

EPISODE 23 • PART I

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat



D&C 60-62

Hank Smith:	00:00:01	Welcome to followHIM, a weekly podcast dedicated to helping individuals and families with their <i>Come, Follow Me</i> study. I'm Hank Smith.
John Bytheway:	00:00:09	And I'm John Bytheway, we love to learn, we love to laugh. We want to learn and laugh with you. As together, we followHIM.
Hank Smith:	00:00:18	Hello, everyone and welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith and I am here with my engaging co host John Bytheway, welcome, John.
John Bytheway:	00:00:28	Thank you. We used to say at BYU when our fellow board members became engaged, they were engaged. You can never find them to do their Home Teaching anymore, too. It was tough.
Hank Smith:	00:00:41	Well, it came from our last interview with Alex Baugh, with Dr. Baugh, as we talked about anxiously engaged. Hey, I need to remind everybody, you can find us on social media, Instagram and Facebook. You can go to our website, followhim.co , followhim.co for transcripts, references, anything you need. You can also rate and review the podcast, we'd love it if you do that. John, who is our guest expert today, I got to tell you, I'm pretty excited.
John Bytheway:	00:01:11	We are excited to have Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat back and he did with us, what was a heck? Section 3?
Hank Smith:	00:01:17	Section 3, when we were just getting started. We were brand new podcasters John, now we know--
John Bytheway:	00:01:23	We're so experienced now. And so we're so excited to have him back because we had so much fun and since that time, I've seen him on <i>History of the Saints</i> , a bunch of other places. So let me refresh our audience's memory about Gerrit. Gerrit J. Dirkmaat is an Assistant Professor of Church History and Doctrine at BYU. He received his PhD from the University of Colorado, (go

Buffaloes!) in 2010, where he studied 19th century American Expansionism and Foreign Relations.

- John Bytheway: 00:01:54 His dissertation was titled *Enemies Foreign and Domestic: US Relations with Mormons in the US Empire in North America 1844 to 1854*. He worked as a Historian and Writer for the Church History Department from 2010 to 2014, with *The Joseph Smith Papers* project and served as a volume Coeditor, Historian for *Documents: Volume One*, the Lead Volume Editor on *Documents: Volume Three*, has continued to work as a volunteer editor for *The Joseph Smith Papers* project on *Administrative Records: " Council of Fifty, Minutes, March 1844 to January 1846*, and *Documents: Volume Eight*. How would you like everything Hank, that you had ever written or texted or posted to be compiled in a book one day?
- Hank Smith: 00:02:41 [inaudible 00:02:41] a word.
- John Bytheway: 00:02:43 I know. He is the co author along with Micahel Hubbard MacKay of the award-winning book *From Darkness Unto Light*, which I am still waiting for the notification from the Salt Lake County Library to go pick up. Maybe I should just go buy one from, *From Darkness Unto Light*, I was going to say. I was like, "John, come on." Joseph Smith is, let me give you the full title, *From Darkness Unto Light: Joseph Smith's Translation and Publication of the Book of Mormon* published by Religious Studies Center at BYU and Deseret Book in 2015, the author of dozens of academic articles as well. Is that enough, Gerrit?
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:03:20 Honestly, my name is enough. I don't think we need to-
- John Bytheway: 00:03:24 -I'm a third of the way through. This is great.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:03:28 I didn't send this one over in particular.
- John Bytheway: 00:03:33 I got this. I just grabbed it from the Religious Education website, but we're just glad to have you. Welcome. And thanks for coming back. In spite of us, thanks for coming back again.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:03:46 Well, I'm glad to be here. Happy to spend some time with you guys.
- Hank Smith: 00:03:49 You knew what we were when you picked us up. That snake story thing.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:03:53 I'm carrying you down the mountain now.

Hank Smith: 00:03:57 I would encourage everyone who hasn't heard our first episode with Gerrit, Dr. Dirkmaat to go back. It's Episode Four. Definitely want to go back. He tells some just wonderful personal stories about his degree. He also tells us about these Stolen 116 pages. Just really and his testimony there is just fantastic. So if you haven't heard that one, please, after you listen to this one, or right now, go back, listen to that one first.

Hank Smith: 00:04:28 I have a couple of comments before we get started, John, if that's okay. Dr. Dirkmaat Gerrit and I shared a hallway for a couple of years at BYU. And I heard some really fun stories. And I thought our listeners deserve to hear at least one of these stories. So the one I'm thinking of Gerrit, I'm going to ask you about two today, but the one I'm thinking about is one I just don't know how to work into our interview. So I'm just going to ask you about it. And that is now I don't want to build it up too much, because people might be like, "Well, that wasn't a great story."

Hank Smith: 00:05:02 But for me personally, I have thought about that story, and people that I've told this story to, I can probably tell it, the people I've told the story to love it. All right, Gerrit, we want to take up all the time we can in this week's lesson, having your expertise here, we're studying Sections 60 through 62 of the Doctrine and Covenants. All three of these are received in the first half of August of 1831. So let's back up a little bit. Let's remind everyone what brought Joseph Smith and some of the members of the Church to Missouri, and what they did there, and now that it sounds like they're going to head back soon.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:05:39 Well, the culmination of what the early believers all wanted was to know where the city of Zion was going to be built. And it's interesting, if I were to have a congregation of Latter-day Saints today, write down what you think the most important doctrines of the Church are, right? I mean, if you made the list long enough, somewhere between having a year's supply of food storage and above, understanding how to use ham radios, would be the idea of a city of Zion.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:06:20 And it's so incredibly foreign, our concept of Zion to what these early believers. I mean, I'm obviously being a little bit in jest there. But my point is, most of us are driven today in our testimonies by things like Joseph Smith's Vision, the Book of Mormon, other doctrines that have been revealed, many, many early converts to the Church are converted specifically because of the idea of a city of Zion, the idea that there would be the city of God, a place where everyone was equal, a place where there was nothing but Christianity and love in it.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:07:02 So they're driven by that. And so they're driven so much by it that, in your previous podcasts I've covered the fact that you actually will have the ability for people to be deceived by false revelation surrounding Zion, like with Hiram Page, because so many believers are so desperate to have that promised blessing.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:07:27 Well, finally, in the summer of 1831, Joseph Smith receives the revelation that they're all to go to Missouri, and that when they got there, God would show them the place where the city of Zion is to be built. This is a pretty big deal. And Missouri is 1000 miles away, at least that part of Missouri is 1000 miles away from where the Kirtland area is.

