

## Podcast 137: Commune with Christ, Part 2

This is the second part of a special series where Denver addresses the question, "How can I commune with Christ?"

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DENVER: There are some brilliant comments from some of you. Profound comments, even. But you must be careful about over-thinking things. Doctrine is not to be understood as an academic or scholarly undertaking. (Remember the chapter in Eighteen Verses on Moroni 10: 5.)

It is supposed to be understood in the doing. (John 7: 17.) When you have done it, as Nephi has, then you will be able to explain the doctrine. To attempt to have a command of the doctrine without having done the will of the Father is to always be left without understanding. It is also not necessary to be able to fully expound the doctrine before doing it. It is necessary to take action consistent with the invitation offered to you.

Your mind can work at cross purposes. Remember the chapter on "Becoming as a Child" in The Second Comforter. In order to go forward you must go back. Simplicity is at the heart of God's offer to commune with you.

Angelic ministerence comes to people of a firm mind and every form of godliness, calls repentance in order to fulfil and in order to do the work of the covenants. "To fulfil and to do the work of the covenants of the Father", that requires that people bear testimony of Him. These are the essential things that are needed. It doesn't require a fanciful or a flowery imagination. It does not require that we bear testimony of ourselves. It doesn't require us to do something other than to fulfil and do the work of the covenants. Therefore, I would suggest this is a pretty good guide to consider when you're evaluating all of the competing claims that are now being made by people, to having inspiration or revelation or the word of God to them.

We are vulnerable to being misled even as we claim to be inspired. I'm going to read from a recent study from the National Academy of Science. I read from it because it's a really interesting study result:

"Religion appears to serve as a moral compass for the vast majority of people around the world. It informs whether same-sex marriage is love or sin, whether war is an act of security or of terror, [and] whether abortion rights represent personal liberty or permission to murder. Many religions are centered on a god (or gods) that has beliefs and intentions, with adherents encouraged to follow "God's will" on everything from martyrdom to career planning to voting. Within these religious systems, how do people know what their god wills?"

“When people try to infer other people's attitudes and beliefs, they often do so egocentrically by using their own beliefs as an inductive guide. This research examines the extent to which people might also reason egocentrically about God's beliefs. We predicted that people would be consistently more egocentric when reasoning about God's beliefs than when reasoning about other people's beliefs. Intuiting God's beliefs on important issues may not produce an independent guide, but may instead serve as an echo chamber that reverberates one's own beliefs.

“The Jewish and Christian traditions state explicitly that God created man in his own image, but believers and nonbelievers alike have long argued that people seem to create God in their own image as well.”

That's a problem that you find everywhere. God wills this to be so – well, because God agrees with me that it ought to be so, and therefore I'm comfortably in tune with God.

The greatest help given to us to solve the contradiction between praying to God and the answer being exactly what we wanted, exactly what we expected, and exactly what makes us right and everyone else wrong; the greatest guide is the scriptures. They provide us a lifeline for measuring any inspiration we think we obtain from God. But that's not enough if it's not coupled together with prayerful, ponderous thought, and time and experience. I want to compare these statements from Joseph Smith about this topic:

*“A person may profit by noticing the first intimation of the spirit of revelation; for instance, when you feel pure intelligence flowing into you, it may give you sudden strokes of ideas, so that by noticing it, you may find it fulfilled the same day or soon; (i.e.) those things that were presented unto your minds by the Spirit of God, will come to pass; and thus by learning the Spirit of God and understanding it, you may grow into the principle of revelation, until you become perfect in Christ Jesus.”*

That seems to suggest that answers can come suddenly, quickly, perhaps even easily. But Joseph also said this:

“A fanciful and flowery and heated imagination beware of; because the things of God are of deep import; and time, and experience, and careful and ponderous and solemn thoughts can only find them out. Thy mind, O man! if thou wilt lead a soul unto salvation, must stretch as high as the utmost heavens, and search into and contemplate the darkest abyss, and the broad expanse of eternity—thou must commune with God.”

