

Yielding Our Hearts to God

SPENCER J. CONDIE

In the book of Helaman we read that four decades before the Savior's birth, the ancient Nephites began to experience great pride within the Church, even to the persecution of many of the members. But there remained a humble part of the people who

did fast and pray oft, and did wax stronger and stronger in their humility, and firmer and firmer in the faith of Christ, unto the filling their souls with joy and consolation, yea, even to the purifying and the sanctification of their hearts, which sanctification cometh because of their yielding their hearts unto God. [Helaman 3:35; emphasis added]

Today we are in the presence of one who epitomizes the yielding of one's heart to God. This man is President Rex E. Lee. I first became acquainted with President Lee thirty-six years ago, when I came to BYU as a student. He was a returned missionary from Mexico serving as the student body president. Even then one could tell he was destined to become a great leader. He was confident but not pompous, friendly, and without guile. It was here that he met the beautiful Janet Griffin, and their friendship soon turned to love. He took the courageous step of inviting this sophisticated

city girl to come home with him to St. Johns, Arizona, to meet all of his cowboy relatives. As they approached the thriving metropolis of St. Johns, Rex stopped the car in front of an isolated one-room shack on the outskirts of town. With a deadpan look on his face, he calmly opened up the trunk of the car and started taking out the luggage. Janet's anxiety turned to panic, thinking of the prospect of spending a glorious weekend in this little shack with all the relatives. Suddenly Rex burst into laughter, and she realized she had been the subject of heartless Arizona humor. They loaded up the luggage and his guitar, and they headed for his real residence.

In 1971 Rex responded to the call of the Brethren to leave a lucrative law practice to return to BYU and become the dean of the J. Reuben Clark Law School and also the bishop of the BYU 51st Ward, where I had the privilege of serving with him. Ten years later President Reagan invited him to become the

Spencer J. Condie was a member of the First Quorum of the Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints when this devotional address was given at Brigham Young University on 22 August 1995.

solicitor general of the United States. Again, subsuming private preferences for the good of his country, Rex answered the call and served with distinction from 1981 to 1985. It was during this time that a pesky thorn in his flesh emerged to test his faith and to try the endurance of his lovely Janet. But Janet's faith and prayers and tender loving care, the faith of their seven children and other loved ones, all combined with the power of the priesthood, sustained him—he came off victorious.

One early morning in the summer of 1989, I saw Rex and Janet in the parking lot of the Church Administration Building. They had obviously just concluded a meeting with one of the Brethren because I detected a special, radiant glow about them. After chatting briefly with them, I felt I had just spoken with the next president of BYU. A few days later my suspicions were confirmed. Alas, it wasn't long before President Lee announced to the faculty and students that once again more thorns of the flesh had reared their ugly heads to try his patience and his faith. But like the Nephites of old, Rex and Janet have gladly yielded their hearts to God, and in the process they have claimed the promised blessings of purification and sanctification.

Last fall President Lee conducted an awards banquet at which one of the honorees was Elder Rex D. Pinegar of the Presidency of the Seventy. President Lee said it was an honor for him to present an award to another man named Rex. He then explained that he had recently returned from a visit to the Middle East. There he had been the guest in the home of a very prominent family that had a beautiful dog. Rex asked them the name of the dog, to which they replied, "In the Middle East we don't give names to dogs." But later in the afternoon he overheard the maid calling to the dog, "Here, Rex. Here, Rex."

Rex E. Lee has always taken the gospel seriously, but seldom does he take himself seriously. Rex and Janet, we admire you and love

you, and we are grateful for your example of faith and courage and devotion in yielding your hearts to God.

Making Connections

On April 17, 1978, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that it had been six months since the last known case of smallpox had been reported in Somalia, Africa. The dreaded and disfiguring scourge of smallpox had been virtually eliminated from the face of the earth (see Donald A. Henderson, "Smallpox—Epitaph for a Killer?" *National Geographic* 154, no. 6 [December 1978]: 796–805).

Two centuries previous to this heartening announcement, a young British country physician by the name of Edward Jenner had shown great concern with this widespread disease that had killed and disfigured so many Europeans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. One day Jenner made a very important observation. It seemed that all of the young milkmaids in England who had contracted very mild cases of *cowpox* appeared to be naturally immune to *smallpox*.

