received an e-mail asking me to meet a woman, I will call her Paula. She was visiting from out of state and had read the book, *"My Peace I Give Unto You."* She said she wanted to meet and "ask some questions." Paula was a diminutive woman. We chatted about the book and family. Then she said, "I feel I should tell you about my story."

She then told me of being abused; Satanic Ritual Abuse since the day she was born. The main perpetrators were her parents and the cult they belonged to. She told of awful things done to her and how she rarely felt loved or cared for by her mother, who was not there "physically or emotionally." Her mother did not hug her or hold her or tell her she was loved. The times she remembered "love" or "care" turned out to be the times they were preparing her for an upcoming ritual or to confuse her as part of her "programming." She experienced dissociate identity disorder (multiple personalities) and for a long time didn't remember the abuse.

When she was an adult, before she began to "remember," her mother would call her and say a "trigger" word. After hearing the word she would find herself headed back East to where her mother lived. She would then receive more programming and abuse. Her mother would have her bring her children. She found out later that her children have all the "signs" of being ritualistically abused by her parents.

The things she shared seemed surreal to me. I had no frame of reference to comprehend what she was talking about. I had studied stories detailing cases of ritual abuse and satanic abuse but had never been face to face with a victim who was pleading for help. She was in counseling which was helping, but it was a long process. She confirmed what Chad from Idaho had shared about his SRA, that it comes off in layers, like “peeling an onion.” “You get one layer healed and another one pops up.”

So I explained to Paula what Chad had done. I explained how he said it “was like chipping concrete out of (his) mouth” to get the words of gratitude out, but when he finally did, he was released from all the hatred, anger, and bitterness he had harbored for all these years. How liberating it was for him to be free of the negative emotions.

Paula told me she didn’t see how she could ever be grateful for the people who had done this to her. “Don’t express gratitude now for the people,” I said. “Express gratitude for the experiences you have gone through.” These were hard words. She flinched visibly as I said them. “How can I be grateful for the experiences?” she responded.

I told her I had asked the Lord the same question about the men who had destroyed me financially. It was a paradox to me at the time too. Then I realized that I would not have even the beginnings of a broken heart, like I did, if I had not been destroyed financially. The hatred for them seemed to make my heart and lung disease take off. If they had not done it, I would not have found Christ when I did, and for that I could be extremely grateful. So that was the initial gratitude I expressed to God about these men. I was grateful to God for them and what they had done, because if they had not done it, I may never have found the Lord. It was because of them that I found Him. For this I was grateful. After expressing gratitude and praising God for the experience, the pain, hatred, and bitterness all went away, and in its place was the most profound peace I had ever felt.

Paula still felt that she could not do it. She told me that she felt she was here on earth to put a stop to this abuse in her family. She knows that it is “generational.” She was starting to teach seminars about how to heal from this, wanting to help other victims. “But you aren’t totally healed, are you?” I asked. “No, not totally,” she answered. The thought then struck me that she would be a powerful healer and teacher if she did have the experience of receiving His peace. I told her so. “What if you tried the ‘experiment’ and got on your knees, thanked Him and had the hatred go away, replaced by His peace? Wouldn’t that make what you are trying to accomplish even more powerful?” I asked.

If I were to present these ideas to a group of victims of SRA, would they believe me? Perhaps some might. If Paula were to present it with her testimony of her pain leaving and being replaced by God’s peace, would they be more likely to believe her? I believe so.

I have talked to Paula several more times in person, through e-mail, and on the phone. Because her personalities are not yet integrated, many of them are fearful of trusting and letting go and keep her afraid to get on her knees and try it. She is an incredible person, though, and as I see her struggling to find that gratitude that eludes her at this time, I pray for God’s greatest blessings and His peace in her life.

Chapter Three

*“It is better to trust in the LORD
than to put confidence in man.”*

(Psalm 118:8)

In the Old Testament there is a story in 1 Kings chapter 13 about a young prophet that was to deliver a message to King Jeroboam. He delivered that message of warning and Jeroboam “put forth his hand” against the prophet. His hand then “dried up, so that he could not pull it out again to him.” Jeroboam then entreated the prophet to have the Lord heal him. The prophet did so and “the king’s hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.”

Then King Jeroboam told the prophet: *“Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward.”*

“And the man of God said unto the king, if thou wilt give me half of thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:

For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest.

So he went another way, and returned not the same way that he came to Beth-el.”

Upon first reading this part of the story I was very impressed by this prophet. He had received an assignment from the Lord. He evidently was told to fulfill it and to not eat, drink or go home the same way. The king offered him food, drink and wanted to reward him, but the prophet refused, citing what the Lord had told him.

It seems that there was “an old prophet in Beth-el” whose sons had heard all this young prophet had done. They reported to their father, the old prophet, what had happened and “the words which he had spoken unto the king.” The old prophet asked his sons which way the young prophet had gone,

then had them saddle his donkey and rode after “the man of God.”

He *“found him sitting under an oak: and said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am.”*

Then the old prophet *“said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.”*

The young prophet answered and said, *“I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place:*

For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest.”

This is the most amazing part. The old prophet then said, *“I am a prophet also as thou art: and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water, that I may prove him.”*

So the young prophet *“went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water.”* Oops.

This would be a tough conundrum for anyone to face. On one hand the Lord has told you what to do and you have just about accomplished your task. You just need to get home. Then an old prophet shows up and tells you that an angel has appeared to him and told him he is to bring you back with him in order to feed you. That would be a hard choice. The young prophet had several options. First, he could have asked the Lord if what the old prophet said was true and see if the will of the Lord had changed. Second, he could have told the old prophet no and gone on his way. Third, he could have done what he did, follow the old prophet to his house and eat. Evidently the purpose of the Lord was to “prove” the young prophet, to see if he would follow the “arm of flesh” or the Lord.

“And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah,

saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee,

But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers.”

The young prophet then left for his home and was killed by a lion. The old prophet then buried him in his own grave.

This is an incredible story about following what the Lord has told you to do rather than the arm of flesh, even if that “flesh” is another prophet that declares words contrary to what the Lord has told you. The deeper meaning for me is the importance of getting our own witness of what others tell us, even a prophet.

I received an e-mail that told me that the center verse in all the bible is the one quoted at the start of this chapter. *“It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man.”* There are many scriptures that tell us not to put our trust in the “arm of flesh.” I believe we are to trust in the Lord and do what he has told us to do. If we put our trust in any man, we give a portion of our allegiance to that man. I also believe in living prophets that receive revelation from the Lord, but I have never believed that we should follow someone blindly. I feel we should get our own testimony and confirmation of what has been presented to us.

It would have been good for this young prophet from Judah to get confirmation from the Lord about what the old prophet was saying. By relying on what the old prophet told him, without getting a confirmation from the Lord, he was giving allegiance to the old prophet. By doing so he brought evil to himself because the spirit of the Lord left him when he gave allegiance to the arm of flesh and not to God only.

Many times I believe we seek the easy way and perhaps listen to the wrong voice, deciding to give blind obeisance to another, be he a leader or whatever. Yet I feel if we place any man above God, which we do if we blindly follow, then Satan

has gained a foothold and will enter in. I know it is the *Lord's law* to honor and obey God and to gain my own witness that our leaders speak by His voice. By so doing we become stronger servants of God and our leaders.

While sitting on one of my favorite “chairs” in our home these thoughts came to me quite strongly:

Nephi in the Book of Mormon was the son of a prophet. His father evidently had received many visions, dreams and revelations. He had recorded them for his family to read and study. Then he went about preaching repentance to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Nephi could have been like the young prophet of Judah and just believe what was told him by his father. But the evidence indicates that Nephi understood the importance of getting his own witness, even if the prophet was his own father.

Nephi stated that he was “exceedingly young.” Yet he also had “great desires to know the mysteries of God.” So what did he do? He went straight to God for his answers. This is amazing to me because he knew that his father, Lehi, obviously was a *prophet* as he had received revelations, dreams, visions, and went about prophesying of them while crying repentance. He seemed to have much trust in what his father had said, unlike his two older brothers who had called their father a dreamer and had even “sought to take away (his) life.”

Nephi wasn't the prophet or even a “prophet” (according to the limited definition most people use) when he went to God for his answers. He just had a great *desire* to know. And guess what happened? The Lord answered him! What if he had waited for the answers to the mysteries of God to come through proper channels? The prophet Jeremiah was a contemporary of Lehi. Nephi could have possibly sought him out. I don't believe he would have received his own witness if he had. He probably would not have received the incredibly strong testimony that he had.

Nephi stated that he was “taught somewhat in all the learning of my father.” What does the evidence indicate was one of the things he was taught? I believe it was if you want to

know what God says about something, go to Him. If you want a testimony of the truthfulness of a doctrine, revelation or vision, you should go to God to get that testimony. His father, Lehi, had taught him many concepts and doctrines. He even stated that: *“I believe all the words of my father.”* But he still went to inquire of the Lord concerning them. It appears he sought understanding and a personal testimony of what his father had declared.

He stated, *“I did cry unto the Lord; and behold he did visit me, and did soften my heart that I did believe all the words which had been spoken by my father.”*

Could this be an indication of what might be a wise or “proper” way of doing things. Might I be so bold as to suggest that if Nephi was alive today and the president of my church, President Hinckley, told us about new doctrines or visions, that Nephi would go to God to confirm what he had been told and to gain a personal testimony of it. If what he declares he did in the Book of Mormon is any indication, I believe he would. Might we be wise in doing the same?

Brigham Young spoke on the subject of getting your own witness of whatever is presented to us, even by our leaders. I believe he expresses some important reasons for doing so.

*“What a pity it would be if we were led by one man to utter destruction! Are you afraid of this? I am more afraid that this people have so much confidence in their leaders that they will not inquire for themselves of God whether they are led by Him. I am fearful they settle down in a state of blind self-security, trusting their eternal destiny in the hands of their leaders with a reckless confidence that in itself would thwart the purposes of God in their salvation, and **weaken the influence they could give their leaders, did they know for themselves**, by the revelations of Jesus, that they are led the right way. Let every man and woman know for themselves, by the revelations of Jesus, that they are led the right way. Let every man and woman know, by the whispering of the Spirit of God to themselves, whether their leaders are walking in the path the Lord dictates, or not. This has been my exhortation*

continually.” (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 9, p. 151, Brigham Young, January 12, 1862)

Not for a minute do I believe Brigham Young felt that the leaders would lead the church to destruction. In my opinion he was trying to teach a principle that when properly understood, empowers the individual, the church and its leaders. It is the same principle that Nephi applied to his own life; to seek the witness of God in all things and know that our leaders speak by His voice.

If we “settle down in a state of blind self-security, trusting (our) eternal destiny in the hands of (our) leader” or anyone for that matter, have we not just given our agency or our will over to them? Wasn’t a war fought in heaven over this? Brigham Young states that this “reckless confidence. . . would thwart the purposes of God in (our) salvation.” Could it be that as we give up our agency to others, it might let Satan or darkness in? He also states that it would “weaken that influence (we) could give our leaders” if we didn’t have our own personal testimony or witness.

A good example of this might be Nephi’s brothers, Laman and Lemuel. These are two individuals that had angels appear to them, had their father speak to them with such power “that their frames did shake before him.” They were “shocked” by Nephi and had many other “witnesses” of God’s power. Yet it did not help them in their personal salvation. They apparently never sought and received a personal witness or testimony of their father’s revelations, dreams, and visions. Therefore they had become individuals that could not be relied upon. When it got tough in the wilderness, they continually murmured and on several occasions sought the life of Lehi and Nephi.

If Laman and Lemuel had sought and received a personal witness or testimony of what their father, who also happened to be their leader and prophet, had told them, might they have been more like Nephi? Would that have given them the strength to do what the Lord had asked them to do?

From a prophet or leaders point of view, would they rather have people follow them that had a “belief” in them or

people that had received a divine witness that what the Lord had revealed to them was the truth. Is this the “influence” that we could give our leaders? They would know that our testimony was based on what the Lord had revealed to them, a witness of Him and His power and not the “arm of flesh.” They would know that it is based on a personal witness from God that they speak by His voice. How would this impact what our leaders could do with us or the influence that we as a people might have on the world?

I believe one of the key ingredients in this story about Nephi is how he shows us that we should desire to know things and believe that God can make them known to us.

Nephi stated: *“For it came to pass after I had desired to know the things that my father had seen, and believing that the Lord was able to make them known unto me. . .”* Then he received a witness or a personal testimony of what his father had seen.

After finding out that Denise had experienced a three day near death experience, I wanted to record it in case she forgot about it. Since I had never been around or even talked to someone that had experienced a NDE, I wasn't sure if Denise would retain the memory or if it would go away. So I went over to a friend's home that has a recording studio. I figured what better way to remember the experience than to have it recorded. But first I had to explain to this woman what we had been going through.

This was not an easy thing for me to do. I had told someone I thought to be a close friend, and he had called my bishop to get me kicked out of my church. So I had no idea how this woman that I only knew from church would react. Nevertheless I ventured over to her home on a Sunday night about eight o'clock and proceeded to tell her what we had gone through to that point.

I didn't know what her reaction would be. I tried to guess. I wondered what she was thinking while I told her what we had gone through. I did feel like she was somewhat shocked

about all of our experiences. After three hours I finally ended. As we walked to her front door I remember her telling me that she “would never be the same.” The story had changed her. Then the next statement was the most compelling.

“Doug,” she said, “I want you to know that I will get on my knees and ask Heavenly Father if what you have told me is true.”

I wouldn't have wanted it any other way. She called me a few days later and told me she would love to record Denise's story. We tried to do this, but Denise would not speak in front of a microphone.

The bottom line with this woman was that she, like Nephi, also *desired* to know and also like Nephi, she *believed* that the Lord was able to make known to her if it was true or not. Since our first book came out, this woman has given away many copies. When she does she will always make the same requests. First, if they take a copy she makes them promise to read it or she won't give it to them. Second, she asks that they also pray for a witness of it.

I believe that is what Brigham Young is telling us. Yes, we should believe our leaders and sustain them, but if we will get our own witness then we become stronger followers, better “soldiers” in the Lord's army so to speak. I believe he is saying that if we have the desire to know and believe that God will tell us, we can receive that witness, thereby becoming a strong, faithful servant instead of murmuring weaklings in the gospel as were Laman and Lemuel.

We had a young woman e-mail us telling us that she wished to have the same gifts as Denise and specifically wanted to be able to talk to Christ. After telling of her desire for this she then said: “I realized that I can too, by feeling the prompting of the Holy Ghost. A scripture fits this perfectly, found in Proverbs 3:5-6. *‘Trust the Lord with all your heart and lean not to your own understanding, In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your path.’* Although I cannot see Him like Denise can, I feel that He is there and always will be. I can talk

to Him, and he does talk back.” She has received her own witness and therefore I feel she is much stronger because of it.

In D & C 8:1-3 the Lord states: “. . . *I say unto you, that assuredly as the Lord liveth, who is your God and your Redeemer, even so surely shall you receive a knowledge of whatsoever things you shall ask in faith, with an honest heart, believing that you shall receive. . . Yea behold, I will tell you in your mind and in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which shall come upon you and which shall dwell in your heart. Now, behold, this is the spirit of revelation; behold, this is the spirit by which Moses brought the children of Israel through the Red Sea on dry ground.*”

I have a personal testimony that the Lord will speak to each of us as he has stated, in our mind and our heart, by the Holy Ghost. It has been my experience that we simply need to have an open mind and heart to be able to hear Him. I also have a personal witness of the importance of receiving a testimony of what we are told, whether it is by our church, political or business leaders. If we do we will become stronger servants of our God. Many of us have the tendency to worship our leaders, whether they be religious or political, and I believe that Lucifer laughs at our naivete. The Lord stated that “Ye shall have no other Gods before me.”

Chapter Four

*“ . . . and it is by faith that angels appear
 and **minister** unto men;
 wherefore, if these things have ceased
 wo be unto the children of men,
 for it is because of **unbelief**, and all is vain.”*
 (Moroni 7:37)

One definition of the word *minister* is: “to attend to the wants and needs of others.” This is something that ministering or guardian angels possibly do. I researched a little about them and found an article by Larry E. Dahl on the subject. He says that the scriptures show that angels:

- announce and testify of events pertaining to God’s work and glory (See Matt. 1:20-21, Matt. 28:1-6; Luke 1:11-20, Luke 2:8-14; Rev. 14:6);

- preach the gospel and minister “unto the children of men, to make manifest concerning the coming of Christ” (Moro. 7:22; Moses 5:58);

- declare “the word of Christ unto chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him” (Moro. 7:31; Mosiah 3:1-27);

- bring to earth “their rights, keys, their honors, their majesty and glory, and the power of their priesthood” (D&C 128:21, D&C 27:12);

- protect and guide the servants of God (which all of us are) in times of trouble so that they may accomplish his purposes (Acts 5:18-20; Dan. 3:28; 1 Ne. 3:29; Hel. 5);

- bring comfort, instruction, and warnings to faithful individuals in times of need (Gen. 16:7; Ex. 23:20-23; Matt. 2:13, 19-20; 1 Ne. 11:14-15; Alma 8:14-18). (Larry E. Dahl, *Ensign*, 1988)

Larry Dahl also explains that: “Guardian angels are referred to in various Church leaders’ recorded blessings, experiences, and sermons. In a blessing he pronounced upon

Newel K. Whitney in October 1835, the Prophet Joseph Smith said, “Angels shall guard (his) house and shall guard the lives of his posterity.” In June 1844, in a meeting in the Seventies Hall in Nauvoo, the Prophet related a dream he had in which he said, “I thought I was riding out in my carriage, and my guardian angel was along with me.”

He also related a story about President Harold B. Lee and how in general conference in 1973 he told of receiving blessings from an unseen heavenly messenger:

“I was suffering from an ulcer condition that was becoming worse and worse. We had been touring a mission; my wife, Joan, and I were impressed the next morning that we should get home as quickly as possible. . .

“On the way across the country, we were sitting in the forward section of the airplane. Some of our church members were in the next section. As we approached a certain point en route, someone laid his hand upon my head. I looked up; I could see no one. That happened again before we arrived home, again with the same experience. Who it was, by what means or what medium, I may never know, except I knew that I was receiving a blessing that I came a few hours later to know I needed most desperately.

“As soon as we arrived home, my wife very anxiously called the doctor. He called me to come to the telephone, and he asked me how I was; and I said, ‘Well, I am very tired. I think I will be all right.’ But shortly thereafter, there came massive hemorrhages which, had they occurred while we were in flight, I wouldn’t be here talking about it.” (*Ensign*, July 1973, p. 23)”

Larry Dahl went on to conclude that “evidence seems to show that:

- (1) We each have constant access to a type of guardian influence through the Light of Christ and the Holy Ghost.
- (2) Ministering angels are sometimes sent to guide, comfort, protect, and instruct the Lord’s servants and other individuals in times of need.

- (3) Angels who minister in our behalf-whether seen or unseen-may include departed loved one who are aware of our circumstances and are concerned about our welfare.
- (4) Faith is a critical element in the ministry of angels.”

Denise and I talked one day about the subject of “ministering angels” or guardian angels as the world would call them.

“Yes, Dad,” she said, “you have guardian angels.” Cool, I thought, now she will tell me who mine are and I can know something that no one else does. Some days it was hard to keep my “ego” in check.

“So, Denise, who do I have for my guardian (ministering) angels?” I asked.

“I can’t tell you,” came the reply I didn’t want to hear. “If you want to know, you can ask them or ask Christ.”

“Well, at least tell me how many I have,” I begged.

“Dad, you have three, as do most people. But usually only one is with you at a time,” she answered, “but I can’t tell you who they are, so don’t ask.” I figured I’d bide my time and get it out of her somehow or sometime.

One day, fairly soon after finding out about Denise not having a veil, we were driving near the cemetery where our daughter, Dawn, is buried. She would be nearly nineteen now. “Hey, Denise, could we talk to Dawn?” I wondered.

“Sure, Dad,” came the response. Was I ever excited!

I pulled into the cemetery and parked near where Dawn was buried. She was under the “baby tree” where they buried young children. “OK, Denise, how do we get Dawn to come here. I mean her spirit, of course,” I queried.

“Just think of her or focus on her, and she will come, if she wants to. But they like to be thought of, so she will come Dad,” Denise said.

The only memory of Dawn was of her in the hospital after she was born. The umbilical cord had been wrapped around her neck about three and one half times and she had

died. Dianne was so distraught she didn't want to see her. But I went over to her and saw she was a perfectly formed little girl, very beautiful. That is the memory I focused on as I sat there with my eyes closed.

"She's here now Dad," Denise said.

"Really, where?" I asked.

"Right between us, on the seat," she answered. I couldn't feel or tell anything. "What do you want to ask her?" Denise asked me.

Wow, a moment I never dreamed I would have in my lifetime, I could ask someone on the other side of the veil anything I wanted and Denise could hear her and tell me what was said. So I asked the only thing I could think of, "Are you happy?"

"She said yes Dad," Denise told me. "Anything else?" she asked me. I couldn't think of a thing to say or ask. "She's gone now," Denise then told me. I didn't care, I knew our little daughter was "alive." That is all that mattered.

As time passed, Denise would tell me when Dawn showed up during the day. I asked Denise if she was here a lot?

"She's with David in Honduras a lot of the time," she said. David was serving as a missionary for our Church.

"That's great," I said. But when Denise told us that Dawn was here, I noticed I felt warm on my right elbow. I put two and two together and asked Denise, "If Dawn was one of my guardian angels, because every time she is here, I get warm on my right elbow."

"Yep, Dad," she answered, "Dawn is one of yours, and that is her you feel." To say I was a little excited would be a huge understatement. I soon came to love the feeling when my right elbow would get "warm" and I knew she was there.

I looked for some insight from others about ministering or guardian angels and found an interesting quote from Joseph F. Smith:

"When messengers are sent to minister to the inhabitants of this earth, they are not strangers, but from the ranks of our kindred, friends, and fellow-beings, and fellow-

servants. . . our fathers and mothers, brothers, sisters, and friends who have passed away from this earth, having been faithful, and worthy to enjoy these rights and privileges, may have a mission given them to visit their relatives and friends upon the earth again, bringing from the divine Presence messages of love, of warning, or reproof and instruction, to those whom they had learned to love in the flesh.” (Gospel Doctrine, Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Co., 1970 pp. 435-36.)

One day Denise and I were driving down 1300 East by Cottonwood High School. I was following too close behind a truck. All of a sudden the truck turned into the left hand turn lane. I realized that the cars in front of the truck were stopped at a red light, and I was going too fast and would hit the one in front of me.

The next thing I knew, I had checked the rear view mirror, the right side mirror and my blind spot for cars, then whipped into the right hand turn lane, all in a split second, thereby avoiding the inevitable crash at the stop light.

“Wow,” Denise yelled, “that was cool.”

I was surprisingly calm as I said, “What was cool? My superior driving ability?” I was thinking I had done an incredible job of avoiding a sure accident.

“That wasn’t you Dad,” she said. “It was Grandpa!”

“What are you talking about?” I asked.

“Dad, Grandpa went in you and did that,” she responded.

“He did?” I questioned.

“Yep, and it was cool to see him do it,” she said.

I came to realize that the reason I got warm on my left shoulder when I drove a car was from my father coming to be with me. He was a truck driver for thirty years and then drove school buss after he retired from driving truck. He loved to drive, as do I. I soon learned to welcome him whenever I drove anywhere. If he wasn’t there, *I would ask for him to come.* This experience wasn’t the only time he helped me avoid a serious accident.

A little over a year later, Denise, Joe, Chris, Rob and I were leaving Henderson, Nevada after doing a book review meeting. I was behind the wheel as we were heading west on the freeway. I knew we needed to join up with I-15 and head north towards St. George. Joe was in the passenger seat and we were chatting. I guess I wasn't paying close enough attention to my driving. We were traveling along at freeway speed doing 65 MPH. I saw the exit to L.A. and it was a nice slow winding one where you stayed at 65 MPH. I did not see our exit until we were right on it. The sign right in front of us read 25 MPH. I heard Joe say, "Oh no!" I said the same thing as we entered that sharp right hand turn going 65 MPH. We were in our friend Merrilee's custom van which is very top heavy.

I don't remember much of what happened next. I vaguely remember the brakes being applied and the wheel turning. The next thing I knew, we were entering the I-15 freeway at the top of the on-ramp. Denise, Rob, and Chris had been thrown to the floor, as no one had seat belts on. I was cracking up laughing, and Chris was yelling at me to stop laughing. I don't know why I was laughing, maybe it was just the shock of an incredible experience.

There was no imaginable way that the van could NOT have turned over or flipped and rolled. Denise said it was "Grandpa" again. We all thanked him and thanked the Lord we were safe. I asked her if he had gone "in me" again. The response from Denise, "Duh, Dad."

Joe then said, "Doug, the only reason I let you drive is because I know you're not doing the driving, your father is."

"Real funny," I told him.

I remembered something I had read in my research about angels:

"Undoubtedly angels often guard us from accidents and harm, from temptation and sin. They may properly be spoken of as guardian angels. Many people have borne testimony to the guidance and protection that they have received from sources beyond their natural vision. Without the help that we receive from the constant presence of the Holy Spirit, and from possible

holy angels, the difficulties of life would be greatly multiplied.” (John A. Widtsoe, *Improvement Era*, April 1944, p. 225.)

I am grateful for a loving Heavenly Father that allows those that we have known or possibly will know to “serve” us, watch out for us and protect us. Joe was right, it really wasn’t me driving that van, at least when it counted most.

In August of 2000 we went to a family camp out. We had spent a wonderful Saturday and were getting ready to come home. As I was loading the van I had the impression from the Spirit that we would have car trouble on the way home. I asked if it was engine trouble and the answer was no, the impression came that it would be tire trouble. Great, I thought, this is Merrilee’s van. I asked if the van would be OK? The impression came that there would be no damage to the van. How about us, I asked? Anyone going to get hurt? No, the impression came again. I then prayed to Heavenly Father thanking Him that no one would get hurt. I then asked Him to send us an angel to help with the tire trouble. We then finished loading and took off.

We were traveling about 75 MPH, which was the speed limit. They were doing some road work and the two lanes had been narrowed. I had just gone to the inside lane in order to pass a large semi truck. Looking to my right, I marveled how close the truck was to us. Even at eleven at night, I could see we were very close to it.

Then, all of a sudden I felt something pop. It sounded and felt like something was beating the wheel well on the left side of the van. The van didn’t move to the left or right, it stayed squarely on the road next to the semi truck. I quickly pulled into the emergency lane, which happened to be gravel because of the road construction. We didn’t swerve or do anything, and I was traveling at 75 MPH.

After stopping the van, I got out to survey what had happened. While getting out, I was thanking God that we had been delivered from a potentially bad accident. I looked at the left front tire and saw that the steel belt had come off. It appeared we had been driving on an “inner tube” and it had not

popped. I was floored. We had been going 75 MPH, next to a semi truck, and stopped rather quickly on the gravel. My mind flashed to all the stories that had been on the news about roll-overs that were occurring all over the country from steel belts falling off the tires.

I quickly looked around and saw directly across the freeway there was an exit with a light over it. I told the family we would go over there to change the tire. We were in the middle of no where and it was very dark. "Look behind us and tell me when there are no lights coming," I said, "and then we'll cross the freeway and get this tire changed." We all looked and there were no lights anywhere behind us. The road was very straight for several miles. I hurriedly crossed the freeway and put the van in park.

As soon as we stopped the van, I saw a car pull up behind us. "Where did he come from," I asked the kids, who had continually been looking behind us.

"We don't know Dad," came the reply. "He wasn't there a second ago."