That second quote is taken from a letter that Joseph Smith composed while he was in Liberty Jail in which he had plenty of time to fashion the language. The first quote, sadly, is taken from a source which may not be reliable or accurate. The source for that first quote is

Willard Richards's Pocket Companion in which he quoted something which, if Joseph Smith said it, Joseph said it while Willard Richards was in England on a mission and he could not possibly have heard it. He doesn't even attribute it to Joseph Smith. But when the documentary history was being compiled they used the Willard Richards Companion to take that language and attribute it to a talk given by Joseph in 1839 because most of the stuff in the Pocket Companion can be tracked to Joseph, and therefore they conclude this one likewise fit that same category. The second one is clearly, unambiguously from Joseph Smith and describes the process. Now, while Joseph was in the Liberty Jail on occasion he would have a friendly face show up, or he would have a letter arrive. On one of the occasions he got letters from other people and his wife, Emma. Joseph, who had been brooding at the time and longing for the companionship of some friends, describes what his mind was going through at the time of the letter and his response to it. He says his mind was frenzied, and any man's mind can be when contemplating the many difficult issues we are called upon to confront.

Just like Joseph, we have perpetual conundrums and contradictions. We all face them. Some are of our own making but others are just inherent in living in this existence. When we thoughtfully consider the challenges, just like Joseph it seizes the mind, and like Joseph in Liberty Jail, makes us reflect upon so many things with the "avidity of lightning". That was Joseph's word. The mind is in this frenzied state, and with the avidity of lightning he's jumping from subject to subject, a fence to a fence, from things that console to things that outrage you. From things you know to be true to things that offend you. Back and forth, and back and forth until, as Joseph puts it, "...finally all enmity, malice and hatred, and past differences, misunderstandings and mismanagements are slain victorious at the feet of hope; and when the heart is sufficiently contrite, then the voice of inspiration steals along and whispers[.]" It's almost poetry, the way Joseph describes what he went through there. But it is poetry describing the actual bona fides of Joseph receiving answers from God.

God's most important inspiration for the most challenging subjects is often not hasty, quick and without effort at our end. Consider the advice to Oliver Cowdery that he must "study it out in his own mind first" before asking God to tell him the answer. Many people want a quick, perfunctory response from God with no forethought. What they receive in turn is a quick, perfunctory answer.

God is almost always, for the most difficult challenges, not a "short order cook" although there are certainly false spirits who are willing to be just that.

I asked God in October what the term "mutual agreement" as used in the Answer meant. Before I asked I hesitated and pondered the issue for two months. I discussed it with my wife and several others, and then discussed again the views of others with my wife. I read emails from people involved in an active discussion about the meaning of the term.

It requires humility to approach God and ask Him for His answer and yet more humility to know it is from Him and not my own ego, presumptions, hopes, desires, wants and conceit. It is for me, as it was for Joseph, only “when the heart is sufficiently contrite, then the voice of inspiration steals along and whispers” the truth. That comes from a purer source, higher than myself and more filled with light than any man. Certainly, greater light than I have.

When the definition was given, it was accompanied by the realization the Lord could have disputed every day of His life with someone. He deliberately chose to not contend. He was not an argumentative personality.

The more we contend with others the more we are taken captive by the spirit of contention. We become subject to the spirit we submit to follow. Those who are prone to contention become more contentious as they listen to that spirit. Eventually they are overcome by that spirit and it is a great work involving great effort to subdue and dismiss that spirit from the heart and mind of the victim.

Let me give you a description of the Prayer for the Covenant: It took months of pondering, testing, questioning beforehand, before I even dared to ask. The idea that presented itself to my mind was that Joseph’s prayer at the dedication of the Kirtland Temple was a pattern to be followed when some great event involving God was to take place. The House of the Lord was one such event in Kirtland but having a new volume of scripture was at least equally important to that. Therefore a prayer to God asking for His acceptance was an idea that continued to press upon my mind.

But it concerned me that the idea of my offering that prayer may be based on my own will, and not heaven’s. Before proceeding I questioned my motive, my desire, and why I would even ask. I was haunted by the continuing impression that it needed to be done and was required of me. Finally, when the idea could not be shaken from my mind I determined it was not my own thought but God’s beckoning voice telling me this was an obligation I needed to act upon and not suppress. I want you to think of Joseph’s description that says: “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 reflected on it again and again[.]”

