



*“The Promised Restoration Goes Forward”*

## **Show Notes & Transcripts**

### **Podcast General Description:**

FollowHIM: A *Come, Follow Me* Podcast with Hank Smith & John Bytheway

Do you ever feel that preparing for your weekly *Come, Follow Me* lesson falls short? Join hosts Hank Smith and John Bytheway as they interview experts to make your study for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints’ *Come, Follow Me* course not only enjoyable but original and educational. If you are looking for resources to make your study fresh, faithful, and fun--no matter your age--then join us every Wednesday.

### **Podcast Episode Descriptions**

#### **Part 1:**

How does the Restoration help us develop a relationship with Jesus Christ? Join Dr. Tyler Griffin as he kicks off a new year of followHIM by examining The Restoration of the Fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: A Bicentennial Proclamation to the World.

#### **Part 2:**

Dr. Griffin continues to explore the Restoration Proclamation and discusses the excitement inherent in anticipating ongoing revelation and restoration through prophets from Jesus Christ.

# Timecodes:

## Part 1:

- 00:00 Part I - Dr. Tyler Griffin
- 00:34 Intro
- 05:43 *Come, Follow Me Manual*
- 07:02 Restoration Proclamation
- 10:39 You're own Sacred Grove
- 15:33 The Inexhaustible Gospel
- 18:47 Zenos's Allegory and the Restoration
- 24:40 Covenant as a relationship
- 26:06 We are on trial, not the Book of Mormon
- 33:08 History of rejecting God's prophets
- 39:45 God allows us to assist in His work
- 44:24 2020 Proclamation
- 48:58 God's plan is NOT to have His children do right
- 50:14 Three things
- 54:14 How does the Father speaks of His children?
- 56:22 *I Will Walk with Jesus*
- 59:04 The name of the Church
- 01:02:16 The first words of the Restoration
- 1:07:33 Moroni's final words
- 1:10:09 End of Part 1 - Dr. Tyler Griffin

## Part 2

- 00:00 Part 2 - Dr. Tyler Griffin
- 02:43 How God feels about His prophets
- 05:35 Witness, affirm, and Christ-like attributes
- 08:31 How did we get here?
- 12:33 Translating is a gift
- 17:54 Why was 7 afraid of 9?
- 20:17 "Griff, are you finding joy?"
- 27:07 Sacrifice is making something holy
- 30:17 Making 2025 a year of ongoing revelation and miracles
- 35:16 Reverence and gratitude
- 38:50 Joseph had questions
- 40:17 Hank searches for answers online
- 43:52 Dr. Griffin shares his testimony of the Restoration and Jesus
- 51:38 End of Part 2 - Dr. Tyler Griffin

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## Biographical Information:



Tyler joined BYU’s Department of Ancient Scripture as a teaching professor in August 2010. His greatest desire in this profession is to use the scriptures and teachings of modern prophets in ways that help increase faith in Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, build lifelong discipleship, and strengthen students’

ability to find answers and respond with faith to the challenges they face. He was born and raised in Providence, Utah in the beautiful Cache Valley. After serving a mission in Curitiba, Brazil, he married an Angel named Kiplin Crook. They have 10 children (5 boys and 5 girls). They love spending time in the mountains, playing board games, making music, and being together. Tyler began his career by teaching seminary for 6 years in Brigham City, Utah. He spent the next 7 years teaching at the Logan LDS Institute. While there, he helped launch the online seminary program. He is a co-founder of BYU Virtual Scriptures Group which develops digital learning resources to enhance scriptural immersion and understanding. His bachelor's degree was in Electrical Engineering and his master's and doctorate degrees are both in Instructional Technology.

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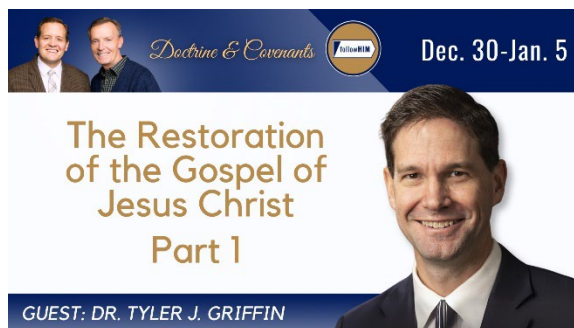
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- Hank Smith: 00:00:00 Coming up in this episode on FollowHIM.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:00:04 As we walk hand in hand and grow to become more like him, that's what the church is about. So if you're going to sacrament meeting or at a Sunday school or relief society or priesthood meeting this month and you're looking for perfection, stop looking horizontally and start looking vertically because you'll find it every time. Jesus Christ's perfection is always there, but you're not going to find it horizontally.
- Hank Smith: 00:00:34 Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of FollowHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with John Bytheway. John, listen to this. This is how I describe you, unique, historic, and of international impact. That's actually a statement from President Nelson about the Restoration. But you, John, are unique, historic, and you have had international impact.
- John Bytheway: 00:01:00 Historic. I think that just means old, right?
- Hank Smith: 00:01:03 Yes, it does.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:01:04 He's the oldest in the group.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:06 John, how exciting. We are here. It's 2025. We have done four years of Come, Follow Me and this is our second time coming around to a book of Scripture that we've studied before. But John, I was thinking about this, as you've studied the other three when you come back to a book of scripture, I think the study from the other three, you bring that with you and it changes the way you see this one.
- John Bytheway: 00:01:33 Oh, absolutely, and I think what's been so much fun, Hank, is having people ask, "Are you going to do it again?" Boy, I hope so, because every guest has brought a unique look at things we've seen before. Every single time, Hank, you and I have been, "Why have I never seen that?" I'm so excited to go

through this again with different guests, different perspectives, and see some new things. Again, this is very exciting.

- Hank Smith: 00:01:57 A new guest with a new vision. I just don't think we're going to get to the bottom of these scriptures ever. I don't think we're going to get to where we're like, "Ah, we've got it all."
- John Bytheway: 00:02:06 We got it.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:06 We've learned it all. We have Dr. Tyler Griffin with us. Of all the teachers in the church, and Tyler's not going to love that I say this, but of all the teachers I've met which are hundreds of teachers in the church, Tyler Griffin stands apart. He has the natural gift for teaching. Tyler, welcome, welcome back to FollowHIM.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:02:26 It's a pleasure to join you two again.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:28 We love having you. And Tyler's an old friend of ours. He's not old, but he's an old friend of ours.
- John Bytheway: 00:02:35 He's not historic. Not yet.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:02:35 I'm not quite historic.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:36 Not yet. He's not quite historic.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:02:40 Give me a few years, John, I'll catch up.
- Hank Smith: 00:02:42 If he gets historic you might get prehistoric, John, so we'll have to be careful. Tyler, I just want to ask you a question. Most members of the church I think who really study Come, Follow Me, are going to know who you are. What has the last, I think it's been five years where you have been with Scripture Central doing the Come, Follow Me lessons, what's that been like?
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:03:03 Well, like you two described, it's this journey of discovery and there's something beautiful, almost magical, I would say about this process of repeating, doing something again, but it's not doing it at the same level. It's like a spiral staircase where you don't just do it again, you figure out how to do it better and better. That's what it's been, is God shaping, teaching, instructing, correcting, clarifying. I cringe as some of the things that I said on camera four years ago, five years ago because of things I've learned now, but it's okay. Life's all about progression. And like you said, Hank, we will never get to the



bottom of this in this life and I find that fascinating and that journey thrilling.