Hank Smith: 00:07:55 I'm going to stop you real quick, Gerrit, I heard someone say once, "Oh, how convenient that Joseph Smith said the city of Zion is in Missouri, so close to Ohio." And I'm like, "Wait, wait, wait!" Tens of miles.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:08:13 Technically, if you were in eastern Missouri and in Western Ohio, then I guess it would only be like 500 miles away from them. The problem is, they're going from Eastern Ohio to Western Missouri. And before, there were as many interstates. I mean, obviously, we haven't had Harry Truman as president yet. And so, the reality is, it is not an easy journey. It's incredibly far. It's incredibly difficult. It usually takes, if you're going fast, three weeks, four weeks, five weeks, six weeks, depending on the time of year, the weather, it's massive. And actually, this space will create an ongoing problem for the Church.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:09:01 Because as the Church begins to grow in Missouri, the members there are 1000 miles away from the headquarters of the Church and there's no telephones and there's not even any telegraphs, and so they are at best two months away from getting any answer from Church headquarters, if you were to call it that. So you're in Missouri, and there's a question that comes up. "Oh, what do you think we should do about this? Well, we better ask Joseph. I write a letter, I send it."

Hank Smith: 00:09:33 [inaudible 00:09:33] a month later.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:09:35 It takes a month to get to Ohio, and if Joseph opens it, first of all, he's there, he's not off preaching somewhere, he's there when the letter comes. And the moment he gets it, he opens it, reads it, hurriedly jumps into a desk and writes a reply back and then sends it on the next passing horse. Then, if that happens, you're two months away from that. So imagine you're like, "Joseph, it's April now we have to find out if by May we're going to buy this land."

Hank Smith: 00:10:11 We did it yesterday.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:10:12 I guess, hopefully you did. I don't know what to tell you. I mean, those exchanges don't happen like that, again, I'm being a little facetious. But the reality is a communications breakdown is going to be an ongoing problem as the Church continues to have two locales, the headquarters of the Church in the Kirtland area where Joseph is, and now the eventual headquarters, not only of the Church, but where the New Jerusalem and the city of Zion is to be built there in Jackson County. And as more and more members move, the tensions created by that are going to become a lot.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:10:51 But for our purposes, there was so much anticipation surrounding the city of Zion, that when they arrive, and you covered this in a previous podcast, Joseph is going to receive a revelation of where the temple is to be built there in the city of Zion. The problem for many of these people that they've been walking for four or five weeks to get down here with the idea that, "When we get to that place, I imagine it's going to be the most beautiful place that's ever been." And it's a dirty Western Missouri gambling town with a bunch of horse thieves and liars in it.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:11:39 I mean, it is not, no part of it to suggest that, "Oh, yes, this is clearly going to be Zion." I mean, it's a real disappointment for some of the people who took the journey. And there's not a lot of prospects for preaching to the people that are there. I mean, there are some people there, not very many people have listened, that the intention of going to this part of Missouri in the first place for all over cadre, and those who went on the mission to preach to the Native Americans was to go into what's today, Kansas, but was Indian Territory then, and preach to the Native Americans.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:12:17 But those American Indian tribes, while apparently quite receptive to those Latter-day Saints that were preaching, the missionaries were almost immediately driven out by the Federal Government. It's actually the first time that the federal government is going to take a stance that is essentially an anti-Mormon stance, and the Federal Government will say, "Well, you can't preach to the American Indians without a permit." Okay, well, can I get a permit? "No." Well, then that.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:12:48 So it makes it, "Well, you can't preach without a permit. And also, you can't get a permit." And so they've really been stymied in their efforts to try to do that. And so there's some angst, obviously, these people have been gone from their families for a

while. There are those who are moving to Missouri who are going to be a part of Missouri, but there's this idea that they need to return.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:13:12 And so the revelations that we're covering today all occur in the context of people beginning to return back to Ohio, how they're going to return back to Ohio, dealing with some of the fallout of the disappointment that occurred when God declared that the place that the New Jerusalem was going to be built was a place that in many of these missionaries' estimation, was the least likely spot for Zion.
- Hank Smith: 00:13:47 Beautiful place, not beautiful surroundings, circumstances.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:13:55 I don't know. I mean, they didn't have air conditioning. So I mean, they're there in the summer, it's western Missouri. If you've ever been in Kansas City in late July, without air conditioning of any kind, I mean, I could see the reason why you're like, "New York's climate seems a lot better. Are you sure? Maybe we can check on the revelation again."
- Hank Smith: 00:14:18 This doesn't seem right. Edward Partridge writes to his wife like-
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:14:22 I don't know what happened but wow.
- Hank Smith: 00:14:28 All right. John, you want to go to?
- John Bytheway: 00:14:31 Sure.
- Hank Smith: 00:14:32 Quite a broad question for you then.
- John Bytheway: 00:14:34 I served my mission in the Philippines, and I thought that I had experienced the max of heat and humidity. And I, on a Church History Tour, was at Adam-ondi-Ahman one time and I thought, "Oh, this is the max of heat and humidity. And do we have to grab our stuff and come here one day?" Because it was warm, and like you said, "They didn't." Boy! So let's jump into Section 60 and look at some of the content. What are some of the things that we ought to see here for sure, Gerrit?
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:15:13 Well, I think the background of Section 60 is the question that is, how are we to return or are we to return back to Ohio? I think, John Whitmer, when he writes the earliest heading we have to this revelation, he just calls it directions to some Elders to return to their own land, is the background that they have for it. And the reality is, all these men have been called by

revelation to go to Missouri, and told how they were to go to Missouri and told how to preach along the way.

John Bytheway: 00:15:52

In companionships, right?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:15:54

In companionships, and that they're to preach to people along the way, that there were all kinds of things they were supposed to do as they went. And D&C 60 is essentially the, it is the book end to that. It is that, okay-

John Bytheway: 00:16:08

You didn't do it.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:16:09

... Now you're to go back, and this is how you're to go back. And so that's what you initially get out of Doctrine and Covenants Section 60 is how directed at almost a micromanagement level, this first trip to Missouri is, God called through revelation, not just Joseph saying, "Hey, would you like to go to Missouri?" God calls through revelation, everyone who goes to Missouri, and then he's going to, again, by revelation, return those elders back that are going to go back.

John Bytheway: 00:16:40

And some are going to stay, Colesville Saints, W. W. Phelps.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:16:44

Yes. Most of them are not all there yet. Right? If they're coming in a larger group, it's going to take them some time to get there. In fact, some of the elders who were called initially to go and be a part of this conference in Missouri, they're not there yet. And the reason why they're not there is because they took seriously the commandment that God had given, that they were to preach all along the way.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:17:12

And there were some who, well, it's a month-long journey to the Western Missouri to begin with. I don't know that I need to spend a ton of time in Western Ohio preaching to people. And so that's actually going to come out and some of these revelations, the Lord is going to chastise people for the fact that some of you didn't really make the effort that I wanted you to make in trying to preach the gospel on your way down here. Instead, you got down here quick, and you hid your talents under the bushel and, you candle under, but you hid your talents, and you-

John Bytheway: 00:17:50

You mixed your parables there, that was.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:17:54

I did, I mixed my parables, that's what happens when you have not a very good scholar on, but the reality is that, at least some of them didn't meet the approbation of God in the sense of how

he expected them to preach. So there are still people coming. For instance, Hyrum Smith is not there for the dedication of land design. He's still coming, because he was actually taking his time on his way down preaching the way that he thought they were supposed to. So they're most people that are going to be permanent residents of Missouri. Well, I think we all know, there are no Mormons that end up being permanent residents during this time.