Joseph did not act hastily when the impression came to him. He couldn’t shake it. It persisted. He reflected upon it again and again. I don’t know whether that’s days, weeks, or months, but I can tell you before the Prayer for the Covenant was offered, for me it was months because if it isn’t of God I have no right to step forward and do something. I ought not be volunteering for things of that nature. At length I determined that I should act on the impulse and therefore I ought to offer a prayer for the acceptance of the scripture. When I began to compose the prayer the content was provided by inspiration from Heaven and not

my own words. It took me nearly 200,000 words to write a history of the Restoration from the time of Joseph to the present, in a book that's fairly lengthy. The Prayer for the Covenant, coming by inspiration, only took a few pages and stated in more concise terms, more correctly the history of the Restoration from the beginning until now. The Prayer for the Covenant, the Prayer for the Scriptures, is not me being clever and insightful and succinct. The words were given, and the words are God's view of what has happened.

There are those who have claimed inspiration on very important matters who make decisions quickly. Almost as soon as they finish a prayer asking for something they assume the first thing that pops into their mind is God's infallible answer. I do not doubt that may happen. It has happened to me, but for the most important things I have found that careful, ponderous, and solemn thought and meditation over time produces God's will and word with clarity that does not happen in haste.

Let's make some assumptions for purposes of what's going to be said. Let's assume that we are like ancient Israel. Let's assume that we too were left outside of God's presence when He offered to come and dwell generally among the Saints back in Nauvoo. Let's assume that this was not what God wanted for us.

Let's assume that these things have, just like they did anciently, kindled God's anger, like we read in D&C 84:24. Let's assume that we have now—as a body, generally—been left with something lesser, which is like what was described in D&C 84, verse 26; that is, only the lesser priesthood, which includes within it the ministering of angels.

Well, assuming all of that, what shall we do? Well, turn to Alma chapter 12 (a great chapter, by the way). And since this is already taking longer than I had hoped, I'm gonna insert in the transcript [paper] the verses in Alma chapter 12, between 9 and 11, that talks about, "if you harden your hearts, you get less; but if your heart is soft and open, you get more" (see also Alma 9:3 RE).

**You're** the regulator that determines whether, on the one hand, you get more or whether, on the other, you get less. And some of those who have come today with a hard heart are gonna find themselves being condemned in the day of judgment, because you were given an opportunity to have a soft heart, and you elected knowingly not to do so. Can you imagine your shame when you, in a council that includes those who are present today, come back from this experience and say, "Yes, I was there, but I didn't believe. Yes, I was there, but I wouldn't accept it." None of us would vote to sustain you in the coming years, in the coming eons, in the coming experience to be a minister, to bring salvation to pass to others. None of us will have confidence in you. Soften your heart now. Today is the day of salvation. This is the moment you came down here to face. The test is on; the challenge is in

front of you. You better have ears to hear. God will judge you, but more importantly, you will judge yourself.

Well, skipping then over verses 9 to 11, I'm gonna go to... Beginning at verse 28:

"And after God had appointed that these things should come unto man, behold, then he saw that it was expedient that man should **know** concerning the things whereof he had appointed unto **them**. (Alma 12:28, emphasis added)

He **wants** us to know! The glory of God is intelligence or, in other words, Light and Truth, which is knowledge of things. He wants us to know these things.

"Therefore [because **this is God's desire**] he sent angels to converse with them, who [this is the angels] caused men to behold...his [God's] glory. (ibid, vs. 29, emphasis added)

So, the office of the angels is to educate and to prepare—and then to cause man, who receive and entertain the angels, to then behold the glory of God (the glory of God being intelligence or, in other words, Light and Truth).

Ultimately, the greatest truth **is** God Himself. And if you entertain angels (and if the angels instruct you and if you have been in their presence), you acquire from them the strength, the fortification, the knowledge—or in other words, the ordination—by which you're able to go on and pass by them (because they surely are sentinels) and enter into the Glory of Lecture 8: A Broken Heart and Contrite Spirit, RE Page 6 of 37 the Lord. And so, if you will give heed to the process, it really should not matter that you are left in a dispensation in which the only authority gives you the ministering of angels. Because the ministering of angels is sufficient to bring you into the glory of God—if you will receive them, if you will give heed to them. That's the office of their ministry; that's what they're responsible to do.