- Hank Smith: 00:03:55 Tyler, you've taught this for decades. Are you still learning? John, I know you felt this way before where someone shows you something and you're like, "Really, I've taught this for a long time. How have I not seen this?" So Tyler, for our listeners out there, you too are you still learning?
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:04:13 Absolutely. There's not just learning, but experiencing. I think that's the difference. It's not just head knowledge, it's relational, it's connection with heaven kinds of capacities that are developing and growing and deepening. That's the beauty of it. Honestly, I know that you two both experienced this at the beginning of each semester. I'm confident you feel the same way. I am more excited to go in and teach whether it's the Book of Mormon or the New Testament or Jesus Christ's Everlasting Gospel than any previous semester precisely because of all these things we've been talking about. There's more to discover and the students teach us in the process lessons from heaven, from the Holy Ghost.
- Hank Smith: 00:05:01 What does the Doctrine and Covenants say? "We're all uplifted and edified-
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:05:04 Edified.
- Hank Smith: 00:05:05 ... together." And John, that's one of our hopes that people listen and they're uplifted and edified.
- John Bytheway: 00:05:11 Oh, absolutely, and I think about when people ask the question you're going to start again. I thought we have had what? Eight more general conferences, incredible addresses by our prophet and other church leaders that are also going to enrich everything that we're going to do. We could start going through some of the phrases of thinking celestial, of let God prevail, of all those things that we've heard in these past relatively recently that are all going to enrich what we're doing now.
- Hank Smith: 00:05:43 Well said, John. I hadn't thought about that. Now John, we are going to continue doing something that we've been doing for four years and that is using the [Come, Follow Me](#) manual. There's so much work that goes into this and it is really, really well done. The writing is wonderful, the questions are fantastic. It's not too short, it's not too long. It really is. I would encourage everyone to make sure that you're in the manual each week. I'm going to read from the manual here and then Tyler, I'm excited

to see where you go with this. We don't really have a specific scripture block to look at today.

00:06:17 We're introducing the Restoration. Here's how the manual starts. "How do you commemorate the 200th anniversary of an event that changed the world? That's the question the first presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles pondered as April, 2020 approached, marking 200 years since Joseph Smith's first vision." This is President Nelson. "We wondered if a monument should be erected, but as we considered the unique historic and international impact of that first vision, we felt impressed to create a monument not of granite or stone, but of words not to be carved in tables of stone but rather to be etched in the fleshy tables of our hearts.

00:07:02 The monument of words they created is titled; [The Restoration of the Fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: A Bicentennial Proclamation to the World](#). It's a monument not just to the first vision, but also to everything Jesus Christ has done and is still doing since then. The restoration of his gospel started when one person turned to God and heard him. It continues that same way." Oh, this is so good. "One heart, one sacred experience at a time including yours." Oh, man. Tyler, what do you want to do today? You and I have been talking for a couple of months about this. What's come to mind? Where do you want to take us?

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:07:43 Good question. This is such a unique year where we get to study the Doctrine and Covenants and all of these events of church history in this unfolding restoration. It's unique on many levels. What other scripture do we have that's given originally in English? It's not transmitted over centuries or millennia to get to us. It's given in our time. It's a beautiful opportunity to see this ongoing open canon. The heavens are opened as it says in the Restoration Proclamation.

00:08:19 I think the biggest point here is for people to not just approach this academically, so to speak, to say, "Oh, I can give you all the dates, the people, the places, the events, the flow of everything that was occurring." As important and as interesting as that is it's back to what you ended with there in the end of that second paragraph, it's including yours. It doesn't matter how many people know that the church is true, it doesn't matter how many people can testify that the Book of Mormon is true, that the Doctrine and Covenants are Scripture, that Joseph was a true prophet. Those are all means to an end of me connecting with God to say, "Heavenly Father, I need help.

- 00:09:03 I need to know what I need to know in order to do what I need to do in order to become who Thou sent me here to this earth to become." And that's really the focus for me of the Restoration Proclamation and the Doctrine and Covenants. And quite frankly, every scripture you ever cover is how can we turn those into connecting points with Christ where I can see him, I can see myself with him on the page and I can see where I can take his hand and walk with him on that covenant path that he has so graciously laid out for us?
- 00:09:44 At the end of this opening episode for this new year I would hope that anybody who's watching or listening would say, "I want to come to know for myself, not just in my head, but in my heart and in all of my desires and in my behaviors that I'm on the Lord's side. I'm going to walk with him this year. I'm going to dedicate my life. I'm going to consecrate my desires, my devotion to him more than ever before because I believe the prophet's words when he said the Lord's going to perform some of his greatest miracles ever." There's energy and excitement surrounding the church right now that I love the fact that there's so much happening. For those who are familiar with C.S. Lewis and the Chronicles of Narnia I would say Aslan is on the move.
- Hank Smith: 00:10:39 That's fantastic. I frequently tell my children, "You have to have your own sacred grove." We can learn about the sacred grove, we can go to the sacred grove, we can love it. I love Joseph Smith history. I love the first vision, but it has to lead me to my own first vision, first of many. I need to have continual experiences with the Lord. Someone might say, "Why didn't Joseph Smith talk about the first vision that much?" I think that might be one reason. Go have your own. Go to the Lord. You don't have to just read about my experience with him. You can have your own.
- John Bytheway: 00:11:13 Yeah, I love what you're saying here. It reminds me of Moses, "Come with me to Sinai." Here's Joseph, "Come with me to the sacred grove." And something that he said in History of the Church, Joseph Smith said, "God hath not revealed anything to Joseph, but what he will make known unto the 12 and even the least saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them." Yeah, you can do this too, so thank you Tyler for pointing that out. That last line's really good. One heart, one sacred experience at a time including yours. That's really good.
- Hank Smith: 00:11:46 And we've talked about this many times on the show, John, we need to send our children and our grandchildren to the Lord. Have your own experience, go talk to him, go ask. If you want to

talk. Someone who's obsessed with the Doctrine and Covenants, Anthony Sweat is right there. Anthony said when he was a kid, he opened up a Bible and it was one of those red letter Bibles. He said, "Dad, what are the red letters?"

00:12:09 And his father said, "Well, this is where Jesus is speaking." And he thought, "Oh wow, okay. I'm going to pay attention to the red letters." And then it occurred to him, "What if we made the Doctrine and Covenants a red letter Bible? Where would we hear the Lord?" And he said, "Almost the entire thing would be in red letters. This is the voice of the Lord through the prophet." He converted me a little bit at that moment. I don't let that out too much because I am constantly trying to pull him the other direction, but this is the voice of the Lord in our day.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:12:42 I love that. And I love the fact that God lets us hear his voice through his instruments. It's not God himself speaking from the megaphone in the sky, so to speak, it's through the voice of his, at times, very humble servants. It's amazing to me to contrast the difference between when Joseph is speaking prophetically versus when Joseph is speaking as a farm boy in upstate New York and there is a stark contrast between those two.

Hank Smith: 00:13:17 That's wonderful. The Lord takes the weak things of the earth to do his work. I don't know if that's a compliment to Joseph Smith, but I'm going to take the weak things of the earth, watch what I can do with them.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:13:31 The other thing I would add here at the introduction of this new year is the reality that the foundation of the restoration of the gospel is rooted in Joseph Smith choosing to use his agency to act in ways that are going to align his will with God's. He's not waking up one morning saying, "I want to be a prophet. I want to establish a church. I want to write new scripture." He went to the grove with a question, "Which church should I join because I'm concerned about the welfare of my soul? I want to repent, I want to be saved, but which church should I join?"

00:14:09 And because he did that God then uses him as an instrument to reveal and restore all of these incredible truths, doctrines, authority, keys, establishing the church, all of that amazing flow of the restoration comes because Joseph was willing to put his own will on the altar, which quite frankly is what the invitation to all of us as individuals is this year as well, is to not have this year be a spectator sport, so to speak, let other people do the digging and the teaching and we just sit back and absorb. But to say, "Lord, what would thou have me do?" We learn, we keep pulling in all of these resources that we can, but eventually it

has to turn to a therefore what? What am I now going to do differently than I've done before and how can I align my will with God's so that I can move forward on the covenant path?