I noticed it was a Highway Patrol car. Good I thought, it will be good to have him there as we change the tire so his headlights can give us additional light. "Let's get the jack out, Darin," I told my seventeen year old son. He picked it up from under the seat and it fell apart in his hands. "See if you can get it back together while I get the spare off the back of the van," I told him. I got out and started to get the spare tire off the back of the van.

The officer got out of his car and asked what kind of problem we were having. "Seems the steel belt fell off the tire," I answered.

"Let me help you with changing the tire," he responded. Now I've had flat tires before and cops had passed me many times. They never stopped and offered to help us. But, I wasn't going to refuse his offer. This was all the more amazing because it had been over 100 degrees that day and was still hot on the road, even that late at night.

The next thing I knew, the officer had gotten a “shop” jack out of his car trunk and was jacking up the van. He took the tire iron from me and had that thing “singing” getting the lug nuts off the tires. I had never seen anything like it before. I commented to him that he must have changed a few tires before. He said, “I’ve changed more tires in my time than they have at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.” All the while he was laughing. I noticed the sweat pouring off him. I was amazed an officer would do this, especially since I was there with my seventeen year old son.

He finished up and put the damaged tire where the spare goes. He told us to get some air in the spare. Then he thanked us and wished us well.

Getting back in the van, I told my family of the feelings and conversation I had before we started back. Then I thanked God that He had sent an “angel” to help us. I don’t know what kind of angel he was and don’t really care. I know that God does hear the petitions of our hearts, that He does watch out for us, and the things we go through are just experiences.

Driving the rest of the way home I reflected on some of the things I had studied about angels. Just what do angels do when they “appear and minister unto men?” We have learned through our experiences and talking to Denise that they are with us much of the time. That is a very comforting feeling. We have also learned from experience that they love to serve. Service brings them joy.

A good friend of ours, Chris, is a dog groomer. One day she was having trouble with a dog. Finally out of desperation, she asked that her guardian angels help her with this problem dog. The dog started to behave instantly. Now she regularly asks for help and receives it.

We received this e-mail from her:

“I have a small dog grooming shop in my home. Every day I ask for my angels’ help and things seem to go better. If a cut is particularly hard I ask for a grooming angel. A cut can turn from bad to great and I can never describe exactly how it happened. But mostly I just ask my guardian angels for help

and comfort, especially when the dogs are nervous, scared or mean.

One day I had a huge, very overweight dog and I was there alone. The bathtub is waist level and I use a lawn chair for them to climb on and then jump into the tub. This dog sat down and wouldn't budge, not even an inch. I pulled, pushed, begged and pleaded. Nothing. Finally I asked my angels to give him a boost. He immediately got up and jumped on the chair and into the tub. That was so exciting it took me about ten minutes to quit laughing and start washing the dog. This has happened on several occasions since but it only seems to work when I am alone. If my husband is within calling distance to give me help then my angels don't seem to make the dogs move. Maybe they think he needs the exercise! Or maybe they only help when you can't help yourself.

One day was more stressful than most. I was doing four poodles, all belonging to the same lady in my ward. They were her little darlings, like her children. The last one was old and blind and could fit in the palms of my hands. It was the mother to the other three. I took her off her noose to shave around her neck and at that time my husband walked in and I turned to say hi and I heard a thud. Somehow the little dog jumped off my four foot tall table, went flying through the air and landed on the hard floor.

I knew I was in trouble. There was no way she could have survived without at least a broken leg. I instantly pictured everyone in the ward finding out that I had killed this sweet elderly lady's dog. I gently picked it up and set it back on the table and no matter how hard I looked I couldn't find a thing wrong with it. It wasn't even bruised or shook up. I had a definite feeling that my angel had put his hand under the dog as she landed to cushion her and keep her from harm. There was no other explanation.

I'm sure that they do things for me throughout the day that I don't even know about but it was fun to be aware of this time and how much trouble I was saved from."

The one thing I have always appreciated about Chris is her faith. She will hear something and ask if it's true or not. After she gets a confirmation that it is, she will then implement the concept into her life. She has tremendous faith in our Savior.

We have also learned that angels are here to provide us the opportunity to see if we will follow our Savior's admonition to be like Him. On Christmas Eve 1999, our kids asked us if we could go out and eat as a family. We had spent all of November in the hospital with Denise. December was filled with physical and occupational therapy and all the unusual experiences. It was a very hard month. We literally had no money. We checked all our pockets and came up with forty dollars, all that we had to our name. So I said, "Why not? Let's go to Temple Square to see the lights and then we can go to a fast food restaurant."

The lights were incredible! It was fun to see how Denise responded to them. It was as if she was seeing things for the first time in her life. I have never heard so many "wows" or "holy cows" in my life. I guess, in a different way, she was seeing all of this for the first time.

After seeing the lights we ended up at a fast food restaurant. It was around 7 PM, Christmas Eve. They were going to close the restaurant at 8 PM. We ordered our food and sat down. The bill came to \$28.00. After I paid the bill I had two fives and two ones left in my pocket.

We were talking, having a great time, when all of a sudden a man stuck a card in my face. I took the card and turned to look at him. He was older and appeared to be down on his luck. The card stated that he was deaf and a mute, and asked if I would give him "\$2 to \$5" to help him out. I turned the card over and saw there was sign language on the back.

It was Christmas Eve and we were feeling good, so I took a five dollar bill out of my pocket and handed it to him and told him to have a Merry Christmas. We watched as he went to the table next to us. The people were dressed very nice, leather

coats and all. They shooed the man away. He then went to some firemen by the opposite door, and they gave him some money.

As he left the restaurant, the Spirit told me to ask Denise if the man had a “white aura.” “Hey Denise,” I said, “did that man we gave the money to have a white aura?” She looked at him going out the door.

“Yea, Dad. How much money did you give him?” came the reply.

“Five bucks,” I answered.

“You should have given him ten,” was her response.

I later talked to her about the man. “Yes Dad, he was a translated being just testing people,” was her answer to my questioning. My mind went to Hebrews 13:2 where it states:

“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”

I wondered how many times I had turned a “beggar” away in the street that wasn’t really a beggar. At that moment I resolved to not judge anyone. If I had the means, I would take care of or help them. I doesn’t matter if they are angels or just someone in need. I have learned that we are here to help each other. If they petition us for help, we should give it. It has nothing to do with worthiness. There are no “worthy or unworthy poor,” just brothers and sisters in need.

“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; and ye will not suffer that the beggar putteth up his petition to you in vain, and turn him out to perish.

Perhaps thou shalt say: The man has brought upon himself his misery; therefore I will stay my hand, and will not give unto him of my food, nor impart unto him of my substance that he may not suffer, for his punishments are just—

But I say unto you, O man, whosoever doeth this the same hath great cause to repent; and except he repenteth of that which he hath done he perisheth forever, and hath no interest in the kingdom o f God.

For behold, are we not all beggars? Do we not all depend upon the same Being, even God, for all the substance which we have, for both food and raiment, and for gold, and for silver, and for all the riches which we have of every kind?" (Mosiah 4:16-19).

I asked Denise why she had said that I should have given the man ten bucks, instead of the five I had given him. "You'll see," came the cryptic reply.

The next Sunday after Church, a man from our congregation showed up on our doorstep. My wife answered the door. "Sister Mendenhall," he said, "I was sitting in Church today and for some reason opened up my wallet. In it was a fifty dollar bill. Now I never have any money in my wallet, so I don't know where it came from. But then the Spirit whispered to me to take it to the Mendenhalls and give it to them. So here you go, it's yours." He then handed the money to my wife.

Denise was right, I did see. I came home a short time later and Dianne related what this dear man had said and done. I am sure the Lord smiled love at Br. Tanner that day and welcomed him into His arms when he passed away a short while later. We were so grateful as it was money sorely needed for food.

The incident made me reflect on something we had experienced the month before while Denise was still in the hospital. Our oldest daughter, Deon, had spent the night with Denise at the hospital, so I was able to stay home. We got up the next morning and got the kids off to school. As we were heading out the door, Dianne asked if we had enough money to eat at a local restaurant. I was so tired of the hospital food that said yes. We had twenty dollars between us.

As we walked into the restaurant, we went by a woman in a stocking cap, sitting drinking her coffee. The Spirit told me to buy breakfast for her. I groaned inside. We barely had enough for us to eat, and then I was to spend the entire day and night at the hospital. I would have no money.

After we sat down, I told Dianne what the Spirit had told me. "Well," she said, "you had better do what it said."

Dianne's faith astounded me, always has. She just does. I don't even know if she thinks about it. In my mind I started adding up the cost of three breakfasts and wondering if I could keep a few dollars to spend at the hospital for food. The numbers didn't come out in my favor.

We ordered two specials, ate, and left the tip. On the way out, after paying the cashier for our food, we left the remaining ten dollars at the register and told the hostess that it was to pay for the woman seated by herself, pointing to the woman in the stocking cap. We then walked out.

Out in the car I started to whine a little. "Dianne," I said, "now I don't have any money for food at the hospital. I have to stay there all day and night. You won't be up until tomorrow morning some time. Besides, we have no money at home." All I got out of her was that "It will all be OK."

We drove by a friend's home to drop off some papers on the way up to Primary Children's Medical Center. I ran them to the door and said hello to both friends, then ran back to the car as we were late.

As I was pulling out of the driveway, our friend came running out of her house. I thought I had forgotten to give her something and started to look in the back seat for more papers. She was yelling, "I'm supposed to give you this," waiving something in her hand. I stopped and she ran up to the car window. Was I ever surprised as she handed me a one hundred dollar bill and told us how much she loved us. I drove to the hospital in humbled silence, realizing that God uses even us as His angels at times.

There have been many times when others have been angels to us. I remember being at the hospital when Denise first went in. I had family and friends hand me hundreds of dollars. Right after Christmas we had a good friend and his family stop by and he handed me three hundred dollars. There have been so many others that have helped us out. They are all angels. We have made some friends in Cedar City. The first time there they let us stay at their home and told us that we were to consider it our home also. They told us where an extra key was, and we

were to use it whenever we came to town, even if they weren't there. They have fed us, clothed us, and even given us money for our trips and to pay bills. They are also true angels. There are so many others like them.

The Lord calls these people His disciples. Since all of us in one way or another are servants of the Lord, I believe this scripture can apply to all of us:

“Whoso receiveth you receiveth me; and the same will clothe you, and give you money. And he who feeds you, or clothes you, or gives you money, shall nowise lose his reward. And he that doeth not these things is not my disciple; by this ye may know my disciples.” (D&C 84:89-91)

As I said before, my family has been blessed by many angels, which are also disciples of the Lord. We appreciate and love each one of them.

One time Denise and I went to pick up my oldest son David at work. It was around ten o'clock at night. He worked at a mini-mart in an area of town I didn't enjoy being in after dark, so we sat in the truck waiting for him to come out after work. In front of the store was a man who looked homeless. He had his sleeping bag and backpack on the ground beside him. He was standing there preaching about God and calling everyone that walked by to repentance. Denise asked me what he was doing and why he was doing it. I told her he appeared to be a little drunk and seemed to be calling everyone to repentance. We sat and watched in amused silence.

All of a sudden he quit what he was doing, picked up his belongings and walked toward our truck. Just then David came out of the store and got in the truck. The man came up to the window and asked if we had any money. We emptied our pockets, the ash tray, and looked on the floor. We came up with 63 cents. I handed it to him and said that was all we had. He looked at it and at us and said it wouldn't even buy him a hamburger at the McDonald's across the street. I apologized and said that was all we had. He just stood there.

I got out of the truck and talked to him a minute. He smelled of booze and had very bloodshot eyes. Finally, he asked if we could take him somewhere.

“Sure,” I said.

“Will you take me to the hospital?” he asked. I told him we would. I helped him get in the back of the truck and told him to scoot up to the front of the cab, as it was very cold outside. In fact it was snowing a little. He got situated and we took off.

We took him to the hospital emergency room. I got out and helped him get out of the truck. We talked for a minute. He told me he was from back East and down on his luck. He wanted to get off the booze and that’s why he asked me to be brought to the hospital. We stood there and chatted for a few more minutes. I found out he was “human.” I also found something I had only experienced a few times before, an unconditional love for him. I understood that he is a child of God, just like I am.

As I started to walk off, he stopped me and asked who I was. “Just a friend,” was the only response I could think of. He hugged me and said thanks. He said people don’t usually treat him nice. I gave him the only thing I had besides that 63 cents, my love in the form of a hug. Then I got in the truck and drove off as he walked into the hospital. It was fun to be an “angel” for a few moments.

Chapter Five

*“And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh;
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,
your young men shall see visions:
And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids
In those days will I pour out my spirit.”*

(Joel 2:28)

I was so excited when the President of my church declared in an October, 2001 conference that the above “vision of Joel (had) been fulfilled.” I knew it was a prophecy that had been quoted nearly 180 years earlier to Joseph Smith by an angelic visitor named Moroni.

A good friend of mine, Tom, had quoted the passage to me a month or two before when talking about some experiences my family and I had gone through. We chatted about the possibility of things happening to Denise and many others as a result of the Lord pouring “out (His) spirit upon all flesh.” Could it be happening around the world? What would the result be when God poured out His spirit upon ALL flesh, as He has stated He has done?

The first part of July, 2001, I received a phone call from Chris. She said she had met a woman who had several kids. One of them, a girl about eight years of age named Lizzy, had the ability to “see spirits.” Chris had told Lizzy’s mother about Denise and her gifts. Lizzy’s mother wanted her to meet Denise. It seems that Lizzy was terrified of her “gift.” We set up a meeting at Chris’ house. We had a pleasant meal and afterwards I had a chance to talk to Ann about what her daughter could see.

“She sees spirits,” Ann told me. “She can see good ones and bad ones. But she is shy about it and doesn’t want anyone

to know. We have encouraged her to keep the gift and develop it further. I was hoping that by meeting Denise, she would see that it is OK to see spirits and have gifts like this.”

Lizzy was very shy. She came over and sat by me for a minute. “Lizzy,” I said, “could I talk to you about your gifts? You see my daughter, Denise, sees spirits like you do and I have never met anyone before like her until now. Can I ask you a few questions?”

“Yes,” she responded.

“Good,” I said back to her. “Are you scared of the spirits sometimes?”

“Yes,” she shyly answered.

“Do they ever harm you?” I asked.

“No,” she said.

“After playing with Denise today, do you understand it’s OK to see them? That she sees them all the time?”

“Yes, I know it’s OK,” she answered.

“Do you see any here now?” I couldn’t help asking.

“Yes, there is one behind you,” she said.

I had felt someone there and had an idea of who it was, but wanted her to look and tell me, so I asked, “Who is it?”

She timidly looked up and said, “She has long brown hair and is wearing a dress.”

I was so pleased that she was willing to use her gifts. We saw her at one of our book review meetings and she was totally different. The shy, timid little girl was gone. She walked right up to me and told me who was standing next to me (from the spirit world). What a special little girl. I was so happy to meet someone that had gifts similar to Denise.

I had a chance to meet Lizzy a year later. She said that since she turned eight her gifts don’t seem to be as pronounced as before. She still has seen her grandmother, who is on the other side of the veil, but not much more. It appears she is content to be where she is at with her gifts. Hopefully she will retain them and develop them even more.

We started doing our book review meetings quite often after the experience with Lizzy. Looking back, I remember the

first one we did. There were about thirty five people in the room and I was so scared to do it. If the truth be known, I didn't want the book to be published and surely didn't want anyone to read it. Now here we were doing "book reviews." I would not have done them if I hadn't felt like the Spirit had impressed me very strongly to do it.

After we did the first meeting, Rob, Denise and I were outside talking to some of the people that had been in attendance. There were three different women that came up to me, at different times, and told me they saw (perceived) that Christ was there, standing by me. None of these women knew each other. I was amazed. I asked them how they knew. They all said it was a gift they had been given. If it had been just one woman, I may have dismissed it outright. However, there were three different women that had all testified of the same thing. They were all active members of my church.

I found that I had been thrust into a world that I had not known existed before. Could it be true, that I was a witness to Joel's prophecy being fulfilled? Had the Lord's spirit really been poured out upon all flesh as promised? I wondered – even if the Lord had bestowed upon us the gift of His Spirit, does that mean that we as a people had in actuality "received" His gift? I remembered reading, *"For what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift? Behold, he rejoices not in that which is given unto him, neither rejoices in Him who is the giver of the gift."* (D&C 88:33)

A few weeks later we were in Southern Utah doing a book review meeting. I noticed as the meeting was going along that about six or seven women kept looking to my right side. It so intrigued me that I stopped in mid sentence and asked them, "Do you women see Christ here?" I pointed to my right.

All of them nodded their heads to the affirmative. Several of them started to cry. I was so curious, I had to ask them if they actually could SEE Him.

They spoke up and told me they could only perceive his presence there. One did say she saw His outline. I was so amazed by this. I knew there were people with gifts, but this

was incredible. Was it possible that we all could develop similar gifts? Have we not been told to “seek ye earnestly the best gifts”?

We did a meeting in Utah County that had about twenty six adults in the room. As I started my part of the book review, I was prompted to ask a question that I had never asked before. “How many of you in this room see auras or the colors or energy around people?” I asked.

I was shocked when nine hands went up. These were all adults. “Do you tell people about this gift?” I then inquired.

“Only with close friends and some family,” came the replies.

“Why with only close friends and family?” I asked.

The answer kind of stunned me and then I realized I had experienced some of the same thing. “We don’t like the persecution we receive, and most people are afraid of what they don’t understand or haven’t experienced,” they said.

“OK,” I said, “I can agree with that. So how many of you see spirits?” I thought why not ask?

Three hands went up. One of them had experienced a NDE (Near Death Experience) and he had many similar gifts to Denise.

This was a wonderful night of sharing experiences with these incredible people. It was like finding old friends; they were so open minded.

One time I received an e-mail from a woman whose young son had been sick and went into a coma for several days. After he woke up he told his parents that he had been with Christ. He also told them that he still sees Christ. The mother wanted to believe her son, but the father was not very happy with what he was saying.

The mother told me they are Catholics, and her husband wanted the Priest to get involved. The Priest wanted to put the kid in a hospital, to help him get rid of his “delusions”. The mother wondered if our book about Denise was true. I assured her it was; we had experienced everything that was written in

the book. The last I heard from her, they were trying to decide how to get their son to **not** see Christ. That was sad to hear.

Some things are hard to accept. I know some of our family members and friends have a very hard time accepting what has happened to us, but that doesn't make it any less real for us or mean that we haven't had these experiences.

I heard a man talking on a national radio show about when he was a young boy. He had experienced a severe illness and had come out of it with the ability to see spirit, etc. His parents didn't believe him and got their Priest involved. They put him in a mental hospital and did shock treatments and used drugs on him until the "problem" went away. I e-mailed him about Denise, and he mentioned her on the radio program. He said she was lucky to have people around her that believed her and supported her. His gifts had been real, but he did not have the support. He said he felt that he had been more or less tortured until the gifts left him.

We heard from a man who listened intently to someone tell him about our story. After the story was finished he told the person who had told him that he believed every word of it. He was asked how come he was so willing to believe? After all he was in his middle seventies and a very conservative Catholic.

"Because I also 'fly' just like Denise does when I am asleep," he said. "I don't tell anyone because I don't want to be committed to an insane asylum." He went on to explain that during World War II, at night he would leave his body and go out and scout out where the enemy was located on the other side of the island they were fighting on. When he returned, he would then let his commanding officer know. He would not tell them how he knew, but they soon learned that he did know. This was a "gift" he has had all of his life.

We have met many people who seem to have this gift. One was a handicapped young woman of about twenty. Upon entering her house, she went up to Denise and acted as if they already knew each other. Her mother asked her about it and she

said that they had gone “flying” together. Denise confirmed that they had.

We met a little nine year old girl that told her parents that Jesus would come at night and teach her. She went to a place where He taught many others also. After about one month of this, she announced to her mother one morning that she (her mother) had pretty “colors.” When her mother asked her about it, she said that she could now see auras. It was fun meeting her and seeing her enjoy and share her gift.

One time we received an e-mail that read:

“One night I had a dream that I was visiting with some friends, in their home, and there I met a man and a dark headed little girl. He spoke of special spiritual gifts and the man wrote down a book that I should read to learn more. When I woke from the dream I could not remember the name of the book. I felt that the dream indicated that I should talk with my friends and that they could somehow introduce me to these people.

I prayed for a second witness of the dream and then fell back to sleep and had a second dream. This time, I was again at the home of my friends, enquiring about this book and these people. Then, still in the dream, I saw the man in my friends family room and the spirit bore witness to me that he had information that would be of great worth to me. When I woke, I knew I had been given the second witness I had asked for.

The next day I told my friends of the dreams. They told me that they thought the dreams might have to do with a ‘book review’ they were having in their home in a few days and invited me to come. When I bought the book and saw Denise’s picture on the back, I recognized her as the young girl in my dream. At the meeting, I felt the same powerful spiritual witness, that this was truth and that I could learn from the brave witness of these people and this book.”

I met this woman at the book review meeting. She related these dreams to me in much more detail. I include it here as another witness that God is talking to us in our dreams as well, just as Joel stated He would.

I could go on and on about the people that we have met who have “gifts” and are having dreams and visions. There are many of them. For the most part they keep it to themselves, not because they feel they are too sacred to share, but because they don’t want the persecution their fellow church members, neighbors, and family put upon them. We met a man who told us that most people don’t understand this type of thing because “it’s not in the manual.” He went on to say that he tells them “it may not be in the *manual*, but it’s in the *scriptures*.”

Spencer W. Kimball stated:

“We do have miracles today – beyond imagination! . . .

*“What kinds of miracles do we have? All kinds – revelations, visions, tongues, healings, special guidance and direction, evil spirits cast out. Where are they recorded? In the records of the Church, in journals, in news magazine articles and in the minds and memories of many people.” (“The Significance of Miracles in the Church Today,” *Instructor*, Dec. 1959, 396)*

We have met many people who do therapy and use their gifts for their patients’ benefit without their patients really knowing. They can “see” where the health problem is and go right to that point on the body. One woman has other gifts she uses and is known to be able to help people heal where others could not. In fact she was fired from her job at a hospital because they couldn’t handle the fact that her patients would be healed in a short time and the other therapists patients were not. In her work she talks of how it is Christ that does the healing and not her. She is very careful not to let people know of her gifts though. She has received too much persecution already. That is sad. Don’t we believe in gifts?”

What incredible things might happen if we really believed as President Hinckley has declared, “that (the Lord) will pour out (His) spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will (He) pour out (His) spirit.” My church has a scripture that states, “*We believe in the*

gifts of tongues, prophecy, revelation, visions, healing, interpretation of tongues, and so forth.” (I believe the “so forth” might include many other gifts). I don’t see where it says these gifts are relegated to just a few.

The Lord has stated:

“. . . seek earnestly the best gifts, always remembering for what they are given:

For verily I say unto you, they are given for the benefit of those who love me and keep all my commandments, and him that seeketh so to do; that all may be benefited that seek or that ask of me, that ask and not for a sign that they consume it upon their lusts.

And again, verily I say unto you, I would that ye should always remember, and always retain in your minds what those gifts are. . .

For all have not every gift given unto them; for there are many gifts, and to every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God.

To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby.” (D&C 46:8-12)

I think it is wonderful that the Lord has given us gifts that we may bless each others lives. It is my belief that God gave us these gifts to serve each other. I met a woman that was given the gift of hearing Christ and others talk to her from the other side of the veil. I have met an LDS bishop that has the same gift. I don’t doubt him in the least, especially after talking to him for several hours.

A woman I met was given her gift well over a decade ago. She was told that she would feel alone because of this gift, and that she would know what loneliness really is. She told me that she felt so alone, as there was no one she could talk to about her gift or really share it with. Then she met another woman with similar gifts. Both were excited after feeling alone for many years.

There are many that we have met that keep their gifts to themselves. The persecution some of these people have told me about is incredible. Incredible from the standpoint that it comes

from family, friends, fellow church members and from people that profess to believe in gifts, revelation and healing.

In the second to last chapter of Third Nephi it talks about when the Lord will start to gather Israel in the last days:

“And when ye shall see these things coming forth among you, then ye need not any longer spurn at the doing of the Lord, for the sword of his justice is in his right hand; and behold, at that day, if ye shall spurn at his doings he will cause that it shall soon overtake you.

Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; yea, wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works!

Yea, wo unto him that shall deny the revelations of the Lord, and that shall say the Lord no longer worketh by revelation, or by prophecy, or by gifts, or by tongues, or by healings, or by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Yea, and wo unto him that shall say at that day, to get gain, that there can be no miracle wrought by Jesus Christ; for he that doeth this shall become like unto the son of perdition, for whom there was no mercy, according to the word of Christ!
(3 Nephi 29:4-7)

I am sure many of these individuals that persecute, revile or “spurn at His doings” feel they are right and justified in what they have done or are doing. Yet the warning of the Lord is sufficiently strong, at least to my mind, that maybe they ought to exercise extreme caution when declaring that individuals displaying gifts are not of God. In this scripture the Lord has declared that His “sword of justice is in his right hand” and “that it shall soon overtake” those that “spurn at his doings.” He also declares that those that spurn at His doings are *denying* Him and His works. I believe there are many “woes” in the scriptures about those that deny the Christ.

After having the president of my church declare that the prophecy of Joel has been fulfilled and reading the warning of the Lord about those that spurn the gifts, prophecies, revelations, or healing, I personally exercise extreme caution in declaring any judgements about individuals saying they have gifts, especially if that individuals life is centered in Jesus

Christ. My friend's life (who was declared to be a witch by a fellow church member) is centered in Jesus Christ. She has a firm testimony of Him and her Heavenly Father. She understands her gift and uses it when the Lord allows her, never for her own gain, but for the welfare of others.

I could see from my daughter and the many others we had encountered, that the Lord has indeed fulfilled this prophecy by Joel. There are many children I have heard of and read about world wide that are displaying gifts. The world calls them Indigo Children. They seem to have one theme: God, service, and love. It would be my prayer that as we encounter any individual with gifts and if that individual is centered in Christ, that we celebrate with them. The Lord has stated:

“. . . As well might man stretch forth his puny arm to stop the Missouri river in its decreed course, or to turn it up stream, as to hinder the Almighty from pouring down knowledge from heaven.” (D&C 121:33)

There are so many other experiences that people have related to us as we have done our book review meetings. I think that has been one of the most gratifying parts of this adventure we are on. When everything started happening to Denise and our family, I wondered if we were “alone” or if there were others having similar experiences? I can now testify from our experiences and the witness of the Spirit that the Lord has indeed poured out His spirit upon ALL flesh as Moroni declared he would, and as President Hinckley has declared he has done. Many people are coming to the realization of newfound gifts. They are having visions and dreams. Some have even prophesied. It is my hope that we will not shun people that display or talk about their gifts when they are directed to do so by the Spirit, but that we will embrace them and glorify God because of them, giving all credit where it belongs, to God.

Chapter Six

*Verily, verily I say unto you,
if you desire a further witness,
cast your mind upon the night that you
cried unto me in your **heart**,
that you might know concerning the truth of these things.*

*Did I not speak **peace** to your mind concerning the matter?
What greater witness can you have than from God?*

*And now, behold, you have received a witness;
for if I have told you things which no man knoweth
have you not received a witness?*

(D & C 6:22-24)

“Dianne,” I said, “I received an e-mail from Sue. You remember her don’t you? She’s the woman that got on her knees and said a prayer of gratitude, then experienced Christ and His peace. Denise and I are heading down there Thursday to see what she needs.”