"And they began from that time forth to call on his name; therefore **God conversed with men**." (ibid, vs. 30, emphasis added; see also Alma 9:7 RE)

It's part of the title to the first book I wrote, [*The Second Comforter:*] *Conversing with the Lord Through the Veil*. That's the object; that's what the "lesser priesthood" can equip you to accomplish—left behind with nothing but a relic...

And what did Joseph say about all the prophets of the Old Testament? He said they **all** held Melchizedek Priesthood, and they were **all** ordained by God Himself because they functioned inside a society that was defective, limited, excluded from the presence of God. But **not those who received and entertained angels**. They were brought up to where they need to be, and **God Himself ordained them**. Should you not have hope? Should you not rise up above the level of those who are content to have less? Should you not be willing

to mount up on that fiery mountain, despite the thunderings and lightnings, despite the earthquakes, despite the fact you do not believe yourself to be worthy? You're still capable of coming aboard.

Look at Moroni chapter 7, beginning at verse 29:

"Because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, have miracles ceased? Behold I say unto you, Nay; **neither have angels ceased to minister unto the children of men.** For behold, they [the angels] are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, showing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness. And the office of their ministry is to call men [to] repentance [repentance], ...to fulfill and to do the work of the covenants of the Father..." (Moroni 7:29-31, emphasis added)

...because when you move **from** repentance, you move **into** covenants (which is why we needed to speak about that in Centerville; which is why **this** process has been undergoing for the last year, unfolding **how you get back into the presence of God**—because it surely is necessary for there to be a rescue mission, and the rescue mission is designed to raise **you**, to elevate **you**, to redeem **you**).

"...the work of the covenants of the Father, which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him. And by so doing, the Lord God prepareth the way that the residue of men may have faith in Christ, that the Holy Ghost may have place in **their** hearts, according to the power thereof; and after this manner bringeth to pass the Father, the **covenants** which he hath made unto the children of men." (ibid, vs. 31-32, emphasis added; see also Moroni 7:6 RE)

In a word, those who receive and entertain angels have an obligation, then, to declare the words so that others might likewise have faith in Him. That word, having been declared unto you, gives you the hope, the faith, the confidence that you likewise can do so—so that the covenants that are made by the Father can be brought to pass. Fortunately—fortunately... Aaronic Priesthood is exceptionally durable, fortunately, unlike Melchizedek Priesthood (which can only be exercised with extraordinary care and delicacy—the purpose of Melchizedek Priesthood being, as I talked about in Orem, to bless; the purpose of Aaronic Priesthood being to condemn, and to judge, and to set a law by which men can condemn themselves). Having the authority to do **that** to yourself is remarkably durable and used with great regularity. And those that have it generally abide by so lesser a law that they wind up judging and condemning one another and parading before God as a... as a... a march of fools, yelling and yammering, pointing and blaming, complaining and bitching about what everyone else's inadequacies are. The purpose of Melchizedek Priesthood is to sound the signal: "Know ye the Lord." And eventually, that sermon will be

heard by enough that there will be none left who need to be told, "Know ye the Lord," for they shall **all** know Him. And **everyone** will take up with Him their concerns and not with one another.

Go to Doctrine and Covenants section 93, and look at verse 1. I've treated this at some length in what I've written, but I just wanna read it because it outlines what's required: VERILY, thus saith the Lord: It shall come to pass that every soul who forsaketh his sins and cometh unto me, and calleth on my name, and obeyeth my voice, and keepeth my commandments, shall see my face and know [**know**] that I am. (See also T&C 93:1)

Knowing the Lord! "This is life eternal to **know** thee, the only wise and true God and...Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3, emphasis added; see also John 9:19 RE). Knowledge; knowledge of the things of God—and in this context, this knowledge **is** salvation; this knowledge **is** the fullness of the Gospel. Forsake your sins; come to Christ; call on His name; obey His voice; keep His commandments. "Obey His voice," in your instance, may be very different than "obeying His voice" in my life, because your circumstances are entirely peculiar to you. You're living your life, and I'm living mine. You're asked to minister in **your** family, to minister in **your** neighborhood, to function among **your** friends, to deal with people that **you** know. And I, on the other hand, am required not only to do **that** but also to come and talk to you good people (which, whether you believe me sincere or not, I would much rather not have been asked to do—but apparently, in the economy of God, no one else is willing to do it).