- Hank Smith: 00:15:12 Yeah, and one thing I think we'll see this year, Tyler, is it's a slow line upon line process with Joseph. We get to watch it happen. And with us too, we can get a little impatient and say, "Hey, can we hurry up this changing process?" And if you'll stick with it, persistence is key, keep coming back. It's almost imperceptible sometimes.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:15:33 Yeah, just like a little child growing up and you learn basic things, how to walk, how to tie your shoes, how to feed yourself, how to run, how to read, and eventually you keep developing more. And like we said before, there's always more to learn. It's an inexhaustible gospel as [Elder Maxwell](#) used to call it.
- Hank Smith: 00:15:55 And that's both terrifying like how much don't I know? And also exciting.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:16:01 It is a little bit perplexing at times because the more we learn, the more we realize we don't know. It's that analogy of a circle. If you were to draw a circle, the inside of the circle is what I know outside is what I don't know. The questions that I have are the circumference of that circle.
- Hank Smith: 00:16:24 Yeah, the rim.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:16:25 The more I learn, the more questions I have and that's beautiful.
- Hank Smith: 00:16:31 It's wonderful. My students will ask me questions and I think I'm pretty experienced, I can answer this question and, "You know what? I don't know that. I'm sorry. I'll go find out."
- John Bytheway: 00:16:41 My sixth grade teacher, shout out to Harrow Byer, he was awesome. He had quotations all over the walls and I still refer to some of those today. One of them said, "The larger the island of knowledge, the longer the shoreline of wonder." You get one question answered, you got five more. We are all here because a teenage boy said a prayer. Like you said, Tyler, his question was, "Which church should I join?" The barrage that came after that. I mean all this kid wanted to know is what church to join.
- Hank Smith: 00:17:16 I just want to know where to go to church on Sunday.

John Bytheway: 00:17:20 Here we are sitting here look what has happened. It's a marvelous work and wonder. It's incredible. And it's still going.

Hank Smith: 00:17:27 And John, I would add this, Moroni told Joseph his name would be known for good and evil, not good and not so good, good and evil, but we, the three of us here and throughout the year we will testify of the goodness and the character of Joseph Smith. And we hope you'll stay with us. If you want to know the truth about Joseph Smith stay with us this year and in your own studies, go through it. You'll come through it like millions have with a testimony of the goodness of Joseph Smith, and really the goodness of Joseph Smith because of who the Lord is and what he can do with someone.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:18:06 And I would add there that sometimes as human beings, our natural tendency is to want instantaneous solutions, quick answers, complete resolution to our problems. This is line upon line. This is a process. Joseph goes in the Spring of 1820 and you watch the Lord do his work. From our perspective, it's absolutely accelerated and mind-blowing how much has happened in the last 200 and what? Four years, five years? Our life is intended to be this growth process.

00:18:46 As I look at the restoration and this unfolding of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ in these last 200 plus years, it reminds me of Zenos' allegory in the Book of Mormon Jacob 5, if you remember that third visit to the vineyard when they found all this fruit, but none of it was tame, it was all wild. Lots of fruit, but not the right kind. The diagnosis of that third visit was, I love this line here, it's in Jacob 5:48. So listen to this not just in the context of the history of the House of Israel or the history of the dispensations unfolding, but also listen at the level of our own personal development and our own discipleship and what can sometimes happen. It came to pass that the servant said unto his master, "Is it not the loftiness of thy vineyard? Have not the branches thereof overcome the roots which are good?"

00:19:46 And because the branches have overcome the roots thereof, behold they grew faster than the strength of the roots taking strength unto themselves. So often in our own lives we get involved in so many things, so many fruit producing activities that if we're not careful, it can actually overpower the roots that we have to be able to sustain and support all of our life. You only have so many minutes in a day, you only have so much energy, so where you devote that energy is really, really important. In the unfolding Restoration it's amazing to watch how God keeps it very measured and it's not just exploding

across the earth. Here we have this tragedy of the third visit with the great apostasy and then what's the solution?

- Hank Smith: 00:20:37 Tyler, you know me well. You know how much I love Jacob chapter five. If you look at the big hit movies of today it follows the same trajectory as Jacob 5. There's a setup, a slow build, a tragedy, and here comes this redemption. Here comes the heroes and that really is the moment of tragedy. What could I have done more for my vineyard? Perhaps it's all over. Perhaps we just end the entire project right now and then there's this, let's try one more thing, call the servants. Almost this group that they've been holding back, call the servants and everything changes.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:21:18 Yeah. And that is amazing. When he says in verse 61, "Go to and call servants that we may labor diligently with our might in the vineyard that we may prepare the way." And then in verse 62 he says, "Wherefore, let us go to and labor with our might this last time." A couple of things that are beautiful to me. There is Jesus is the Lord. The vineyard isn't saying, "Go figure it out." He says, "No, come labor with me. We will labor in my vineyard one more time. We're going to nourish and dig and prune and graft and plant one more time, but we're going to do it differently." I love this.
- 00:22:04 Verse 66 he says, "It grieveth me that I should lose the trees of my vineyard wherefore ye shall clear away the bad according as the good shall grow, that the root and the top may be equal in strength until the good shall overcome the bad." That to me is the essence of our dispensation of the gospel. The Lord of the vineyard is working very methodically to keep the branches to match the strength of the root as this gospel is unfolding. And now you sit down in general conference and it's always a guess as to how many temples are going to be announced. It's every year wonder how many new missions there are going to be.
- 00:22:51 The growth is coming way faster now than it was before, but we had to get the root structure in place, which to me is a beautiful model for each of us individually as we go into this new year of study is, don't get so excited about all of the frills and the garnishment of the gospel that we lose track of the core, the root of our conversion and our connection with Christ. And we make sure that all of these incredible pursuits that we're involved in don't overpower that which is of greatest worth, which is literally my covenant connection with God and with Jesus Christ.

Hank Smith: 00:23:36 That's wonderful. I remember President Hinckley saying one of the largest problems in the church is growth, dealing with the expansive growth of the church. Tyler, what a great insight, that the Lord is not going to let this blossom out of control. We're going to go slowly and deliberately, but as that gets established it actually can go faster. It can be hastened. I don't know if either of you have ever heard that. I think the work could be hastened.

John Bytheway: 00:24:05 Just yesterday I was saying to my class that anciently we used to use something called a flip chart as we were on a mission. My flip chart, I had one visual aid with all 16 temples of the church and I could name them by sight because they're just those 16. Here's Manti, here's Logan, here's Salt Lake, here's St. George, Cardston, Alberta. I said, how many were announced in just the last general conference? My students knew 17. I was like, "Yeah, more than my flip chart in one week."

00:24:40 You know what I love that you're saying here, Tyler, is that covenant connection with Christ. One of the ways I've heard this articulated more recently that I really appreciate is do not think of a covenant as simply a contract that you sign and let it on the shelf, think of it as a relationship. Where Christ is strong because of that relationship I can draw on his strength to help me and every one of these hearts one at a time that that introductory paragraph said so beautifully, one heart, one sacred experience at a time including yours. That's what it's about. One covenant relationship at a time as this massive growth happens, but it's one person at a time carefully growing.

Hank Smith: 00:25:24 I feel bad for those people. Do you remember when we were younger people would say, "We have a goal to visit every temple across the earth."

John Bytheway: 00:25:33 Yeah.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:25:35 At this point it's even hard to say, "I have a goal to visit every temple in Utah."

John Bytheway: 00:25:39 When I was in the Philippines just for fun there was one temple under construction in Manila and then President Dallin H. Oaks gave that talk. He mentioned the Philippines and showed even a graphic with 11 temples operating, planned, under construction in the Philippines. Things really picked up after I left. I don't know what to make of that exactly, but-



Hank Smith: 00:26:02 It was all the seeds you planted, John. It was all the seeds you planted.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:26:06 It's interesting as you analyze this unfolding restoration and the day in which you and I now live, we get to see this happening right before our very eyes and to a small degree be a little part of that growth. It's amazing how often you run into people who get caught up in, "I just don't know if the church is true." Or "I just don't know if Joseph Smith is a true prophet." Or "I just don't know if the Book of Mormon is true or President Nelson is a true prophet," or whatever. It's fascinating to me how the scriptures don't put the emphasis on an external true-false test.

00:26:47 In other words, the most important question here is not whether the church is true or whether Joseph Smith was a true prophet because people can go into all kinds of examples and say, "Well, he can't be a prophet because he did this or because he said this or he didn't do that." They find all the reasons they can for why he must be a false prophet, but they very rarely spend any time putting the true-false test on themselves. In other words, whether or not Joseph Smith was a true prophet is not going to be changed by my belief or unbelief in him.