On May 14, 1796, Dr. Jenner took some matter from a cowpox lesion of Sarah Nelmes, a young dairymaid, and inoculated James Phipps, a boy of eight, who later developed only a slight fever and a few cowpox lesions. Six weeks later, young James was inoculated again, but this time with virulent smallpox matter—but no infection occurred. He was immune to smallpox. A breakthrough of gigantic proportions had been made; and though it would take two centuries to do so, smallpox was doomed to extinction.

Whether discoveries occur in Archimedes' bathtub or under Sir Isaac Newton's apple tree, most scientific breakthroughs result from establishing connections. For centuries milkmaids had only been subjected to very mild attacks of cowpox whereas the rest of the population suffered from the scars and fatalities

of smallpox. It took Edward Jenner, at age twenty-seven, to make this important connection in identifying the desirable immunization properties of the very mild disease of cowpox that could be utilized to protect individuals against the dreaded disease of smallpox.

A quarter-century after Jenner's earth-shattering connection, an even greater connection was made by a young boy who was studying the Bible in the spring of 1820. He seemed to be the kind of young lad who did not just *read* the scriptures. He had an inclination to *study* them and to *ponder* their meaning. One day he read a passage that hundreds of biblical scholars and millions of Christian believers had read during the preceding centuries. But just as British physicians and farmers had failed to make the connections later made by Edward Jenner, previous students of the Bible had failed to make the saving connection that Joseph Smith made when he read those immortal words of James: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God" (James 1:5–6).

Joseph described his reactions in the following words:

Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. It seemed to enter with great force into every feeling of my heart. . . .

. . . I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God.

[JS—H 1:12–13]

Joseph's inspired ability to make *this* connection led him into the Sacred Grove. From thence, during the intervening years, he became an instrument in the hands of God in bringing forth the Book of Mormon, in restoring the true church of Christ, and in restoring the gospel in its fullness, including priesthood power and keys and all of the eternal ordinances necessary for us to return to the presence of God.

It all began when a young man made a connection between a scripture and a sacred grove and yielded his heart to God.

Powerful Ideas

Because of Joseph Smith's experience, we are all gathered here today. You are the "extra-milers" in the kingdom of God. Your presence confirms that you are among those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). Your minds are drawn to interesting, challenging, and powerful ideas. Elder Neal A. Maxwell has suggested that we maintain an inventory of insights and powerful ideas gleaned from reading, especially from the scriptures.

The purpose of our sojourn in mortality is to learn and to do those things necessary to qualify us to regain the presence of God. In order to do so, we must continually make connections between actions and consequences. One extremely important connection to make early in life is that "wickedness never was happiness" (Alma 41:10). In the Russian classic *Anna Karenina*, Leo Tolstoy observed that "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way" (*Anna Karenina*, trans. Constance Garnett (New York: Random House, 1939), p. 1). Inasmuch as the Book of Mormon teaches us that "men are, that they might have joy" (2 Nephi 2:25), we would do well to maintain in our hearts and minds those powerful teachings that bring us joy.

Another important connection is the discovery that "when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated" (D&C 130:21). Those who share the gospel with others and who engage in family history and temple work claim blessings and joy that simply cannot be gained any other way.

Still another valuable insight is "that the rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven" (D&C 121:36). A few months ago I had a wonderful

experience I have had several times previously in reorganizing a new stake presidency. I was given the assignment by President Boyd K. Packer of the Council of the Twelve. After praying for inspiration and guidance, a regional representative and I began interviewing several brethren whom the stake president and his counselors had arranged for us to meet.

As we interviewed a ward Young Men president, a very warm and impressive feeling came into both my heart and the heart of the regional representative. The confirmation of the Spirit was clear and unmistakable that this man was to be the next stake president.

After interviewing his wife and extending the call to him, we gave him some time to prayerfully select his counselors. The next morning we presented their names to the entire congregation. The voting was unanimous in the affirmative. We call this the law of common consent. This was not a majority vote as part of a democratic political process but rather a physical manifestation signified by the raised hand that each and every member of that congregation believed “that a man must be called of God, by prophecy, and by the laying on of hands by those who are in authority, to preach the Gospel and administer in the ordinances thereof” (Articles of Faith 1:5).