John Bytheway: 00:18:41

Some were permanent.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:18:42

But the ones who plan to stay there until the Millennium only to be driven out by mob violence, most of them are going to be arriving later, this initial missionary group is coming with primarily just the men who are going down there, a few of them are going to stay, most of them are going to go back and then the larger groups of actual migrating Latter-day Saints families, they're going to be coming later in the year.

John Bytheway: 00:19:10

All right, let's go into Section 60, Gerrit, what do you see here?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:19:16

I think part of what we talked about there and some of the initial verses, right, God says that he's not well pleased for those people that wouldn't open their mouth. Why? Because they had a fear of man. And Latter-day Saints are, they're not even Latter-day Saints yet, right? Members of the Church of Christ who believe in the Book of Mormon, these people are not well received primarily in most places that they go.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:19:48

So you could see how, for some of these people, was a very difficult prospect and you're on this really long journey that is arduous, that's in the middle of the summer, that requires a great deal of physical effort, you start preaching to a few people, they tell you very unkindly to move along, you can see how quickly, after the first couple 100 miles, that you might say, "You know what, even if I go try to talk to those people, they're not going to listen to me." So if they're not going to listen to me, even if I go try to talk to them, I'm not going to expend any more of my effort to do that.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:20:23

And probably, there's a lot of people who've served missions in more modern times who've had similar thoughts, right? I mean, I went to Wisconsin on my mission, there were very few people who ever listened to us at all. And certainly a thought would arise all the time. Like, look, whether I spend the next two hours knocking on these doors or not, the results are actually going to be the same. Only my hand will hurt more. I mean, there's not...

So reality is that you can see how continual rejection can help fuel that kind of apathy towards preaching.

- John Bytheway: 00:20:59 I remember, as a missionary, I was like, "Oh, I just kind of avoid this confrontation," avoid this awkward moment. To me, that's fear of man, right? I think nowadays I'd probably be a little more bold in my 40s than I was when I was 19. But I can see that being fear of man. Not necessarily, I'm scared they're going to hurt me, but just scared of the interaction, fearing the awkwardness.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:21:28 I mean, I think human nature is such that we are social animals, and that we want to be comfortable socially, and we want to be liked. And when you're talking about religion today to somebody, right? I mean, if you want to make someone feel uncomfortable, you're like, well, I would love to talk to you about God for a minute. Okay, let's dial it back. I mean, imagine in the 19th century, when people's religion is much more interwoven into their society, in their culture, but they also feel so much more passionately about it.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:22:08 And if you happen to be departing from what the accepted, protestant narrative is, which, of course Latter-day Saints are, I mean, it is a fundamental absolute of Protestantism in the 19th century in America, the Bible is the only revealed will of God. And you have these Latter-day Saints saying, "Well, let me tell you about the Book of Mormon."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:22:31 I mean, so their opening line is essentially going against 300 plus years of absolute protestant bedrock theology that there could be any truth, let alone an entire book of it, outside of the Bible is just, it's a blasphemy to them. And so my guess is rather than just disinterested stares, many of the people reacted to them with a kind of, "Well, you're a blasphemer. If you're trying to tell me that there's truth outside of the Bible, well, then you're a liar, you've been deceived, you're a blasphemer." I can imagine. We have accounts of missionary efforts that didn't work as well, from other times during this era.
- Hank Smith: 00:23:16 And I think too, we are talking about the fear of man, but this is, like you said, this is the frontier, too. It's not like there's a cop around every corner to help with things. I mean, I don't know if they were ever physically assaulted or anything, but perhaps threatened. What do you think, get off my record [crosstalk 00:23:34]?
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:23:34 We don't have a record of that at this early period. I mean, although the Federal Indian Agents in the Indian Territories did

threaten to take all the missionaries to jail, and Fort Leavenworth if they didn't get out, I mean, so they are getting that. I don't know if there are any specific threats, but I think more, it's a matter of, no one's listening, but it is a very rough place.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:24:01 I mean, I think it's one of the Knights who explains that, the only way that you could tell the difference between the Sabbath day or not in the area was that the saloons and gambling houses were more filled on Sundays than the other days of the week. I mean, it is certainly, it is a rough place to be a religionist, it certainly probably does not help that these are primarily almost exclusively northerners coming into what is a hotly contested Southern state.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:24:38 I'm not saying they're preaching abolitionism all the way but the reality is, they lived in very different worlds. And so they would have been mistrusted as outsiders even if they were, as Episcopal was the day is long and in an accepted religion, there would have been a great deal of mistrust. They're coming in, they're preaching a new religion. I don't know who they are and then you add to it this kind of cultural divide between people from New England and Ohio and people from a specially contested slave state like Missouri. I'm sure there were many difficult encounters.

Hank Smith: 00:25:23 The Saints there, did they know that Joseph had been pulled out of the John Johnson Farm in the middle of the night? Did they know that Sidney Rigdon had been dragged by his heels?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:25:33 Because this is happening before that, right? So what will start to happen in late 1832, in part as a result of Ezra Booth's apostasy that we'll talk about here in a minute, what starts to happen is what I call a rising tide of anti-mormonism, that it really hits Ohio and Missouri at about the same time. And it became violent, first in Ohio, with the assaults on Sidney Rigdon and Joseph and the loss of Joseph's child as a result, I mean, in 1832. But then it became widespread violence in Missouri in early 1833.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:26:16 So here at this early stage, in early 1831, I think for the most part, the reason why there's not as much violence is there's very little threat, right? I mean, the reality is, I don't know what towns everybody lives in, but if like six people showed up from some weird Protestant sect in your town and started preaching, and they started saying things like, "We're going to own this town, this is God gave this to us." And they have obviously a high pitched voice like that. I mean, your primary reaction

would not be like, well, I guess we've got to go tar and feather. Your primary reaction would be.