00:27:29 The Book of Mormon's veracity or its truthfulness isn't going to be adjusted in any degree whether I believe it or not. Whether or not President Nelson is a true prophet is not going to be affected by me. The one thing that will be affected by me is whether or not I am true to the truth, whether or not I am true to the principles that God is willing to give to me to move forward. And sometimes I have to move forward in faith alone because I don't know, but that's a gift of the Spirit as well, not just a gift to know. Sometimes it's a gift to believe.

00:28:08 To the listeners out there if you're saying, "But I don't have this strong testimony like I hear people bearing it, fast and testimony meeting." That's okay. If you can even believe and if you can live like you believe and you can move forward with desires to believe even more and put yourself to the true-false test instead of all of these external things, the chances are that you will grow like the trees in the vineyard. You'll become fruitful because, John, as you said before, because your roots are tapped into that relationship with Christ, that's where you're drawing your strength.

00:28:48 You're not drawing it from doubters, from unbelievers, from people who want to throw potshots at Joseph or any of our prophets or any of our scripture or any of our revelations or practices. It's not going to help you. People generally walk the

direction they're facing instead of facing doubters and unbelievers as [President Nelson](#) said, face the Lord. Turn our attention, our focus of our life to Jesus Christ and see him as not just the root, but my root. It's where I put my life effort is to say I'm going to more than ever before. 2025 I'm going to seek the Lord Jesus Christ to do His will and to trust and follow His prophets better than I've ever done it before, and just see what happens as this fruit now gets produced because of that life rooted in Christ.

- Hank Smith: 00:29:53 My 18-year-old son, Mason, he likes to drag me to the gym every morning. As you were talking Tyler, I thought, wouldn't it be odd for Mason and I to walk around the gym saying, "I wonder if that's a true weight. I wonder if that's a working treadmill. I wonder if this elliptical is true." Where the Lord would say, "That's not what this is about." Start using these things. Use the Book of Mormon. Listen to the prophet. Start acting on those things. This gym, this church is not about what's true or not, it's about you developing into a true person. I really like how you said that. It's almost as if we put the book on trial, the Book of Mormon on trial instead of ourselves.
- John Bytheway: 00:30:34 Putting us on trial. I just love these father-son chats in the Book of Mormon. When Alma the younger talks with Corianton, those chapters are introduced too are as you marvel about this, you're worried about this, you marvel about this and you think this is unjust, and at the very end he says, "Let these things trouble you no more. Only let your sins trouble you." You're focusing on the wrong thing, son. How's your relationship with Christ? And let his justice and his mercy and his patience, his long-suffering have full sway in your heart. I just think, "Wow. Look what he just did there." You're looking at the wrong stuff, son.
- Hank Smith: 00:31:18 What great insight there, John, that you marvel about this, you're thinking about that. You're debating about the justice of God here. Let's put those aside and focus on how are you doing internally? Are you aligned?
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:31:34 As you pull all of these concepts together here we live in a world that focuses so much on history and on trying to dig up dirt, trying to, back to our analogy here of the vineyard, spend so much time digging around in the roots trying to find something to discredit either a person or an organization or a scripture. And I love the fact that Jesus Christ, he said "By their fruits, ye shall know them." He didn't say by their roots, ye shall know them."

- 00:32:14 People can spend a lot of time trying to dig up all kinds of dirt on different characters in church history, but at the end of the day as we look at the fruit that was produced by God through his instruments in those early days of the church, especially Joseph Smith and those surrounding him, those fruits are sweet and they connect me with Christ. They give me a vision of who I am and more importantly who I can become and they give me hope. Even as we're talking, we're spending a lot of time ironically talking about the Book of Mormon as we're preparing to start a new year in the Doctrine and Covenants, but I think that's fitting in that this is the restoration of the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon is a vital part of that restoration process.
- John Bytheway: 00:33:08 There is a line in [Preach my Gospel](#) that I thought, "Oh man, whoever wrote that, I want to buy them lunch." I'm just going to paraphrase it. "Throughout history, God has had a pattern of reaching out to his children through a prophet and man has had a pattern of rejecting them." Then it says, "Amazingly they even rejected Jesus Christ when he came." And then it says, "Consider our evidence that God has reached out again through a prophet." Consider our evidence that God has reached out again through a prophet. The prophet is Joseph Smith and the evidence is the Book of Mormon, which you can read and study and pray about it. What a great way to put it. He reached out again in this time he showed up with 531, give or take, pages of evidence and what are you going to do with... Where did this come from? And what are the fruits of that?
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:34:02 Beautiful.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:03 I'm sure both of you feel this same way as I have read the Book of Mormon and now studied it and read it and studied it and taught it. I understand what [Joseph Smith](#) said, "Lord deliver us from the prison of pen and ink." How I feel about the Book of Mormon I try to put it into words. It does feel like a prison. There are just not words to describe what this book has done, how I feel about it, what I've seen in it. And it hasn't always been this way. It took, like you said, Tyler, time. And now the beauty and majesty, you would say, of the Book of Mormon is overwhelming to me. There are not words to describe how I view it, see it and feel about it.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:34:51 Amen.
- Hank Smith: 00:34:53 I just might add, Joseph Smith had never seen an olive tree in his life.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:35:00 I find that fascinating, John, that here's a New England farm boy who he knows a lot about clearing land, cutting down trees, ripping out roots and leveling and plowing and harrowing and then planting and harvesting food off of a farm. We don't get a lot of detail about clearing land in the Book of Mormon. We don't get a lot of New England farm explanations, but like you said, we get a very detailed account of an olive vineyard.

Hank Smith: 00:35:40 You guys are going to have to stop me here, but this chapter, Jacob 5, you could spend your life in this chapter. And this is one of how many chapters you can do the same thing. I know both of you feel this way. There's an excitement that when you catch the vision of the Book of Mormon it almost eclipses Joseph Smith. You see the prophet and you're impressed by him and then you see this book and you almost forget about him and go, "Wow, this unending..." What did [Elder Maxwell](#) call it? This mansion, that room after room after room with a new fireplace to warm me consistently forever.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:36:23 Isn't that a beautiful thing that if you go back to the allegory yet again, it's not about the servants. They're not even named. Other servants are called in our dispensation and they were few. So you've got a few people who are called to go and assist the Lord. And I love verse 72. "It came to pass that the servants did go and labor with their might and the Lord of the vineyard labored also with them and they did obey the commandments of the Lord of the vineyard in all things."

00:36:55 If I could give a marching order for myself for 2025 going into this year of studying the Doctrine and Covenants, it's that verse 72, to go and labor with all of my might, do everything I can in order to labor with the Lord of the vineyard, in order to obey his commandments in all things. To what end? It's not for me to get glory. We're not building my kingdom. It's not about me. It's about building fruit. It's about growing fruit. And that takes time and patience. My digging efforts. Some listeners may have disabled family members that they're taking care of, others may have gone through terrible losses of death or divorce or lost jobs or displaced home or all kinds of tragedies and the reality is we keep going, laboring with the Lord.

00:37:52 We dig a little here, we prune a little there, we nourish a little bit there, we graft in here with the help and the inspiration of the Lord and we trust that over time things are going to work out. Beautiful fruit is going to be produced in this little part of the vineyard that he has given me to labor in. And what a privilege it is to go and labor with my might. It's not as if the servant is in servitude, it's covenant relationship with the Lord.

And I love that. And it is a joy to work with him in the vineyard. It's not a task that's burdensome.