Go to Ether chapter 3. I wanna define what the promise of "know[ing] that I am..." (And by the way, those are the words that He uses in section 93: "know that **I am**." You need to know "the I am.") Verse 13 of Ether chapter 3:

And when he had said these words, behold, the Lord showed himself unto him, and said: Because thou knowest these things ye are redeemed from the fall [there's the definition; that's what redemption is]; therefore ye are brought back into my presence; therefore I show myself unto you. Behold, **I am** he who was prepared from the foundation of the world to redeem my people. Behold, **I am** Jesus Christ. **I am** the Father and the Son. In me shall all mankind have life, and that eternally, even they who shall believe on my name; and they shall become my sons and my daughters. (Ether 3:13-14, emphasis added)

This is the definition. This is what the promise means. And then, look what happens. In verse 18:

And he ministered unto him even as he ministered unto the Nephites; and all this, that this man might know that he was God, because of the many great works which the Lord...showed unto him. (ibid, vs. 18, emphasis added)



This is the definition of the glory of God. This is the definition of Light and Truth: to know these things... to know these things about God.

And because of the knowledge of this man he could not be kept from beholding within the veil; and he saw the finger of Jesus, which, when he saw, he fell with fear; for he knew that it was the finger of the Lord; and he had faith no longer, for he knew, nothing doubting. (ibid, vs. 19, emphasis added; see also Ether 1:13-14 RE)

He had faith yet in things he was commanded to do because they had not yet happened. But he no longer had faith in the existence of Christ—that had been replaced by knowledge of Him. Knowledge supplants faith.

We looked at John's testimony in Doctrine and Covenants section 93, and we need to look at that again, just to remind you—because this is an important reminder before we get to the next point. Between section 93, verse 7 and verse 20, he describes the process by which Christ was called to be the Son of God. I wanna skip to verse 12.

I, John, saw that he received not...the fulness at the first, but received grace for grace; And he received not...the fulness at first, but continued from grace to grace, until he received a fulness; And thus he was called the Son of God, because he received not...the fulness at the first. And I, John, bear record, and lo, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon him in the form of a dove, ...sat upon him, and there came a voice out of heaven saying: This is my beloved Son. And I, John, bear record that he received a fulness of the glory of the Father; ...he received all power, both in heaven and on earth, and the glory of the Father was with him, for he dwelt in him. And it shall come to pass, that if you are faithful you shall receive the fulness of the record of John. I give unto you these sayings that you may understand and know how to worship, and [to] know what you worship, that you may come unto the Father in my name, and in due time receive of his fulness. For if you keep my commandments you shall receive of his fulness, and be glorified in me as I am in the Father; therefore, I say unto you, [that] you shall receive grace for grace. (D&C 93:12-20, emphasis added; see also T&C 93:4-7)

That's what you do to worship! That is how you are to worship! We grow in grace as we exhibit the grace that has been given unto us. And we do so in order for us to obtain, likewise, the fullness.

Everything I have said so far bears only upon the temple, and that's the purpose of getting here; is to discuss about what the temple's purpose is, what it means, and what it is trying to convey to us. Is the temple an end or the temple a means? If the temple is an end, then everyone who goes through the temple obtains everything the temple has to offer by virtue of going in and participating in the ceremony. Even more so, those who have conspired to

break their temple covenants and gone in and recorded the temple ceremonies, and then transcribed those ceremonies and put them on the internet, have made it possible for everyone who goes to the trouble of finding and reading the temple ceremony that is now available on the internet. If the temple ceremony is an end, then all of those people are the beneficiaries of it as well. But if the temple ceremony is instead a means, a means of trying to take you somewhere, then it doesn't matter who sees the ordinance, you can't steal the ends. You can't come in by some unauthorized way and attain the end, because that is a matter that exists between you and God. If it is a means, then what is it a means to? Because one possible meaning that you should come away with, is that it is a means to inform you that there is a veil and not a wall to permit you to talk through and to touch through and to feel your way through to the symbolic presence of God and then, that veil is not a wall, but something that can be, with merely the brush of the hand of our Lord, drawn aside so that you may enter into his presence. And the way you get there is by being prepared in all things, having been true and faithful in all things, coming to learn something from Him; not coming to tell Him something, not coming to impose upon Him, but coming to learn from Him. Our Savior was, and is, first and foremost, a teacher. By HIS knowledge, Isaiah and Nephi wrote, he shall justify many. By His Knowledge. He possesses things, which we do not yet comprehend. He possesses things which He would like us to comprehend. How then are we to comprehend the things which only He can teach? By permitting Him to do so; by coming to Him.