I wondered what she wanted? Her e-mail stated that she had gone through something as devastating to her as my financial ruin was to me and that she can’t feel His peace anymore and can’t remember how to get it. She stated she was going to read our book again to see if she could find the answer. After reading her e-mail, I remember thinking, “It’s not really about doing something, it’s about having an attitude of gratitude that brings us His peace.”

The curious thing was, I felt like we were supposed to take Merrilee with us. God’s perfect sense of timing made that possible.

We arrived at Sue’s and she wasn’t happy. Her ex-husband had taken her back to court again and said many things that were outright lies about her, trying to destroy her credibility in order to get full custody of their children. She told us she

had lost Christ's peace and didn't know what to "do" to get it back.

We talked about the last experience at her home, where she had prayed and experienced Christ's peace. Suddenly Merrilee seemed to know why she was there. She asked for Sue to get her scriptures and had her open them. "Sue, would you read right here for me?" she asked.

Sue looked at the verses for a moment and started to cry. She then read them. "*Cast your mind upon the night that you cried unto me in your heart, that you might know concerning the truth of these things. Did I not speak **peace unto your mind** concerning the matter? What greater witness can you have than from God?*"

Merrilee then asked her to repeat what happened the first time we had come to her house. Sue told her the whole story. Then she asked Sue to repeat it again. She did.

"Sue," Merrilee said, "it appears to me that you have forgotten. You forgot what you had experienced with Christ the first time Doug and Denise came here. We are taught that we need to **remember** as this scripture states. If you do remember that moment of receiving Christ's peace, you can have it again. What was it like? Do you remember the peace?"

"Yes, I remember it was wonderful. I wasn't sure if these guys were for real. So before they came I had prayed that I would know. While they were talking the Spirit told me very strongly that what they were saying was true. Then when I prayed, I felt Him and received His peace. But," Sue continued, "I don't have that peace all the time like Doug does."

"Heavens, I don't have it all the time," I said, "What gave you that idea?" "Denise, what happened at the end of the month when rent was due and I didn't have it?" I asked.

"You were really grumpy," she replied.

"Oh, the honesty of kids," I said, "Aren't they great! But she is right. I used to get very concerned when the rent money wasn't there. I didn't have His peace."

"If you remember from the book, I didn't have much peace the week I had the Division of Family Services show up

at my door with the news that someone had accused me of child abuse on Denise. I was angry for over a week about that. I wanted to destroy some people. Then I mellowed out, repented, and said a prayer of gratitude for the experience. Then I was given the gift of His peace again.”

“You see Sue,” Merrilee joined in, “if you had it all the time it wouldn’t mean anything to you. Here in this life we get to experience the hard times and the good times. But when we express gratitude for **all** things, every experience, His peace will come. We just haven’t arrived at the point where it can be permanent YET. You just forgot how to get it back.”

“I think you are right,” Sue said.

“Maybe you might try what the Lord has said and *remember* that day here with Doug and Denise and what you experienced with Christ,” Merrilee added.

In the book, “*Written by the Finger of God*,” Joe Sampson talks about the word “remember” in Hebrew. It seems that in the Hebrew alphabet each letter has its own meaning, so you can see what a word means by stringing together the meaning of each letter in that word. The word “remember” in Hebrew broken down with each letter’s meaning is:

zayin = the cut which flows down, water poured out
anointing oil, blood, revelation from above

kaph = the palm of the hand, the strong arm of the Lord

vav = the nail, the divine decrees of God, Covenants that are affixed and cannot be broken

resh = the sickle, the Lehi, jawbone with teeth, that which cuts, harvests, divides

What are we to remember when we string together the meaning of the word? We should recall that the Redeemer would be the first fruits of the harvest of the world, that He would be cut, nailed in the palm of the hand, and that His blood should be the sign of our anointing. It really is incredible, even the word remember testifies of Christ (in Hebrew).

But, it seems that it is so easy to forget! At times I get frustrated over events, people or things and lose His peace. It takes a conscious effort of gratitude from the heart to get it

back. Perhaps even being able to be grateful is a gift in and of itself?

It seems in our world of plenty, we seek so many ways to secure peace. At times we may feel we have reached it through other ways, but it is not lasting. Our experiences have taught us that the only lasting, true peace comes from the author of peace Himself, even Jesus Christ. We seek out programs of self improvement, seminars, classes, masters, alternative disciplines of much vagueness and variety. The world seeks mediums, psychics, healers, clairvoyants, etc., but it seems that many forget about Christ, The True Healer.

In our experiences we have encountered many people that have incredible gifts or talents. Many are very sincere about helping their fellow man. They use their gifts for good, not seeking riches. Among some of them there seems to be one common denominator; they leave Christ out of the equation. If “*every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is the Christ,*” why are we looking elsewhere for help other than Him who is our rock and foundation? It is true He does use “small means” many times to help us when we seem to lack faith in Him, but He is also the author of those means, and they will testify of Him.

Paul stated, “*Charity (the pure love of Christ) never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*” According to the apostle Paul, all things will fail except for charity, which charity, we’ve experienced is Christ and His pure and perfect love.

Our experiences have taught us time and time again that He is the one sure foundation upon which we must build if we are to have His peace. When we are “down” or events aren’t going the way we feel they should, it is to Him we should look. It is then that we ought to remember that single defining moment in our life where we understood that it was His Spirit, the Holy Ghost testifying to us. It could be like the moment that Sue had. I feel if she would *remember* that moment when

life gets difficult, she could have His peace again and realize that He truly is in charge of all things.

Dianne and I were sitting outside waiting for some friends to come over for ice cream. While sitting there, Rob and his wife came by. After talking for a while our other friends showed up. So we all sat outside and chatted. Soon the conversation turned to Rob's depression and what he has done to overcome it. We offered all kinds of "solutions" to his problem. During some point in the conversation, all three of our daughters came out and just listened. Debi sat near me and had a strange look on her face. I asked her what was wrong and she wouldn't say anything. So I asked her again.

"Dad," she said, "I'm supposed to say something."

"Well say it sweetie," I responded.

"I can't, I'm just a kid," she said back. Then she went into the house. She came out a few minutes later and sat by me again. I told her she could say anything she wanted, we were all close friends, but she wouldn't talk.

It was getting a little cold by this time, so we all went inside to our family room. The talk continued how we could solve Rob's depression. All kinds of ideas were offered: programs, pills, doctors, therapies, and antidepressants.

At this point Debi was sitting by my side, kind of hiding. She looked at me several times with a pained expression on her face. "Sweetie," I said, "if you want to say something, please just say it. Otherwise you need to get in bed."

"Dad," she whispered, "I can't say it. I'm just a kid. They won't listen to me and besides, I'm too scared to say it."

She looked like she wanted to crawl into a hole and disappear. I had not seen her in so much agony in a long time. She got up and left the room. The talk continued about how to help Rob. After a couple of minutes Debi came back in.

I had about had enough of her not wanting to say whatever she was "supposed" to say and told her to get in bed. She just gave me this terrible pained look. So I told the group

that Debi had something to say. They all looked at her and told her to say whatever she wanted. At this point Debi had started to cry, hiding her face behind me.

She finally looked at all of us and said it was hard because she was just a seventeen year old kid and we were all adults. We all told her to say it anyway, it didn't matter. Little did we realize what was about to come out of her heart.

"You guys are offering Rob all kinds of solutions, none of which will work permanently. I know because I suffered from depression and looked for all kinds of solutions that never helped." She looked right at Rob and said, *"You keep trying all kinds of things. I have seen you try pills, doctors, alternative doctors and much more, none of which have worked. When you wrote that book with my Dad, you had all kinds of incredible spiritual experiences, many of them. Why don't you remember and look to Christ to heal you? I am supposed to share my story with you."*

We all just sat there, kind of in shock. She continued, *"In 9th grade life just started getting at me. Junior High is real hard anyway, but for as long as I can remember I have felt depressed. I've felt alone and have never completely trusted people's love for me. I felt I was nothing and that my existence was a mistake."*

In 9th grade, when I was fourteen, I decided I couldn't take anymore. I contemplated suicide at least two or three times a day but never had enough courage to follow through with my thoughts. Or maybe I knew in my heart there was another way out of this loneliness. Well, my way out soon presented itself.

During that year, as you know, my little sister, Denise, went into a diabetic coma. She woke up three days later and left the hospital after one month with an incredible story. She has no veil, as you all know. My family had many experiences and witnesses that this was for real. But while this was going on, I was still in my personal hell. I had my parents pull me out of school. I wasn't happy and I just plain hated everything about my life. It made things worse knowing that I had a great

life compared to so many other people. Knowing this just made me think even less of myself.

Well finally, the day came where I knew I wasn't going to live to see the next day. I was done with life. I was done feeling all alone. I was done crying myself to sleep at night. I was just done.

On this Spring day, I just happened to be with my dad and little sister. We were in my dad's old truck on our way up to his friend's house. And for some reason that I still cannot explain today, I blurted out to my dad that I was through with my life, that I couldn't take it anymore, and that he needed to fix it.

By this time we were sitting out in front of this friend's house and so I continued to cry and tell him how much I hated myself and my life. I can still remember looking at my dad and seeing him looking helplessly at me, wanting to take all my pain away from me. When I couldn't go on anymore, I just sat and cried.

My dad looked at me and told me then, that all my pain and all my feelings of worthlessness could go away. He told me all I had to do was ask my Savior, Jesus Christ, to come in to me and take it all from me. He said that Christ was next to me and all I had to do was ask. Now I had heard my dad tell other people this before and I'll admit, I didn't believe it.

I didn't believe that something as bad as what I was feeling could completely vanish. But, I was at my end. I needed something. So sitting in a little gray pickup truck, with tears streaming down my face, I asked my Savior if He would come and heal me. I asked Him to take away everything. I told Him I wanted to be happy and that I knew the only way to be happy was through Him.

Now I honestly cannot even begin to describe what happened next. The only way to describe it, is that one second I'm freezing to death, and the next I'm warmer than I've ever been in my entire life. Its like this huge ball of heat and love just encircled me. And I knew at that moment that I was going

to make it. I knew that no matter what life threw at me, I could handle it with my Savior by my side.

I went through the rest of the day warm, which is incredible for me because I'm always cold. It was just another witness to me that I'm never alone, my Savior is always there, and that there is no need to be depressed. It's just Satan trying to get you to forget the Savior and the good things in life.

*I am now a Senior in High School. I can honestly tell you that there has not been one day when I have ever wanted or even have come close to the way I was before. If there is ever a time when I feel a little worthless or lonely or just hating life, all I have to do is **remember** the day in that truck and ask for my Savior to come and to take away all of my pain. He is my best friend. He is my brother. He is always there whenever you need, all you have to do is ask. He saved my life, He is literally, MY Savior."*

Our friends sat there in stunned silence. I knew of her experience, but had never really shared it with many people. It was her experience, for her to share when she felt she needed to. Now I knew why she had been so scared to share with them, but I was so grateful she had done so.

She looked at Rob, whose depression we had been trying to solve. *"I don't know why you keep looking outside yourself for answers. You have had such amazing experiences, many more than me. I have only had the one. But anytime I get depressed, lonely, feel bad or whatever, I remember it. And then I know Christ loves me, and He will take the pain away. I ask Him to take it away, then He does. I don't know what your problem is. Why don't you just remember what you have experienced? You know Him, you have had such incredible things happen. How can you ever be depressed? And if you are, just remember! All we all need to do is remember."*

Debi then got up, excused herself and went to bed. We all had been fed from a child. One of our friends said, "And a little child shall lead them." The evening was over. What could we "adults" add to the lesson that had been taught?

The words of an ancient prophet comes to mind as he tells us to *remember*:

“And now, my sons, remember, remember that it is upon the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God, that ye must build your foundation; that when the devil shall send (not maybe send, but, shall send) forth his mighty winds (of depression, guilt, shame, etc.), yea, his shafts in the whirlwind, yea, when all his hail and his mighty storm shall beat upon you, it shall have no power over you to drag you down to the gulf of misery and endless wo, because of the rock upon which you are built, which is a sure foundation, a foundation whereon if men build they cannot fall.”

If our “foundation” is built upon the “sand” (i.e. men, buildings, programs, drugs, institutions, doctrines of men), it will come crashing down. After our experiences and from what our daughter Debi taught me, I know to build my testimony on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ and our Heavenly Father. I know to “remember” that moment when God spoke peace to my mind, when I experienced that single defining moment in my life, when I knew He is real and that I could have Him as part of my life.

Chapter Seven

*O that cunning plan of the evil one!
 O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men!
 When they are learned they think they are wise,
 and they hearken not unto the counsel of God,
 for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves,
 wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not.
 And they shall perish.*

(2 Nephi 9:28)

This verse is one of the scriptures that I memorized as a youth. As a result, for much of my life it has stood out in my mind. As a young person though, I never really understood what it meant. Because of our experiences of the last several years, it has been demonstrated to me what the Lord possibly meant by our vainness, foolishness, and frailties. I have discovered that most of us, myself included, really do think we are wise when we get a little knowledge, education, or feel we are “learned.”

I have come to understand that the Lord will give us whatever we desire, the desire of our heart, whether or not we feel it might be good or bad. We can find a good example in the Old Testament. Anciently, Israel desired a king so they could be like other nations. *“But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord.”*

The Lords answer to Samuel I believe can apply to us today: *“And the Lord said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, **but they have rejected me**, that I should not reign over them. According to the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith **they have forsaken me**, and served other gods.”* (1 Samuel 8:7-8)

Their prophet said it wouldn't be good to have a king, but the Lord gave it to them anyway, *because they desired it*. It has always surprised me as I read the scriptures how Israel or even individuals think they know better than God. They would forsake Him and serve other gods like money, positions, titles, degrees, power, wealth, jobs, material possessions, and individuals. They would forsake God for their fixed conclusions about how they feel things ought to be.

Are we doing the same today when we turn our back on the Lord? I believe as we seek understanding and knowledge from the Lord, He will give it to us. But I believe that we are to still remain humble and "hearken to the counsel of God." Otherwise will we also have rejected the Lord? From our experiences we have seen many who have sought, and then received incredible experiences, gifts, and signs. Unfortunately there is a plague that seems to affect all of mankind, or the "natural man," and we seem to "get full of ourselves" and set aside God's counsel, perhaps, thereby rejecting Him.

We have met some of the most amazing people during the meetings we do. There are some that we have met that have said they see angels in the room as the meetings are going on. I have had a chance to talk to many of these individuals in person after the book review meetings. There are several that apparently have this gift and use it to help others get rid of devils or demons that seem to possess them. They say they have the gift of seeing or just perceiving their presence.

I feel the work that most of them do is important. They seem to be incredible people. They do a work that I would not want to do. For the most part it has been learning how to help people get rid of devils by following the spirit and even sometimes by trial and error. They have told me they deal with people of many different faiths, but because they live in this area they help mainly people from my faith. Some of these people have waged a decades long war with darkness on behalf of others.

They have described to me many of their experiences with darkness. From them I have been told there are many

people plagued with devils. From what I've experienced, I have to agree. We were having people come to us asking for our help in this area all the time. Because of this, I listened very intently to what they had to say. They had many interesting stories about their experiences of dealing with negative energies, forces, or devils. They offered many suggestions that I have found helpful.

After experiencing several different encounters with devils, Satan, and people that appear to be possessed, I had a chance to talk to a couple that have dealt with possession problems for decades. They told of many encounters with people that were bothered by devils. They told me how sometimes the devils will talk through the individual, and they relayed what they did to get rid of them and help that individual heal.

The part I enjoyed the most while talking to these two wonderful people was when I asked them if I could share my experiences and see if they could help me and if possibly my experiences help them. They readily agreed.

They told me they believed *“that the power to heal comes from a higher source. We mortals who become involved in that healing process are only facilitators or beneficiaries. . . the more I am involved in the healing process the more I am convinced that ultimately, Jesus Christ, is the only true healer.”*

What I really appreciate about this couple is how they seem to have remained open to help from others and any ideas that can help them. They seem to be a very humble couple that just want to help others. They work with people for hours at no charge, only wanting to help them. They are a “learned” couple as the result of their many years of helping others, yet they remain open and willing to learn from others and most importantly from the spirit.

I have great respect for the work they are doing. It is something I wouldn't have wanted to attempt, but because of their willingness to share and be open, I have a much greater understanding of how darkness can affect all of us and how to deal with it.

We have had the opportunity to talk to others about the same thing, but some of them don't seem to be so open. It seems like some of them feel they know it all and aren't open to share any other ideas. Could it be possible they have become so learned that they are not open to the counsel of God? I surely hope not. I know I struggle with being "human" all the time. At times, it seems hard to humbly accept counsel from others and even sometimes from God.

We have met many people that have received "revelations" and have really changed their lives as a result. I have met men and women who were told by "angels" to do some things I regarded as quite different.

I have asked Denise many times if she can see the future and she has said, "Yes." Then she will qualify it with this statement:

"But I don't want to know what is going to happen. The future is dynamic, Dad, it can change. I like living today. I know God is in charge, so I don't worry about the future."

Could it be possible that when we do receive revelation or inspiration, sometimes we tend to convert what we have received into hard and fixed conclusions? Then do we put those hardened and fixed conclusions about our inspiration or revelation in the crevices of our mind and seal them with concrete, determined never to listen to any further directions that the Lord may have for us? It might be that the message may be pure, but the filter (our mind) is impure, or because the future is dynamic, our "revelation" may have changed. Jonah in the Old Testament certainly found this to be the case.

God had sent Jonah to declare repentance to the people of Nineveh. He told them they would be destroyed in forty days if they didn't repent. Then he went and sat on a hill to watch. The people of Nineveh repented and "turned from their evil works." The Lord then declared that he would not destroy them. That "displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry." Jonah found out that the future can be dynamic and can change, even a prophecy the Lord told him to declare.

Is it possible, that our friends who help people that are dealing with devils could receive revelations about how to better deal with the devils? Possibly. Have they received God's final word on how to deal with devils? Probably not. Does God only give us what we can handle, line upon line, precept upon precept? I'm certain He does. I'm also sure that my friends will be open to receive any further instruction the Lord may send them, whether by direct inspiration or from other individuals. I know they are open to the counsel of God.

But what if we get inspiration and believe that what we have received is all there is, could we get caught short? I've experienced that the Lord may be ready to give us so much more, but I feel we need to be open to receive that counsel. If we feel we are learned or wise, we are probably not open to much more. Then we will as God has decreed, perish. *"But to be learned is good if they hearken (remain open or teachable) unto the counsels of God."*

When we first started doing our book review meetings, we seemed to attract some of the dissident people from my church. I remember some of them coming up and telling me that I would be joining them outside of my church for telling what we had been through in the first book, *"My Peace I Give Unto You."* Some of them seemed to come hoping for validation from Denise for their beliefs. We did a meeting at Rob's home one time. A woman who has turned into a good friend showed up with her husband. She wanted to talk after the meeting, so we sat down together.

"Doug," she said, "I want you to know that I didn't come here to get your book or hear your book review. I have a message from Christ for you. I hope you don't think I'm strange for saying that or coming here."

Boy, did she ever have my attention. "No," I responded, "I don't think you're strange or anything. If Christ has a message for me, I'd love to hear it."

We get all kinds of wonderful, sweet and sometimes strange people at our book reviews. I didn't know what

category this woman was in, so I waited with baited breath to hear what she had to say.

She continued, “He wants you to be careful when doing these meetings. You have to be careful not to seek a following or form a group.”

I assured her that we never have and never will do that. We don’t allow “groupies.” I am very protective of Denise. We just want to get our message out, that Christ is real, and we all can have a personal relationship with Him. As He said, He stands at the door, knocking. Then I asked her to continue.

She continued, “You will have the fringe element of your church come to you and others that have left their church. They will be seeking validation for their revelations and beliefs from you and Denise. You should be wary of them and not give them the validation they seek.”

I told her we had experienced this many times before. I have learned that they are God’s children too, and I don’t judge them. I choose not to follow their ideas, but I don’t judge them.

I told the wonderful woman with her incredible message from Christ that I appreciated her coming all the way to Rob’s house to give me a second witness of the feelings I had received. As a result of her visit, I started watching even more closely the people we came in contact with and what their intentions were in regards to us, and especially Denise.

What was interesting was seeing how many are given spiritual experiences and so start down a path toward greater understanding and then, when converting their spiritual experiences to knowledgeable conclusions of the way they believed things ought to be, they seem to veer off that path.

It seems that Lehi in his vision of the Tree of Life saw this. Many, who had left the security of the great and spacious building, would start down the straight and narrow path, which perhaps symbolizes spiritual experiences and even revelations. When mists of darkness came up they would lose their way and were lost. They were still seeking the Tree of Live but because of the mists of darkness, they wandered off the path. In that vision we’re told that the mist of darkness represented the

temptations of the devil. And what was the first thing the devil tempted mankind to do? He tempted (successfully) Adam and Eve to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. Just a thought – if the devil had such success in the Garden of Eden with his temptations, why would he change tactics? If something works, why fix it?

One man we met had incredible things happen to him. He was given things and told of missions he was to accomplish. It was amazing to hear of his blessings and see what had happened to him. Then he started to complain about my church, which I thought was his also, but it seems he had left it. I didn't have a problem with that. I accepted him for who he is, because he still is an incredible man. The more I got to know him though the more it appeared that he was wandering in the mist of darkness, looking for something or someone to tell him what to do or to guide him home. When this happens, we seem to want to have a sign given to us to help find us find the path. As a result of my experiences, I believe one of the signs we look for is the Spirit telling us what to do rather than making a decision and having the Spirit confirm it.

There seemed to be groups of people like him. They have wonderful experiences, experiences that most members of my church would love to have, experiences that I would love to have. Then they seemed to feel that because they are now “enlightened” and they know better than the leaders, they would leave the church. They seemed to find and accept strange doctrines. When using their knowledgeable conclusion of the way things ought to be (perhaps gleaned from their “spiritual experiences”), it seems that many of them begin to find fault with the church and by extension, it's leaders.

We were doing a meeting up north once and a group brought up the doctrine of multiple mortalities or reincarnation. I am stunned that this is brought up by so many members of my church. I had sought understanding about it for months.

I felt impressed to tell them that Denise had been asked about reincarnation and multiple mortalities many times. She has always witnessed that we live here once in this mortal life

and that reincarnation was not a true doctrine. They seem to drop it. Some have said that because she is so young, God has not yet revealed it to her. That could be a possibility. But they seem to forget she has no veil. She can see their whole life back into the pre-earth life. She can see all about them. If they had lived many mortalities, wouldn't she be able to see it?

Anyway, I continued to say that if they accept the doctrine of multiple mortalities, then in a way would they not be denying Christ? If we keep coming here over and over until we "get it right," why do we need a Savior? If that idea was true, would an atonement or a Savior be necessary?

I told them that I thought that the belief in multiple lives also denies the sanctity of the family. I then ended in testimony of the Savior and His atoning sacrifice. I don't know if they accepted it or not.

We did a meeting once where the subject of multiple mortalities was brought up. A young man asked Denise if it was true that we lived here on earth many times. She said, "No."

Then a woman in the group spoke up. Earlier in the meeting she had told Denise that she felt that Joseph Smith was a false prophet and the Book of Mormon was false. She had never read the book or read about him, she just felt they were both false. Denise then told her that Joseph Smith was a true prophet and the Book of Mormon was a true book and that she had seen all of Joseph's life. Then what the woman said really floored me.

She said, "I want to testify that reincarnation is a true principle. We have lived many lives, and we will live many more times. I haven't read the Bible and don't know what it says, but I feel that we have lived before and will live many times."

I just looked at her and didn't say anything. The silence just hung there for a minute. Then another woman asked a question about something else. I started to answer when Denise elbowed me and said:

“Dad, we are done here. Let’s go.” She ran her finger across her throat, giving a cutting off signal. I had never seen her do this or say anything close to this.

“Look Sweetie,” I whispered, “we have come a long way to talk to these people. We need to answer their questions.”

“No, Dad,” she firmly whispered, “we are done here. Let’s go now. Christ says we are done **now**, so let’s go.”

We then did something we have never done before or since. We got up and left. I know that we offended them. In the car I turned to Denise and asked for clarification.

“Dad,” she said, “when she testified of the truthfulness of reincarnation or multiple lives, she denied Christ. He told us to leave. He was done with them. We weren’t to speak another word to them.”

It was a long two hour drive home with much contemplation.

I have learned from our experiences that there are some signs or things to look for in people that have started down that path towards the Tree of Life and seem to have gone off into the mists of darkness or those that possibly have become so learned that they think they are wise and won’t hearken unto the counsel of God. Please understand, I believe that they are very sincere and for the most part wonderful people. I believe they are searching for that tree also.

The one sign that seems to stand out is that they are almost always *bitter*. Bitter over people or their church, their lot in life, or whatever. Along with the bitterness comes the attitude of being *critical of leaders*. They keep talking about what others have done to them, or want to know why the leaders don’t do this or that. It seems that you can just feel the bitterness ooze from them. They can’t seem to drop it. With the bitterness, it appears that they will never find the peace that Christ offers.

If His hand is truly in all things, then perhaps we ought to be grateful for whatever is going on or has gone on in the

past. I know that this is a hard concept for some people to grasp. I know, because it was hard for me. It still is at times, especially when someone “spits” in your face, so to speak.

We have found that it is not up to us to “steady the ark,” as Christ is in charge and he will do whatever He wants to do on His own time schedule. We can be grateful for all things, thus acknowledging His hand in all things, thereby opening us up to receiving His peace that goes beyond understanding.

Bitterness, I believe, does not come from our Savior. It is a negative emotion. I remember a meeting where we told the people that we personally didn’t care what path they had chosen to follow. It is between them and their God. However, I then asked them why are they continually critical of the church or institution they had left? *If they are truly following the Savior, as they claim to be, there should be no bitterness or hatred in them.* I feel that these negative feeling or emotions do not come from God. So why did they keep expressing hatred or anger about the church they had left? I tried to point out that their attitude didn’t seem to come from Christ.

Another thing we have noticed is what my friend warned me of. We should be careful of those that are *seeking a following*. Could it be possible that these are those that have gained some wisdom or learning, then because of their “enlightenment” seek to tell us what to do and how to do it? People seem to gravitate toward these “masters” or gurus, wanting them to give us their enlightenment, perhaps even revelation for our lives. Many seek Denise for this. Whenever I ask her for help, she tells me what we all ought to hear, “Go ask Christ, Dad.” Is this possibly part of the “foolishness” of men, trusting in the arm of flesh or those we think are wise instead of seeking the true Master, Jesus Christ.

Christ is the only true “Master.” We have been told to seek Him and Him only. He is the way, the truth and the light. So why do we seek it in others?

We have been in groups where there seems to be a “guru.” They are incredible, charismatic leaders of men and have gained a following. But it seems that the group is only

willing to do what the leader says and not what Christ says. It also seems that the leader is seeking to have the group follow his will and not that of Christ unless they appear to be in agreement. What we have learned from experience is to seek to follow Christ and not trust in the arm of flesh. We are commanded to not put our trust in the arm of flesh. I believe that when we trust solely in the arm of flesh, we then deny the Christ. In my church we have a prophet. He will and does give inspired direction from God. He has given much direction to help us in many areas of our life. But even he tells us that he is human and therefore fallible, and that he does not lead or direct the church, but Christ does. He is just the Lord's mouthpiece.

Another thing we have experienced is people showing their vainness by being *proud*. They have been blessed with incredible gifts. We have met many healers, and I have witnessed incredible things done by them. I've also witnessed not so incredible things. I have wondered why one minute some of them seem so inspired in what they are doing and the next minute Denise is shaking her head wanting to leave. Many times Denise has made the comment that they "hear both sides, light and dark, but at times they can't tell the difference." After listening and watching carefully, I believe it might be pride. It becomes their gifts and not the Lords. It's about what they can do and not what the Lord may be doing through them.