The outgoing stake presidency were all professional men with a combined experience of more than two dozen years serving in a stake presidency. They were in their mid-fifties, men of wisdom and sound judgment and experience. They were replaced by men in their early forties with no experience at all in a stake presidency, but it was readily apparent from the outpouring of love and support they received that the members of that particular stake fully realized that the Church is organized “for the perfecting of the saints” (Ephesians 4:11–12). “The Lord requireth the heart and a willing mind” (D&C 64:34), and these three men and their eternal companions had met that test by

“yielding their hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35).

Those called to work in the Primary nursery, on the ward newsletter, in the library, as Scoutmasters and Laurel advisors, as ward organists and choir directors also demonstrate by their actions that they have yielded “their hearts unto God.”

The Lord in his infinite wisdom calls his servants through divine inspiration. Sometimes those servants are fishermen and carpenters, and sometimes they are lawyers and doctors. Sometimes the most obvious man in the ward is *not* called to be the bishop so that he may continue learning humility, and the one who *is* called may become perfected enough to receive inspiration and guidance for the entire ward.

Oliver Cowdery

When called upon to sustain someone who appears to be less qualified than ourselves, there may sometimes be an inclination to follow the course of Oliver Cowdery in eventually looking down upon a leader less educated than we are.

In October 1834 Oliver eloquently recounted the great spiritual experience he had while serving as Joseph’s scribe:

These were days never to be forgotten—to sit under the sound of a voice dictated by the inspiration of heaven, awakened the utmost gratitude of this bosom! Day after day I continued, uninterrupted, to write from his mouth, as he translated with the Urim and Thummim . . . the history, or record, called “The book of Mormon.” [Messenger and Advocate 1:14; emphasis in original]

Oliver then referred to the ecstatic joy that filled their hearts as the resurrected John the Baptist conferred the Aaronic Priesthood upon Joseph and himself (ibid., pp. 15–16).

Joseph’s confidence in and reliance upon Oliver is reflected by the fact that in February 1835, the Prophet invited Oliver to give the

newly called Council of the Twelve their apostolic charge. Among other excellent counsel, Oliver admonished them to “cultivate great humility; for I know the pride of the human heart” (HC 2:195).

In April 1836 Oliver was in the Kirtland Temple with the Prophet when they “saw the Lord standing upon the breastwork of the pulpit” (D&C 110:1). Moses, Elias, and Elijah subsequently restored priesthood keys to them. But not long after, Oliver committed some serious transgressions and lost the Spirit of the Lord. He failed to attend to the responsibilities of his calling and began persecuting the Brethren and defaming the character of the Prophet Joseph (see HC 3:16–17).

In April 1838 Oliver was invited to appear before a disciplinary council to be tried for his membership in the Church. Among the charges was the allegation that he had persecuted the Brethren through urging lawsuits against them. It was also alleged that he had defamed the character of the Prophet and that he had treated “the Church with contempt by not attending meetings.” It was further alleged that he had forsaken his calling “appointed him by revelation, for the sake of filthy lucre, and turning to the practice of law” (HC 3:16–17).

Oliver refused to attend the disciplinary council and to face his brethren, but he did send a letter to Bishop Edward Partridge in response to the charges made against him. Note the change in this man who, in humbler days, had enthusiastically served as the Prophet’s scribe. Note the justification of his behavior and his arrogant attitude as he wrote the following:

My venerable ancestor was among the little band, who landed on the rocks of Plymouth in 1620—with him he brought those maxims, and a body of those laws which were the result and experience of many centuries, on the basis of which now stands our great and happy government; and they are so interwoven in my nature, have so long been inculcated into my

mind by a liberal and intelligent ancestry that I am wholly unwilling to exchange them for anything less liberal, less benevolent, or less free. . . .

This attempt to control me in my temporal interests, I conceive to be a disposition to take from me a portion of my Constitutional privileges and inherent right—I only, respectfully, ask leave, therefore, to withdraw from a society assuming they have such right. [HC 3:18]

Oliver had been a man of great native intellect, of eloquent speech, of unflinching loyalty to the Prophet as he served as second elder of the Church and later as assistant president of the Church. And now he had thrown it all away because he refused to accept the counsel of others.