In the ceremony, there is an account given of the man Adam, and I have a question for you... WHO, in the ceremony, is Adam? Is this a history lesson about the first man who lived on the Earth or is this, instead, a symbolic rendering of the lives of every man, or is it instead YOUR life. Are you being told that in the beginning, you came here in an innocent, even a paradisiacal state. And in that state, everything was possible to the innocent mind. I mean, we impose, as adults, upon the credulity of our children by teaching them about the Easter bunny, and then to pull off the fraud, we have to go the trouble every Easter of acting the role of the Easter bunny, always out of sight; and we impose upon them Santa Clause, and they believe in these things. That faith and that trust that those children have, comes as a consequence of where every one of you began; in a state of innocence, in a state of purity, in a state in which it is possible for that mind to comprehend and to accept the things of God. But there comes a point when you become accountable. There comes a point when you grow out of that and you are expelled from that innocence and then in order to return there, you have to make certain sacrifices and you have to be willing to obey, and you have to be willing to pursue the gospel. Because there is a difference between the age of Å when you begin to become accountable and puberty; at length, the range of temptation that will confront you will require you then to engage and obey the law of chastity. And then as you grow into adulthood, when you realize that this world really has very little to offer, you learn that the way to happiness does not consist in popularity or wealth or acclaim, it lies

exclusively in consecrating yourself to the things of God. And when you have developed through that course and you have come to the recognition that consecrating yourself is the only thing of value.

In the ceremony, it only takes some 2 hours before you are called true and faithful in all things. Well, if that's an end and not a means, then in 2-½ hours in sitting and occasionally standing and agreeing to some things, you have become true and faithful in all things. I would suggest that the temple rite is an end, makes that notion preposterous because you are the same person walking out of the temple as you were walking into it 2 hours earlier. You are no more faithful in the temptations that you face on the street, you are no more lovely in the way that you deal with your family, you are no more honest in your business dealings with your fellow man then you were 2 hours earlier when you walked in, but the ceremony is saying you have been true and faithful in all things. I would suggest that's a means and it's an admonition. And it's an invitation, even begging you to recognize that the challenge you face in your life requires you, invariably, to lay aside those things that pull you away and that you always turn and face the Lord. THAT'S WHAT REPENTANCE MEANS. It means to turn and face the Lord. And you know when you face him the first time, you're just not going to be that good or that different than you were the moment before, but if you'll face him, he'll work with you. It does not matter how badly damaged you are. That's irrelevant. He fixed the apostle Paul. If you don't think the apostle Paul suffered from pride, than you don't understand the malignancy of pride. He fixed Alma the younger and the sons of Mosiah, whose deliberate purpose was to overthrow the things of God. I don't care what you've done, the malignancies of those men are highlighted in scripture in order to assure that you can all be reclaimed.

Turn and face Him and then walk with Him. He does all the guiding and most of the heavy lifting. When it comes to the idea of being True and Faithful... By the way, I don't care if you buy a quad, your scriptures are not complete until you get the Lectures on Faith. They were voted in and sustained as scripture and then they were removed without a vote. In the Lectures on Faith, 7th lecture, 16th verse, talking about the Savior:

"These teachings of the Savior most clearly show unto us the nature of salvation; and what he proposed unto the human family when he proposed to save them -- That he proposed to make them like unto himself; and he was like the Father, the great prototype of all saved beings: And for any portion of the human family to be assimilation into their likeness is to be saved; and to be unlike them is to be destroyed: and on this hinge turns the door of salvation."

Jesus Christ IS the prototype of all saved beings. SO WHAT was our Savior if he's the prototype? He was a blasphemer. He was a sinner. He worked on the Sabbath and he encouraged his disciples to do so. He associated with the tax collectors and with the

publicans and sinners and the harlots, and he let harlots tooooooouch him. This is the prototype of the saved man. This is the One who was rejected by His people. This is the One who was called unclean. This is the One who was rejected, persecuted, and ultimately killed by those who held religious rank and authority in His day. This is the prototype of the saved man. This is the example of Joseph Smith. This is Isaiah and Jeremiah. WAS Christ true and faithful in all things? If so, to what, to whom was He true and faithful? Was it the law? I mean, he never spoke ill against the law. The Sermon on the mount is simply taking the law and showing what it really meant. He took it to another level. If he took it to the level in which he took it, Caiaphas would not have been sitting there in the robes of the priesthood, which by that time, had been elevated to the status of wealth itself. If you had merely the attire that Caiaphas had on during the trial of Christ, just his attire, you would have been a wealthy man.