Some of our favorite people are a couple from northern Utah. The wife is like a child in her playfulness. It seems that she loves everyone unconditionally. She just loves life. She has been blessed with gifts of healing as has her husband. The difference with them is they always give credit to God for their gifts. They acknowledge that the gifts they have, come from God. It is not them doing the healing, it is God THROUGH them.

Others seem to leave God out of the equation altogether. It seems to be all about them. The gifts they have are theirs, but it appears they don't acknowledge the giver, which is God, for their gifts. That is one of the signs we have noticed also. If all of our gifts come from God, shouldn't we give all *glory to God*

and not take any for ourselves. Isn't that the example that Christ taught us?

We have told so many people when we start our book review meetings that is isn't about Denise or her gifts. The book isn't titled, "Denise's Peace She Gives Unto You." It is titled, "*My Peace I Give Unto You.*" Christ is the author of all things and especially His peace. The book isn't about Denise or our family. It is about our experiences of finding Christ, even through all of our difficult and trying times.

One of the last things we have observed is something the Lord has long said, "*by their works ye shall know them.*" However, we've seen that there are many ways of observing things and many points of view. We are taught that if it is a good tree it will give forth good fruit.

We have experienced that when some people become learned (as they suppose) and therefore believe that they are wise, then they seem to begin to leave the Savior out of their lives, or they listen to other spirits that tell them to do things that take them away from the Savior. Sometimes they receive revelations that take them away from Him.

We have been able to spend time with many people that "hear" the other side. One person told us many things that seemed to be true, and it was incredible. Then he veered off on many tangents; one was giving credit to Satan and saying that he was the first born of God the Father.

As we finished our "experience" with him, someone asked Denise if there had been many people from the other side of the veil in the room.

Before Denise could answer, the man said, "Yes there are many here. I have many spirits that help me."

Out in the car after we had left, I asked Denise if there had been many spirits in the room.

"Oh yes Dad," she said, "the problem was he didn't know which ones he was listening to. He was hearing both the light and the dark, but couldn't tell the difference between the two."

Brigham Young said: *“The children of men give heed to the deceiving spirits that are abroad, and that is the cause of the ten thousand errors, wrongs, sins and divisions which are in the world, and for this reason the multitude are unable to distinguish between the voice of the Good Shepherd and the voice of the stranger.”* (Journal of Discourses, Brigham Young, 16:75)

“There are many spirits gone out into the world, false spirits are giving revelations as well as the Spirit of the Lord.” (Journal of Discourses, Brigham Young, 3:44)

Could it be possible that when we remain humble (teachable) to the Spirit of God, we are then in a position to know His voice? His voice speaks peace to our mind and heart. When we truly follow His voice, our works will bring forth good fruit.

The works and words of Christ are love, patience, forgiveness, humility, no guile, openness, peace, giving glory to the Father, etc. The works of our not hearkening to the counsel of God or listening to the deceiving spirits are: being critical, keeping the glory to ourselves, not acknowledging where our gifts come from, seeking a following, hatred, anger, and negative emotions.

It would be my hope that we realize the evil one does have a “cunning plan.” If he can, would he not use our vainness, frailties, and foolishness to accomplish his designs? My prayer is that when/if we do receive wisdom or become learned, we will stay humble and always seek the counsel of God. I believe that if we do so, our gained wisdom will not become foolish unto us and we will not perish, as the Lord has so stated.

I would love to be like Christ, helping everyone with unconditional love, remaining open to what His Father wanted Him to go through and always giving credit to His Father for all things.

Chapter Eight

*“Wherefore, I give unto them a commandment, saying thus:
 Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy **heart**,
 with all thy **might, mind, and strength**;
 and in the name of Jesus Christ thou shalt serve him.*

I have a wonderful friend, Charlene, that calls just to chat about the possibilities of what we have each learned during the past month or two. We share experiences and talk about the possible meanings of what the Lord has taught us. She is so much fun to talk with.

One day we were chatting about what the Lord possibly means when He states that when we do anything from repenting to loving Him, He commands us to do it with all our heart, might, mind, and strength. and in the name of Jesus Christ.

We talked about the first part of that commandment or what it means to love God with all of our heart. She felt that the “heart” had to do with your emotions. That did sound good, but I expressed another possible meaning.

“Could it mean your *intent*?” I asked.

I told Charlene that the previous Sunday in Sunday School class the teacher was talking about this very subject and how someone brought up that she felt it was our “intent” that mattered when the Lord was talking about loving Him with all our heart. Even that intent and heart could be interchanged. Could it be possible that it was more than just emotions of the heart, that it was the “real intent” of the heart that mattered?

I told her about my buddy Rob and an experience he had when he first started to write our book, *“My Peace I Give Unto You.”* I felt it might illustrate what it means to love God with all of our heart.

During the year of 2000, Denise kept telling me that I was supposed to write a book. I kept telling her to forget it because I don’t write books. Finally at the end of the year I

went to her and asked if I was going to get in “trouble” with the other side of the veil for not writing the book.

“Dad,” she said, “you already have, you just don’t remember it.”

I knew I was feeling an incredible “pressure” to write. I say pressure for lack of a better word to describe it. It was so great that I started sometime around the tenth of December to write down our experiences. I still remember the feeling as I finished the last of thirty-two type written pages, the “pressure” was gone! I was free! I was so exhilarated.

Then the Spirit whispered to me to take the pages to Rob. I argued, saying that Rob was a math teacher. What would he do with these pages? I still felt impressed to take them to him, so I complied.

I knocked on his door on December twenty third, about 8 PM. He opened the door and I handed him the pages and said, “Tag you’re it.” He knew what they were, we had talked before about it many times. Then I turned to walk away.

“What do you want me to do with these?” he asked.

“I don’t really care,” I said, “You can throw them in the garbage if you want to. I really didn’t care.” I then turned and walked home. I really didn’t care. I kind of hoped he would not organize it into a book.

Rob took the papers and read them. He figured that being the educated math teacher he is, he could pop out a book during the remainder of Christmas vacation. Rob had never written a book either.

What was incredible was that when Rob started to write, he felt he had much help from the other side of the veil while writing. He had many incredible spiritual experiences. Evidently, Rob had been blessed with the gifts he needed to write the book. He wrote three chapters over the next week or so. Then one night as he was resting on his bed he had a dream while wide awake.

Rob’s friend growing up was Richard Paul Evans, who had become quite famous for a book he wrote. He apparently had also become quite wealthy. So Rob dreamed of fame and

riches. The first three chapters of the book he was writing *were* quite good, he thought. Then he dreamed of the wealth and fame he might have if this book took off. He dreamed long and hard.

When he got up the next day, the gifts were gone, as was his help from the other side of the veil. Rob's heart was not "in the right place" at this time. He did not have "real intent" or true intent. He suffered over the period of three weeks, asking for forgiveness, trying to get his heart in the right place. I have to admit I thoroughly enjoyed watching his suffering. You see, I had been through so much "stuff", it was wonderful to see someone else go through it. Yet I know through opposition comes growth but maybe I did take too much glee in his suffering, though.

After his heart was sufficiently broken, the gifts seemed to come back to him. He even told me he would take his name off the cover of the book if I wanted. He has never taken a dime for writing it. I feel that is real intent. His heart (intent) was changed. Instead of doing it for himself, he was doing it for the Lord, giving all credit to Him.

Charlene seemed to enjoy the story. She then brought up a scripture that tells us if we do anything, such as give a gift or pray without real intent, it is counted as evil to us:

*"For behold, God hath said a man being evil cannot do that which is good for if he offereth a gift, or prayeth unto God, except he shall do it with **real intent** it profiteth him nothing. For behold, it is not counted unto him for righteousness. For behold, if a man being evil giveth a gift, he doeth it grudgingly; wherefore it is counted unto him the same as if he had retained the gift; wherefore he is counted evil before God. And likewise also it is counted evil unto a man, if he shall pray and not with **real intent of heart**; yea, and it profiteth him nothing, for God receiveth none such.*

I agreed that it is so important that we do all things with real intent. I shared another story that happened to Rob and me. As he finished the book we were looking for a way to publish it. We were looking into the possibility of self publishing, but

neither of us had the slightest idea of what to do. The opportunity presented itself to talk to some book publishers at a book seller's convention. I called and found several publishers that would be there and sent them a copy of our manuscript.

To say I was excited to enter the world of book selling would be an understatement. The convention hall was full of vendors, publishers, authors, and artists. To me the atmosphere was electric. I soon found myself in front of one of the publishers we had sent our manuscript to.

Dean (not his real name) was extremely well dressed, down to the expensive cufflinks and starched shirt. What a privilege I felt it was to sit in front of him. His company had taken several books and sold millions. They were very successful, I thought. Even more important, they were successful in our genre.

"Have you read the entire manuscript?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, "I have and my chief editor has also read it."

"Well, what do you think?" I almost was blubbing

"We really like it," Dean said. "It is our type of book. As you know we helped to establish his genre in the market. So we know what we are doing."

"I know that," I replied, "but do you think you can do anything with our book?"

"We would like to do a major rewrite with it. It has incredible possibilities. We think we could sell many copies."

"What kind of rewrite?" I asked.

"Well, the story of your daughter is incredible," he said. "We would focus on her and her gifts. So what we would do is write it again, focusing on her and her gifts, what she can do. That would be about it."

"So," I said, "you would take Christ out of it."

"Yes," came the reply.

"Why would you do that?" I asked.

"We know what we are doing," he answered. "If you want to possibly sell millions of copies, we need to write it again focusing on Denise and her abilities. We would then be

willing to start with a fifty-thousand dollar advertising campaign. We would fly you two all over the country and promote the book and your daughter. You could make a lot of money.”

“So, “ I said slowly, “what you want to do is take Christ out of the book, and rewrite it, focusing on her gifts. Then you will send us around the country promoting it. Sounds to me like you want to make this into a three ring circus with Denise in the center ring.”

“A circus,” he said while rubbing his index finger and thumb together, “isn’t half bad, if you are the ring master. It can make you rich.”

I stood up and extended my hand to him. When we started this project, we knew it wasn’t about money. It was about Christ. If He wanted us to make money off of it, fine. But we would not take Him out of it. And surely I would not allow anyone to make this into a three ring circus. I told Dean it was a pleasure meeting him and wished him and his company much success. I then left.

After Rob’s experience with having his ability to write and receive inspiration gone, we both knew that the book wasn’t about Denise or her gifts. We couldn’t allow it to be printed if our hearts or intent weren’t real. The focus has to be on Christ and His teaching.

Charlene agreed that both stories illustrate what the Lord may have meant by saying we must love Him and do everything with all of our heart, or with “*real intent.*”

“Just last Sunday in Church someone was talking about obeying God’s commandments. He felt that many people obey to receive a reward or blessing. He thought that was possibly the wrong way to do it. He even read the passage you just quoted, Charlene,” I said.

“You know, Doug,” she responded back, “what do you think of the possibility that if we obey a commandment to get the blessing, reward, or avoid punishment, we may be doing it for the wrong reason, not with our ‘heart’ or with ‘real intent.’ Then would we “be counted evil before God?”

“I have to agree with you,” I said. “For example, according to my understanding of the scriptures, if we pay tithing or offerings with the intent to receive the promised blessing or to avoid the penalty of not paying, according to the scriptures we’re not doing it with *real intent of heart*, and it will profit us nothing.”

“I believe,” she said, “that the Lord wants us to obey His commandments and love Him. But it seems that the Lord would prefer we do it His way, with real intent of heart. If you and Rob had taken that publisher’s offer and taken Christ out of your book, you may have made a lot of money, but would you have offended God in the process? Would so many lives have been touched if Christ wasn’t in the story? I think not, because He is the story.”

I agreed with her. Both Rob and I knew our hearts had to be in the right place. If they weren’t, there was no reason to do the book.

“So what do you think the Lord meant when He said we should love Him with all of our *might*?” I asked her.

“Well,” she said, “it could possibly mean that we love Him, obey Him, or even repent with our *will, agency or determination*. That could be our might. The dictionary defines *might* as the power or force held by a person or group.”

I told her how I could see the possibility that “might” could be defined as our determination or will to follow God. We can do this by giving Him our agency. I told her of a blessing I received once. At the time I thought it was one of the strangest blessings I had ever been given.

In the blessing two things stood out above all others. The person voicing the blessing stopped short and then stated very loudly, “You are to never, never, never trust in the arm of flesh.” That kind of shocked me, but it is stated many times in the scriptures, so I wasn’t to alarmed by it. The next statement was also different:

“Doug, you know that Jesus Christ is your companion. You are to invite Him into your life, so much so that your will is His will. If He tells you to turn left in a grocery store, you

will turn left. If He tells you to turn right, you will turn right. You should strive to become one with Him.”

“The interesting thing is, Charlene,” I continued, “I had the chance to experience this first hand. It is something that happened while Denise was in the hospital. It is something that I never really tell many people. It was an incredible experience, but really strange too.”

“What in the world was it?” she asked.

“Rob wasn’t allowed to write about it in our book. I always wondered why. Maybe because at that time I didn’t comprehend the meaning of it. The incident happened the night that I watched the movie at my friend John’s house. After the movie I had experienced the oneness of God and had been able to feel what everyone was going through.”

“I remember reading about that in your book,” she said.

“Well,” I continued, “later that night after everyone had left and Denise was asleep, I felt impressed by the Spirit to write. So I got out a pen and paper and wrote for some two hours or more. About three in the morning I was impressed to put the pen down, so I did. I sat there contemplating the days events, experiences that I never dreamed I would ever have. Suddenly I felt impressed to get up and walk out of the room. No, it was even more than just an impression. I was drawn to get up and walk out.

“What do you mean, drawn to get up and walk out?” she asked.

“It felt like I was being pulled,” I said. “As if *someone* was pulling me. It was the middle of the night, but I wasn’t the least bit tired, and I knew it wasn’t a dream. So I decided to get up and see where I was being drawn to.

I headed out of Denise’s room and turned left. As I was heading past the nurse’s station, I wondered if I still had my agency or will to go where I wanted to go. I felt myself being pulled to the right, but I decided to go straight ahead, just to see if I could. I could. Well, I thought to myself, at least I know that I can still do whatever I want. But I decided to see where I was going.

It was the most incredible feeling, being drawn along, as if by a rope, really gently, sweetly. I turned right and left and went down the stairs to the main floor. I turned again and found myself heading straight to the emergency room. This is appropriate I thought. I need to see a doctor to see if I'm nuts.

I walked right through the security doors, turned left and walked past three policemen standing there talking to two hospital security guards. I then turned right and stood right in front of the main nurses station inside of the emergency room. It seemed to be a busy night, as there were many doctors and nurses running around. There were five or so right in front of me.

Standing there right smack in front of the nurses station, I wondered how long it would be before they asked me to leave. This was a secure area, where they don't allow people to wander around. Both entrances that I knew about had locked security doors. But they didn't seem to notice me. No one did.

So I watched the clock. Several minutes ticked by. 'Lord,' I said, 'What am I doing here?' The still small voice asked me, 'are you willing to be made a fool for Me?' I had to admit, I sure felt foolish standing there. I tried to see the reasoning behind what I had been led to do. There was none, I felt. 'Yes, Lord,' I said, 'I am willing to be made a fool for you.' So I stood there in front of the nurses station for more than ten minutes and no one noticed me or said a word to me. After a few more minutes I was told by the Spirit to leave. I gladly left."

"Then what happened," she asked, "did they finally kick you out?"

"No," I replied, "it was like they never saw me. But when I left, walking right past those same policemen, I was pulled to the right hallway outside the door. Halfway down the hall I was stopped by the Spirit and told to face the wall and stand there with my face to the wall."

"You're kidding," she laughed.

"I wish I was kidding. I had told Him I was *willing*, and I guess He wanted to make sure. So I stood there facing the

wall for about five minutes, wondering what I would say to someone if they walked down the hallway. I figured I'd be cute and mutter something about my doctor putting me there as therapy. Then I noticed a security camera right next to me, aimed right at me. Great, I thought, now they will come and get me. No one ever did."

"Doug," she said, "that is a strange story."

"I thought so to." I told her. "Then a few days later when I was relating it to John he got a chuckle out of it."

"He told me where in the scriptures it states we must be *willing* to be made a fool for Christ, but he had never heard of something so literal happening to someone. I assured him that it did happen to me. The great thing was that I had experienced what was said in that blessing. When he wanted me to turn left, I turned left, right, I turned right. My will was His. For that reason it was a wonderful experience, as strange as it was."

I had read where Brigham Young stated, "*Break not the spirit (will) of any person, but guide it to feel that it is its greatest delight and highest ambition to be controlled by the revelations of Jesus Christ; then the will of man becomes Godlike in overcoming the evil that is sown in the flesh, until God shall reign within us to will and do his good pleasure.*" (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 9, p. 151, Brigham Young, January 12, 1862)

"Doug," Charlene chuckled, "I now know never to follow you around a hospital. But I will agree with you, it must have been an amazing experience for you. So, what do you think about the third part of the scripture, that we should love Him with all of our *mind*?"

"I don't know, Charlene," I answered, "Could it mean that our *thoughts* should always be on the Lord? Possibly we do this by always having a prayer of gratitude in our heart and mind (thoughts)."

"That might come as close to anything I could add," she answered. "I know the scriptures also state that God will speak to our mind and heart. I like to think that He speaks to my mind and my heart, confirming it is Him because of the peace I feel."

But, I agree, our thoughts ought to be on Him in all things in order to show our complete love for Him. It would make sense to do that with a prayer of gratitude for all things.”

“I have an experience that might illustrate the importance of keeping our thoughts on the Lord in all we do,” I said. It happened the January after Denise got out of the hospital. At that time our house was going through all kinds of emotions. All of these experiences were going on with Denise, and we were all trying to adjust. It was extremely hard at times.

Then one day as I was showering, I received the strong impression that we were to travel out of state to meet the individuals that had developed the bio-feedback machine that John had tested me on.

“Hey Denise,” I yelled, “I received the strong impression to go meet those guys that developed that machine John has. Do you want to go?”

“Yes, Dad,” came the response.

“That ought to be interesting,” I told her, “because we don’t have a dime to go on.”

“Dad,” she said, “trust in Christ, the money will come.”

“I hope so,” I replied, “I want to have you tested on that machine. I also would like them to test me so I can see if my heart and lungs are really healed. But I believe the real reason is for them to meet you, Denise. I wonder what they will do when they put you on that machine and see what happens. You know every time we test you on John’s machine, you test balanced. No one tests balanced in nearly every category. That must be the reason we are going!” I had come to my grand *conclusion* why the Lord wanted us to go and Denise didn’t try to tell me any different.

We then went about our lives, waiting for some way to get to make our trip. A few days later Cindy called and said she felt impressed to take us. She had about fourteen hundred dollars and a car, “So let’s go Doug,” she said.

The next Sunday night we took off. It was about a ten hour drive. There was Cindy, John, David his son, Denise and me. I was the official chauffeur for the trip, no one else drove.

It was a fun ride over. We discussed all the things we had gone through and what might happen with this group that had developed the bio-feedback machine. We discussed all types of possibilities, but I *knew* the reason we were going was to get Denise tested for these guys to see.

Monday morning we arrived at their corporate office and asked for the main person. They said he wasn't in and they wouldn't give us his home number. We were really frustrated. I was very annoyed by the fact we didn't get right in to see him. Our mind or thoughts were certainly on doing the Lords business, and I *KNEW* the reason we were here was to meet them and for them to see Denise. I had already figured that out.

We went to a motel and called a local practitioner that used the bio-feedback machine. John talked to him for several minutes. He told John the he had been in the area for a few years and every work day he was booked solid. But for the strangest reason the next day, he did not have one patient coming in. That had never happened before, so he said he felt it must mean that he was suppose to see us.

I was elated. This was one of the two reasons we were to come here. Now we could get it out of the way, meet the people, and go home.

The next morning was very exciting for me. We met the practitioner and he hooked up Cindy on the machine. It was a device that sold for a lot of money. Normally the practitioner would run it for about forty-five minutes and then the device prints out a report about your body. All the organs and systems are checked and reported on. He did a fifteen minute body survey on just the major organs and systems on Cindy, then read the printout to her and told her where she might need help.

After she was done, he hooked me up. It was great fun. Denise just sat and laughed at how funny I looked with the bands or straps around my head, wrist, finger and ankle. I didn't care.

Fifteen minutes later we were looking at my printout. The only things I cared to look at were my heart and lungs. The bigger machine operates similar to the smaller one, except you

get a printout, but you still want to be balanced at fifty. When John had tested my heart and lungs nearly six months earlier they were 18 and 19 respectively. The tests now showed my heart at 48 and my lungs at 49. I was so elated. My heart and lung disease really were gone! The practitioner wasn't impressed. He was more concerned about the low figure my digestive tract had come in at. I told him it was stress or the restaurant food, and he agreed it probably was.

Then we asked Denise to get "hooked up" on the machine. She declined to be tested on the large machine.

"I will let him do the small machine," she said, "but not the big one. You two looked goofy on the big one."

"Alright," the practitioner said.

He took hold of her hand and had her hold the brass handle in the other hand. He did the first point on her finger and the needle went to fifty. He did the second one and the needle went to fifty again. He then did about ten different points on her hand and it went to fifty, balanced every time. His eyes got big.

We then told him a little about her, the coma, stroke and not having a veil. He did some more testing and the needle kept going to fifty.

Finally he got up and went to make a phone call. He came back and said that he had called the man we had tried to see yesterday and told him about Denise. But no matter how much he talked to this man, he didn't want to see us. The practitioner was floored because "no one tests at fifty on everything and your daughter does." He couldn't figure out why these people would not want to test her.

I didn't really care. After being tested we left for the hotel. After getting there, I told Denise that we could go home now. "We have done what we came to do," I said, "and they don't want to see us, but we were tested anyway on the machine, so now we can go home."

"No we can't, Dad," she said. "That's not why we came here."

"Well," I said loudly, "then why did we come here?"

“I can’t tell you,” she answered, “You have to figure it out. You need to ask Heavenly Father and Christ and have them tell you. I can’t. We can’t go home until you figure it out.”

Now I was getting a little heated under the collar. I knew why we had come and we had accomplished it, except for meeting the developers of the machine. Now I had my little ten-year-old daughter telling me that we hadn’t accomplished what we had come to do. And to top it all off, she wasn’t going to tell me what it was. I had to figure it out, I had to ask God what it was He had in mind. Now I WAS hot under the collar.

I went and talked to John and Cindy in their room. It was Cindy’s car and we could just go home I told them. Cindy told me that she wouldn’t go until Denise said we were done. I wondered to myself if all these people had gone nuts. Denise is ten and we are following her around the country. Yes, she is the one with no veil, yet all she will tell me is that I have to ask Christ, that she won’t tell me anything. Now John and Cindy are going to back her up! I went to my room even hotter than before.

“You know Denise,” I said through gritted teeth, “it is snowing here. It has snowed continually since we came. We need to leave now or we may not get over the mountains. We are done here. We were tested on the machine and those people won’t see us. We have tried our best and they won’t see us, so let’s go.”

“No, Dad,” she replied.

Now I was fed up. I felt trapped. I had no money and here we sat a long way from our home. The others would not leave until Denise said it was alright to go. Denise said she wouldn’t go until I asked God why we were there, that I “had to figure it out.” Well I was tired of trying to figure it out. I had been through so much “stuff” in the last two months, on such an emotional roller coaster, so I decided right then and there that I was done. My frustration level had gone through the roof, I was done with all of this twilight zone. I wanted my “old” life back.

I didn't want a daughter without a veil, and I was tired of "asking Christ."

"You know Denise," I said very strongly, "I don't believe you talk to Christ. I believe that you talk to the other guy, the bad one. That is who you follow."

At that very moment I knew I was in *deep* trouble. She just stood there and looked straight into my eyes and didn't move. Then tears started to come down her cheeks. There was no doubt I was in real big trouble. At that moment I was so very glad that I *did* have a veil and could not see Christ and the pain that might have been in His heart. I was glad I could not see Satan and the glee he was most likely expressing.

"You're right, Dad," she said very quietly, "Satan is who I talk to, not Christ. Let's pack up and go home now."

I didn't know what to do. I knew I was so wrong. I should have never said that. With everything we had been through, I knew beyond any doubt that she talked to Christ, she did what He asked her to do, without question. I was one of the few adults that believed her and now I had turned on her. I looked for a rock to crawl under.

"Denise," I said, "I am sorry. I didn't mean that. I am so sorry."

She left and went to Cindy's room to watch a movie. I called Dianne and told her what had happened. She told me that maybe I was thinking too much about what I wanted and not what God had in mind. She told me that maybe I had jumped to so many conclusions about what the trip was about that my legs must be tired. Maybe I ought to turn my thoughts to what He wanted us to do.

I knew she was right. And I *knew* that he wanted us to meet these people. So I determined to stay until we did. The next morning we went back to the corporate office and hung out in the parking lot. Finally the head of the company came out. I went right up to him and asked if we could meet him. He looked at his watch and said he had an appointment and would we come back the next day, at two o'clock. I said we would.

Now I was so happy. We played at the hotel, watched movies, and spent Cindy's money. The next day we showed up exactly at two o'clock. John did not go in with us. We had about a one hour meeting with this man. He showed no interest in Denise. He showed no interest in the plant that he had walked away from. This was the man that John had brought it to, that had shown so much excitement over the possibilities of what it could do, and now he wanted nothing to do with it.

After leaving I told Denise that we could go home now. It was Thursday night and was still snowing. It had snowed all week, but we could try to make it over the mountains.

"Dad," Denise said, "we can't go home yet. We haven't done what we came here to do."

I was floored. I didn't get mad or explode, but my frustration level went up a couple hundred notches. I didn't need to ask her what it was we were here to do, because I "was supposed to ask Christ."

That night I got on the phone quite late with Dianne. She really helped me through this. She told me to get a good nights sleep and just ask God what we were supposed to do and then to *listen*. She told me to get rid of my preconceived ideas or conclusions about why we were there. She said to actually do what Denise had said all week, to ask God. It was the best advice she could have given me. I prayed a sincere prayer and finally did ask Heavenly Father what He wanted us to do, why He wanted us there. I told Him I was willing to do His will, finally. I gave up my preconceived ideas of why we were there and then I went to sleep.

I woke up about seven Friday morning. As I lay there the thoughts just poured into my head. I grabbed a pencil and paper and wrote what came to me. It was an incredible experience. Afterwards, I just sat there and read it over and over. Finally I woke Denise up.

"Denise," I said, "I know why we are here."

"I know," she sleepily replied.

“I will write it again on some nice paper and then we can deliver it and go home.” I happily retorted, “Do you want me to read it to you?”

“Dad,” she said, “I know what it says. You need to change the line on the second page back to the way Christ had it.”

“Oh,” I replied, “it was so strong, I just wanted to soften it up a little.”

“Not supposed to Dad,” she said.

I changed the line and wrote up a clean copy and then went down the hall to John and Cindy’s room.

“Hey, this is why we came,” I said, waiving the paper in front of them. I had them read it and they agreed it was why we had come.

A few hours later we delivered the paper to the founder of the company that produced the bio-feedback machine. Then we left for home. As we drove about thirty miles away we noticed it had not snowed there. We found out later that it had snowed all week in just that little city we were in. “Dad,” Denise said, “Christ did that just for you, to help you stay there.”

“You know Charlene,” I said, “I hardly ever tell that story. Denise won’t allow me to tell it when she is around. That night I turned on her was not a memory she wants to keep. Actually I don’t want it either. But the whole experience shows what we have been talking about.”