- Hank Smith: 00:26:59 "They're crazy."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:27:00 "Those clowns are crazy, but whatever. I mean ..."
- Hank Smith: 00:27:04 There's so few of them.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:27:05 Exactly. Generally, what starts to cause physical problems for the Latter-day Saints, is that, as they gather, the very fact that they're gathering presents political, economic, religious, and societal social problems, those problems don't really exist when there's not a large group, right? So that happened in Colesville, in New York, right? In Fayette, there aren't any mobs because nobody lives there, right, except essentially, for the Whitmore's extended family. No one lives there today.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:27:48 But in Colesville, when you got to the point that a significant portion of the town, I mean, nothing near a majority, but I don't know what the percent is. And any number I throw out, Larry Potter could later listen and be like, "That's not even close." Even if it started to approach 15 to 20%, that is a big deal. That's transforming what your town is, it's transforming your relationships in the town, it could possibly transform economies, the local politics.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:28:20 So when it's just a dozen, two dozen people that are there and then leaving, I mean, the reality is in order for people to react violently, usually, they have to feel like that there's something that is long term that they are fighting against. I mean, I'm sure initially the people that are there are basically saying, "Well, this is great, actually, because these newcomers are coming here and buying our stuff. And we're of course charging them outrageous prices, because they're just showing up with nothing but desperately wanting to live here." I mean, I'm sure we could talk to any Real Estate Agent, and they would tell you that their favorite client is the one who absolutely has to live in this town no matter what, and has to be on this street no matter what.
- John Bytheway: 00:29:10 We can do that.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:29:11 If you're going to pay me a premium, we can do that. I mean, and that's essentially what the Latter-day Saints are doing, right?

John Bytheway: 00:29:17 We gotta be here.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:29:19 They're moving to this area that is, I mean, literally no offense to any Latter-day Saints in Kansas City today. But at the time, this is essentially the most worthless land in the United States. It's as far west as you can possibly get. It has such poor connections to the remainder of not only the state of Missouri, where almost all of the settlement is in the St. Louis area, right, it is so disconnected from the rest of the country that, I'm not saying the land isn't fertile, the land's beautiful, the land is fertile land. But it doesn't matter how fertile your corn crop is, if it takes you three months to get it to a market somewhere, right?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:30:02 I mean, the reality is it is the cheapest land that exists. And so when you have a group of people moving in, who desperately have to live in a specific part of this land that's relatively inexpensive, I think at first, it's actually seen as a boon. I can sell my land for twice what it's worth here. Right?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:30:25 But as more and more people come, right? And look, that's the reality of migrating peoples all the time, is that often they're seen as an opportunity at first. And then as more and more come, then they're seen as a threat. And that plays out, I think, for the Latter-day Saints in Missouri. What's funny is that, there are a couple of times when you're reading Joseph Smith's writing that you wonder, I mean, it seems to come across the heat, like he's not educated, right? So he's trying to spell things phonetically a lot of the time.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:31:01 And one of the words that he misspells multiple times the same way is the word church. Right? He misspells the word church with, instead of C-H-U-R-C-H, he spells it with an I. And I think it's because Joseph's from New England. I mean, I know that every church movie, we see him and he's got this wonderful Utah accent. He's like, "We've got to get the brethren out." But the reality is, the guy's born in Vermont, he's raised in New Hampshire, he's not from Utah. And so it makes you wonder if the reason why he's misspelling that is if, the reason why he pronounces it is because it's not the church, it's the 'chirch.' New England going to the 'chirch.'

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:31:49 And the other name that he misspells is actually Edward Partridge's name, he leaves the R out of it, because it's not Partridge. It's Partridge type 10. "Me and Edward Partridge going to go to the chirch, and maybe catch a Sox game after." I don't know what his accent sounded like. So again, I don't want to make anyone feel uncomfortable. If you don't want to think of

Joseph talking about the first vision with a kind of New England accent, you don't have to.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:32:16 But I'll tell you what the New England Saints should probably be like, "Actually, Joseph sounded a lot more like us than you people out in Utah." In Section 60. So one of the other things I think to take away from it, is not only of this chastisement, they're directly commanded by God to how they're supposed to go home, right, they're supposed to either make or purchase a craft, which they're going to try to take the river down. Now, where Jackson County sits, where they're at, is on close to anyway of the Missouri River.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:32:51 And the idea, of course, is you couldn't do it this way going there unless you run a steamship. And there's really not a lot of steamship travel up that far that early. But you can go with the river down the river, right? So you can get in a canoe or get on a flat boat or something and you can float down the river, you don't have to walk as much and that'll take you all the way into St. Louis.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:33:14 Now from there, you're going to have to probably go over land because, the Ohio River, you'd be going up river on the Ohio and you'd be going up river on the Mississippi, whichever way you decided to go. But it's verse five and six that tell them that they need to essentially get some boats and take their journey speedily to St. Louis. And then they're going to go from there, Joseph's told that they're going to go through Cincinnati on the way back, which makes sense.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:33:48 They are told that they aren't supposed to again, preach on the way back. The reason why I point that out is they're specifically commanded to get some watercraft in order to take their way back. And that matters because of the sections that follow, at least one of them is directly resultant of the fact that they follow this commandment. They're commanded to take this water route. And the fact that they actually listen, it's going to lead to some issues, I don't, spoiler alert, I don't want to let everyone know immediately.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:34:30 But I think verse 14 is also pretty good. "After that has come up into the land Zion, has proclaimed my word thou shalt speedily return, proclaiming my word among the congregations, the wicked, not in haste neither with wrath, nor with strife." So this idea that again, don't try to just make the journey. Also, not with contention. I mean, that idea with not with wrath, not with strife, that suggests that maybe there might have been some on the way to try to make it a more peaceful exchange.

Hank Smith: 00:35:05 My dad used to quote to me verse 13, "Thou shalt not idle away thy time." He loved that one

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:35:11 Dads love most scriptures that have the word idle in it. And that was before there was the internet. So I can only imagine now, that's-

Hank Smith: 00:35:21 Get moving, get working. I remember.

John Bytheway: 00:35:24 I think I like the context, though, because as Gerrit alluded to a minute ago, "Neither shalt thou bury thy talent." The idle part was not preaching the gospel, by the way. Isn't that right?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:35:42 Yeah. And even when they got there, I mean, I think the missionaries that were already there had, in some respects, stopped trying. I don't know how many future missionaries are going to listen to this, or, but the reality is, just about every mission you go on, you will find yourself feeling like your efforts don't really matter, they don't bear fruit. And that becomes a really difficult thing. I mean, that it's hard as a human to have negative result, negative result, negative result, again, and again, and again, and again, and to still have faith that your next result might be different.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:36:37 I know we all hear the missionary stories of, "There I was. It was 400 degrees below zero, my companion wanted to go home. But I said, 'Wait, there was one more house at the far end of that street.' And then that person's baptized, and they become an Apostle later." Whatever, those are the missionary stories that we share with each other all the time. And because they're miraculous experiences. But we sometimes miss the whole other part of that, and that is, remember, I started the story with we'd been out tracting for 15 days, 15 hours a day, and no one had talked to us at all.

John Bytheway: 00:37:19 That's [crosstalk 00:37:20].

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:37:19 I mean, the reality is, I think Satan tries to convince us that our past failures are in some way indicative or predictive of our future results and tries to wear us down. And if you're going to serve a mission, I mean, the reality is, you actually have no idea what person is going to listen next. And you might have been cursed off the doorstep from the last person, and this person embraces the truth of God.