Safety in Counsel

We would do well to remember a great principle taught in Proverbs: “Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety” (Proverbs 11:14). It generally takes longer to make a decision when several people are involved than when we make a decision alone. But when others are involved, they serve as an error-correction mechanism. Others see the blind spots that elude our own view of the vicissitudes of a given problem.

We gain valuable insight from the book of Abraham with regard to the council held to discuss the creation of the earth:

And the Gods took counsel among themselves and said: Let us go down and form man in our image, after our likeness. . . .

And the Gods said among themselves: On the seventh time we will end our work, which we have counseled; and we will rest on the seventh time from all our work which we have counseled. [Abraham 4:26, 5:2; emphasis added]

Notwithstanding his omniscience and omnipotence, our Heavenly Father counseled

with the other gods. Can we as mortal women and men do any less than to counsel with those around us, with our children, with our spouses, and with all those with whom we labor in the Church?

The law of common consent is part of the invisible glue that binds members of the Church to their leaders. Wherever we happen to live, we may often be better prepared than those with whom we labor in the kingdom, and there may at times be an Oliver Cowdery inclination to reject the counsel of others. But as we are called to serve as counselors and on councils and on committees, it is good to remember the Lord’s injunction to the presiding quorums of the Church that “every decision made by either of these quorums must be by the unanimous voice of the same [or] their decisions are not entitled to the same blessings” (D&C 107:27–29).

We may well be the brightest person in the bishopric or Young Women presidency or high council, but unless and until we subordinate our will to the law of common consent and are willing to receive counsel as well as to give counsel and are willing to concede and compromise and obtain consensus, then our potential influence for good will be greatly limited.

He Must Increase, But I Must Decrease

One of the paragon examples of one who yielded his heart unto Christ was John the Baptist. John was born into the world with a very special mission “to make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (Luke 1:17). As he reached manhood and began his ministry in the process of preparing the way, John acquired many devoted disciples of his own. In addition to baptizing them, he taught his disciples how to pray (see Luke 11:1) and the importance of fasting (see Matthew 9:14). In all of his teaching, however, John invariably pointed his disciples toward the coming of the Savior—such as when he told them:

I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.
[Matthew 3:11]

John clearly understood his mission as a forerunner to the redeemer of all mankind. After he had baptized the Savior, John continued teaching and baptizing (see John 3:23), and some of his disciples became very concerned that *others* were being baptized by the disciples of Jesus and they were beginning to follow the Savior (see John 3:23–26, 4:1–2).

The meekness and humility of John the Baptist and his unqualified devotion to the Savior are reflected in his spiritually mature response to his overly concerned followers: “*He must increase, but I must decrease*” (John 3:30; emphasis added). And so it is in each of our lives. If we are to become true disciples of the Savior, *he* must increase, but *we* must decrease.

A few months ago I flew to Sacramento with Elder Henry B. Eyring. We hadn’t planned to fly on the same plane—it just turned out that way. Our stake conference assignments were in similar areas. His seat was behind mine. A little girl about ten years old said to him, “Excuse me, sir. That’s a window seat. It’s mine.”

As she took her seat, this humble apostle with a string of degrees and other accolades said, “What’s your name, my dear?”

She answered, “My name is Sarah.”

And he said, “Hi, I’m Hal.”

I could have heard the words “I’m Luke” or “I’m James” ringing in my ears.

Becoming Prisoners of Christ

You will recall that it was the young Saul of Tarsus who looked after the clothes of those involved in the stoning of Stephen (see Acts 7:58). Thereafter Saul pursued a zealous career of making “havock of the church,” frequently punishing the Saints “in every synagogue” and

assenting to their imprisonment and death (Acts 8:3, 26:10–11). His fanatical “threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord” struck great fear in the hearts of the Saints of the Church (Acts 9:1).

And then, on the road to Damascus, he had a very dramatic spiritual experience that would forever change his life. He later wrote to the Galatians that after his conversion he went into the Arabian desert, and “then after three years” he finally “went up to Jerusalem to see Peter,” who was the head of the Church (Galatians 1:16–18).