- Hank Smith: 00:38:30 Is there anything better than laboring shoulder to shoulder with the Lord of the universe? It's unspeakable.
- John Bytheway: 00:38:39 I remember the moment in the Old Testament year that impression over and over again of God is not uninvolved, he's not just watching what's happening. He was relentlessly coming after people, coming after his children. Then in the allegory we've been talking about it grieveth me that I should lose this tree. If you have a vineyard with a couple of hundred trees and you lose one, eh, but what if the trees are people? What if they're relationships and that makes it totally different? That it grieveth me I should lose any of these trees.
- Hank Smith: 00:39:14 The Lord of the vineyard wept. How do you think the Lord of the vineyard feels about those servants? You can read towards the end of the chapter, "Blessed art thou for because you have been diligent with me in my vineyard." You can feel that beautiful connection between the Lord and these servants.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:39:34 It's amazing.
- John Bytheway: 00:39:36 So thank you for joining us on Jacob chapter five today, also known as the Doctrine and Covenants.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:39:45 Sorry, I didn't mean to take us that far into Jacob 5, but it is so applicable to the coming forth of the Restoration. This is an interesting concept that here you have a God who holds worlds without number in his hands. He's more than capable. He can do his work. He tells us that on two occasions in 2 Nephi 27, I am able to do my own work. And yet the fascinating thing to me is that he relies on servants to assist in the work when he could just miraculously perform all the work way better, quite frankly than Joseph Smith or any prophet or any teacher.
- 00:40:30 Jesus could give every talk this coming Sunday in sacrament meeting and it would be the best most perfect sacrament meeting ever. But a perfect sacrament meeting isn't the point, helping us grow line upon line to become more like the Savior, that's the point. And you can't do that by going and having a lesson and having somebody teach you facts and figures and dates and places. You do it by walking with the Savior, by keeping his commandments to the best of our ability and then pleading for forgiveness when we don't, extending mercy to others who are struggling in their part of the vineyard as well.

00:41:13 We work together, we grow together, we with the Lord, help produce fruit together and it's just this long process of becoming who we have the capacity to become. And I just marvel at God's goodness. Instead of just taking over my life and doing everything perfectly, he lets me wrestle, he lets me struggle. He lets me teach those lessons. He lets me come as a guest on your podcast here because there's an opportunity for learning and growth and development and becoming. It's amazing to me how patient and kind he is with us as children of God through this growing process.

Hank Smith: 00:41:58 John, I've been mission companions here with you long enough that I know what you thought of. I'll start it and you can finish it. The Lord gets his work done through the people-

John Bytheway: 00:42:09 ... and he gets his people done through the work.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:42:12 I like that.

John Bytheway: 00:42:13 My mission president Menlo Smith used to say, "The Lord gets the work done through his people and his people done." Because we're not done yet so we do the work however many times we stumble and everything else. But I love that you said, Tyler, a while ago. When I think about things I taught 20 years ago I cringe because I'm still learning yet he lets us do it, but he does it because of what we are becoming, which you've said a few times today, Tyler. It's all about what we can become and it's a long process.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:42:44 Which to me is one of the most beautiful truths that God restored to the earth, is that simple reality that we've all known since we could first sing any primary song. I am a child of God. That is such a unique doctrine in the restoration. Most people in the world see us as creations of God, that he fashioned us, he made us, but it's a totally different thing for me to create something or fashion something as opposed to engender new life in a child that's a totally different relationship and that child now has capacity to grow up to become something that none of my creations have the capacity to do.

00:43:33 We see that happening not just with Joseph Smith and those who are around him in the early days of the church, but we see it with each of us here now, that we're children of God, we're not robots that were created by God and programmed by him. Because if that were the case quite frankly when we get it wrong, he should just rewire, fix that code that went astray, fix me, but you don't fix children like that. You invite, you teach, you love, you persuade. You motivate children to use their

agency to grow into their capacity. And that's what I see in the unfolding restoration over the last 200 years is, a group of a few servants who are willing to turn to the Lord and say, "Okay, we'll work with you as you are willing to work with us." And we grow into those children of God that we were born with the capacity to become. I love that.

- Hank Smith: 00:44:31 That is wonderful.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:44:34 I think it would be beneficial for us to spend some time in the actual document produced by our first presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for that notable two-hundredth anniversary general conference back in April of 2020 as you introduced in those first two paragraphs of the Come, Follow Me manual.
- Hank Smith: 00:44:54 Tyler, I think this is a great opportunity because I'm sure both of you remember that April of 2020 the world was in complete upheaval and maybe some of us missed this proclamation and for good reason too, we had never seen anything like it, April of 2020.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:45:15 If my memory serves, Hank, BYU shut down classes on March 20th, a week and a half later we have general conference and this restoration proclamation was given out. And I agree with you. I think a lot of people probably missed the significance of that moment because we were so distracted with what in the world is going on around us with COVID.
- Hank Smith: 00:45:38 So this is a good chance for us to say, "Let's take a look at that."
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:45:42 They point out in the Come, Follow Me manual how the whole proclamation opens. That first sentence is fascinating. "We solemnly proclaim that God loves his children in every nation of the world." That is a beautiful truth that the Book of Mormon has been teaching for centuries. We are collectively recognizing that truth more than ever before, but there's still room to grow. We still have room to improve there. This recognition that all of God's children, every nation of the world, every one of them is by him. It reminds me of that powerful line in Alma the Younger's statement in Alma 29 when he opens it by saying, "Oh, that I were an angel and could have the wish in my heart."
- 00:46:35 Well that makes sense because it was an angel who came and changed his life originally. He then says, "Yeah, I sin in my wish. I should be content." But then he gives this incredible truth in verse eight, "For behold, the Lord doth grant unto all nations.

That's 100%. Of their own nation and tongue to teach his word yea in wisdom, all that he seeth fit that they should have. Therefore, we see that the Lord does counsel in wisdom according to that which is just and true. I love this reality that God will give to his children as much as they're willing and able to receive from him. And He'll give it to them in their own tongue and of their own nation. It's a beautiful reminder of the universality of God's love.

00:47:25 If you consider all the ways that the first Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles could have opened up a proclamation to the whole world, it doesn't take a long time thinking or pondering on that to realize that was beautiful. That was the perfect starting point because love is the single greatest motivator. There's nothing that is more powerful to get children to use their agency appropriately. You can shame them, you can threaten them, you can coerce them, you can bribe them, you can do all these other techniques and get the behaviors that you might be looking for, but you won't get their heart.

00:48:11 It's love that opens up the soul of the children of God to recognize who they are, who he is and who they can become. And then doctrine, nourishment that comes from the gospel of Jesus Christ now has more fertile ground on which to land and grow and one day produce fruit. So I love the fact that they opened with I don't care who you are or where you live, you're a child of God and he loves you. That becomes the plowing and harrowing the ground to make it ready for all of this incredible that the seeds of doctrine that are now going to be planted by the members of first presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve.

Hank Smith: 00:48:58 Speaking of the Quorum of the Twelve, [Elder Renlund](#), "Heavenly Father's goal in parenting is not to have his children do what is right." Did both of you remember that? I thought, "Wait, what?"

John Bytheway: 00:49:09 Yes. Wait, what? Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:49:11 ...not to have his children do what is right, it is to have his children choose to do what is right and ultimately become like Him. He doesn't want simply obedient children. God desires, expects and directs his children to choose for themselves. He does not force obedience. Wonderful talk. I could keep going on this.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:49:31 Beautiful. What conference was that?



Hank Smith: 00:49:33 That was October of 2018.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:49:36 Wonderful concept. Then as you continue in the rest of that first paragraph, I might go as far as to say just because the three of us are used to teaching scripture classes and we like talking about chapters and verses it just rolls off the tongue. I don't mind looking at a document like this. I know it's not canonized scripture, I get that, but to me it's scripture on the level of the first presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles unanimously come together and make a proclamation to the whole world. To me, that's scripture. So I'm going to refer to these not as paragraphs, but as verses if that's okay.

00:50:14 So if you continue in verse one here it says, "God the Father has given us three things here, the divine birth, the incomparable life, and the infinite sacrifice of his beloved son, Jesus Christ. Our Father, our God is a giver of gifts and he gave us the best gift ever. Not just life, he gave us the life of his Son. He gave us the divine birth and that infinite atoning sacrifice of his beloved Son, Jesus Christ." And by the way, sorry to use John's name in vain here, but by the way, if you look at the phrase here, his beloved Son, you start adding up all of the places where God, the Father definitely is the one who's speaking in scripture. You have the voice of God, the Father, the baptism of Christ.

00:51:17 You have it at the Mount of Transfiguration, you have it in third Nephi 11 with the group of people assembled at the temple in Bountiful. You have it in the first vision in the sacred grove which President Hinckley beautifully said, was the most powerful testimony of Jesus Christ given in this dispensation. When the Father himself said, "This is my beloved Son," when God the Father bears testimony that Jesus is the Christ, there's no more powerful testimony available. You've got those four instances of the Father bearing witness of the Son, then you've also got a couple of instances in Second Nephi 31 where Nephi hears the voice of the Father. And you get another one in Helaman 5 where Nephi and Lehi in prison and they hear the voice of the Father speaking.