Hank Smith: 00:37:56 Searching for Israel, right, it will speak into them. I wonder if verse 15 is, I honestly don't know if Parley Pratt is around when

this revelation is given. But it says, "Shake off the dust of thy feet against those who receive the not."

- John Bytheway: 00:38:11 "Not in their presence."
- Hank Smith: 00:38:12 "Not in their presence," unless she'll provoke them, because we just talked about- [crosstalk 00:38:17].
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:38:16 Might be a reference to D&C 49, shaking the coattails-
- Hank Smith: 00:38:21 Right in front of them.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:24 Everybody looks at Parley.
- Hank Smith: 00:38:27 Gerrit, sections 61 and 62 are not received in Jackson County now, but on the river. Are these the only two sections received on the Missouri River? I think they probably are.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:38:39 Yeah, at least for right now, during this time period. These are the ones that are received here. I mean, and it's because it's for their journey back. So with Section 61, they went and got the craft that they were told to get, right, in Section 60. And in fact, Ezra Booth will bitterly complain about the fact that he had to go find canoes. The group is traveling back in these canoes, because they've been told to by revelation.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:39:11 And there's some simmering hostility that's going on. I mean, it's interesting, like if you've ever been on a trip with a group of friends, right, you can make three days on a trip with a group of friends and things are fine, right? You get 12 or 13 days in and you don't care how good that guy's Missouri accent is, you've got a problem. Benjamin Franklin right, he said, "Fish and houseguests stink after three days."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:39:50 I mean, the reality is, these guys have been on this arduous trek together to get down there, in the heat in the sun and a month plus journey to get there. And there are some tensions that really start to boil over in part because of the disappointment that, I think some people really thought that the city of Enoch is going to come down when they got there, that they'd see the streets paved with gold. And this would be, it'd be like a Garden of Eden spot. And then this is where the city rebuilt and that wasn't the case.
- Hank Smith: 00:40:23 These are thoughts all in a month.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: [00:40:24](#) Exactly. Well, of course, because we're "God's Chosen Elders" here, we're going to be baptized. I mean, there's not going to be water enough in the Missouri River to baptize the people that we're baptizing. And none of that happens. So in many ways, you have this physical exhaustion, combined with this, the familiarity that being with each other so much. And then there's the temporal, really disappointment of, that's not what I thought Zion was going to be.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: [00:40:56](#) And now look, not everyone complains about the location of Zion. But, as you learn in one of your previous episodes, I mean, it's bad enough that Edward Partridge and Sidney Rigdon get into a massive fight over this, and it's a fight that they have, it will actually take a long time before they ever seem to be reconciled. So you already have some bad feelings among the group that didn't quite seem to get [crosstalk 00:41:24].
- Hank Smith: [00:41:23](#) Joseph Smith was involved in that argument as well, Partridge always talked about that.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: [00:41:25](#) Yes. Because look, Partridge is a businessman. He's got an eye for real estate. And when Joseph says, "This is the place where the temple is going to be built." I mean, for Partridge, it's kind of like, "Well, I can see like 1000 other places that are better than this, why is it here? Why don't you check again?" Not to be trite about it. But I think that Partridge has just sacrificed unbelievably, in a very short amount of time, in order to be a part of the movement.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:42:03 And it really seemed like he felt like Joseph was wrong. And then, of course, Sidney Rigdon tries to jump to Joseph's defense. And one thing that no one's ever said about Sidney Rigdon was, he had such a mild personality that he never ... So I mean, the problem is that when Sidney Rigdon gets involved, you're going to know about it. I mean, the guy is going to come at you, and he's going to come at you hard.
- Hank Smith: 00:42:32 He's got away with words. He's good with words.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:42:34 He's very good with words, but he's also very biting with them, right? And so all of us have been in a situation where we've had a fairly sharp disagreement with someone that we otherwise really care about. Even when you both slap each other's backs and say you're sorry, those words, they linger. There's some lingering sting from that. Well, maybe he was, I mean, every time Hank and I get in an argument, he's like, "You're just a hack . . . and you aren't even good at all." I'm like, "Ah." He says he's sorry, but I really feel like he means it.

Hank Smith: 00:43:08 Maybe he really means it.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:43:10 I feel like Hank means it. But anyway. So I think there's that, there's some lingering things. And then there's apparently, we don't know the nature of it. But as they start going down the river, there's really some grumbling going on among the group, to the point where Oliver Cowdrey starts to try to chastise people that, "Hey, you need to straighten up and fly right." And so there's just some bad feelings going on.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:43:37 And in the midst of all of that, this was not the pleasure cruise down the Nile that they thought this was going to be. The Missouri River today, it's been dredged, and there's been dams built in it. And it is a navigable waterway. In 1831, it is a treacherous, treacherous river and even after they start trying to make improvements on it, it is a regular thing that there are massive catastrophes that occur on the river. I mean, there are shifting and uneven sandbars. It is all the time that things can get submerged into the water.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:44:26 And in this case, that's exactly what happens with the group. There's a sawyer or sire that is essentially a tree that is just under the water, but it's a fallen tree, right? So the tree is on the back and then falls into the water. The bottom is now stuck into the water, the other parts now sticking up, and it's going to present this huge snag opportunity for any boat because the water's going over it, but it can't draft all the way over it. So if you're in your canoe and you hit it-

Hank Smith: 00:44:56 You're going to hit it.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:44:57 Well, you're going to flip, right, or you're going to, something's going to happen. They run into one of these at McGill Waness Bend, which is a place essentially lost to history because since they've redone the river and improved it, and it nearly capsizes Joseph and Sydney's canoe, these guys, it's not like they've been taking swimming lessons at the YMCA. I mean, not everyone knows how to swim in the 19th century.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:45:23 I mean, it's not everyone who does. And so it's a terrifying experience. They all make their way to the bank. But not only have they been carping at one another, not only are they all exhausted from this journey, now they feel like their lives were just about threatened. And again, if you're looking for a way to criticize, why were we in that boat in the first place? Well, because Joseph received a revelation telling us to be in that boat.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:45:52 So in the context of D&C 61 is it's this revelation that's received on the bank of the Missouri River, after they've had this kind of, I don't want to call it a near death experience, but they were certainly terrified with what had happened in their water journey, a water journey that they think that they were only on because God gave them a revelation, telling them that they should do it.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:46:18 Something that God talks about in, the Lord talks about and D&C 61, he first starts with verse two in saying that, "Whose sins are now forgiven you, for I, the Lord forgive sins, and I'm merciful, one of those who confess their sins with humble hearts, verily I say unto you that it's not needful for this whole company of mine elders be moving swiftly upon the waters, whilst the inhabitants on either side are perishing in unbelief."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:46:46 So it was always kind of odd, right, that God kept telling them they needed to take their time and preach to people along the way, but at the same time, told them to take this water route to St. Louis. I mean, I don't if you're going to like shout to people as you go down the river. You're like, "We're Mormons!" How quickly can you teach a First Discussion? I mean, if you're on someone's door, and they're like, "I'll give you one minute." You're like, Joseph Smith, most people just going to spring meeting even though call them by different for names. We believe that God lives, [inaudible 00:47:15] you're going to . . . and you're trying to get it out.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:47:16 And clearly, there's not a whole lot of opportunities to preach the gospel while you're in a canoe going down the river. And so that seemed like maybe a contradiction. And then the Lord explains that here in verse 4, he says, "I suffered it that you might bear record, behold, there are many dangers upon the waters and more especially hereafter."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:47:42 So what these guys are going to do when they go back to Kirtland, is they're going to say, "Listen, you just take the overland journey, okay? That you don't want to try to take the river journey. I know it looks inviting, but it is a nightmare that is so dangerous. It's not worth it." And so apparently, God allowed them to have this experience so that they would be able to know firsthand how treacherous the river route actually is, so that other people would not take that route. So it's an interesting concept of where God apparently put them in a position where they would have a very negative experience, so that they could, with experience, testify to other people about what it is they should do. You get that out of D&C 61.