As Saul of Tarsus began his mission, he changed his name to Paul and turned his life to Christ. On several different occasions the apostle Paul referred to himself as a “prisoner” of Christ (see Ephesians 3:1, 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:8; Philemon 1, 9, 23). Once he had made the decision to serve the Lord, that decision was irrevocable.

Paul’s frequent use of the term *prisoner* of Christ is very significant, for he was very familiar with prisons and prisoners. Before his conversion he had personally sent numerous Saints to prison (see Acts 26:10), and after his conversion he himself had been forcibly committed to prison (see Acts 23:10–11, 28:17–18). He had observed firsthand the restricted latitude of free will in the lives of other prisoners and had experienced this confinement in his own life when imprisoned.

Thus, when Paul confessed that *he* had become a willing prisoner of Christ, he disclosed that he had willingly chosen to use his moral agency to do only the will of the Lord. In doing so, he unraveled the mystery of the Savior’s paradoxical promise that “he that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 10:39). Those who willingly become prisoners of Christ “shall know the truth, and the truth shall make [them] free” (John 8:32). Those who resist becoming prisoners of Christ shall hear the truth, and the truth shall make them mad.

As Paul became Christ’s prisoner, his life began to more closely approximate the Savior’s life. His relationship with Christ became more like the Savior’s relationship with *his* Father. A myriad of scriptures could be cited to describe this relationship between father and son, but let us review only a few of them in headline form.

At the pool of Bethesda, after healing the man who had suffered an infirmity for thirty-eight years, the Savior humbly declared: “The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do” (John 5:19). He later added: “I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me” (John 5:30).

After forgiving the woman taken in adultery, the Savior reiterated that “I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me. . . . I do always those things that please him” (John 8:28–29; see also John 4:34, 6:38, 7:17).

The prophet Abinadi foresaw the Savior’s earthly ministry, during which time he would “be led, crucified, and slain, the flesh becoming subject even unto death, *the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father*” (Mosiah 15:7; emphasis added). What an eloquent description of what it means to be truly obedient: “the will of the Son being swallowed up in the will of the Father.”

And then that fateful hour arrived as the Savior began to atone for our sins in the Garden of Gethsemane. The weight of your sins and mine caused him to bleed from every pore and moved him to plead: “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: *nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done*” (Luke 22:42; emphasis added).

Inherent in each of these scriptures, and in countless others, is the fact that the Savior’s entire life reflected his humility and meekness in subordinating his will to the will of his Father.

Charles C. Rich

The spirit of “thy will be done” was strongly reflected in the life of Elder Charles C. Rich. Brother Rich was ordained an apostle in 1849 at the age of thirty-nine after serving as a general in the Mormon Battalion. Two years later Elder Rich was called to settle San Bernardino, California. Then, in 1863, President Brigham Young asked Elder Rich to establish a settlement in the Bear Lake Valley in what is now southeastern Idaho.

In June of 1864 the entire Rich family joined a band of nearly a thousand residents at Bear Lake and began constructing log houses with roofs made up of “a layer of willow branches, then a covering of straw topped off with thick sod” (Leonard J. Arrington, *Charles C. Rich* [Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1974], p. 259). That first summer Brother Rich proposed that the Saints celebrate the Fourth of July in grand style with a homemade flag, a little brass band, and lots of dancing (see p. 261).

But the joy of the occasion was short-lived. The very next day frost killed the spring wheat and stunted the growing corn. The subsequent winter was bitter cold, and the potatoes and wheat froze because of lack of storage facilities. The John Clifton family grew so short of supplies that their children “were kept in bed to conserve their strength” (p. 263).

As the individual and collective misery of the Saints increased, murmuring began to emerge from their ranks. Some of the brethren asked for a meeting with Brother Rich to discuss the possibility of abandoning the settlement for a more hospitable environment elsewhere. Elder Rich, sensing their concerns even before they were expressed, rose to his feet and addressed those in attendance:

Brethren — in the fall of 1863 President Young called me into his office and said, “Brother Rich, I want you to go up to Bear Lake Valley and see if it can be opened for settlement; and if it can, I want that you should take a company there and settle it.”

That was all I needed. It was a call. I came up here, with a few brethren; we looked over the valley; and, although the altitude was high, the snows heavy, and the frosts severe, there was plenty of water for irrigation purposes and plenty of fish in the lake and streams. So, with a company, I came here and settled with my family.