The Lectures on Faith 6:7:

“A religion that does not require the sacrifice of all things, never has power sufficient to produce the faith necessary unto life and salvation; for from the first existence of man, the faith necessary unto the enjoyment of life and salvation never could be obtained without the sacrifice of all earthly things.”

It's through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things that men do actually know that they are doing things that are well pleasing in the sight of God. And then we get to this verse 8:

“It is in vain for persons to fancy to themselves that they are heirs with those, or can be heirs with them, who have offered their all in sacrifice, and by this means obtained faith in God and favor with him so as to obtain eternal life, unless they, in like manner, offer unto him the same sacrifice, and through that offering obtain the knowledge that they are accepted of him.”

What did the Prototype of the saved man offer in sacrifice? I mean, we jump to the end of the story and we point to Gethsemane and we point to the cross and we say, there it is, His life. But He was a living sacrifice for many more years than the week that was spent coming in, confronting them in the temple, celebrating and implementing the sacrament, going into Gethsemane and suffering, being tried and crucified, being laid in a grave, and 3 days and 3 nights later arising from the grave. He spent some 30+ years prior to that as the prototype of the saved man.

In the ceremony, you come asking for further light and knowledge from the Lord, and when you enter into the Lord's presence in the ceremony, it hints at something which the scriptures themselves make plain. In John 14:18 The Savior said, I will not leave you

comfortless, I will come to you. John 14:23 “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and WE will come unto him and make our abode with him.” Well, that promise in the 23rd verse suggests something beyond the Lord simply coming and visiting someone. The notion that the Father and The Son will take up their abode... I mean, we have that hymn, and that hymn creates a picture; Abide with me Tis Eventide, so abiding means you come and you spend the evening and there we have taken care of the abode. But the suggestion here is that there is a greater kind of familiarity that attaches to the relationship that is more enduring.

In Revelation 3:20-21 there is a promise that John records, Behold, I stand at the door and knock... In this description, it's almost a flip. It's not you knocking to get in, it's the Lord knocking to come to you. It's the Lord who is the eager One. The One who would like to have this relationship take up. He is the One knocking. He is the One trying to get into your life. And so, in this account the Lord is speaking: “I stand at the door and knock. If any man hear my voice...” See, His sheep hear his voice. Do you hear His voice? “If any man hear my voice and open the door...” because you're the one who shut it. You're the one who is saying, “uh, no thanks, I'll pass. I mean, I've got a skeptical mind now. I've been to college and have received training to practice law. I'm an engineer and I understand formulas and equations. I'm a mathematician and I know some things add up and some things don't, and I also know that I've been leading a reasonably decent life and I have never had Jesus in MY car.”

Our minds are skeptical. WE have to open the door, because almost invariably the door that we configure to keep him out from our construct is something that has come about as a consequence of what has happened in your life. From the time you left that state of innocence as a child in the Garden until today. Every painful experience you have been through, every humiliation you've suffered, everything that has gone on in your life that has led to where you now construct a door.... Some of oak, some of iron. Whatever it is that has happened to you, you use THAT to keep Him out. “Well if he really cared, he would....”

You know, the notion that He doesn't care is the greatest lie of all. If you knew what he suffered, you would NEVER say, “If He cared....” But if you will open the door, He says I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.

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The foregoing excerpts are taken from:

- Denver's blog post entitled "Don't Overthink Things," originally posted August 29, 2010 and subsequently recorded on February 16, 2021;

- A fireside talk entitled “That We Might Become One”, given in Clinton, UT on January 14th, 2018;
- Denver’s *40 Years in Mormonism Series*, Talk #8 entitled “A Broken Heart” given in Las Vegas, NV on July 25th, 2014; and
- Denver’s fireside talk on “The Temple”, given in Ogden, UT on October 28th, 2012.