00:52:16 Then you could debate whether Moses 1 and other places it's the Father speaking or whether it was Jesus speaking under divine investiture of authority. So I'm just going to stick with the ones that I've mentioned there that we know for sure that's the Father speaking. It's fascinating to me that there's only one word that is repeated in every single one of those, the four big ones and then the couple in 2 Nephi 31 and the one in Helaman 5, one word that gets repeated in all of those, and it's the word beloved, which is used here again. It's his beloved Son. To me,

it's amazing that Jesus Christ cognitively knows that Heavenly Father loves him.

00:53:03 That's not in doubt for Him. He gets it, but Heavenly Father says it again and again and again. And every time he introduces his Son he's introducing him as the beloved. For us today in this unfolding restoration I think there's a message, once again, love really is the greatest motivator. With your loved ones they shouldn't go too long without hearing or experiencing your love, your expressions of love for them appropriately, not just once or twice, but again and again and again. It's one of those little fruits of the restoration that I think can be applied by each of us. And it's not hard to find ways to more fully express our love for those around us that God has given to us in our life.

Hank Smith: 00:54:02 I can text my son right now that I love him and I know he'll see it because I know he is on his phone and that's not hard. It's not hard to just express that token.

John Bytheway: 00:54:14 Our friend and colleague, [Brad Wilcox](#), I heard him take this idea of how the Father speaks about the Son and make an application to families, kind of like you're doing right now. As best as I recall, look how this father talks about members of his family in front of larger audiences. I thought it was a great application. It's not just this is my Son. We all know that. This is my beloved Son. I love him. I am so pleased with Him. How do I talk about my wife in presence of others? How do I talk about my children in the presence of others? Is my wife ever wondering what I'm going to say about her? What a great application. Here is the perfect being, talking about a member of his family in front of others.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:55:01 Brad is one of those who doesn't just talk about it. He embodies that. He doesn't just talk about grace, he doesn't just talk about love. He lives it. It's beautiful to see.

Hank Smith: 00:55:11 He does.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:55:12 And it's beautiful to receive from him.

Hank Smith: 00:55:16 He loves people. When I see him coming, I know, okay, get ready. I'm going to get a compliment and a hug.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:55:22 And that's motivating.

Hank Smith: 00:55:26 It is.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:55:27 You want to be better. So to finish off verse one, they say by the power of the Father, Jesus rose again and came the victory over death. He is our Savior, our Exemplar, and our Redeemer. It paints this picture of what kind of relationship, a connection I want with Jesus Christ. He's not just a statue, he's not just a picture on a wall or a word on a page, he's literally the Son of God who was sent to be my personal Savior and Redeemer, my Exemplar. He will walk with me and when I fall, which I do way more than I ought, he's there. When I'm happy he's there. When I'm perplexed he's there. When I'm hurting he's there.

00:56:22 And the amazing thing to me is I analyze what kind of a relationship would it be with a human being if every time this individual came to me they just came and said similar things that they usually say and then they walk away. They usually only come when they're really hurting or when they really need something. What kind of relationship would that be? For me, what I've been pondering the last little while is how can I truly walk with the Savior? I love that new hymn in our hymn book. I think it's hymn 1004, if I'm not mistaken.

00:57:03 I will walk with Jesus and he will walk with me, which means not just when I'm in trouble, not just when I'm hurting, but to walk with him when I'm happy, to walk with him when I'm working on a project, to walk with him when I'm creating, to walk with him when I'm going into teach or while I'm teaching or after I've taught, to walk with him when I'm in administrative roles, to involve him and include him and draw strength from him and to look at his life as truly the exemplar. What should I do here? Well, what did Jesus do in similar situations and to have it be more on the front of my mind rather than an afterthought?

Hank Smith: 00:57:42 Don't you love that about the name of the church? The Church of Jesus Christ. And we're going to include all of you as well of Latter-day Saints or what I like to say is of trying to be, really hoping to be Latter-day Saints.

John Bytheway: 00:57:59 I'm glad you said that. Tyler, you used a phrase, Nephi one time calls him my Jesus. I've always thought how he's so universal and so powerful, but he also can be my Jesus and I can walk with him. And I think it's only one time that he uses that phrase, but I glory in my Jesus, I think. That's how I want to think of it as a relationship, the way Nephi did there.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:58:30 You pull all that together in this unfolding restoration, and Hank, you mentioned even the name of the church, which actually jumped down to verse six. We declare that the church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints organized on April 6th, 1830

is Christ's New Testament church restored. Even that is fascinating to me because when the church is restored on April 6th, 1830 in upstate New York it wasn't given that name. It was just the Church of Christ and then four years later it becomes the Church of the Latter-day Saints.

00:59:04 So if you go to the Kirtland Temple, you see that it was built by the Church of the Latter-day Saints. And then it wasn't until section 115:4 that the Lord officially names his church for the last time the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. And he says, "Thus shall my church be called." President Nelson has done an amazing job of re-emphasizing the significance of that name. And as you mentioned already, Hank, the connection of Jesus Christ and the Latter-day Saints, perfection combined with imperfection as we walk hand in hand and grow to become more like him, that's what the church is about.

00:59:51 So if you're going to sacrament meeting or at a Sunday School or Relief Society or Priesthood meeting this month and you're looking for perfection, stop looking horizontally and start looking vertically because you'll find it every time. Jesus Christ's perfection is always there, but you're not going to find it horizontally. You're going to find a whole bunch of people who just like you are struggling to figure out what they should do and how they should do it and they're going to mess up sometimes. And that's the beauty of being in an organization like the Church of Jesus Christ that we're under his direction and he's calling us to labor with him. As imperfect as our efforts may be, as dull as my pruning shears and my saw might be, he still says, "Tyler, go and take care of that branch over there."

John Bytheway: 01:00:43 Yeah.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 01:00:43 It's beautiful.

John Bytheway: 01:00:44 It is. It's absolutely beautiful and how gentle we can be with each other. I'm grateful for the members of my ward to understand that me and my family, we're trying. We're trying just as they are. That is wonderful. My heart is just full today as we talk about these things. I can tell that I'm feeling the Holy Ghost. I'm more in tune with the Holy Ghost as we discuss this proclamation. It's an inspired document.

Hank Smith: 01:01:14 I've marked already just the first, what would it be? Six words, we solemnly proclaim that God loves. When I think about one of the accounts of the first vision, Joseph Smith said, "My soul was filled with love and for many days I could rejoice." It starts with a relationship. God loves and Joseph felt that and he was going

to need to feel that forever. What an inspired way to start. I love that you said that, Tyler. He loves his children. That's the starting point, and I think that was a starting point for Nephi too when he had his question, "Well, I know God loves his children, but I do not know the meaning of all things." Oh, that's a useful verse for all of us with all of the strange things and contradictions and sadness. Well, there's one thing I know. I know God loves his children. What an important starting point for us.

- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 01:02:16 Amen. And if you consider what the very first word heard in all of the unfolding events of the The Restoration of the Fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the very first word uttered happened to be just a simple name, Joseph, but spoken in such a way that it had to distill on that little farm boy's heart where he could feel not just that he was loved by God, but that he was seen and known by God. Like you said he was going to need that because unfortunately, you and I don't get to live on spiritual plateaus any more than any of the prophets in antiquity or in the history of the church got to live on these spiritual plateaus just walking around, bathed in the light of heavenly manifestations.
- 01:03:13 You have those mountain peak experiences, but then you have to go down into life and endure through the valley of the shadow of death, and there must have been countless times in his life where he's saying, "I can't do it. I'm not strong enough. I'm not learned enough. I'm not capable enough." Those memories, those spiritual memories of God's love that had been manifested to him on those mountain peaks of revelation had to be able to see him through. And quite frankly, I think that's one of the messages for us today.
- 01:03:50 There are probably people listening who are wrestling with doubt and fear and struggling with their faith and wondering if they're going to be able to move forward in the gospel of Jesus Christ. If Joseph were here, he would say, "Cast your mind back. Search your spiritual memory and find those mountain peaks of revelation where God has manifested his love to you." Think of a time in your life when you knew that God was there, that he saw you, that he loved you and that can perhaps provide enough fuel in the tank to get through this next phase in the valley of the shadow of death.
- Hank Smith: 01:04:36 When I think of why we send our sons and daughters and our grandparents all over the world, people we love, we do not want to send them away. Tyler, you have one right now.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 01:04:50 He's in Mexico right now.