There have been many hardships. That I admit . . . and these we have shared together. But if you want to go somewhere else, that is your right, and I do not want to deprive you of it. If you are of a mind to leave here, my blessing will go with you. But I must stay here, even if I stay alone. President Young called me here, and here I will remain till he releases me and gives me leave to go. [Arrington, Charles C. Rich, p. 264]

Elder Charles C. Rich, Mormon general, Western frontiersman, apostle of the Lord, and prisoner of Jesus Christ, died nineteen years later in the Bear Lake Valley at Paris, Idaho, on November 17, 1883. He claimed the blessings of the Book of Mormon promised to those who yield “their hearts unto God” (Helaman 3:35).

Heiko Masurek

A contemporary prisoner of Christ is my good friend Heinz Konrad Masurek. Ten years ago Heiko, as he is called, was a young music student in Vienna during the time I was serving in the mission presidency in Austria. One day Heiko was walking down the streets of Vienna when a Book of Mormon street display caught his eye. His Latter-day Saint girlfriend had awakened in him some interest in the Church, so he stopped to talk with the missionaries, and they gave him a copy of the Book of Mormon. He began to read it and accepted the missionary discussions; eventually he was baptized.

Shortly after his baptism he moved back to Germany to accept a position in a symphony orchestra and a job teaching in a music school. I was concerned that this new convert might get lost in the shuffle of moving to a new ward in a new country so shortly after baptism.

I knew Heiko's new stake president since the days when I served in Germany as a young missionary, so I called President Ulrich Rueckauer and asked him if he could give Heiko some special attention to assure that he remained active in the Church.

A few weeks later this caring stake president invited Heiko to make a three-hour train trip to Stuttgart to share his conversion story in a Saturday afternoon stake priesthood leadership meeting. Heiko accepted the invitation with considerable fear and trepidation.

He had never spoken to a large audience before, so the evening prior to his appointed speech he spent a rather sleepless night tossing and turning. When the alarm clock finally rang, he turned it off and promised himself he would just sleep for a few more minutes and then get up. But he was so exhausted from his fitful night's sleep that he awoke too late to catch the train for Stuttgart in time to arrive punctually at the stake center to give his talk.

He hurriedly dressed and called a taxi to take him to the small airport outside of town, and, although he was a financially struggling musician, he chartered a small plane to fly him to Stuttgart. The cost of the flight was 900 deutsche marks, or about \$450. Upon landing, he checked on the bus schedule into the city, and it was immediately clear that the bus made too many stops along the way for him to arrive at the stake center in time. So, although the taxi fare for the twenty-mile trip was another forty dollars, he hired a cab and headed for Stuttgart.

President Rueckauer called me in Vienna after the meeting and described how Heiko had arrived all out of breath just ten minutes after the meeting had begun. But he gave a marvelous and inspiring talk, and all in attendance were grateful for the sacrifice he had made to attend.

Several months later Heiko came to visit us in Vienna, and we asked him to recount his experience of chartering the small plane to

Stuttgart in order to attend the meeting on time. After he rehearsed the details, I asked him: "Heiko, why didn't you just call up President Rueckauer and tell him you would not be able to make it to the meeting and that you would be willing to speak on some future occasion?"

Heiko looked at me almost indignantly as he said: "When the missionaries taught me the gospel, they explained the importance of commitments and of covenants, and they said that when we make a promise to the Lord or to one of his servants, we are expected to keep our commitment."

Heiko, Elder Charles C. Rich, the apostle Paul, John the Baptist, and Rex E. Lee share a commitment in common with the ancient Nephites, who became purified and sanctified because they yielded their hearts unto God.

Robert Robinson and John Wyeth have aptly captured the essence of yielding our hearts unto God in that grand old hymn "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing," which will now be performed by the BYU Symphony and combined choruses under the direction of Professor Mack Wilberg:

*O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, as a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,
Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it;
Seal it for thy courts above.*
["Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing,"
Hymns, 1948, no. 70]

I pray that each of us may live our lives in the spirit of "not my will, but *thine*, be done," which the Savior exemplified throughout his earthly ministry, that we, too, may yield our hearts to God. I say this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.