Hank Smith: 00:48:37 Very interesting. A lot of people are going to be going back and forth between Kirtland in Missouri, and it might be like, "Oh, we'll take the river now."

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:48:45 And look, eventually in Nauvoo, obviously, the Latter-day Saints are going to use river traffic all the time, right. I mean, they're even going to have the *Maid of Iowa*. I mean, they're going to utilize it. But, frankly, the Missouri River up to Kansas City, at that time, was just not as navigable as the Mississippi River, which was also filled with all kinds of trash. I mean, if you read 19th century newspapers, you will read catastrophe after catastrophe that occurs on the river. The reality is, they are not easily navigable, but they're so tempting to navigate, because it's so much easier and so much and you can carry so much more freight if you can navigate them.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:49:38 But there's that danger. And so that really becomes the practice to try to avoid the water route to Zion after 61. I mean, they aren't going to have too many years to be able to worry about that because within less than two years after that they're going to be driven out by mob violence.

John Bytheway: 00:50:03 I had just never, I'm so glad you talked about this, because we've all been to Nauvoo, got to the end of that and we see the Mississippi and there's that big Keokuk, is it-

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:50:14 A dam there.

John Bytheway: 00:50:16 A dam there that slows the flow, evens it out, whatever, I just had not thought of this and I was going to ask you to compare the Missouri to the Mississippi as far as width and stuff, I'm not even sure.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:50:28 Boy, I don't even know at the time, right. So the reality is the way those rivers look today to us, especially near those urban centers, is just nothing like they looked like back then. We have flood control levees all along them. So what do we know? We know from the time period that this particular stretch of the Missouri River from Kansas City to about a third of the way to St. Louis, was particularly treacherous that people got capsized, that there were problems, that there were boating accidents that occurred there all the time. And so, we don't really know what it would have looked like. But there's at least a pretty regular record of shipping disasters along the Missouri there.

Hank Smith: 00:51:27 And I like the principal here, I like the principle here of you, so I put you in a difficult situation, now we're going to get out of it.

But now you can tell other people, don't do that. Don't go that way. I'd like that idea. I think the Lord sometimes uses that in our lives, we can learn big time lessons, and he lets us learn them. And then he's going to say, pass that along.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:51:51 I've seen it in other places where God knows that there is no replacement for actually having the experience. I mean, I guess we could all say that about mortal life to begin with, but in the Council of Fifty, there's an experience where the Saints are trying, I mean, the members of the Council of Fifty are trying to write the new Constitution for the location of the Kingdom of God, when they finally leave Nauvoo. And imagine the pressure of "I'm writing the Constitution for the Kingdom of God, right? I mean, obviously, how am I going to get that right?" And at one point, they simply are frustrated, and they just asked Joseph, "Well, can't you just receive this by revelation? Because anything we write is going to just, I mean, obviously...."
- Hank Smith: 00:52:41 He's going to throw it out anyway.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:52:43 It's going to be wrong. So why don't you just do it? And Joseph teaches them that, actually, no, you need to create the very best thing you can create and expend all your efforts in this thing. And then I'll receive revelation. And the reason why he says, there have always been some great big elders in this Church, who we know come along, who would criticize. Frankly, if Joseph received the Constitution by revelation, some of the people who thought themselves to be a little bit more intelligent than Joseph would have behind the scenes be like, "Well, that's not how I would have put it. I don't know, maybe if Joseph knew what I knew about it, then he probably would have changed it."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:53:19 And so instead, what Joseph says is that it's necessary for the elders to exercise all their efforts in this thing. And then when they see that they cannot get the revelation, and I can, they will know from once wisdom flows. So if you've already expended all of your efforts to do it, then you can't, when Joseph receives, they go like, "Well, that's what I was going to say." I mean, you can't, because you had a chance to say it, and you didn't say it, because the revelations actually coming through the prophet.
- Hank Smith: 00:53:48 Remind me of Doctrine and Covenants, Section 1 where write a preface and toss it.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:53:53 Well, and I think that's exactly-

Hank Smith: 00:53:55 They tore that to shreds.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:53:57 They don't say that specifically in the Council of Fifty minutes. But I think that the men involved who asked Joseph to receive it, I think that's exactly what they have in their mind. I mean, because it's W.W. Phelps, it's John Taylor, they know that that was the case with the preface to the Book of Commandments, which became D&C 1 that they tried and Joseph eventually received the revelation. Well, let's just cut out the middleman here, let's not try and just have Joseph receive the revelation.

Hank Smith: 00:54:26 No, it's good for you to try, because then you can see.

John Bytheway: 00:54:33 There's just a question that, for my, I haven't done as much reading and studying as you have Gerrit, but that maybe we overdo the idea of the destroyer riding upon the waters. Was it specific to everything that you have just taught us about the Missouri? Is there more than that? Do we overdo it? And did W.W. Phelps have a vision of it?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:54:55 He has a vision where he's the one who sees the destroyer riding upon the water. I mean, it's unclear exactly when he sees that, if he sees that while they're going through their crisis of nearly being drowned in the river and that makes sense, that that's when they see it. But actually, it's not a solely W.W. Phelps' vision. While he's the only one who sees it, there are other members of the group who say they hear it, that they can hear this interact... And I'm not entirely sure what the destroyer Satan sounds like, but whatever it is, it was such that they all experienced this. So you can look in *History of the Church* volume, it will say that the other brethren heard the sound but didn't see the vision.

Hank Smith: 00:55:47 Interesting.