I had gone with my own intentions or conclusions as to why we were going. I did not ask the Lord why he wanted us to go. Not until I got my heart (intent) in the right place did we accomplish what we had gone for. Then I willingly gave my might (will) over to Him. It wasn’t about me or Denise finding out what we did on the bio-feedback machine. That was all ego. It wasn’t His will. But, not until I turned my mind (thoughts) to Him did I finally “get it.” Then the experience leads right into the next part of what we are talking about. We showed our strength (action) and did what we had been sent to do, no matter how difficult. Once I had written that paper to

them, all the frustration and doubt fled. I was so elated to deliver it and be on our way home.

“I agree with you Doug,” Charlene said, “It does have all the elements of that scripture. We can get our heart, might and mind right with God, but unless we do the strength or action required, we have done nothing.

“I agree with that possibility,” I said.’

“I feel that may possibly be the key to that scripture,” she stated, “but I just have to ask something before we continue. What was on the paper, what was written?”

“Let’s just say,” I answered, “that we had the opportunity to deliver a message that the owner of that company needed to hear. It was one of the worst times of my life, when I turned on Denise, but also one of the most wonderful, when I finally got my ego out of the way, threw all my preconceived ideas out the window, got my mind right, and listened to the Lord.”

“I have been studying the scriptures where it talks about repentance. It states that we should ‘turn to the Lord (our) God, with all (our) might, mind, and strength’. I believe the strength part refers to *action*, or us putting forth the effort or faith to show God that we do have our whole heart, might and mind in whatever we are doing, whether it be loving Him, obeying commandments or repenting. You surely did that after realizing you shouldn’t have said what you did to Denise.”

“Remember what happened with my friend Rob?” I asked.

“I don’t really, what?” she replied.

“Well he had gone through eight years of depression, came out of it, wrote our book and then crashed again with his depression. We had tried all kinds of things to help him. He had visited different therapists, done the anti-depressant thing, everything. All to no avail.

One day we had talked about how he had left the anti-depressants and was “normal” for nearly a year and a half. He seemed to have followed the steps we are talking about. His heart or intent was to get off them. He really desired it.

He also said he was exercising his might or will/agency to get off them. This was now his choice and not someone else making the decision. He felt like he had great determination to do it and get off the anti-depressants, which he had informed this doctor he was going to do.

Then he said he was thanking the Lord for his experiences all the time. He felt his mind was in the right place, but he was having a hard time of it. If you remember, Charlene, I called you and we discussed what was happening to him. You talked about when we repent or correct something the Lord says we should do it with our heart, might, mind and strength.”

“I remember that,” Charlene said. “I remember how he was frustrated, he felt the Lord wasn’t listening to him and was not helping him.”

“Yes,” I responded, “and you told me that he had not done the fourth part of what the Lord says we must do. He had not put his strength into the equation. I didn’t understand how he could do that or why the Lord might not think Rob hadn’t done that already. Then you reminded me of what strength was about.”

“That’s right,” she said, “I told you to ask him if he still had his medication in the cupboard, just in case the Lord didn’t respond to what he had asked. If I remember right you called him and asked if he still had the medication, just in case.”

“I did just that,” I said, “and he told me I was right, it was still in his bathroom cabinet. He agreed that he had kept it ‘just in case’ he needed it. He then threw it away. That was my first inkling of what the Lord meant when He said we must love Him, obey Him, and repent with all our strength. It is the action part of the equation and how we show our faith.”

“You know Doug,” she said, “it’s like when you told me about your friend that couldn’t understand how getting on her knees and thanking our Heavenly Father for the experiences she had been through could open the door for Him to give her His peace. It seemed like a paradox to her if I remember right. When Denise was in a coma and going to die or be left a vegetable, you didn’t receive His peace until you showed your

strength (faith) by actually thanking Him for the experience you were going through.”

“I agree,” I responded, “sometimes I wonder how many people won’t do the strength part of what is required because they don’t understand how or why it would work. Thanking God for our experiences, especially the ones we perceive to be really awful, would look like a paradox. Even though I know it works, I still forget at times, especially when I’m in the middle of some experience I’m not particularly fond of.”

“That’s why I shared my way of remembering,” she enthusiastically said. “If you remember, every time we put our arm to the square we should be reminded of doing what we are covenanting to do with our whole heart, might, mind, and strength. Everyone puts their arm to the square. Boy Scouts do it. In court they do it. In ordinances they do it.”

“Let me see if I can remember it correctly,” I said. “When we put our arm to the square it could possibly show our heart, might, mind, and strength. As the arm is put to the square, the bottom part points to our heart, reminding us of our *intent*.

Then the muscle or biceps remind us of our might, reminding us that we are doing this of our own *agency or will*, also that we have the will or *determination* to carry it out.

Third is the mind, which our thumb is pointing to. This would remind us that our *thoughts* should be of God, by having a continual prayer of gratitude.

The last one is strength. This is expressed by the fingers of our hand, which expresses our *action* and *faith*.

“So every time we raise our arm to the square,” she said, “we should be reminded of doing that thing we are agreeing to with all our heart, might, mind, and strength.”

I had never thought about the possible symbolism of raising our arm to the square before. Now when I do, I am reminded what the Lord has asked us in regard to serving, loving, and obeying Him along with repenting. I am reminded to do it with all of my heart, might, mind, strength, and to do it in Christ’s name.

The last part of the scripture at the beginning of this chapter tells us that it is also a commandment to serve our Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ. We have learned from our experiences that this life is all about service to each other. Our Heavenly Father serves us each minute of every day. The same with our Savior. In my opinion His atonement is the single greatest act of service ever performed. It was not for Him that He did it, it was for us. He did it only because of His love for us and our Heavenly Father. Then after completing His mission, He gave all credit or glory to His Father.

I have stated before that it might be a good thing to not only read and follow the words of our Savior, but it might be good to also look at what He did and do likewise. Everything He did during His earthly mission, also before and after it, was about serving others. Then He would give gratitude to God for the opportunity to serve. It is my testimony that as we serve others, we become closer to God and more like Him. If we are selfish in our service of others, I believe that attitude will bring us closer to darkness. It is my hope that all of us will do everything in the name of Christ, as we have been commanded and that we will be about “(His) Father’s business.”

Chapter Nine

*“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet
before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:*

*And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children,
and the heart of the children to their fathers,
lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”*

There are several scriptures that are similar to the one above. Many people probably don't know what it is talking about. In my church it is said to refer to genealogy and doing the saving ordinances for those that have passed on. I would agree with that. But I also wonder if it might have other meanings on a deeper level? We have had so many experiences that indicate this might be a possibility.

Brother Jack Marshall gave a talk at BYU Education Week 2000 titled *“The Savior’s Teachings On Hope.”* Some of what he said proves to be very interesting in light of saving ourselves and our ancestors.

He mentioned that D&C 46 talks about gifts. Each person gets different gifts so we all may profit and benefit. We've all had people come into our lives and had events happen that seem to be a coincidence. Br. Marshall said that he feels it's not coincidental, it's *divine positioning*, and we've all had the experience of someone coming into our life with the understanding, knowledge or training we've needed at that moment. Perhaps they're struggling with something and we walked the path years before and can give them some good inspired instruction and direction or empathy.

Perhaps we need some knowledge or guidance and people just come into our life and they have the information, love, attention, and caring that we need. Heavenly Father brings about what we need many times by divine positioning.

Most of the time we're not even cognizant of it. Sometimes it's dramatic, but most of the time it's not.

Br. Marshall talked about Dr. Crawford Broderick from California. He was a prolific, inspired writer, who taught at the University of Southern California where he was a psychologist and counseled couples. In Dr. Broderick's book, *"My Parents Married on a Dare,"* he tells the story of a woman who had come from a home where she was physically, sexually, and psychologically abused as a child. When she was a teenager she left home and met a man. He was very loving, caring, and sensitive. She joined his church, they married and had children. Many people might feel if you have nothing material but you have a loving spouse and wonderful children, you'd be rich and have everything. She had a wonderful life compared to what she grew up with, but she had intermittent bouts of serious depression.

Dr. Broderick said she had very negative feelings about herself because she had been taught by the people most important in her early life that she was a rotten person. It was hard for her to overcome her self-image. One day she said to him, "You're a stake president. You explain the justice of it. When I go to church I can hardly stand it. When I see little girls being hugged and kissed and taken to church and appropriately loved by their parents, I just have to get up and leave. I say, Heavenly Father, what was so terrible about me at that age that I didn't get any of that? What did that little girl do in the pre-mortal existence that I didn't do? She's so loved, so safe, she gets priesthood blessings when she's sick, her mother loves her, supports and teaches her. What did I do? Can you tell me God is just if he sends that little girl to that family and me to my family? It's a good thing I had only boys because I don't think I could have raised girls and have their father love them because I'm so envious. Am I suppose to learn some lesson through this horrible ordeal?"

Did God know that this would happen to this little girl? In 2 Nephi 9:20 it states: *"Oh how great the Holiness of our God! For He knoweth all things, and there is not anything save*

he knows it.” Did God know this would happen to this woman? I am sure He did as the above scripture states.

Br. Marshall goes on to say that this woman asks Dr. Broderick for a blessing. As he laid his hands upon her head he says, “the Lord *inspired* him to tell her that she was a valiant, Christ-like spirit that volunteered to come to earth to suffer innocently and to purify a lineage. She had volunteered to absorb the poison of sin, anger, and violence. To take it into herself and not pass it on. To purify her lineage so that downstream from her it ran pure and clean, full of love and the Spirit of the Lord.”

Br. Marshall mentioned in his talk that he believes this applies to many of us. He said that her calling was like the Savior, to suffer innocently that others might not suffer. She voluntarily took such a task with the promise she would not be left alone and abandoned. He sent one that would take her by the hand and be her companion out into the light.

Dr. Broderick was quoted as saying he “viewed that woman in a different way, realizing he was in the presence of one of the great and noble ones and unworthy to have his hands on her head.” It didn’t matter that her home wasn’t perfectly kept or if she was overweight or even if people wondered why she doesn’t get her life back together. Maybe we ought to acknowledge the Lord’s hand in all things and understand the *divine position* that individuals may have.

Apparently this woman was to stop the curse. In Deuteronomy 5:9-10 the Lord says the curse of the parents will be handed down from generation to generation. It’s common for abusers to abuse their children down the generations and Heavenly Father divinely positions individuals to stop the curse and take it within themselves like the Savior, to suffer that others might not. Like Dr. Broderick said in his blessing to this woman, “to purify her lineage so the next generation will be free.”

Br. Marshall explained that this woman had not done something wrong in the pre-existence. John 9:1-2 talks of the old days when people believed being handicapped was due to

sin. They asked the Savior, “Who sinned, the blind man or his parents?” The Savior said, “Neither.” This man was made handicapped so the works of God may be made manifest in him. The Savior was saying He divinely positioned this man to testify of Him. What does He do with the man? He heals him. He uses him as an instrument to testify of Him.

In Jeremiah 1:4-5 it says before we were formed in the belly He knew us. If He knew us before we were born, there isn't anything he doesn't know about us and he'll use us as He sees fit. We'll be positioned where we'll do the most good. I'm sure this applies to every one of us. I'm sure all of us were willing to be instruments in the Lord's hand. In Alma 17:11 He said, *“be patient in long-suffering and afflictions, that ye may show forth good examples unto them in me, and I will make an instrument of thee in my hands unto the salvation of many souls.”* In other words he will divinely position us to bring about His mission statement.

Near the end of Br. Marshall's talk he quoted Spencer W. Kimball as saying that “God does nothing by chance, but all is by design as a loving Father. The manner of our coming into the world, our parents, the time and other circumstances of our birth and conditions are according to eternal purposes, direction, and appointment of divine providence.”

He then quoted Henry D. Moyle as saying, “We had our agency in our pre-mortal existence. Whatever we are today is likely the result of that which we willed to be here for. We unquestionably knew before we elected to come to this earth the conditions under which we would exist.” Br. Marshall then said he felt we are as we should be unless our course has been altered by disobedience to the laws of God.

Joseph F. Smith said he believes the Savior knew beforehand everything that He would have to pass through in the mortal tabernacle. And if Christ knew beforehand, so did we. But in coming here we forgot all, that our agency might be free to choose good or evil

Jack Marshall's talk is a very good one to listen to over and over. The whole thing is full of wonderful wisdom. For

me the most thrilling part is the concept that we possibly agreed to come here under our specific circumstances. Could it possibly be that many of us, as President Broderick said in his inspired blessing, “volunteered to come to earth and suffer to purify a lineage? She volunteered to absorb the poison of sin, anger, anguish, violence and to take it into herself and not pass it on, to purify her lineage so that downstream from her it ran pure and clean, full of love and the Spirit of the Lord.”

For me, this was another way of looking at turning the hearts of the fathers to the children and of the children to the fathers. Being willing to absorb or stop something as pernicious as abuse was a wonderful concept, but the concept was soon to expand even further.

As we would do our book review meetings, we met many wonderful people. Some of the people we met had the gift of healing, something my church states is part of our beliefs, “We believe in the gift of healing.” Some people would ask if they could work on Denise to perhaps help the damage caused by her stroke. Denise always seemed accommodating and let them work on her. I had always wanted them to work on me, I wanted to experience what they were about or what they could do. There seems to be many different types of disciplines. The medical profession would call them alternative therapies. I didn’t really care, the doctors had given up on my daughter. They had told me, “Unfortunately Mr. Mendenhall, our brain can’t grow new cells, and since your daughter has had so much of her left brain destroyed, she will most likely never function normally again.” (If they only knew how right they were, but not exactly how they pictured it). The next week Newsweek Magazine came out with an article about some scientific breakthroughs about how our brain can grow new cells. Since “regular” medicine didn’t offer any hope, I didn’t mind if other disciplines worked on her, and she seemed to enjoy it.

One woman seemed really gifted. She had some of the same abilities as Denise. I was able to let her work on me one

morning for about ninety minutes. It was an experience that I had never dreamed of.

I lay on her table and she asked me what I wanted to work on. "I don't know," I said, "I don't have any agendas. There is nothing in particular bothering me. I just wanted to have this experience and see what you do."

"Well, Doug," she said, "we need to have somewhere to go. What do you want to work on?"

"I don't know," I answered.

"Do you have any questions or places to go, or things you want answered?" she asked.

"Well," I responded, "there is one thing, but I doubt you could help me with it. I would like to see or know who my father's real birth mom is. He was given up for adoption after birth. There are no records up at the LDS hospital about it. They claim they were destroyed in a fire."

The next thing I knew I was in a deep state of relaxation, but it was not hypnosis. I was talking to her, describing what I was "seeing" for lack of a better word. She had me state the date of my father's birth and location. The next thing I knew "I was there."

I don't know how to describe it, but in my mind I was in the LDS hospital in 1923. The room was pretty sparse. I had someone standing to my left, a man. I didn't know who it was and I didn't care, because on the bed was a young woman of about fifteen or sixteen years of age. She was a Native American. She was scared to death. She was pretty.

"What do you see?" she asked me.

"I am at the LDS hospital, in a room, a very bare room. There is a young fifteen year old or so in a bed waiting to give birth," I answered. "She is a Native American."

"Can you feel what she is going through," she asked, "and if you can, describe her emotions to me."

I wasn't quite ready for all of this. It was really stretching my basket of experiences and I wanted to leave. But I was so fascinated by it that I decided to continue. At that

point I had been through many different experiences, so this wasn't completely foreign to me.

"She is very scared," I said, "I can feel her guilt, sadness, embarrassment, and remorse. But mostly I feel her sadness about giving up her baby, my father."

"Anything else," she asked.

"Yes, I can tell that the father is a 16 year-old white boy." How I knew this I have no idea and wondered if I had just made it up, but I felt it to be true.

"OK," she said, "let's leave the hospital and see where she wants to take you."

"Alright," I replied. "We are now in a huge field. She seems to be way off, at the other end of it. She is so far away from me, she seems really small. Behind her is a fence."

"OK," she said again, "let's bring in Christ and have Him talk to her and see if she will let Him have her guilt, remorse and sadness. Ask for Christ to come."

I did. To my amazement, He walked in from the right of the field straight to her. He stood there and talked to her. Then I asked for my father to come in. I was hoping they would "heal" anything between them. He came. The three of them stayed at the end of the field for a long time. Then my father and Christ left. I felt her pain was gone, she had given it all to Christ. Anything between my father and her was also gone. There was only love between them. It was so cool to see and feel, I didn't want to leave.

Then to my amazement, two light beings came in from the right, missionary companions. I knew they had been sent by Christ. My father's birth mother, my genetic grandmother, then opened a gate behind her. The two beings went through the gate. It was then that I saw all of my grandmother's ancestors behind the gate. For some reason she had been preventing them from hearing of Christ. Then more light beings came in, two by two, until there were many of her ancestors being taught about Christ. I noticed that some of them stayed away from the light beings. They still had their agency to listen or not.

I had been relating all of this to the therapist as it happened. She would ask a few questions, but mainly let whatever happened happen. Then she said a most curious thing:

“Doug, after I do a session like this, genealogy usually takes off for that group.”

I was floored. “You mean,” I asked, “this happens a lot?”

“Well, similar things,” she said. “We call it generational healing. My experience has been that as you heal yourself, you heal your ancestors. As you heal your DNA, theirs is healed also. Or in your case, you helped your ancestors heal by bringing Christ to them. After sessions like this, genealogy just takes off. In your case, because you don’t know who they are, you may not be aware of it. But trust me, these people will now motivate others to do their genealogy.”

Driving home I wondered in amazement how my heart had been turned to a “birth grandmother” that I had often wondered about. By turning my heart to her, was it really possible that it had now opened the door to her hearing about Christ? Could it really be possible that by bringing Christ to her and her letting His atonement become effective in her life, she was healed and thereby allowing her ancestors the same chance, her heart then being turned to them? I had always thought that the “missionaries” in the spirit world would take care of the work there. The Bible states that Christ went to preach to the spirits in prison after His death. I wondered if it could be possibly go deeper. Was there even more to it? Jack Marshall had quoted the stake president about how that woman had come down here to stop abuse, thereby making her lineage pure. What a possibility this was to think about!

It seems he was also saying that by repenting or not making the same mistake, it would purify our lineage or even our DNA. The Lord does state in the Bible and the Doctrine and Covenants that the sins are carried down generationally. Would he not then make it possible to heal it back the other way if we repent? Could that possibly be in our DNA?

There is an amazing person, Dr. Candice Pert, that was one of the scientists that discovered the endorphins in our brain. She recently lectured at the BYU. She made the comment that the possibility exists that in the next ten years science may be able to take a sampling of our DNA and put it in a machine and then be able to tell of our whole life. Everything we have done or thought will be open to them. It seems that all of our memories may be recorded in our DNA. If our memories are, then so are our ancestors memories, along with all of their hang-ups, sins, etc. I guess the Lord was right, they are carried down “to the third and fourth generation.”

I had the chance to witness this first hand with this same therapist. She worked on an acquaintance of mine while I was present. We’ll call him Sam. Sam struggled with depression issues for years, as has his family. He was nervous about seeing the therapist.

She had Sam relaxed on the table in a short time. She had him “look inside” and see his DNA. I was fascinated. He said he could see it.

“Take a look up and down it to see if it looks dirty or is clean,” she told him.

“It kind of looks gray in spots,” he answered back.

“Now, I want you to unravel it, so it looks like a ladder,” she said. “Then start at the top and look down the whole thing and tell me what you see.”

“OK,” Sam said, “I have unraveled it. It looks like a ladder now. I’m starting at the top and going down.”

This was so fascinating to me. Apparently she does this all the time when she feels generational healing might be needed and it’s encoded in the DNA.

“Wow,” Sam almost yelled, “there’s a huge black ball right there. The sides of the ladder have to go around it.”

“I want you to look into it and tell me what you see,” she asked.

“It’s all dark,” he said, “it’s depression, and all kinds of negative emotions!”

“Now let’s go back,” she said again, “back in your generations to see where it started. Is it with your dad or mom?”

“It’s with my dad,” he responded.

“Good,” she said, “keep following it back until you find where it started.”

Sam went back eight generations. He said he found himself in Scandinavia. He didn’t know what the year was, but it was back well over one hundred years.

“I can see a woman,” he said, “She is outside her house or cottage. She had a young son with her, he must be around two years old. They are eating outside, having a picnic. She isn’t paying attention to her little boy. He has wandered off and has fallen in the canal by their house.”

Sam went on to tell us that he saw the boy drown. He then felt the guilt and remorse of this young mother. She felt horrible, and Sam felt all of it. Then to make matters worse, her husband blamed her and really let her have it. That made the guilt she was feeling even greater. She had a death wish, blaming herself for her son drowning.

Then Sam described how he “saw” this guilt imprinted on the young mother’s DNA, and how he saw all of his ancestors between her and him add to it with their depression, guilt and negative emotions.

The therapist then proceeded to tell Sam to bring Christ into the picture, and to ask Him to come. Then she said to take Christ to the young woman, where she is right now.

“All of my relatives seem to be in a large area,” he said, “Christ is there now. He is taking their pain, guilt and negative emotions away. Some of them are staying away, I guess they aren’t ready to be healed.”

It was so fascinating listening to him describe all of this. The therapist then had him look at his DNA and see if the “black ball” was smaller or gone. He did and indicated that it was pretty much gone. She then ended the session.

Needless to say it was quite an experience for Sam, his wife and myself. I had never experienced anything quite like it.

The therapist said that many people have come to her just for generational healing.

I have not met one person that does alternative therapy (I don't like that term) who had not told me that most issues they help people with end up having to do with generational healing. And I have met dozens during our book review meetings. In fact, I make it a point to ask them about generational healing when I find out they do other therapies.

Is it possible that in addition to genealogy and ordinances for those that have passed on, we can also be "saviors on Mt. Zion" by repenting and healing ourselves, thereby healing our ancestors in the process?

Through our experiences from talking to many people about this possibility of generational healing, we have found that the ones that seem to have the most success are those that bring Christ into it, make Him the focus of all healing that goes on, and allow their client or patient to give their pain, grief, sorrows, and negative garbage to Him. Jesus Christ has paid the price for ALL of us and had descended below all things. He is the only one that can truly heal any of us.

A friend shared an old saying with me. I wish I knew where it came from. It goes: ***"People tend to oppose that which they do not understand, and the greater their ignorance the greater the opposition."***

It is my hope that those who haven't heard of or thought of a possibility like generational healing won't oppose it because they haven't heard of it or don't understand. I would ask that they please study the scriptures and ask our Heavenly Father. Seek out someone that does other therapies and ask them to relate their experiences. If you don't ridicule them, they probably will be able to relate many experiences to you. Even better yet, find one that works with Christ and let them work with you and then watch your own genealogy take off!

The possibility of helping our ancestors by helping ourselves is an incredible concept! To think that we may be able to help our families by stopping, changing or repenting is such a wonderful possibility. From our experiences I can

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understand why it is so important that our hearts be turned to our ancestors and their hearts be turned to us. What a wonderful way our Heavenly Father has provided for us to help them, not just by doing saving ordinances and genealogy, but by bringing in Christ to heal us, thereby healing them. He truly is the Master Healer in many ways. I am grateful His atonement can be effective in my life, the lives of my ancestors, and all of God's children to help all of us heal.

Chapter Ten

*“We have learned by sad experience
that it is the nature and disposition of almost all men,
as soon as they get a little authority,
as they suppose,
they will immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion*

Hence many are called, but few are chosen.”

(D & C 121:39-40)

It seems to me that the “war in heaven” was fought over agency. Christ presented His plan for us to come here to earth, receive bodies and experience what we couldn’t with a Father in Heaven who is perfect. Since we would have our agency to decide if we wanted to obey God or not, a Savior was provided to give us a way of repenting for our misdeeds or atoning for our sins. But we would have the right to choose. Christ would also give all glory to the Father.

Then Lucifer presented his plan. He would have us all come here to earth, and he would take our agency away, thereby making us obey all the commandments. We would be forced to obey. Then he, Lucifer, would take all the glory for himself.

Fortunately two-thirds of us chose Christ and His plan. One third of Heavenly Father’s children left with Lucifer. They were placed here on earth to provide our opposition. For with opposition I have found, we grow the strongest. Plus, I believe “it is required in all things.”

As a result of our experiences I have found that man does have a tendency to walk all over each other’s agency. When we do, are we under the influence of the evil one and could this be to our own detriment? The Lord seems to indicate it is. After all wasn’t agency what we “fought” over in heaven? Could it then be one of the foundational principles of heaven? I believe it is. Otherwise why would the Lord deem it so important and tell us to be careful of taking away someone

else's agency, impinging on it, or even giving another individual part or all of our own agency.

After we started having our "experiences" with Denise in December of 1999, I had an encounter with someone who felt it was his duty to take away my agency.

A family that I had considered to be close friends stopped by our home around Christmas time. They had moved some five hours away and we were very happy to see them. I had considered the father, Jeff, to be one of my best friends and had always confided in him. Well we told them what we had experienced with Denise up to that point. My mind was always reeling, trying to figure out what was going on each day with each new experience we were having. It felt good to confide in Jeff. I guess I was seeking understanding.

The next Sunday in church my bishop came up and told me that Jeff had called and had tried to get me excommunicated. He told me that he told Jeff to back off, that he was aware of all that was happening. I believed that would be the last I heard of Jeff. Was I ever wrong.

In our first book, the story was told of how someone had called the Division of Family Services on me, accusing me of abusing Denise. DFS came to the house and checked on Denise. After a few minutes they wanted to know who I thought had turned us in because "obviously there is no abuse here." I thought it might have been Jeff and so indicated to DFS and also mentioned the same thought in the first book. I have found out since from several people that he personally told that he indeed did turn us in as abusers to DFS.

I don't hold any ill feelings toward Jeff for doing what he did. I have talked to him several times since. It is just amazing to sit back and see what we do to each other. How we try to justify taking away another persons agency. In my opinion, Jeff followed what the world (Satan) is telling us to do, turn each other in. What is interesting is seeing how we love to do this, even based upon false conclusions we have come to.

Five months after this incident with Jeff, another person showed up at our home and accused us of abusing Denise. He

said he had talked to Jeff that week and because of his “love and concern for Denise” he was there to “test her urine” to determine if we were abusing her. I wondered to myself when and where he had received his medical degree.

He stayed at our home for over one hour accusing us of many things that I feel Jeff had put into his mind or false conclusions that he had jumped to on his own. It didn't seem to matter to him that Jeff seemed to have a personal vendetta against us or that we hadn't seen Jeff in five months and he would have no idea what was going on in our home. He didn't seem to care that our bishop had told Jeff to mind his own business, and I felt that maybe he ought to follow the same advice. It also didn't matter when Dianne and I asked him if he would believe a “friend” over family. We were shocked when he said he would. We asked if he wanted to hear our story of what was going on and he declined. We were flabbergasted to say the least. I finally asked him to leave.

Then we found out that this person had told another individual what Jeff had said about us, and then he also turned us in to DFS. I have talked to him and he said he “did it out of love and concern for Denise.”

Now I am not telling these stories because of any pent up feelings or wanting to “get back” at these people. In fact both of these people have apologized to us and we have accepted their apologies. They really are caring individuals.

I just happen to believe these stories are a good example of how we step on each other's agency and then sometimes justify it because of our “love and concern” or some other reason we make up in our own mind. Also, how many of us, me included, tend to jump to conclusions about things we know nothing about. Some days my legs get real tired (from all the jumping I do). I also have stepped on many people's agency and am trying to become cognizant of it and not do it anymore. We related in the first book how I did try to abuse Denise's agency by getting her to use her gifts for my benefit. I am as guilty as anyone.