Hank Smith: 01:04:52 And John two.

John Bytheway: 01:04:54 We were talking earlier about having all the family together. We won't be all together for a family picture until June of 2026. It's amazing to think about.

Hank Smith: 01:05:07 I'm about to send one out. Why are we doing this? We solemnly proclaim, this is why our missionaries are there, that God loves his children in every nation of the world. We are motivated by that same message of love. It's not about numbers. It's about telling people, letting them know God loves you. There is a God and he loves you.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 01:05:34 And he'll walk with you.

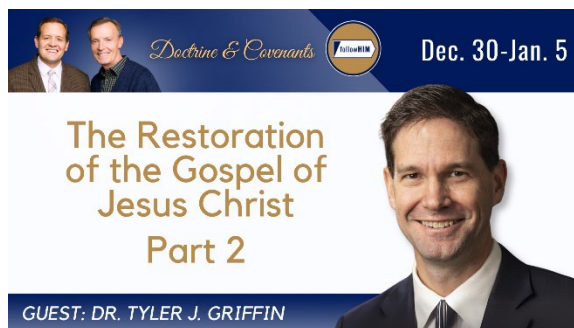
Hank Smith: 01:05:35 Yeah.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 01:05:37 If you jump down into verse two, this is the reason why they were doing this bicentennial proclamation. 200 years ago on a beautiful spring morning in 1820, young Joseph Smith seeking to know which church to join went into the woods to pray near his home in upstate New York of the United States. I love this quote that comes from the talk, "seek learning by faith" by [Elder David Bednar](#). You remember when he was a new apostle and spoke to seminary and institute and religious educators all over the world, one of the greatest talks ever given on learning. I've read that thing over and over and over again.

01:06:20 Here's what he said. "Notice that Joseph's question focused not just on what he needed to know, but also on what he needed to do. And his very first question centered on action and what was to be done. His prayer was not simply which church is right. His question was, which church should he join? Joseph went to the grove to learn by faith. He was determined to act." I think that for most of us, we fall into this trap of just seeing God as the trivial pursuit answer bank in the sky that I'm curious.

01:07:01 What is this? And I'm curious about this doctrine, I'm curious about this factor or this claim, but there's a difference when we go to heaven, not with a curiosity question, but with an agency-based question saying, "I have real intent. I'm going to act on the answer that is given. What would thou have me do?" Not just what would thou have me know. That's a powerful transition in our connection with Heavenly Father and with Jesus Christ when we put our agency on the altar.

John Bytheway:	01:07:33	You brought up the word I was going to say when we talk about some of Moroni's closing words and he says, "Ask with a sincere heart and with real intent." I feel like the real intent part is the I really intend to act. I just don't want to know, I really intend to do something about what I hear. You tell the Lord you're really going to do what he tells you, watch out because he'll answer you, I think.
Hank Smith:	01:08:01	And that's something we can all think through as we study this year. We've talked about wanting to have our own personal experiences with the Lord. As you petition the Lord, think through if I get my answer, what's the implications? Do I intend to follow through on what I receive? If you're not, wouldn't it be merciful of the Lord to not answer you at that time?
Dr. Tyler Griffin:	01:08:25	It's an amazing thing to be able to use the Savior's phrase because he taught us how to use it. Lord, here am I. Send me, I will be thy son or I will be thy daughter and to mean it regardless of what that answer is going to entail. As you've said, it's powerful.
Hank Smith:	01:08:46	Coming up in part two of this episode.
Dr. Tyler Griffin:	01:08:50	I'm reminded a couple months ago, our friend that we've already mentioned earlier, Anthony Sweat, came into my office and he asked me a question that caught me off guard. He said, "Griff, are you finding joy in your administration assignment right now in religious ed? Are you finding joy?" And I had to pause and think for a moment.



- John Bytheway: 00:01 Stay tuned for part two with Dr. Tyler Griffin, The Restoration of the Gospel.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 00:07 If you jump down to verse three, there's one thing I wanted to point out here. The first two words, in humility. This is coming from the First Presidency and the Quorum of the 12. They're saying, "In humility, we declare that in answer to his prayer, God the Father and his son Jesus Christ, appeared to Joseph and inaugurated the restitution of all things as foretold in the Bible." I love that gentle, kind, soft persuasion approach rather than the heavy-handed, pound the pulpit, wave the finger kind of an approach that they know, these special witnesses of Christ, they know things and yet they're still using the principles from Section 121 of unrighteous dominion. They're not coming down heavy-handed on us. In humility they're sharing these truths as a gentle invitation to activate our agency, to draw us in, to choose, as you said earlier, to do the right thing, not just to do the right thing. Back to the beautiful talk quoted earlier.
- Hank Smith: 01:14 You can almost hear in this verse, Tyler, that these apostles and prophets are saying, "We know there are good God-fearing people on this earth. It's in humility. This isn't a you're wrong we're right scenario. This is in humility we want to tell you what we know. Not judging you, not telling you that you've been in the wrong being in this religion that you're in your entire life. No, no, that's not it, but we do need to declare what we know."
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 01:48 Yeah. It's [President Hinckley's](#) invitation. We invite you to bring all the good that you have and see if we can add to it because we believe that you're a child of God. We believe that God has been speaking to you. We believe that you've received multiple outpourings of his love, of his mercy, of his grace throughout your life, and we're not discounting any of that. We're celebrating that with you and saying, "Now come and see if we can add to it." And President Hinckley said, "We're confident that we can." It's such a beautiful, gentle invitation. Which I might say here, it's interesting how often prophets get thrown under the bus in our society and our culture, how easy it is to



make fun of or tear down or pick apart what they've done or what they've said or how they've said it or how they've administered certain things.

02:43 One time just this year, I did an extensive study on the word prophet and prophets throughout all of our scripture canon just to see what do the scriptures say about the prophets? How does God feel about the prophets? What does Jesus Christ say about his prophets? Jesus does not emphasize the fallibility of prophets. Now, I get it. We don't teach infallibility for our prophets. Jesus doesn't emphasize that. He emphasizes how much they're beloved, how much they're chosen, how much they're authorized by him, and how much he upholds them, and it's fascinating. Even with the Nephites, 3 Nephi 11, he comes down and the very first thing out of his mouth is, "Behold, I am Jesus Christ whom the prophets testified." He's upholding them and then his new Beatitudes in 3 Nephi 12, "Blessed are ye if you basically trust these apostles whom I have chosen."

03:43 And to me it's a beautiful thing to stop looking for where prophets might have said or done something wrong and to recognize that God has chosen them. Trust that things are going to work out. If I follow the prophets, things are going to work out. This whole restoration proclamation to me is one of the many, many, many fruits of this incredible relationship that Jesus Christ has with his prophets to be able to give us his gospel in such beautiful and inviting ways.

John Bytheway: 04:21 I like that in humility it's not he came to us. Obviously, he would come to us. No, it's like we don't know how else to say this, so in humility we're just going to say it, he came. This is the greatest thing ever. God has come again. He loves us. Thank you for pointing out those two words there.

Hank Smith: 04:41 Joseph Smith himself says that later, "I was persecuted for saying so. Why persecute me for telling the truth? I had seen a vision. Do you want me to deny what God has shown me? I had seen a vision, I knew it. I knew that God knew it and I could not deny it. Neither dared I do it." That's part of this proclamation. In humility means we have to tell the truth. We would not dare to deny what God has given to us. He said, "At least I knew that if I would, I would offend God and come under condemnation." Don't you feel that in this proclamation? In humility, we need to tell you this. We don't want to offend God. Yes, we don't want to offend you, but we also don't want to offend God in what he has given to us.

John Bytheway: 05:32 This is actually really, really good news.