John Bytheway: 00:55:48 I personally, and maybe I'm way off here, Gerrit, you can correct me, but I think we've taken the idea that Satan controls the water. I remember hearing that as a missionary. Why can't missionaries swim? Satan controls the water. I'm like, why did we baptize people in water? Why do we have the sacrament with water?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:56:05 Well, I always use it as an excuse, why do I shower?

John Bytheway: 00:56:11 That thing controls a lot.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:56:12 It's easy when you have a practice that's in place to then try to find scriptural reasons for that practice that exists. If that's what the prophet wants us to do, then that's what the prophet is going to tell us to do. And we have to be careful because, even though sometimes our looking beyond the mark is spawned by fervency, right, it's spawned by a desperate belief. Sometimes we get so enamored with what we think is going to happen, that when that thing doesn't happen, it becomes a faith crisis.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:56:53 We see that with Zion. That's certainly what happened with Ezra Booth, Ezra Booth joins the church because he sees Joseph Smith heal somebody. He's a Methodist minister, so certainly he's educated, he knows the Bible. He is very skeptical of whatever it is that these Mormons are selling, right. But he witnesses Joseph Smith heal someone's paralyzed arm.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:57:23 Well, that's a pretty big deal. And to him, it's essentially irrefutable. He buys into the idea of Zion, he buys into a member of the Church, he's an elder, he is going down on this mission. But in his mind, he had built up that they would have ridiculous amounts of success preaching, that everyone would believe this. And that, essentially, Zion was going to drop down out of heaven, that when they got to the spot of the place, it was going to be the most beautiful place that ever existed. And it was a dirty frontier gambling town filled with houses of ill repute and saloons. I mean, it was nothing that he expected.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:58:02 Now, the thing is, Joseph had never said that, Joseph had never said, "Hey, we're going to go down to Missouri, we're going to baptize like, seriously 1000s of people on the way, folks, so it's going to be." But that's what he had come to believe. And so when his projected reality failed to match the actuality of circumstances, it caused a faith crisis for him. It seems to not help that there was bickering and difficulties among the elders. I think he thought-

John Bytheway: 00:58:34 The big argument between-

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:58:35 Elders of God should never have a problem with each other. I mean, clearly, right? Because Christ's Apostles never argued about things. Obviously, they did, right? I mean, the reality of this false expectation can really cause problems. And I think that's-

John Bytheway: 00:58:53 It happens today.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:58:54 All the time.

- John Bytheway: 00:58:55 I had the expectation of Church History, and when I started reading and learning, it didn't meet my expectation, and no one ever, how did we create that expectation? Where did it come from?
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:59:07 And sometimes things are more innocent, sometimes they're not. I mean, the reality is, sometimes people deliberately try to deceive people to create their own following in order to build themselves up, I mean, to try to make themselves a light, to demonstrate, "Oh, look, I have this special knowledge." I just think it's, I know history, right? Well, I mean, someone listening to this who's another historian is like, "Not as well as I do." I'm sure okay, not as well as you, but I mean, I study history, that's what my training is in, but I'm not a prophet, right. I'm wearing a lavender shirt here for a reason.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:59:49 I mean, I don't have any access to how God interprets these revelations. I can place them in historical context. They have this terrible accident where they nearly all drown. They don't receive the revelation right then, they actually, they kind of bicker and argue and they have this discussion through the night and really by the next morning, they've come to terms with one another.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:00:17 And it's in the aftermath of that kind of spirit of peace that's pervaded, that this revelation's received, which is part of the reason why I think God's saying, "Listen, your sins have forgiven you. Yes, you're mortal, but now you're coming on back." And you get that out of verse 37, where he says, "Inasmuch as you've humbled yourself before me, the blessings of the Kingdom are yours." Right?
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:00:43 And probably, verse 36, is also very uplifting to your listeners. "What I send to one, I send to all, be of good cheer little children, for I am in your midst, and I have not forsaken you." That idea that you're little children, which is exactly what Jesus, you become like a child in order to inherit the Kingdom of God. I think that we feel an awful lot of times in life like God has forsaken us.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:01:11 And I think it's in part because there's a lie that is repeated, sometimes unintentionally and sometimes very intentionally, that we tell ourselves that if only we're doing everything that's right, the bad things aren't going to happen to us. I know we talked about this a little bit, we talked about D&C three and Joseph and Emma losing their first child. This is also happening in the aftermath of yet another catastrophe for Joseph and

Emma, right, that they're going down there, having lost their next set of children, their twins.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:01:52 And I think it's really easy for believers who are sacrificing so much for God to start to wonder why they're still terrible, bad things happen to them. And it is hard. I mean, in the past couple of months, I lost my brother, he died very unexpectedly, my youngest brother. And he left two little kids under the age of two at home, and a wonderful, loving wife. There's a lot of horrible people in this world. And they're still rolling around, right. And when you're faced with catastrophes like that, I think it's a natural thing for us to wonder, God, things have been really, really bad. Why are they so bad? It's actually the question that has perplexed the religious, in every religion from the dawn of religion. And that is, why is this world so terrible?
- John Bytheway: 01:03:04 Why suffer?
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:03:06 Why? Why is there suffering? If there's a God who can stop suffering, then let's see it. And I think God in these revelations and further ones, you saw this with the death of Polly Knight, he had to remind them that this world has tribulation. But it's not about this world. We are living about this world, we are living for the next world. What makes Christianity great, what makes the message of Christianity great is that while this world is terrible at times, they're suffering at times, there is going to be a time when there is no suffering, there's going to come a time when there is no tears, where there is no ill treatment of others, where there is no bigotry and hatred. There's going to come a time when everything that you've lost is going to be restored to you.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:04:02 And that's in this next life. And I think that that's part of what God is trying to remind them here, look, you guys have had a rough go of it. I'm still with you. I haven't forsaken you. Life is just hard. Things are bad. That's how this mortal life is. And I hope that anyone listening, I mean, I hope anyone who's suffering has some kind of bomb that's given them from God, that they know that at some point, they are going to be recompensed, at some point, God is through, the power of the Lord going to overcome their suffering, and possibly not until the next life. But that's the only one that really matters, because that's the one that lasts forever. That's the whole point of what Jesus taught.
- Hank Smith: 01:04:59 Again from the Book of Revelation, right, "God shall wipe away the tears--"

John Bytheway: 01:05:04 [crosstalk 01:05:04] "from your eyes."

Hank Smith: 01:05:05 ... Do away with suffering and pain. I love that verse 36.

John Bytheway: 01:05:09 That's beautiful.

Hank Smith: 01:05:10 "Be of good cheer little children, I have not forsaken you."

John Bytheway: 01:05:12 "I have not forsaken you."

Hank Smith: 01:05:14 You might think I have, I promise you I haven't.