I feel many of us believe our intent is pure and our hearts are pure, when in reality we are actually stepping on or abusing another person's agency. I felt at the time the Lord had given Denise these incredible gifts to bless our family, and how much more could these gifts bless us than to deliver us out of the heavy load debt that we were under. I felt my "intent" was pure and acted accordingly, as I am sure all of these individuals did.

The Lord has stated:

“. . . when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or authority of that man.”

Then He goes on to explain how we can exercise our "authority" or even "influence" in a righteous or godly manner:

*“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 the 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 toward him whom thou hast reprov'd, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;

That he may know that thy faithfulness is stronger than the cords of death.” (D&C 121:41-44)

I believe the words of the Lord apply to anyone. If we exercise control, dominion or compulsion on our families agency or anyone else's for that matter, we are not doing as the Lord would have us do. Domination, control or compulsion are part of Lucifer's plan to MAKE us obey him. When we do these things to others, we no longer act under God's authority, for we then have chosen to follow Lucifer's plan.

How much heartache, guilt, angst (dread or anguish), anger, etc. could have been avoided if my wife and I had been approached according to the Lord's way of doing things? A lot.

It looks to me that the world in general is intent on keeping Lucifer's plan going. If we truly want to follow our Savior and His plan, it might do us all good to study the Lord's way of doing things. Maybe we ought to be more cognizant of not infringing on the agency of others, in our family or not. If we feel that maybe they are doing "wrong" in our eyes, maybe we ought to approach them the way the Lord has prescribed.

We have been taught in my church that Christ presented Heavenly Father's plan. So it seems that this foundation of agency was determined anciently. If we didn't have agency, there could be no progression.

When a man does good and serves his God and fellow man and in his agency he places **God** first, it fills his soul with light. But Satan or darkness would command that he does evil or seeks his own gratification by hurting the innocent by inflicting **his** will upon them. By doing so he serves darkness or Satan.

As we seek to inflict our will on others, we are taking away their agency. It seems to me that the war in heaven is still going on, we just have a different battle front. If it was agency that Satan sought in the pre-earth life and something he still seeks, does it give him power if we abuse another's agency? I believe it does. After witnessing firsthand how negative emotions or influences allow darkness into us, I believe that unrighteous dominion allows some very negative forces or demons into the individual.

The Lord has stated that "*the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved*" when we exercise unrighteous dominion. If the heavens have withdrawn themselves from our lives then who might take up that place? I believe if we are doing the bidding of darkness, that is what will take up residency in our life. I also believe that if we place the will of God first in our lives, then it will be His spirit that takes

up residency in our lives and darkness will not be able to enter in.

I believe that God our Father and all that is truth will never take away our agency. I also believe that Lucifer and his minions of evil will take every chance to abuse or feed upon our agency, for I know our disobedience gives them power.

While traveling about doing our book review meetings and having the opportunity to meet people, I have observed that there is another way we may be abusing agency. It is something that had not really occurred to me until I found myself doing it and standing accused of God once again. Many people have commented after reading our first book that I seem to learn my lessons slowly. I wish I was perfect, but since I am far from it I seem to repeat some mistakes. Thank goodness for repentance, the atonement, our Savior and the mercy of God.

After dealing with Denise and her “gifts” for over thirty months, I knew I was to ask my Heavenly Father for answers to all my questions. Denise very seldom will provide answers, at least it seems to be that way.

I met a friend that has similar gifts as Denise. I had not asked her to use her gifts for my benefit. Then one day I decided to ask for some help and she gave it, because the Lord allowed her to do so. Later Denise, Dianne and I met her for several hours once and I started asking questions that I knew I should ask of God. She helped, and then I was given some papers by her that she said the Lord wanted me to have. I could hardly wait to read them.

In the car I was talking about how wonderful the experience had been when suddenly Denise said, “Dad, you know that by asking her those questions you denied Christ.”

“I don’t think so, Denise,” I said.

“Dad,” she responded, “you know that you are supposed to ask God for those answers. By not doing that and asking her, you denied Him.”

I had this horrible sinking feeling that she was right. *I had given my agency to her by asking about things that I knew I*

should be asking God about. Then I read part of what was in the papers. She had been inspired to write:

“If a man goes unto another seeking that he should receive inspiration, but not as a witness, he is placing his agency in the hands of another. It is therefore a form of priestcraft and he has opened that door unto evil. It is therefore bargaining with evil and is therefore necromancy and the mans agency feeds evil. But if a man looks to God to redeem him and seeks the Spirit and light he then has a sure foundation and his agency remains.”

I also knew that by placing my trust in her and her gifts, I was in essence denying Christ. For it is to Him that we should look, not another. I felt as if I had been given a gift of being able to get answers to my own prayers and then buried that gift (talent) in the ground and sought out another, because the way was so much easier, He would take away that which He has given me. Has He not declared that we are to increase the gifts (talents) that He has given us?

If we look at the parable of the talents, but with a slightly different twist, it might provide some insight. For our discussions sake let’s suppose that the Master gave each of the three men five talents. He shared with each of them what their talents or gifts were and told them how to increase the talents each had been given.

The first man takes his talents, goes out and does what the Master told him thereby magnifying and increasing what he was given. He does this through service to others and following the example of his Master, as had been explained to him by his Master. The Master will entrust that servant with more of what He has or more “talents” or gifts, even until he is blessed with all that the Master has, because the Master knows that this man will do His will.

The second man takes five talents and because of fear he hides his talents. He does not seek to serve others. He is afraid that others might ridicule him because of his talents or gifts. He is therefore *cursed* for his failure to increase his talents or gifts. They are then taken away from him. If he refuses to use them

to benefit others, thereby benefiting himself and the Master, why allow him to keep them? The Master will take them and give them to he who uses them in the service of Him and others.

The third man takes his talents and gifts and consumes them upon his lusts. He uses them for his own benefit and glory. He uses them to abuse others and take away that which they were given, even their own agency. He is selfish and thinks only of himself. He goes to others seeking wisdom and knowledge of how he is to increase what he has been given, instead of seeking and obeying the Master. He is the most cursed of all because of his selfishness. All three were given the same choice and opportunity. All of them knew the way to increase their talents or gifts, thereby increasing their glory and the glory of their Master.

These last two men set aside the counsel and wisdom of the Master, placing their own wisdom, even the arm of flesh, first. They chose to place their trust in another. The Lord has declared that this path will always fail. We are to put our trust in Him and not the arm of flesh.

God has given all of us talents and gifts. We all have the ability to know Him and to learn of His mysteries. Yet I believe that when we approach others asking what God wants us to know, or asking what we should be doing in the future, or if what we did in the past was alright, we are giving some of our agency to that person. We are also burying the gifts or the Spirit the Lord has given us. This will let darkness in.

I see so many come to Denise and others with talents or gifts and do the same thing. I truly have empathy for them. But now I understand that when they come asking and *if it is not the will of the Lord* that they do ask, it will be counted evil to them, because in essence they are giving their agency to another person. I also know that it opens the door to the adversary, allowing him access to us.

If we go to another person and ask for them to tell about the future or what we should do, have we not just given our agency over to them? We have given our life over to them. I've heard some people ask Denise some pretty amazing things.

Why would we ever put our trust in someone other than the Lord? I am guilty of doing it. When I realized she didn't have a veil, I put much trust in her. I felt that she could tell me everything the Lord wanted me to know.

How about when we call on psychics, tarot card readers, palm readers or anyone that displays gifts. Aren't we then making Denise or those other individuals our God by offering them our agency? If we fought over the right to keep our agency and not be told what to do by Lucifer, why are we so quick to run to someone with gifts, willing to give our agency to them by having them tell us what to do or what our future holds? Why aren't we willing to expend the effort and time to seek God's will for our lives? When or if our world crashes in around us and that psychic isn't there, who will we turn to if we don't have a personal relationship with Christ? Richard G. Scott, an apostle in my church, said that ***"nobody in this wicked society will survive without faith in Christ and the power that comes from coming unto Christ."***

Are we empowered by letting someone other than the Spirit give us guidance? Does giving our agency to another individual give us power? The Salt Lake Tribune did a story on August 4, 2002 about psychics. One woman in Salt Lake City has "around 8,000 clients." I am sure this woman is very genuine, extremely nice, and has incredible gifts, and "she charges \$100 per hour for her services." The interesting thing is the Lord charges no money. His only requirement is a broken heart and a contrite spirit. When the "chips are down," He will be there. We can get to know Him by bending our knees.

I do know that it is good to seek for a second witness, if a person does so putting Gods will first and not to satisfy their own needs. I have also been a witness many times when the Lord has allowed Denise to use her gifts to help people, truly help people. But most of the time what she does is second witnessing. She does get immense joy out of helping others, using her gifts to do so, but only when Christ allows it. But she is also aware when someone is giving her their agency and knows that it does not please the Lord. That is why she told me

that I was denying Christ by asking my friend for things I should have gone to the Lord for. Right now if Denise has a “mission,” it is to be a witness that Christ is real, that we all can have a personal relationship with Him, and that He truly will “come in and sup with us.”

There is a story of a woman that went outside to write in her journal things she had learned from the Lord and to visit with Him. She sat there pondering and several yellow jackets came and started bothering her. She stood up and walked around her house to get away from them. Six of them followed her, harassing her all the while. She had done nothing to irritate or disturb them, they just went after her of their own volition.

“Lord,” she said, “what should I do about these yellow jackets?”

“Get out the bug spray,” He said, “and kill them. They were sent by the adversary to prevent you from writing.”

The woman got out the bug spray and then asked, “Do you really want me to kill them?”

“Yes,” the Lord said. “These yellow jackets are rebellious. Their natural defense, to sting, should only be used in a defensive posture. Yet these *choose* to be aggressive and ornery, without love or integrity, and they are therefore cursed. Just as I cursed the fig tree that gave no fruit. It too used its agency and choose not to bear fruit. Something can’t be cursed if it can’t make a choice.”

The Lord gives our agency unto us. We can choose to use our agency to do His will, thereby benefiting all and allowing the Lord to bless us with even all that He has, or we can choose to give it away to another or choose to take another person’s agency away, thereby allowing the Lord to withdraw His spirit and curse us. The individual that uses their agency and gives to others receives joy. The joy of the selfish, non-serving individual is limited and does not increase. Their progression ends. If we seek to abuse another’s agency or if we give our agency to another willingly, I believe we have also ended our progression.

It would be my hope that all of us would strive to be the “chosen” of the Lord. If we feel it necessary to exercise control, dominion or compulsion over the souls of others, we will realize that those desires do not come from the Lord. I also believe that these desires to give our agency away to others doesn’t come from the Lord. I pray that each of us will take a look inside and find the Savior dwelling there in our hearts. Hopefully then we will use long-suffering, persuasion, gentleness, meekness, kindness, and love unfeigned when dealing with others. By doing so we will become more like Christ and our Heavenly Father.

Chapter Eleven

*“Behold, verily I say into you,
that there are many spirits which are false spirits,
which have gone forth in the world.*

*And also Satan hath sought to deceive you,
that he might overthrow you.”*

(D&C 50:2-3)

Of all the things I had Denise tell me when she came home from the hospital, one of the hardest to understand was when she simply said: “Dad, Christ is over here all the time,” pointing to her right, “and Satan is always over there,” pointing to her left. This went on for the first month or so, and then she never said any more about it. We seemed to focus on Christ and forget about the adversary, though he was always intruding in our lives, as he does everyone’s, trying to disrupt and destroy. I soon learned that the Lord wanted us to understand Satan and his power; not really something I wanted to experience. A lot of what I was to learn really would stretch all my preconceived concepts.

One morning Denise was sitting in her bedroom, playing on the floor. I walked in and squatted down to talk to her. She kept looking over my right shoulder at someone or something. “Who is there, Denise?” She didn’t answer. So I asked if it was Christ. She shook her head no. “Well, is it Satan?” I asked somewhat flippantly, not really believing “he” would be there. She nodded her head yes. I immediately went into a state of “fear” and had a sharp pain hit me in the middle of my back.

“Dad,” Denise calmly said, “he’s stabbing you with a sharp pole like thing. Get out of fear, Dad. You need to get out of fear.”

I learned two important possibilities:

One: Fear or negative emotions seem to allow Satan or his devils access to us. The emotions can either be passive or aggressive.

Passive emotions could be things like grief, guilt, loneliness, and depression. These emotions come when we feel like we are helpless, victims of things or events, things have overcome us, many times to a point of despair. *They also come when we enjoy our sorrows, afflictions and discouragements. When our hearts are set upon our problems or when we enjoy the attention we receive from our illness or being sick, we feed the darkness.*

Aggressive emotions could be judgment, anger, hate, arguing, contention, gossip, selfishness, manipulation, hungering to criticize, being a tattler and feelings of resentment.

Two: Satan can inflict pain on me, something I never consciously realized. This experience seemed to start our “instruction” about Satan and how he works. So along with learning of Christ, it seemed we were to receive instruction about the “opposition.”

While learning about judgement and why we should not do it (please refer to Chapter Seven in our book, *“My Peace I Give Unto You”*), I was taught an incredible lesson.

I had a little stabbing pain just above my knee; it would come and go. It had plagued me for years. I really had no idea why it was there. Every once in a while, it would be there for a few moments and other times for days.

After her experience with Christ, my daughter Denise had some rather unusual gifts, one being able to see my body and let me know if something was “different” in a particular spot. I had asked her very few times about certain things, however I knew I was not to abuse her gifts in any way. I was also becoming so accustomed to her telling me to ask Christ that I “knew better” than to ask. But the pain in my thigh had bothered me for quite some time, so I approached her about it. “Denise, I have a pain right here above my knee. I’ve had it off and on for years. Do I have a medical problem there?” I asked.

She looked where I was pointing and said as a matter of fact, “No, you have a little devil there. Every time you judge, he stabs you.”

At first I laughed out loud and said, “Yeah, right, you really want me to believe that?”

“Well, Dad, all you need to do is judge (condemn) and you’ll see, or rather *feel!*” She giggled.

I judged, it hurt!

I was shocked. But I soon discovered, as a result of my keen sense of pain, she was right. When I “judged” someone or something, I had a sharp stabbing pain. I learned to “cast out” the “little devil” in the name of Christ and the pain would go away. From that point on, the pain became a barometer of my judging (condemning). Needless to say, my leg hurt a lot. But as often as I judged, I cast it out. I soon found out my judging of others became less frequent, so I actually enjoyed my personal “judgement barometer.” It taught me how often I did judge others and helped me learn not to.

During our book review meetings we would mention these stories when the Spirit told us to. As a result, people would come up afterward and tell us their dad, mom, son, grandchild or whomever was “possessed.”

I really had no answer for them, but it started me searching for a greater understanding of Satan and how he works. I prayed many times to know what to tell these people or how they could be helped.

It seemed to me that Jesus went about his mortal ministry casting out devils and healing. The “casting out” seemed so pervasive that I wondered if everyone “back then” was plagued by them. It was not something I had heard much about in our “enlightened” times. I read where He would cast them out of people and they would be healed. He did this many times.

I decided one day I wanted to see what “depression” would do to me, if it was caused by allowing “devils” in. one morning before Church I was in my room and my daughter

Debi came in. We were talking and joking around. After I teased her about something, she made a comment that I “wasn’t very cute.”

In that moment I took that comment and put it inside my heart. I decided that I wasn’t very cute, or good, or anything nice. Determination took over, as I decided to see how depressed I could get over “dwelling” on one comment that I perceived and internalized as negative (which really wasn’t, we were just goofing around).

Soon I found myself sitting on the edge of the bed not wanting anyone around me. Several of my children came into the room and took one look at me, then left quickly. Church was not an option that day, I didn’t care if I ever went back. Dianne told me that I should get ready as she headed off to the shower. I did not move the whole time she was in the bathroom. Finally, about forty minutes before church started, I stirred and got off the bed. A song played on the radio, something about “letting it go.” I felt a tiny bit better.

I went in and got my electric razor and started shaving. I was almost done when the charge gave out and it went dead. I took a look at it and just about put it through the wall with my fist. The “thought” had come in my mind to shove it and my fist right through the wall. I stopped myself, realizing *that this wasn’t like me*, I don’t have those kind of feelings or thoughts. I went in and dry shaved the rest of my beard.

Denise and I usually walk to Church about thirty minutes early. So I hurried and finished getting ready. We took off for Church. I didn’t say much. Obviously she could see I was full of “devils,” but didn’t say a thing about it. She very seldom does. That still amazes me to this day about her, she will do the will of the Lord, no matter what it is. Apparently it was for me to experience devils this day.

We arrived at Church and sat in our favorite spot in the middle of the chapel. Sitting there, my mind seemed confused. I remembered feeling really depressed, wanting to throw the razor through the wall, not wanting to go to Church or do anything for that matter, and the kids not wanting to be around

me. I then turned to Denise and asked, “Do I have devils in me?”

“Not as many as you had at home,” she said. “After you listened to that song, some of them left.”

I sat there not remembering how to get rid of them. “Dad,” Denise whispered, “you can cast them out if you want to.” Oh yeah, I forgot! I was stunned how they could make my mind so confused or cloudy. So I acknowledged them firmly, with no hostility or anger, and cast them out in the name of Christ. The feeling was so incredible. *I was back*. My mind was clear, and I felt great. I had no idea that “devils” could fuel depression. Though I knew they would try to influence me to do things I normally would not do.

Turning to Denise, I asked her if there had been many of them in me. “Oh, yes Dad,” she responded.

“How come you don’t tell me these things when I let them in?” I asked.

“Well, Dad, I’m not supposed to. It is your experience,” was her reply.

I sat there truly stunned. She really will do His will. At that moment it was to let me, her dad, have this experience. I also realized at that moment that dwelling on our “problems” or pitying ourselves can let in darkness or evil. With this new understanding I sat and thoroughly enjoyed the Sunday services.

We were invited to go out of state to do several book review meetings. We had not left our state very often to do them, so I was very excited. We would be gone about nine or ten days and do six meetings.

Our good friend, Merrilee, loans us her van to go on these trips. There were four of us in the van, Joe, Chris, Denise and me. We traveled some twelve hours over two days and arrived about three hours early to the first meeting. They were busy, so we went to find some late lunch – early dinner. We arrived back at the home one hour before the meeting.

It was a strange meeting, as far as they have gone for us before. As stated previously, we show up, tell our story, testify

of Christ, give out books and leave. Pretty simple. At this home it didn't seem so simple. About one third of the people the host had invited didn't show up. What was different was that the host never even came back in for the review, though some of her family did. We've experienced that several times, though the wife will usually stay and the husband goes.

As we do these book reviews, I look into the people's faces to see their reactions to our story. This night there were none. We ended it after about one hour. Was I ever glad to have it over. It was probably the "hardest" one we had ever done.

We went into the kitchen after because they had offered to feed us. The woman made Denise a sandwich. We made sandwiches and talked. At about eleven o'clock, I made the comment that I needed to get Denise to bed. But the host had never come back. Denise then told us that she would not sleep in that home and would spend the night in the van if she had to. She then walked outside and got in the van. Our friends that came with us offered to rent a hotel room. So we left.

The next morning, a friend that had been at the meeting called us. He told us that a couple that had come to the meeting late had called the woman and told her that we had put devils on them. They had left the meeting and went to a restaurant to get rid of them, they said. My friend wanted to know what I thought. "Gee , Bob," I said, "we've done over seventy of these meetings and that is a new one for me. Usually we feel Christ there. I have never been accused of putting devils on people before. Let me ask Denise some questions."

I put the phone down and asked Denise to come so I could talk to her. She asked what was going on. "Well, Sweetie," I responded, "Bob is on the phone and has some concerns about the meeting last night. I would like to ask you a couple of questions about it. Is that OK?"

"Sure, Dad, shoot," she said.

"Was there anyone in the room last night that was "dark" or had a dark aura?"

“Yes,” she answered. So I asked if she would tell me what had happened last night.

“OK, Dad, I will,” she said. “When we started the meeting there were two people there with dark auras. They both had devils on them. One was the guy next to you, the other was the woman on the couch in front of you. As the meeting went on, the lady in front of your let the light in. Her devils left her and went to the older couple that came in late. They were judging us.”

I picked up the phone and told Bob what Denise had said. I was astonished. So was Bob, I believe. He stated that he had attended over fifteen meetings that we had done and had always felt the Spirit there. He didn’t know what to think. I then asked Denise why she didn’t want to stay at that house the night before.

“I just didn’t like the feel of what was there,” was the only response she gave me.

Interesting, the possibility of having devils come in to us as we sit in judgement (condemnation) of others. Also, letting Christ (light) in seems to get rid of them. Interestingly, the host from the night before came to our meeting the next night. She came up to me afterward to thank me and said she felt great about what we were doing.

In October of 2001, Denise, Deon my oldest daughter, and myself were invited to go up north to do a meeting. This was a chance to go farther north than we ever had, so we took the opportunity and went. I must admit that I had other motives for going. The people that had invited us were quite interesting. Julie could see spirits, good and bad. She’s had this gift her whole life. It had gone away for the most part after having kids. But recently this gift had started to return. It was a double-edged sword for her. She enjoyed the gift and didn’t enjoy it. At the University, she and Tom, her husband, would be walking down the sidewalk and she would jump into his arms. It wasn’t his animal magnetism that had caused it but a “devil” or evil spirit had come at her and she jumped to get away. When they

were first married, Tom had to keep all the windows covered at night. The evil spirits would look through the windows at her.

Needless to say, I was looking forward to spending some time with these two. The first night, we went to some activities and had a great time. We returned to their home to sleep. Denise and Deon went into their room while I went in to the room prepared for me. I don't sleep well on the road, so I did my normal thing and just lay there thinking. Since I am allergic to cats I shut the door tight, so as to not let their cat into my room.

About two in the morning I was laying there facing the wall. All of a sudden, it felt like the cat jumped next to me on the bed. I wondered how that thing had gotten into the room. Then I realized that if it was the cat, it was the size of a mountain lion.

At that moment I realized it was not a cat. I KNEW who it was; it was Satan. The thought came to me to "push" with my rear end to get him off the bed, as he had to be on the edge. So I tried to push. I couldn't move, I was paralyzed. The astonishing thing was, I was not scared. I had no fear in that moment of him. I lay there wondering what I was to do. I tried to open my eyes, but could not. I had never been unable to move before. I asked Christ to please come! He did, and the Devil left.

I whirled around to the edge of the bed. I sat there for many minutes and prayed a long prayer of gratitude. I never knew that Satan had that kind of power, enough to paralyze me. But I was so incredibly grateful to Christ, that He would come and "save" me. The experience was only a few minutes long, but long enough for me to understand that Satan does have power and is very real.

The next morning I told Tom and Julie about my little experience. It didn't seem to faze them. We went to Church with them and later that night did a book review. It was a great time and we had a lot of fun with them.

After the meeting we talked past midnight. We were discussing how spiritual things seem to bring people from the

other side of the veil. We talked of Christ and many others. The room felt full of “other” wonderful beings. All of a sudden they left. Every one of them. It was so sudden I exclaimed, “Whoa, they all left.”

“Who left?” Julie asked.

“All the spirits in the room,” I answered.

Julie then closed her eyes (she sees spirits best with her eyes closed) and said, “There is someone just behind me, outside the patio door about ten feet. He is around six feet tall, he is dressed in old civil war type clothes. He has brown hair down to below his chin line. His eyes are red and he is angry, angry enough that he wants to destroy all of us.”

Tom responded, “It must be Cain.”

I knew who it was from the previous night, so I just asked Christ to come back. For about fifteen minutes we talked about why Christ had left, hoping He would come back. The room remained empty. Julie kept checking outside, the being stayed there, full of hate and anger.

Finally, Christ and the other “good” spirits all came back. I was astonished when they had left, but was I ever grateful. I told Tom and Julie, “They’re back.” Julie closed her eyes and checked outside.

“He’s gone and there are two angels on the roof in full armor,” she stated. “We will be fine tonight.”

We talked another thirty minutes and went to bed with no further incidents. I joked with Julie that I was grateful *not* to have her gift.

We had meetings where people would come up and tell us their problems with devils:

One woman told me her four year old grandson was plagued by them. She would see spiders appear on his cheek and then disappear.

Another woman told us her LDS Bishop believed her three year old son was possessed.

A doctor told us she had a patient that was plagued with devils. The patient could hear them, and they would talk through her to the doctor. I had no answers for any of them.

Denise, Rob and I were scheduled to do a book review at the doctor's home. We arrived about one hour early. A woman had come early in order to talk to us. We entered the living room where she was sitting with a friend of hers. The doctor stayed with her. She told us her story of "mental" problems, being able to hear the devils and dealing with them for years. How a lot of her family has the same problem. I asked Denise if she had any devils in her.

"No, she doesn't have any in her," was Denise's reply.

"Does she have any ON her," I asked.

"Yes," she answered, "five of them."

Now Denise and I have this little "scale" from one to ten for devils. One on the scale is the little guy that would stab me in the leg when I judged. Ten would be Satan. "Denise," I asked, "on our scale, where are these guys that are on her?"

"They are nines, they are really bad guys," she said. I asked the woman if she had received any "blessings" and she said that she had but they didn't seem to work.

"Denise, can Rob and I give her a blessing to get rid of them?" I asked. "If not, what can we do?"

"Dad," Denise replied, "SHE has to ask Christ to come, and SHE has to ask Him to take them. We can't do it for her." I remembered an incident in the history of my church that might have been similar in some respects.

Philo Dibble wrote about the experience in his journal. *"I saw Joseph Smith the Prophet when he first came to Kirtland, and was with him in the first conference held in that place, which was a small schoolhouse. When he arose in our midst he said that before the conference closed that there were those present who should see the heavens open and bear record of the coming of the Son of Man, and that the man of sin should be revealed."*

"While he talked . . . Lyman Wight stepped into the middle of the room and bore record of the coming of the Son of

Man. Then Harvey Whitlock stepped into the middle of the room and with his arms crossed, bound by the power of Satan, and his mouth was twisted unshapely.” Hyrum Smith arose and declared that there was an evil spirit in the room. Joseph said, “Don’t be too hasty,” and Hyrum sat down. Shortly Hyrum rose the second time, saying, “I know my duty and will do it,” and stepping to Harvey, commanded the evil spirits to leave him, but the spirits did not obey.”

*Joseph then approached Harvey and **asked him if he believed in God. Then we saw a change in Harvey.** He (Harvey) also bore record of the opening of the heavens and the coming of the Son of Man. Next a man by the name of Harvey Green was thrown upon his back on the floor by an unseen power. Some of the brethren wanted to administer to him by laying on of hands, but Joseph forbade it. Harvey looked to me like a man in a fit. He groaned and frothed at the mouth. Finally he **got upon his knees** (prayed?) and came out of it.”*

The woman bowed her head and offered a silent prayer, asking that Christ come and take the devils away. She prayed for several minutes. Finally she lifted her head up and Denise made the comment that the devils were gone. The woman confirmed that they were; she had felt them leave.

I talked to her doctor several weeks later and was told that the devils had left her for two days and then came back. We talked for a while about this and could not understand why they would come back if Christ had taken them away from her. This was something that we had no understanding about. I asked Denise and she told me, “Go ask Christ and He would tell me.” I should have known *that* answer was coming.

About one week later I was chatting with a man and woman from Kearns, Utah about some of our experiences. I related this story to them, wondering if they had any ideas about why the devils had come back. All at once it hit us at the same time. *She had holes (for lack of a better term) in her aura from the devils. She needed to say a prayer of gratitude to seal them up.*

I remembered her doctor had told me in an e-mail, “It seems that most of her spirits (devils) were spirits that had died, but were still earth-bound. They all said through her, that they came to her because she could hear them, they liked having a body even if they didn’t have much control over it, and one said he could enter in because *of a hole in her energy field or aura*. She has been working to close those holes on a daily basis.”

I called her doctor and told her the feelings that my friend from Kearns and I had about holes in the aura and possibly closing them with a prayer of gratitude, it was just theory. We weren’t really sure. I asked her to let us know what happened.

I have found that in the “Lord’s University” the lessons seem to come all the time. I was still wondering about holes in auras and about how they allowed devils or spirits to come in when a friend from Boise called and asked if I wanted to take a short three day vacation to St. George to play around. We don’t get to play much anymore, so I agreed and asked if Denise could go.

“The more the merrier,” he said.

We had a great time in St. George looking at petroglyphs and hiking. We stayed in a townhouse that a friend was trying to sell. I was telling Bob, my friend, that on a previous visit to the house Denise had come into my room and announced she was going to sleep on the floor in my room. I asked, “Why?”

She just said, “Because.”

We have stayed there several times since and she always wanted to sleep on the floor in my room. Finally I asked if there was a dark spirit in the home.

“Yes, Dad,” came the reply.

That night I was sitting talking to Bob. Denise had gone off to bed. The living room, dining room and kitchen were combined into one large room. Out of the corner of my eye I kept seeing something “dark” pacing back and forth in the dining area of the room. This went on for quite a while.

“Bob,” I asked, “do you see a dark spirit over there by the kitchen?”

He looked and said, “No, but it is dark over there, and I don’t mean the lights aren’t on.”

The next morning I asked Denise if the spirit was a “devil” or the spirit of someone that was “earth bound.”

“He is earthbound,” she answered.

“Is he an evil or a mean spirit?” I asked.

“Yes, he is,” she replied.

I thought about the teaching of Brigham Young:’

“There are myriads of disembodied evil spirits – those who have long ago laid down their bodies here and in the regions round about, among and around us; and they are trying to make us and our children sick, and are trying to destroy us and to tempt us to evil. They will try every possible means they are masters of to draw us aside from the path of righteousness.” (Journal of Discourses, Brigham Young, 6:73-4)

“There are millions and millions of spirits in these valleys, both good and evil. We are surrounded with more evil spirits than good ones, because more wicked than good men have died here. . .The spirits of the just and unjust are here. The spirits that were cast down out of heaven, which you know are recorded to have been one-third part, were thrust down to this earth, and have been here all the time, with Lucifer, the Son of the Morning, at their head. (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 4 P. 133-134, Brigham Young, December 4, 1856)

The next morning we took off for home. On the way we stopped off at a friend of Bobs and talked for a while. Bob’s friend showed us around his shop and later Denise came up and told me she was hungry. I hadn’t realized it was so late, and being a diabetic she should eat on schedule. Bob’s friend said that they would feed us. His mother was there and she said that she would get right on it. I ate one sandwich and Denise took a little nibble of hers and pushed it away. We then took off for Cedar City to meet some more friends and look at more petroglyphs.

About two hours later my stomach was hit with an incredible pain. I went to a mini-mart and got something to relieve it. Denise said that she was very hungry and we bought her something to eat. I told Bob that I felt we needed to head back to Salt Lake; I was feeling really sick. It felt like I had food poisoning.

The pain and diarrhea were horrendous. It lasted for three weeks. I knew it wasn't food poisoning because I had experienced that before and it is systemic. This was a horrible pain in my stomach along with bowel problems. After three weeks, I told Dianne that maybe I should go to a doctor to see what the problem was. She told me that maybe I ought to ask Christ to come and heal me first. I agreed.

Friday night I knelt in prayer and asked Christ to come. I then asked Him to heal me of whatever was plaguing me. It went away, so much so that Saturday I ate the entire day. Church Conference was on TV, and I sat and watched it and ate. Later, I went to a church meeting, came home and ate some more. I had not been able to eat much for three weeks and seemed determined to make up for it in one day. Sunday I watched the conference again on TV and ate.

It hit me again Sunday afternoon. The pain had come back with a vengeance. We went to a book review meeting that evening, even though I was really sick. By ten that night I was in the kitchen deciding if I was going to live or not when Denise popped in.

"Hey, Denise," I said, "I don't bother you much anymore about using your gifts, but could you do me a huge favor and look at my stomach area?"

"Sure," came the reply I had hoped for.

"Do I have a bleeding ulcer here?" I asked pointing to my stomach.

"No," she said.

"Do I have cancer growing there?" I asked again.

"No, Dad, you don't have cancer," came the reply. Wow, it wasn't either of the two things I thought it would be. I

pondered for a minute and the idea came to ask her if I had a devil there.

“Do I have a devil there?” I asked.

“Yes Dad, you have a real bad one there, a number nine,” she said.

Wait a minute, how did I get a devil in me? The first thought that came to my mind was at Bob’s friend’s house in Southern Utah. The food must have had devils on it. That must have been why Denise took a little nibble and pushed it away. “Hey, Sweetie, did that food in Southern Utah have devils on it?” I groaned.

“Just yours and mine did. Maybe you ought to be more aware of what is around you Dad,” came the “wisdom of the ages” reply.

“But I got rid of it the other night,” I said, “when I had asked Christ to come and take it. I didn’t know what “it” was, but He took it. So why did it come back?”

“Dad,” she said, “you have a big hole like thing in your aura right there. Maybe you ought to say a prayer of gratitude and seal it up.” I had my answer that I had sought for from the Lord. I just didn’t know that I would be living the answer. Yet I still didn’t know why Denise had allowed me, her father, to suffer like I had for those three weeks.

“Denise,” I asked, “you knew I was sick, that I really hurt, yet you didn’t say a thing about it. You just let me suffer. Why?” (Boy, could I play the martyr when I wanted).

“Dad,” came the reply I knew was coming, “I wasn’t supposed to tell you. It was your experience that Christ wanted you to go through, so you could understand.”

Later that night I knelt in prayer and asked Christ to come again and to take away the devil. He did. Then I said a prayer of gratitude for the experience I had gone through, for the pain, the horrible bowel problems, not being able to eat, the “damage” in my aura, and the understanding that He had given me. I haven’t had a problem since, but I am more aware of what is around me, what I eat, where I eat, and what if I do. It

makes me wonder how many of our problems or illness come about as a result of us “letting them in?”

I know it is true, that we let darkness in as a result of our “sins” or misunderstandings. We let them in when we get angry or have any negative emotions or when we judge. Yet I still struggle with not judging, i.e. condemning others and the things they are doing. A friend told me that because judging seems so “delicious to the taste and is very desirable, to make us ‘think’ we are wise,” we all do it continually. I believe that was what was mentioned in the scriptures about the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It is desirable and delicious to make us think we are wise. But aren’t we commanded not to partake of that fruit? Isn’t it called the forbidden fruit? Aren’t we told that in the day we partake of that fruit we would surely die? Is that a spiritual death? Could the fruit of that tree be the using of our knowledge, of how we believe things ought to be, to accuse, blame or compare (judge) what is going on around us with how we “think” things should or should not be?

One day a couple of friends dropped by our home. Dianne and I were sitting outside talking and they came and sat with us. Some people’s names came up in the conversation and we all started to judge (condemn) them. I was immediately “stabbed” in my thigh, just above the knee (the old familiar spot). The pain caught my attention, but the “judging” was just too delicious not to partake in. The more I participated, the worse the pain became. I noticed it didn’t stay in the same spot however, it traveled up my leg about six inches. I figured I’d go in after our friends left and “cast” it out.

After a few more minutes the conversation finally turned to something else, for which I was very grateful. Then our friends left and I went in the house to take care of my “little friend.” I did what I usually do to send him away, but he didn’t leave. That had never happened before. I went through the repentance process and still the pain stayed, so I figured I would take care of it later that night.

My leg felt like hamburger meat by the time night came around. It really hurt. I tried to take care of it again, to no

avail. Denise happened to walk through the room and I asked her to answer some questions I had. She came over.

“Denise, I judged some people today, pretty severely. I was stabbed by this little devil (pointing to my left thigh) and I have been trying to get rid of him, but he won’t go away. Why can’t I get rid of him?” I asked.

“Dad,” she said, “you don’t have a little devil there. You have a big one there, a ‘number nine’ devil.” I couldn’t understand why I would have one of those, in the past I always had a little guy and he was easily dispatched. Then Denise said, “Dad, remember a couple of weeks ago when I said that you would get to experience some things like me? You asked me why and I said because you *understand* things better now. Well, now when you judge, you get the really bad guys.”

I remembered a conversation I had with my friend Charlene. We were talking about some gospel concepts and she made the comment that she wanted to share some thoughts with me, but she was hesitant. “Doug,” she said, “with greater understanding comes greater responsibility. Do you accept the responsibility that comes with the greater understanding you could receive? Before the understanding comes, it is like Christ is protecting you from things that might occur to you.”

“I agree with you, Charlene,” I said. “I believe that the veil of forgetfulness comes with a great innocence – which is power, perhaps the power of Christ to withstand evil and its darts and arrows. With greater understanding also comes the possibility that He will not offer that same protection. With greater understanding comes greater responsibility.”

“In the scriptures,” she continued, “we are taught:

‘Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciple came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them is not given. For whosoever hath, (more understanding) to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: (of the spirit) but whosoever hath not, (understanding or consciousness) from him shall be taken even that he hath.

Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.’ (Matt. 13:9-13)”

After talking with my friend and after my experience with the evil spirits and how they affect us, I realized I had received greater understanding about how devils work and about how judging (condemning) others really takes its toll on our spiritual, as well as our physical well being. For several years I knew not to judge (condemn), yet at times, I did so anyway. Was it possible that Christ left me to the “buffetings” of Satan because I did have the understanding that we are not to judge? As Denise and Charlene both had pointed out, with the greater understanding comes the greater responsibility. Yet, with this responsibility also comes the understanding of how to eliminate Satan from my life.

Late that night, alone, I got on my knees and talked to my Heavenly Father. I thanked Him for the experiences, the lessons taught and the pain in my leg. I asked His Son to come and take the “devil” away. He did. But to my surprise, my leg still hurt. The evil spirit was gone, but my thigh felt like raw hamburger. It was like a large “bruise” was left there.

Talking to my friend John a few days later, I related the experience and what I had learned from it. He reminded me that Brigham Young had talked about similar things, that the devils caused our aches and pains. If I hadn’t experienced what I did, I would probably have not agreed with John or Brigham.

I then went back and read again the talk that Brigham Young had given at the funeral of one of his counselors, Jedediah Grant:

“Do you not think that brother Jedediah can do more good (in the spirit world) than he could here? When he was here the devils had power over his flesh, he warred with them and fought them, and said that they were around him by millions, and he fought them until he overcame them. So it is with you and I. You never felt a pain and ache, or felt disagreeable, or uncomfortable in your bodies and minds, but what an evil spirit was present causing it. Do you realize that

the ague, the fever, the chills, the severe pain in the head, the plurisy, or any pain in the system, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, is put there by the devil? You do not realize this, do you?"

"I say but little about this matter. . . When you have the rheumatism, do you realize that the devil put that upon you? No, but you say, "I got wet, caught cold, and thereby got the rheumatism." The spirits that afflict us and plant disease in our bodies, pain in the system, and finally death, have control over us so far as the flesh is concerned."

I realize that as people read this book, there may be ideas that are hard to understand or even fathom. Most people when seeing or hearing something new tend to see it as false. Just because we may not have experienced something or heard about it or it's not in the "manual", doesn't mean it hasn't happened or isn't true. Such feelings merely show that one is being exposed to concepts which may be new to him.

I would encourage those reading this book to hold an open mind and experiment with the possibilities of these ideas to see if they are of any possible value to you in better knowing yourself. I know I had no concept that what Brigham Young said about devils being the cause of disease might be true. As a result of our experiences, I now have a better understanding of how it is possible. I know that when I display any negative emotions, I am allowing myself to be tormented by them, allowing them in, even to the point of allowing them to inflict pain and the resulting disease, as stated by Brigham Young.

Maybe it is as important to look at what Christ did as it is to read His words. Are there lessons in His actions as well as His words? I believe so. Why did he cast out devils and then heal? Might we be aware of this possibility in those we are asked to bless, in those that suffer from depression or any disease for that matter? Should we give them a better understanding of Satan and how he might be working in their life? Why did Joseph Smith not allow a blessing and had the man get on his knees and pray? Could it be similar to what we learned that day with Denise and the woman that had five devils

attached to her? Maybe we should all learn to be more aware of what is around us, learn to listen to the Spirit, and follow that still small voice. I certainly don't have all the answers and am still unsure of some of the questions. I do know that as we seek the answers through Christ, they will be revealed to us if we listen with an open mind and heart.

I didn't realize how soon I would experience some of the things I had learned. One of my good friends, Steve, called one morning and wanted a blessing. It might be best shared from both our points of view.

----Doug----

It was Monday morning and I had been gone for a while. Upon returning I noticed that there was a message on the phone. I listened and it was Julia, Steve's wife. We had experienced an enjoyable time with them the day before at our home. It was strange for her to call me. Steve always called, never Julia.

"Hello," I said over the phone, "is Steve there?"

"This is Steve," he said.

"Hey, Steve, " I responded, "your wife called and I'm returning the call. What is it she wanted?"

"Doug," Steve said, "I need to come up there and get a blessing from you."

"You know," I chuckled, "you have a brother-in-law where you are staying and your father is right down the street. Wouldn't they be a whole lot closer?"

"I think I need to see you," he said. "We'll be up within two hours."

I hung up the phone wondering what was up. Why would he want to drive nearly one hour to get a blessing? It was strange. But for some reason I decided to follow the advice of a Stake Patriarch I know and do what he does before giving a blessing.

I went to my room and asked the Lord for a wall or field of protection to be placed around me. I asked that my ego leave and "protection" be placed around my mind so that I might be a

pure conduit for what the Lord might want to say. I then asked if it was okay to give Steve a blessing. I felt it was all right.

When Steve and Julia finally came, I could tell something was up. He didn't seem to be his self, he even looked different. As we sat outside my house to talk I noticed that Denise got up and went in the house.

"Steve," I said, "you don't seem to be yourself. Usually you are really cheerful. You love to joke and tease. Today you don't seem to be in that frame of mind."

He proceeded to tell me that he didn't feel all that well. "In fact, when I woke up this morning the first thought that came to my mind was that I wanted to die."

Now that is not like Steve. I asked if he felt he might have a devil or evil spirit plaguing him. He thought he might. I told him I would go inside and ask Denise to look at him and left to go in the house.

"Hey Denise," I said, "Steve is outside and I think he might have a devil in him. Would you come outside and take a look for me?"

"Dad," she said, "I don't need to go outside to tell you he has a devil in him. He has a real bad one in him. A number nine."

---Steve---

"Yep," said Doug cheerfully as he came out from the house, "Denise says you have a devil in there. A bad one, a nine." It didn't come as a surprise. "You know that the only way I know to get rid of him is to ask Christ to take him."

"I know," I said dully – it was hard to get the words out, "but I don't want to."

That must have shocked Doug. It took a moment for him to answer. "That's what these guys do. They make you apathetic, you just don't care about anything any more," he said.

"True," I thought, but saying it would have required too much energy.

"You have to get him out though," Doug went on, "he wants to kill you."

I thought of the arguments I had been having with Julia, and death didn't seem like such a bad idea. In fact at that moment the thought of being delivered from even one of those "intense discussions" seemed like a pretty good deal. But something deep inside me knew that was wrong, the coward's way out, that it was contrary to the will of God, and I mustn't let the adversary win. "Let's go into the house," I said.

---Doug---

After coming out of the house and telling Steve that he had a bad devil in him, I was shocked at his attitude. We had discussed this before several times. Now Steve was having the experience. I told him that he needed to ask Christ to come and take it away. He told me he really didn't want to ask Christ. He said that he really didn't care much about Christ anymore. He told me that he felt the demon had tried to cut off his breathing last night, but he didn't care anymore. He didn't want to ask Christ for anything. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. Steve was one of the most Christ centered people I had ever met, and here he was telling me he really didn't care about Christ anymore. I had never seen him so apathetic. I was really shocked. He then asked to go in the house and get a blessing.

As we went in the house I noticed that Denise quickly went outside. It made me wonder what kind of "thing" was in Steve to make Denise leave. It also made me glad I didn't have the gift of seeing what was there.

---Steve---

"I can give you a blessing," Doug told me, "but I can't cast out that kind of devil, you have to do that yourself. If what we have learned is true you have to go to the Lord in complete gratitude for everything that has happened, and ask Christ to take the evil spirit from you." I knew that; Doug and I have talked about this sort of thing before, although I'm sure neither of us expected to put the knowledge to use like we were doing now.

I wanted to be able to ask to have the dark spirit taken from me, but I just didn't feel I had the strength. "I'd like a blessing first," I said.

---Doug---

Sitting in the family room Steve asked me to give him a blessing. I knew from all the experiences we had seen and read about that I wasn't sure I wanted to place my hands on his head. I remembered an account where some men had blessed another man that was possessed and the devil just jumped into a different man. This went on all night long. They would bless the next guy and the devil would jump to someone else. I also remembered when Joseph Smith told some men to not lay hands on a man to bless him. Joseph wouldn't allow it. Then seeing Denise take off and stay away from Steve made me unsure of doing anything at this moment.

I finally got a chair. As I stood behind Steve, I paused and said a silent prayer for protection and asked that specific individuals from the other side of the veil be present with me as I put my hands on his head.

I opened my mouth to say the blessing and audibly heard the words I was to speak. I had never said words like that in a blessing before. Steve was my good friend and I didn't want to say those words, so I paused even longer. Then I was quite strongly impressed to say them.

---Steve---

Doug got a chair, and after a pause he put his hands on my head and spoke. I had hoped for a blessing of strength or power, so what Doug said could not have been more unexpected.

"I reprimand you in the name of Jesus Christ for not keeping Christ at the center of your life and command you to repent."

There was more. Julia said the part that she remembered most was that I should hold fast to my family, which is a good thing. But that phrase hit me hard enough that, though I listened to the rest of what was said, my mind was filled with those first words. They were exactly what I needed

to hear. Yes, they took me by surprise; I thought that I had been trying very hard to center my life in Christ, but as I have thought about it since I can see how I had sought for Christ in my way instead of humbly seeking the guidance of the spirit, reading the scriptures and letting go of my ego.

---Doug---

I had never said words like that in a blessing before. “I reprimand you in the name of Jesus Christ for not keeping Christ at the center of your life and command you to repent.” I vaguely remember parts of what was said, but not much more. I remember telling him he had holes in his aura and he could heal or seal them with gratitude to his Savior. After I finished, I hurried to the couch to sit down as I had no idea what Steve’s reaction might be.

---Steve---

When Doug finished I actually felt weaker rather than stronger. I was humbled by what I had heard. But what had made me feel weaker had also weakened the evil spirit or bonds by which he held me. I don’t know which, and it doesn’t matter, because I now was able to do what I had known all along that I needed to do; to pray, grateful for the experience I was having, and even for the reprimand I had received, for it showed me that way I needed to go. As I prayed I felt a little lighter. Not much, because I was still worn out from lack of sleep and the rigors of the past few days, but I knew something had changed.

Now, a day later, I felt much better. . .

What Steve did not know and I did not share with him until later was as I placed my hands on his head, I felt my own head and face being “shoved” up and away. That was a new experience. The whole time I was saying the blessing I felt like my head was being shoved up, and I also felt like a war was going on as I tried to keep my hands on his head.

What I learned from Steve was that none of us are immune from the darts and arrows of the adversary. He will be relentless in his efforts to get us to deny Christ and to destroy us. Steve and I both had been given an incredible lesson. If we

allow the adversary into our lives or even into us, we will have problems that could be so severe that only Christ can overcome them.

I related this story to a good friend. She made the comment that Christ had said that some kind of devils will only come out by fasting and prayer. I agreed with her; I do feel that some may require great prayer and fasting, but I wanted to also add a little different perspective. I had always thought the fasting and prayer were to be done by the person trying to get rid of the darkness. Though that may be true in most instances, another possibility came to my mind.

“Could it possibly be,” I asked, “that sometimes the prayer might have to be done by the one who has let the demon come into him? Using their own agency they have invited darkness in and therefore they need to be willing to let it go. I have learned from my own experience and that of others, that one way of letting darkness in might be when we give up our agency to someone or we invite them in with negative thoughts, emotions, or actions.”

“We also can let a servant of evil or darkness in” I continued, “by desiring power by bargaining with the dark one. Sometimes the individual is deceived by (instructed by) and chooses to believe the dark one or they place their trust in or give pity to a dark one. That might mean that the person giving the blessing or trying to cast out the demon can’t do it, casting it out would go against our agency if we are the one that had ‘invited’ the dark one in. Satan’s plan is to take our agency away. Until Steve *wanted* it gone, there was nothing that could be done, otherwise I would have been going against his agency, something in my opinion that the Lord does not condone. That might be one possibility why Joseph Smith wouldn’t allow Hyrum to bless the possessed man? Interesting things to think about.”

“Another possibility,” I added, “is that Hyrum might not have had the same understanding as Joseph. He might not have been able to see and know, as Joseph did, the power of the darkness in the man. Joseph may also have known of Hyrum’s

weakness and knew that he could not withstand this particular darkness. By doing what he did, Joseph taught that all power comes through our Savior and His atonement. It is to Christ that we must look for our salvation.”

“What about the fasting part,” my friend asked.

“I had a harder time with what that might possibly mean,” I answered. “We know that fasting represents a sacrifice of going without food. What if on the spiritual level it meant that the individual that was possessed had to sacrifice his will to the will of Christ? To do that, Steve needed to ask Christ to come and ask Christ to take the darkness away. Just like the woman that had the five devils attached to her had to do.”

Interesting possibilities.

I know I am grateful for the small understanding I have been given in regards to how Satan works. With that knowledge I can better help protect my family from his darkness by giving them understanding about darkness and how it works. **I know I have much yet to learn.** It is my hope and prayer that we all may let Christ into our lives so that Satan will not have any influence over us. Then Satan would be bound and we could all live in peace, even a millennial peace.

Chapter Twelve

*“And he shall go forth, suffering pains
and afflictions and temptations of every kind;
and this that the word might be fulfilled
which saith he will take upon him the pains
and the sickness of his people.*

*And he will take upon him death,
that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people;
and he will take upon him their infirmities,
that his bowels may be filled with mercy,
according to the flesh,
that he may know according to the flesh how to
succor his people according to their infirmities.*

*Now the Spirit knoweth all things;
nevertheless the Son of God suffereth according to the flesh
that he might take upon him the sins of his people,
that he might blot out their transgressions according
to the power of his deliverance;
and now behold, this is the testimony which is in me.”*

(Alma 7:11-13)

As my family and I have traveled this journey of the last two and one half years, there is one possibility that keeps coming up. This is the possibility of us being one or connected with each other somehow. Not just with the Savior, but with each other also. I know a husband and wife should be one, in all ways. But is it possible that we are more connected to each other than we realize? Another way of looking at it might be that the veil is so thin, the other side interacts with us all the time and we just aren't aware of it. But it seems to be more than just connecting or interacting with the other side of the veil, it's interacting with each other on this side, but on a different level.

I received this e-mail from a woman that has become a good friend.

“I just feel like I should share this experience with you. As you know I had a tooth pulled today. I am (was) deathly afraid of dental work.

About five weeks ago I fell down the flight of stairs here at the house and hit my right hand on the landing and the thumb nail was completely torn out. It was a busy day and I did not have time to take care of an injury, so I just commanded my thumb nail to heal and not give me any grief or pain. I gave it a time period of two weeks to be done. I am told that having a ‘nail’ ripped from your finger is very painful, but I endured no pain or a slight sensitivity. I put a finger guard on it to protect it while the nail grew back in. NOW, I commanded my tooth to not hurt during the extraction. I commanded it to release itself from my body. But when the time for the appointment came I lost confidence. I felt I needed a blessing. I remembered your blessing (from the book) that you gave your mother that her procedure would not be painful. As I do not have anyone here that I could call for a blessing I asked the Lord if I could call upon your blessing from your mother be pronounced upon me. I again claimed your blessing as I was sitting in the dentist chair with my mouth wide open. RESULT: no pain. I did not even know when he pulled the tooth. I thought he was still preparing me when he told me that he was finished. SO THANKS. . . I hope you don’t mind that I called upon you when I lost confidence in myself.”

I thought this was a fascinating e-mail. What a great experience! I didn’t know if what happened was a result of her claiming the blessing my mother received or just a “mind over matter” type of thing.

Once, a year or so ago, I remembered an incident when John’s son had cut himself quite badly. Later, he came in with it healed. I asked how he did that and he said that he just told himself that he had already had the experience of cutting himself like that and he chose not to have it again. He then said it went away. Now, I have been through many “different”

experiences, but this one really stretched me. Yet I know what I saw really happened.

Then I happened to burn myself a few days later. It was on my finger, and I knew it was a bad one, probably a second degree burn. I knew I was in for a lot of pain. I remembered what John's son had said. So I said to myself, "I've already had this experience, I know what a burn feels like, I know what pain feels like from a burn. I choose not to have the pain from the burn."

I never felt even a little bit of pain. The burn developed a blister and finally healed. I even kept poking at it, I was so fascinated with not having any pain from the burn. I figured that my friend must have had a similar experience because I had never heard of asking Christ if you could claim someone else's blessing.

But that was not the end of the story. My friend showed up at my house almost a month after "claiming the blessing." She wanted to ask me a question.

"Doug," she said, "the first time I came here to talk with you, I asked a question and you kind of flinched. Do you remember that?"

"I sure don't," I said.

"Are you sure?" She asked.

"I am quite sure," I responded.

"Well," she continued, "my heart felt like something hit it. Did you feel anything?"

"You know," I answered, "I really don't remember what you are talking about, and I sure don't remember feeling anything." I was perplexed.

"You don't know this," she said, "but I have a bad heart valve for an illness years ago. I have had two angiograms and each has shown the damage to my heart. The doctors have wanted to go in and repair the valve for a long time now. I went in last week to have a third angiogram done and it showed my heart is fine, perfectly healthy."

"Wow," I responded, "it sounds like the Lord did something to heal you. If I were you I'd be really grateful."

We ended our conversation with me assuring her that I had not felt anything. I did tell her it was a wonderful development though. To not have major surgery is always a plus.

Later that day, I was thinking about her experience. Suddenly it hit me. She had asked the Lord if she could claim my mother's blessing a couple of weeks earlier. The blessing had not only told my mother that she would not feel any pain, it had also said that her heart would be healed. Could it be possible that when she claimed the blessing she received the whole blessing?

I present this as an amazing possibility to think about.

Several years ago when our life changed as a result of Denise's coma and arrival of her many gifts, I had an amazing experience with our neighbor, Merrilee.

In the middle of the year 2000, Merrilee had taken off to Australia to tour with a group of people that perform. She was to be gone most of the month. At that time my friend John had loaned me his bio-feedback machine. I would "practice" with it a few minutes each day, trying to understand how it worked. The one thing he did tell me is that because it is a portable machine, everything that was tested would go through the tester. It was an extraordinary experience, being able to feel the emotions of someone you were testing. This phenomena has been confirmed by practitioners I have talked to that also use the same type of machine. But for me it was a fascinating possibility that we can feel other people's experiences or emotions or even possibly know what they are going through.

I was practicing with the machine one Sunday after church with John present in the room. When "testing" individuals, it is done with no judgement, and with the permission of Christ. It is basically done by proxy. That was a new concept for me. I was familiar with doing saving ordinances by proxy, but not using a machine to test others by proxy. Since, I have found this is normal in many therapies.