John Bytheway: 01:05:17 "In this world, you have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." But there's that waiting period, President Benson called it, the wicked think they're getting away with something, or the righteous think where's my blessings. But there's a waiting period as was the case with Job and Joseph And I think that having, there's such a hopeful thing that as believers in God, we know there is a reason, there must be a reason. And as you just said so beautifully Gerrit, a God of justice will, there will be, things will be restored to us. I think, if Joseph Smith, if I got it right, "All of your losses will be made up to you and the resurrection by the vision of the Almighty, I have seen it." Joseph Smith said, I love that one.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:06:06 And that's what I think is really what gives us hope. And at the same time, he tells them to be of good cheer. I mean, it can be easy in this world that's filled with horrors, to curl up into a ball, and think about how awful things are, and dwell upon how terrible they are. And yes, look forward for that blessed day of Zion or the resurrection or something that will end this horror show. But that's not who Joseph was. All of our accounts of him and even the account he gives him himself, right, that he had a native cheery disposition, right. He suffered all kinds of absolutely unfair, horrible things that happened to him.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:06:57 And yet, he greeted people with a smile. He loved other people that were around him. And I hope that that's what we can at least try to do. That we can expect and understand that this world is filled with all kinds of horribly unfair suffering that God has promised through his prophets will be made up to us in the next life, in some way that we don't understand, in a time we don't comprehend, all of our suffering will be made up.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:07:30 And that we can try to as cheerfully as we can go about this life and recognize the blessings that we do have. At my brother's funeral service, my older brother commented on the fact that

my brother Bryant when he was born, it was very bad delivery, premature, all kinds of complications, and he nearly died and was in the hospital for a month. And my brother commented on it, he said, we can look at this as the most unfair thing that's ever happened and the worst tragedy, or we can look at it that we almost didn't have Bryant at all. We should have lost him when he was a two-week-old. And we got 37 years with him that we never should have had, by a miracle he survived and that doesn't fully assuage the loss, but it is at times like that, that you are grateful that you know that you are going to see your loved ones again.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:08:43 And not because it's a "myth or cleverly devised fables," but because Joseph Smith saw Jesus Christ. Jesus is resurrected, and if Jesus is resurrected, then all of our losses, everyone we've lost is going to be resurrected.
- Hank Smith: 01:09:00 Amen.
- John Bytheway: 01:09:00 I thought of a Book of Mormon verse. This is Alma the elder, he's being, he and his people have been enslaved by Amulon. And this is what it says. Mormon writes, "And now came to pass, the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brother were made light, the Lord did strengthen them, that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord." I'm okay if it just says, I'm totally fine if it says, "They did submit with patience to all the will of the Lord." Like I'm good there. But he says they did submit cheerfully and with patience. And that reminds me of that verse 36, "Be of good cheer, submit cheerfully."
- Hank Smith: 01:09:44 That's [crosstalk 01:09:45] Liberty Jail too, "Let us cheerfully do all things that lie in our power." Out of Section 123, right.
- John Bytheway: 01:09:52 And Gerrit's the epitome of cheerfulness, and yet here he's going through this difficulty. Gerrit, when I heard about your brother, I mean, the same thing happened to me in December, my oldest brother passed away and it just was, and then my father last month and I know you lost your father just a couple of years ago.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:10:14 A few years ago.
- John Bytheway: 01:10:15 But you're the epitome of cheerfulness, you really are. And it's not a fake cheerfulness, really, the gospel has made you a cheerful, happy person. And that's not to say you're never sad,

and you never grieve. There's a place for those. But I think what Elder Scott once said, "These difficult things that happen to us are laid on the background of a very happy life." They are kind of laid as portions on a background of a very happy life.

- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:10:46 Reminds me of President Hinckley quoting the Jenkin Lloyd Jones, the newspaper editor.
- John Bytheway: 01:10:55 "Some putts don't drop."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:10:56 Exactly.
- John Bytheway: 01:10:57 "Some beef is tough."
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:10:58 Saying that it's the rail journey, right? That it's slow and chugging and problems all over, but it's occasionally blessed with beautiful vistas and thrilling bursts of speed. And that's the reality. I mean, we live in a mortal world, which I think, as you get further on this podcast, this revelation will be revealed to people, and that is that a lot of this, our premortal life is one of the most important aspects of dealing with the suffering we have in this life.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:11:33 Because all of us chose to come here knowing, not specifically what terrible things would happen to us, but we've been around, we saw what mortal life was that it was filled with inequity, it was filled with disease, it was filled with sickness, it was filled with betrayal, it was filled with all kinds of horrible things.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:11:56 And knowing that, we still said, if that's the only way I can become like my Heavenly Father and my Heavenly Mother, then that's what I'm going to do. And so, I mean, we chose to be a part of that. And so, again, I'm not saying we chose our individual trials. But we weren't tricked into this either, right? It wasn't like it was a timeshare presentation. And we were showing a whole lot of, like actually that does sounds pretty good.
- John Bytheway: 01:12:24 Ice cream and pizza.
- Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:12:25 "No, like if you go down, you can't even believe it. I mean, there's this amazing stuff down there. Wait till you meet the mosquito, boy, you'll love that. "I think we knew full well what we were getting into when we came into it. And we knew that it would be terrible. And yet, we made that decision. And we just don't remember that we made the decision.

John Bytheway: 01:12:49 But you're right, it's a crucial piece of our doctrine, you signed up for this.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:12:55 It's really one of the only ways that we can sort out the reason why there is suffering, and we can sort it out in a way that others can't. Because if you believe God created everything out of nothing, and created you out of nothing, just whenever you were conceived, and that you didn't exist before that, well fundamentally then, the suffering that you go through, I mean, not only could God have mitigated it, I mean, there's a real question as to why God created you with an immortal spirit, if he knew you're just going to burn in hell forever.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:13:28 I mean, he already knows whether or not you're going to heaven. Why did he give you an immortal spirit then, right? Like, I'll create you out of nothing for my own will and purpose, and also you're going to burn in hell for eternity. There you go. I mean, not only in a mortal sense.

John Bytheway: 01:13:41 What kind of being is that [crosstalk 01:13:44]?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:13:44 As that starts to be revealed more, the idea of this preexistent life in Joseph's revelations, I think that helps an awful lot that this is not our beginning.

John Bytheway: 01:13:56 This is Act II.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:13:57 Certainly isn't our end.

John Bytheway: 01:14:00 It's Elder Neal A. Maxwell, I believe that was him that used the phrase about the knowledge of the premortal existence as a wonderful flood of light. That sound familiar? And it is, it changes everything, we're in the middle of, we're in the hard part, and it's a very short part of this long existence and this little testing. President Packer, you remember "The Play and the Plan," he called it Act I, Act II, Act II, and we're in Act II that and he said it's characterized by test trials, temptations and even tragedies. Nowhere in Act II he said appears, "To live happily ever after. That's reserved for Act III."

Hank Smith: 01:14:44 Please join us for Part II of this podcast.