I had tested several people, just to get a feeling of how the machine works. I then tested Merrilee to see how it works

on someone on the other side of the world. The machine showed that she wasn't doing very well at that moment either spiritually or emotionally. I felt sad about that.

Then John said that we ought to send her "our love" or just love. We had done this before and it seemed to work. After sending out our thoughts of love and healing to someone, they tested more positive on the machine. So we sat there and "sent" her our love. I was going through a period during this time with Denise and her experiences where I said in my heart that I would be willing to die for Merrilee, if it would help her. I truly meant it.

John then tested her and she was almost in "balance." I was blown away, that someone could be that low on the machine and then go so high after just focusing on her and sending her our love. But, I was so wiped out by the experience that I needed to lay down to rest. I felt like I was going to faint, I was so weak. John looked at me and said, "you were willing to give up your life for her at that moment, right?" I admitted that was what I had said in my mind.

"No wonder you are so weak," he said.

I laid down and counted it as just another interesting experience.

One Sunday a few weeks later, Denise and I were walking home from Church and up drives Merrilee. She pulled up beside us and asked how we were doing. I told her great and then remembered the event from a few weeks earlier.

"Did you experience anything a few Sundays ago in Australia?" I asked. She didn't seem to know what I was talking about at first. Then she remembered.

Merrilee shared her part of the story with me:

"I work as an Associate Director for a very prominent performing group. They have always been very good to me and have trusted me with their performers to a great degree. I had the opportunity to travel with them to Australia in May of 2000. I was going along as a guest for this trip as the main Director would be taking charge. Even though the trip was amazing and I had wonderful experiences, it was very tough for me. I was

used to directing the group on my own but because the main director was there, I was only needed when called upon. I remember one day being so distraught. I was full of feelings of uselessness and anxiety. I actually felt stupid being there. From there, my whole outlook plummeted and I was a mess. This lasted for most of the day. Then I remember starting to feel hope, calm and usefulness for no apparent reason. It actually overtook my body and I became grateful again for the opportunity just to be there. It was wonderful! The rest of the trip was great!

When I got back home, Doug asked me if I had experienced a rough time in Australia. Because the trip had ended so well, I had actually forgotten the terrible time. As I thought about it, I remembered that there had been a time of great despair. I told Doug about that and then remembered that those feelings went away and were replaced by a calming peace. He then shared with me his 'side' of the experience and as we talked about the time frame, I realized that my healing occurred because of Doug's willingness to take my pain.

In those moments, I had a tiny inkling about my connectedness with every other person on the planet. What a concept!"

Once again I was blown away. I agree with Merrilee, what a concept! It was a wonderful experience to show the possibility of how we all might be connected, how we can affect others, good or bad.

Through our experiences we have found that perhaps we are connected to those beyond the veil more than we have ever realized. We have found that those on the other side of the veil want to serve us and help us. This seems to be their great joy. As the scriptures state, we can't be saved without them, and they can't be saved without us.

Last Memorial Day I was outside playing catch with my youngest son, Dwight. We had a good time, but he soon tired and went off to play with something or someone else. Then Denise came out of the house and said she wanted to play catch with me.

“You know, Honey,” I said, “we were using a softball and mitts. Can you use a mitt and catch a softball?”

“No, Dad,” she answered, “I brought this ball. It’s really soft and easy to catch.” She showed me a ball the size of a little sponge basketball. It was really soft and we played catch.

Denise couldn’t catch the ball to save her life. As a result of her stroke, she has some paralysis on her right side. She can’t catch well with her right hand, in fact she has become more or less left-handed. Ball after ball was dropped. She was a little frustrated.

“Do you want to quit playing?” I asked.

“No.”

I then threw the next ball and she caught it. She caught it again and again. I threw it harder and harder. She never missed. I didn’t say anything. I watched her eye hand coordination. It was perfect, as if she had played ball for years. Something was up. I knew she couldn’t catch the ball, now she couldn’t miss catching the ball.

“All right,” I said, “what’s up? How come you couldn’t catch it before and now you catch nearly everything I throw at you?”

“Well Dad,” she somewhat shyly answered, “I wanted to catch it and I can’t. So I asked Christ if I could have a baseball player come and help me. He said yes.”

Having lived with miracles and strange happenings for nearly three years, I have heard Denise say and do many things, but this was a new one.

“So is this baseball player there helping you?” I almost dared not ask.

“Actually he’s inside of me,” came her reply.

“What?” I said somewhat loudly.

“I *asked Christ* if it was OK if I had him go inside of me, to help me catch the ball. Christ said it was OK. So I let him come in me,” she said.

“Denise,” I questioned, “is it wise to let someone come in you like that? Someone you don’t even know?”

“Dad,” came the ‘sages’ reply, *“that’s why I asked Christ. I wouldn’t let it happen with someone unless He said it was OK. It’s kind of weird. I watch his hands go to the ball and see my own hands follow. Really freaky, Dad.”*

Freaky didn’t begin to tell the half of it. “OK,” I said, “tell him to go.”

“OK,” came the reply.

She then couldn’t catch a thing, just like normal. What was interesting to me is the fact that if I had asked her to do this, she would have said no, because she would know that my intent was to “see” her do it. Her intent was pure or real. She just wanted to play catch with her dad. I enjoyed her “new found ability” so much that I asked her to bring him back so we could play some more. She did and it was fun. I started throwing the ball quite fast. She still caught it.

“You know,” she said, “they want to help us Dad, the people on the other side of the veil. We just don’t ask them. They really want to do anything they can to help and serve us. Maybe you should ask for help when you need it too, Dad.”

I thought back to our friend that grooms dogs and how she will ask her “angels” to help with problem dogs, even to help with large dogs that she can’t move herself. She gets the help. I remembered how many times my father, now passed away over ten years, has helped us while driving and how many wrecks I would have been in if not for him.

After telling the story about Denise to my dog groomer friend she sent the following e-mail:

“I thought about what Denise had done for several days, when all of a sudden I got an idea. I have scoliosis of the spine and I am always in pain somewhere from my neck to my lower back. I go to the chiropractor on the average of two to three times per week just to keep functioning. If I turn my head wrong or bend over too long, or any number of things, something goes out. I thought if an angel baseball player could help Denise, why couldn’t a chiropractor help me?”

The day of Denise’s episode I had hurt my neck more than normal trying to prune a tall tree. It was on my

chiropractor's day off. The next morning it had really tightened up and I was in a lot of pain. I was planning on going to my chiropractor that afternoon. But before I went I decided to try what Denise had done. I sat in a chair in my front room and asked Christ to send a chiropractor and I submitted my body to him. I pictured him behind me, adjusting my neck. My neck became relaxed and in a minute the pain was gone. It was still sore and swollen but the pain was gone.

Then my husband took me over to the chiropractor where I had a strange experience. He felt my neck, stopped, felt it again, and looked perplexed. I asked him what he was feeling and he said my neck was swollen like my atlas should be out of place, but it wasn't.

For the next two weeks I asked my chiropractor angel to come every time something started to hurt, sometimes three times a day. Then I went back to my earthly chiropractor and he checked me and said, "Why are you here?" That was the first time I ever heard that question!

I haven't been to a chiropractor for several months now. I have noticed the only time I don't receive help is when I am feeling a negative emotion such as fear, frustration, or depression. If I am in a place of gratitude and love, and submit my body to them, I seem to get immediate help. Since I ask Christ to send them, I have no fear of submitting my body to them. I have also had years of trouble with TMJ (jay alignment). I had a huge knot in my jaw with blinding headache pain so I asked for a healer that is familiar with TMJ and that was fixed immediately. Then one day my muscles ached so bad from working all day that I laid face down on the bed and asked for a massage therapist to come. In about three minutes I felt like a new person. I'm sure there's countless situations in which to ask for help.

I am so grateful for this blessing in my life, to be allowed to know that angels are anxious and willing to help us. I wish I could share it with everyone so they could enjoy these blessings too."

Wow!

I mentioned this story to another friend that has “gifts.” She was taking some art classes and was having a difficult time. She asked for help from a very famous artist and got it. First though, she asked the Lord if it was proper for her to ask, then after getting confirmation, she then asked for a certain individual, if it was OK to ask him. After receiving confirmation, she did. She told me the class was like night and day compared to previous art classes. Her ability to paint skyrocketed, and she learned a lot from that individual. She loved it.

This was a somewhat radical concept for me. I wondered how many of us ask for help and receive it, but we don’t have a clue that we received the help from the other side of the veil. Could it possibly be more than we ever imagined?

Through our experiences I have come to feel that we are connected. Whether it is through the “light of Christ,” or God’s Spirit, or oneness, or whatever you want to call it, I feel we all are part of one great whole, the “whole” consisting of those on this side of the veil and the other side of the veil also. We are here to serve each other. Maybe King Benjamin had it right when he stated **that when we are in the service of our fellow beings we are in the service of our God.** And if we *look* at Christ’s example, our Lord is here to serve us.

My oldest son, David, had just gotten off a mission to Honduras. He went to school and found a sweetheart. I thought it would be interesting the first time he tried to explain to her about our family, and especially Denise. He didn’t have a problem about telling her. The night he told her he came home and told me that she wanted to talk to me. It seems that she also had “gifts.”

A few days later my future daughter-in-law came over, and I had a wonderful chat with her. Many months later she shared the following with me:

“I love people. I look at them and I feel like I have a connection with them, whether I have met them or not. When I was growing up there were some experiences that I had that I couldn’t have explained or understood until lately.”

For example, I had a friend who had sunk into a very deep depression. He would hate life, hate himself, and go to the extreme of self-mutilating his body. I loved him so much as a friend and saw what a great person he was that it hurt me deeply to see him suffer. I noticed that whenever I was at his house or with him, I fell into that mode of numbness with him. I started to spend more time with him, because he was the only one that I felt connected to. It got so bad that I started mutilating my own body. Finally my parents denied me the opportunity to spend time with him and slowly I came out of it. I look back now and see that I loved him so much that I didn't want him to have to go through that alone. I know I wouldn't have.

Later, one weekend I went to a party with some girlfriends and they took some drugs while I just stood there. Then we went dancing. I never had the desire to take drugs, I just don't like the idea of not being able to control my body and mind and end up becoming a slave to it. I saw one of my friends going through a bad 'trip' on the drug she took. She was a very small person and probably took too much. I felt bad for her, because I knew that she was in pain and couldn't think clearly enough to do anything about it. So I went to her and hugged her. I felt so much love and empathy for her that I guess I just took what she was feeling away from her.

I remember feeling like I was screaming inside, like I was in a cage and couldn't break out of it. But also like I was detached from the world. Everything was intensified by ten times and I felt like I had never seen anything before. I now know and am grateful to know what it feels like to be 'under the influence.' I can see how it would be hard to break away from that, I can now have true empathy for them.

From time to time I walk past someone and feel like I am walking through a blanket of what they are feeling. I automatically know if they have cancer, strep throat, a broken ankle or anything that is afflicting them. I sometimes want so bad to take it away, but I can't. I know it is for them to

experience, not me. Christ will let me take it if it is His will, not mine. I'd probably be dead if it was my will.

Recently something strange happened. I woke up wanting and craving cigarettes. I don't know why to this day. But all that day I was calling my husband complaining that I wanted one. I have never been addicted to smoking, never even smoked. But I remembered what they tasted like. I knew the exact kind I wanted and I wanted them now! I felt so tempted and so torn between what I had been taught all my life and what I craved. Dave, my husband, was getting to the point of buying me a nicotine patch or some gum. Finally though, I asked Christ to take the feeling away. I told Him how grateful I was to experience the feeling of trying to quit smoking, how it is so physically, mentally and spiritually consuming. That might have been the hardest thing I have ever had to do, quit smoking, when I never had smoked. But He took it and all at once I felt normal again. I wasn't agitated and angry at everyone and I didn't want to smoke.

I am so grateful that my new family taught me how to get rid of the 'stuff' that I get sometimes. Now I know that you must give it to Christ. You must be grateful for it, find a lesson and learn what He wants us to do. He will take the pain away. I am so grateful to know that now. It makes life so much simpler."

It seems that at times in her life she has been able to feel what other people are going through. It has caused her some physical problems, some of which she mentioned. I guess the proper term would be to say that she is *empathic*. Her problem has been that she is so sweet, she can't stand to see anyone suffer and has wanted to take their stuff, to stop their suffering.

It was so much fun to talk to her, have her explain how she can feel other peoples "stuff," and how she takes it from people. I told her of our experiences with the bio-feedback machine and how we would "get full" of people's stuff. We had learned from experience that we can give it to Christ, that we need to give it to Him. He descended below all things and is willing to take it from us. He is our Savior and paid the price

with the atonement. We talked about the three days when I had experienced being in that state continually, how up at Primary Children's Hospital I had no idea what was going on and felt like I would die as all the pain from the children came in to me. (This is related in our book, *"My Peace I Give Unto You"*). Then I told her what John had told me up at the hospital, to "let it flow through you to Christ."

She does this now and is much happier. She still takes on people's "stuff." Though most of the time she doesn't know she is doing it. Which can be serious and other times quite comical.

I have met people that are similar to her. Most have learned to deal with their gifts and not take people's "stuff" or have learned to block it. That still amazes me about Denise. She will see someone going through the worst thing and be totally calm and OK with it. She understands that God's hand is really in all things, as He states it is, and it will be to that person's good, whatever it is they are going through. She sees the bigger picture.

On January 1, 2000 I recorded this story in my journal:

"Boy is it strange writing the year 2000 down. I am going to relate a true story that happened to me in the last several days, things that I had no idea could happen or ever would happen.

Two days ago Denise and I decided to drop by John's house to see him and his wife, Cindy. When we arrived there were a few people in the living room talking. We sat and waited for John.

He came out and looked awful. He talked to the people there for a little bit and went back to his room to take a phone call. After he left, Denise and I went into the kitchen. Cindy came in and we asked if John was off the phone. She said he was, and we went back to his bedroom to see him.

He seemed happy to see us, as always. But he looked terrible. In fact I "knew" that he would die that night. I had worked in a hospital right after high school and had seen the look of death before, and he certainly had it. I really didn't

want him to die and told him so. He mumbled something about it being a choice and he had to finish some things and then he would probably go. He asked Denise if she had taken him “flying” the previous night. She said she had taken him and Jesus. He thanked her for taking him. I decided we had better go, he looked so bad and I didn’t like being around someone that was dying. As I got up to leave the Spirit told me to give him a hug and tell him how much I loved him and Cindy. This was hard for me as I am not much of a “hugger.” But I got up and gave him a hug and so did Denise. I told him how much I appreciated him and loved him.

On the way out of his home, Cindy told us he was really bad and she didn’t think he would last through the night. Sorrowfully, I agreed with her. I figured I’d never see him again in this life.

We left and went for a walk to exercise. As we finished walking, I started to feel a little bit tired and sick. We went home and as the day progressed I kept feeling worse. By that night I was in very bad shape. I couldn’t walk more than ten feet without feeling like I would faint. I couldn’t get any air into my lungs. They felt like they were full of fluid and I coughed like crazy trying to get the fluid out. Then my left arm started to ache and my chest or heart really hurt. This really perplexed me because those things had gone away months ago, I was taking the homeopathic drops and couldn’t figure out why it started back up. The worst thing was a terrible “popping” sound in my head when I breathed out. I could get about one third of a breath and then when exhaling the popping would go off. This was worse than the other stuff. It’s like explosions going off inside of my head and made it impossible to sleep. I figured that I had developed pneumonia or something like it.

I had NO sleep that night, coughing, wheezing, trying not to faint, while putting up with that awful popping sound and the chest and arm pain. I wasn’t able to lie down to sleep, I had to stay upright, otherwise I couldn’t breathe. I had a “vision” that I had been taken to the hospital with a heart attack and the heart machine went flat-line. I saw the whole thing and it

scared me to death. Once again this really perplexed me. *I WAS TAKING THE DROPS.*

Early that morning I decided I needed to go down to Insta-Care and asked Dianne to take me. I was really in bad shape. She asked if it was alright if she got the kids off to school and then she would take me. I said it would be fine and sat on our bed leaning against the headboard to wait.

After a while I asked Denise to come in the room. Earlier that morning she saw me and commented that I “was really sick.” My aura was very green she said. A little later I had suddenly realized that I had a daughter that could talk to and see Christ. I would have her ask Him to heal me.

“Denise,” I called out, “would you come here.”

“What do you need Daddy?” came her reply.

“Sweetie,” I almost begged, “I am really sick. I think I might have pneumonia or something. Would you ask your Friend to come and ask Him to heal me?”

“Sure Dad,” she replied.

It was at this point I had decided it was nice to have a daughter that can see Christ and talk to Him. She stood there and looked to the other side of my room. I felt Jesus come to the left side of my bed.

I remember wondering what would happen, how would I know if He was there? I kept thinking that I really didn't think I would feel or know He was there, I would just have to rely on Denise telling me. I was kind of shocked when I felt Him to my left side. I didn't want to look there, as I thought I might actually see Him and I certainly wasn't “worthy” to see Him. As I look back on this I am amazed how accepting I was that Jesus would and could actually come.

For a few minutes I just sat there uncomfortably, in a semi state of shock, knowing that He was there to my side, and I could feel Him. This was the moment in my life when I really knew He was real, He really exists! I could feel the heat, energy, and love coming from Him. Still I didn't dare look, but finally I stole a peek and was grateful that I couldn't see Him,

just feel Him. I had always hoped He was real. I had received a spiritual witness of His reality, but this was so much more.

After a few minutes Denise said, "Dad, He can't help you now. He won't tell me why either."

Then she walked out of my bedroom and He was gone also.

If I had been stunned before with Him actually being there, now I was shocked beyond belief. I sat on my bed not knowing what to do. The thoughts kept going through my mind that Christ had just refused to heal me. I thought that I must be the most unworthy piece of garbage on the planet. He had healed so many when He walked the earth, even the most vile of people, and He won't help me. All I could do was sit there and wonder. Denise had said that "He can't help (me)." How come?

All of a sudden the thought came to my mind to call John and see how he was. Wow, I realized, I hadn't thought of him since we left his home yesterday.

I picked up the phone and dialed. John answered in a chipper voice. I was surprised.

"John," I said, "you didn't die!"

"No, I didn't," he answered, "I haven't felt this good in eight months!"

"Wow," I replied, "that's great. I'm glad you are still here, but John I think I have pneumonia. I'm very sick."

"Oh," he said, "you're the one who took it."

"Took what?" I asked.

"My heart and lung disease," he answered.

"No, John, I don't know what you're talking about," I said questioningly, "I have something like pneumonia. I have just had one of the worst nights of my life. I don't know what you're talking about, I didn't take any thing from you."

"Doug," he chuckled, "because you took my disease, two lives were saved last night. Mine and another man's. He came here and tried to kill himself. I had to hold him the whole night. Thank you."

“John, I don’t know what you’re talking about,” I said. “I didn’t take any disease, but I am glad you are alive.”

“Let me describe your symptoms,” he replied. “Your chest is killing you and the pain extends all the way down your left arm. Your lungs are around two thirds full of fluid and you continually cough to get the junk out of them. You can’t lay down to sleep or you can’t breathe. You walk ten feet and can’t breathe either. But the worst part is the death rattles, that terrible popping sound in your head.”

“Is that what that is?” I asked.

“Yes,” he said, “you get the death rattles right before you die. That’s where I was yesterday before you took my disease. Doug, you are going to die.”

I was beginning to believe him. There was no way he could know about that horrible popping in my head. It was the worst part of the whole ordeal. “Death rattles,” it was named appropriately. As bad as the chest and arm pains were and lungs full of fluid and not being able to breathe, the death rattles were the worst.

“Doug,” he said, “you are going to die. But I believe you may have two options. One, you can die. Or two, you can give it to Christ.”

“Well now I do have a problem,” I replied. “I asked Denise to come to my bedroom and for her to ask Christ to come. He came, John, he really did. I felt His love and the heat or energy from Him by the side of my bed. Then she asked Him to take it and heal me. He told her He couldn’t do anything for me and He left.”

I figured my goose was cooked now. I guess I really had taken John’s disease. He sounded so “healthy.” Figuring I had no options other than the first one he gave me, seeing that the second one hadn’t happened, I was ready to hang up.

“Doug,” he asked, “did you express gratitude for the experience you went through?”

“No,” I replied, “how could I? It was one of the worst nights of my life. How can I be grateful for that?”

“Well,” he said, “you now know what those that have lung or heart disease are going through, those that have emphysema, what they endure, what it’s like walking ten feet and not being able to catch your breath. You understand how horrible the death rattles are. Now you can have true empathy for these people. After all your experiences with expressing gratitude for all things, I thought you would understand that you might need to do the same here. Ask Christ if He will come back. If He does, then express your gratitude for the experience you had, as awful as you think it was. Then ask Him if He will take the disease away, if it is His will. If it is, He will take it, if not, then you will probably die.”

I didn’t know what to believe at this point. So I figured why not give it a shot. It surely couldn’t hurt.

I then focused my attention on Christ, with a heart FULL of gratitude. I asked Him to come back and He came to the bottom of my bed. I could feel Him standing in front of me. I could feel His love for me, His energy or the heat that was coming from Him. I told Him what I had done, that evidently I had taken John’s disease from him. I told Him that I loved my family and wanted to stay around to help out in whatever way He wanted me to. I told Him that I now understood what people were going through with congestive heart and lung failure and how awful death rattles were. Now I could understand those that walk around with those oxygen tanks hooked up to their noses. I could have true empathy for all of them.

Then I asked that if it was possible AND HE was WILLING, could He please take this from me? Then I just sat there, upright on my bed, waiting to see what happened.

It started at my feet and swept up my body to my head. I felt it leave my lungs and body! It was incredible. The illness literally “whooshed” out of my body. It was a physical event. I don’t know how to describe it, but the illness went straight to Him.

I thanked Him and somehow knew He was crying. He stood there and I sat there, not knowing what to do but express profound gratitude for what had just happened. About this time

Denise came popping into the doorway of my room. She looked where Jesus was standing. I told her that Jesus took my sickness away and he was crying. She said she knew, and then her only comment was, "Can you see Him?" I told her no, but that I could feel Him or perceive Him. I asked her if He was crying, and she confirmed that indeed He was.

I knew He was shedding tears of love, and I also knew He was smiling love at me.

Denise came in my room, and I told her what happened.

"Dad," she said, "I couldn't tell you before why He couldn't take the illness when you had me talk to Him. You had to figure it out for yourself. He knew you would, with some help from John. You just forgot about gratitude."

***I knew from that point on that it wasn't about being worthy to have Him in our lives, it was about being "willing."** I knew beyond any doubt that gratitude opens the door that He stands at. We have said that at so many book review meetings, and I just don't think some people get it. I didn't. But when our hearts are sufficiently broken and our spirits are contrite (teachable) enough, then He can teach us. What an incredible experience this was!*

As I come to the end of this little book, I am filled with so much love for my Heavenly Father. I am grateful that He has allowed me and my family to have these learning experiences. I know what Jeremiah said of the last days is true:

"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:33-34)

I sat in a leadership meeting once in my church where this scripture was cited, and we were told that the day would

come where we would be taught directly by the Lord. No more would we teach neighbor to neighbor or brother to brother, we would be taught in our hearts by God. I know this is true and available for anyone who *desires* it.

I am grateful to know Christ, to know He is real, to feel of His love, and to know that He loves each one of us **unconditionally**, with NO judgment, and does our Heavenly Father. It was a thrill to sit in a meeting, actually the dedication of a Temple in Nauvoo, where the Presiding Bishop of my church testified of God's unconditional love. I know Christ does stand at the door, knocking, and that we are the ones that must open it. What Moroni says is true:

*“Yes, come unto Christ, and be perfected in him, and deny yourselves of all ungodliness; and if you 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 nowise 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.”

Sometimes after talking to individuals, I feel many of us get this scripture backwards. We are trying to become perfect enough to come unto Christ or feel we must become worthy enough to “come unto Him.” The scripture states that we become perfected through Christ *after* we come unto Him. Then we will deny ourselves of all ungodliness.

Through my experiences I have come to know that it is ONLY through Christ that we can become “perfect,” through the blood of His atonement we can be washed clean. It is His atonement that gives us power to overcome all things. I testify that one way we can “come unto Christ” is by acknowledging His hand in all things and expressing gratitude in our hearts for the experiences we have, for all things. All things testify of

Jesus Christ. He truly is in all things, and through all things. He is the One we should look to for salvation and understanding, not to anyone or anything else. He is the Master, no one else. We should place our faith in Him. When, as Paul states in the New Testament, all things will fail, except charity, which is the pure love of Christ, it might be wise to already know Him, to have Him as the sure foundation upon which we have built.

It is my testimony that it is through Christ and His authority that we can overcome Satan and his hosts. I have experienced that we allow darkness in by negative emotions, by having evil desires, or giving up our will or agency to someone other than Jesus Christ. It is through Christ and His authority and love that we can become free of that darkness.

I have experienced that through Him our “angels” administer to us. They want to be part of our lives, to serve and help us. It is up to us to let them in. We need to have faith and “simply ask.”

Our complete heart, might, mind and strength should be turned to Christ and our Heavenly Father. We can be reminded of this every time we raise our right arm to the square.

I have received a witness that our Heavenly Father has poured out his Spirit upon the world, as Joel stated He would and as President Hinckley has stated that He has. The gifts of the spirit seem to be exploding, and they testify of Heavenly Father and His Son. When we encounter something new, that we haven’t seen or experienced before, maybe we ought to be open or as Joseph Smith stated in the thirteenth Article of Faith, “*We believe all things.*” I feel if we remain open to the possibility that we may not know all things, then God can witness to us the truthfulness of what we have encountered or experienced. If we feel we know it all already, how can He testify to a closed heart?

I know we should “remember” that single defining moment in our lives when the Lord testified to us, spoke to our heart and mind, because “*what greater witness can (we) have than from God?*” If we do so, we can overcome the arrows and

fiery darts that the adversary will fling at us. Because the adversary will always do so, his favorite phrase to tell us is to “believe it not.”

When we “forget,” that is when the adversary has his way with us. Perhaps when we believe we are wise and learned, we become foolish, vain and show our frailties. Then we forget the counsel of God and we will perish. But as the Lord states, “It is good to be learned if we hearken unto His counsel.”

One of the most intriguing things I have learned is the possibility of generational healing. By coming unto Christ I can be healed or become “perfected in Him,” thereby healing my ancestors and opening up their progression even further. Even on the other side of the veil, they can still come unto Christ and become perfect in Him. What an incredible possibility!

Our good friend Merrilee offered some sage counsel. After telling her about the events in our first book she said, “I want you to know I will never be the same. You have shared some incredible things with me. But I also want you to know that I will get on my knees and ask my Heavenly Father if they are true.” I wouldn’t want it any other way and I believe Heavenly Father and Christ feel the same way.

In fact she reminded me of one time when she was talking to Denise, right after she had gotten out of the hospital. We had wanted to record her near death experience and Merrilee has a recording studio, so we had gone over there to do the recording.

“Denise,” Merrilee said, “does the President of our Church know about you?”

“I don’t think so,” she answered.

“What would he do if he was told about you?” she asked.

She replied, “He would get on his knees and ask Heavenly Father if it was true.”

Wow

Possibilities . . .

“And now, he imparteth his word by angels unto men, yea, not only men but women also. Now this is not all; little children do have words given unto them many times...” (Alma 32:23)

Much love.

Doug Mendenhall



The soft whisper of the spirit teaches us of Christ, His Atonement, and all other things necessary.

Within the cover of this book Doug and Denise tell more of their experiences as well as those of friends that have shared special moments with them.

This book becomes an opportunity to learn lessons from the Spirit, as they have done.