Dr. Tyler Griffin:	05:35	<p>So on that same line, I love analyzing text. I mean, we're in the business of teaching and we are constantly swimming around in the doctrinal pool of text and trying to find meaning. As you analyze this document from a textual perspective, I love looking at the opening to most of these paragraphs. So we emphasized in humility, we declare in verse three there. Look back at verse one, we solemnly proclaim. It's this solemn proclamation, this duty that they feel as called prophets, seers, and revelators to make this declaration. So we solemnly proclaim. Verse four, we affirm. Verse five, we further witness. Verse six, we declare. Verse eight, we gladly declare. And verse nine, with reverence and gratitude, we as his apostles invite all to know. Meaning to watch the flow of this document and them using all of these different words to describe the message they're trying to get across, I love the Christ-like attributes that are being revealed right through these black words on a white page in front of us.</p>
	07:06	<p>We're seeing a blueprint for Christ-like living, for Christ-like loving, Christ-like leading, Christ-like motivating. These are the things the Savior did in his life and continues to do today, and it shouldn't shock us that his prophets follow the same pattern. So consequently, invitation is I should probably follow this pattern better in my teaching and parenting and leading as well.</p>
John Bytheway:	07:37	<p>I like this verse five, "The earth will never again be the same." It's like, yeah, well said. "I'm sitting here in a place called Utah that they wanted to call Deseret. I'm sitting here in between Bountiful and Nephi and Ephraim and Lehi and the world will never be the same. It is interesting to think about." A kid goes to say a prayer and look what happens.</p>
Hank Smith:	08:13	<p>It's like asking for a spoon, he gives you the whole house. Really love to talk to Joseph Smith. How many times he thought, "How did I get into that? How did this happen? I was planning on farming in New York for the rest of my life."</p>
Dr. Tyler Griffin:	08:31	<p>And how many times did he experience things and perhaps to one degree or another missed the magnitude or the significance of the exact event in that moment and then afterwards in hindsight looked back at this unfolding restoration and realize, "Wow, it really is the Lord Jesus Christ who's doing this work. I'm just an instrument." It's that last line of verse three. Joseph would be instrumental in its return. He wouldn't be the architect or the artist or the creator. He's just the instrument in the hands of the Lord and so it is with us how many times God does things to us where we ask for that spoon and he says, "I have so much more to give you. I'm going to pour this out, and you don't know all the reasons why now, but someday you'll</p>

look back and be able to stand as a witness of me. I'm doing my work through you."

- Hank Smith: 09:31 It's a privilege to be part of it, but it's also very scary. I know for just this show, John and Tyler, you with Scripture Central, you think, "What am I doing here? Why am I up here teaching?"
- John Bytheway: 09:43 Why am I here?
- Hank Smith: 09:45 These people who are trusting me." And I know both of you, your hearts are so pure and so good. Of the teachers that I know, you're on my list both of you as people who would not generally want to be in front of thousands.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 10:05 So now you come to verse four, all of these visions and angels and keys and authority being given, it takes incredible trust for somebody to hear this story and say, "Wait, what?" You expect me to believe all that? And the answer is, yeah, we do. If you believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that's the greatest miracle of all time, then all of these things are pretty minuscule in comparison to him overcoming death and hell for us. But at the end of the day, all of this takes faith. You have to believe and move forward with faith. We talked before Jesus could have done all this work so much better himself, but instead he authorizes, he gives keys to imperfect people to now move that work forward, and it's amazing to watch as those keys are given to Joseph and those around him moving forward to set the stage for all of these ordinances and covenantal connecting opportunities that are given to us to actually be valid, to be authorized by God.
- John Bytheway: 11:18 This reminds me of a story that [Elder Glenn Pace](#) told. I think it was in his book, *Spiritual Plateaus*, and I guess he was a missionary back east and he talked about teaching a student, a college student maybe from Harvard or something. And we get kind of used to the idea of the restoration and the first vision, and he said this guy at the end of the lesson starts summarizing, "Okay, so wait a minute. You're saying that God himself appeared to this young boy?" You're like, "Yeah, that's what we're saying." "Okay, wait, and then Jesus was there?" "Yeah, that's what we're saying."
- 11:49 "Okay, wait, and then you're saying that an angel came and told him about a book?" "Yeah, that's essentially." "Okay, wait, and then John the Baptist came and like the Peter James and John?" And Elder Pace said getting more animated by the minute, he finally said, "That is the most incredible story I've ever heard. If I really believe that, I wouldn't be able to sleep. I'd be running up

and down the streets shouting it to everybody. How come you guys aren't more excited about it?" And Elder Pace said, "That was a penetrating question."

- Hank Smith: 12:26 That is. How are you not telling everyone about this every second of every day?
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 12:33 That's amazing. Which by the way is a beautiful segue into verse five about the Book of Mormon, which all by itself, if you take all these other things apart, just the book itself, the fact that we have this thing, it's a marvel and it's a wonder. He says, "We further witness that Joseph Smith was given the gift and power of God to translate an ancient record, the Book of Mormon, another Testament of Jesus Christ." I love the fact that we use the word translate there, but technically speaking a translation means that an individual knows two languages, the source language and the target language.
- 13:18 It becomes pretty evident early on that Joseph doesn't know the source language of the plates. He's not aware of what those characters even mean early on and needs some of that external encouragement from some experts to be able to say, "Hm, so I think this is an actual translation that I'm getting on the Urim and Thummim here." The beauty of this is he was given the gift and power of God. It wasn't the power of intellect, it wasn't the power of the world. God is the one who governed that process of translating the Book of Mormon. Then the rest of that paragraph describes the beauties and the additions that the Book of Mormon makes to our scripture canon, which I love.
- Hank Smith: 14:09 It's hard to have the words, isn't it, Tyler? To grasp what the Book of Mormon does to our understanding of Christ. I wanted to read one thing from [Elder Holland](#). Most everybody knows this talk, Safety for the Soul October, 2009. However, there are some youth in the church who maybe never heard this talk, obviously weren't around when it was given, so it might be something to revisit. This is Elder Holland, he says, "For 179 years," now, that was 15 years ago, so now we're looking at for 194 years, "This book has been examined and attacked, denied and deconstructed, targeted and torn apart like perhaps no other book in modern religious history, perhaps like no other book in any religious history, and still it stands."
- 15:02 You both I'm sure will remember this moment when he said, "I ask that my testimony of the Book of Mormon and all that it implies given today under my oath and office be recorded by men on earth and angels in heaven. I want it absolutely clear when I stand before the judgment bar of God that I declare to

the world in the most straightforward language I could summon that the Book of Mormon is true. That it came forth the way Joseph said it came forth and was given to bring happiness and hope to the faithful in the travail of the latter days." Do both of you remember that moment?

- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 15:43 That was powerful. That whole talk and holding up the book that Joseph and Hyrum had in Carthage jail, that was powerful.
- Hank Smith: 15:52 Sometimes you have a moment and you think, "Okay, this is going to stick with me for a really long time."
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 15:57 And it has.
- Hank Smith: 15:59 Yeah.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 15:59 Don't you love the fact that we don't ever hear the prophets and apostles pitting the Book of Mormon against the Bible, telling you you have to make those kinds of decisions? I love the wording here, "As a companion scripture to the Bible, the Book of Mormon testifies," and then it goes on to reiterate that we're all sons and daughters of a loving Father in heaven. But the beautiful conclusion to paragraph five is that his son, Jesus Christ, speaks today as well as in days of old. That's what the book does is it complements the Bible to say, "Look, God is still speaking to us today as he did in ancient times", which is a beautiful doctrine within this unfolding restoration.
- Hank Smith: 16:52 When you think of all the content that the internet has, when you search something on Google, it says it found how many billions of things you could read in half a second? Wouldn't you think that the Lord of the universe has unlimited content to give knowledge as if it could be stored up in a single book, he's still speaking. Of course he is, and he'll continue to speak.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 17:18 It's beautiful and Mormon lamented the fact that I'm only giving you less than a hundred parts of what I'm able to read here. I'm trying my best to distill this down on what would be the most important for you, and Moroni says, "We've seen your day. We know you're doing, so we have a pretty good idea of what to share with you here."
- Hank Smith: 17:38 But it's so limited. Doesn't John say the same thing?
- John Bytheway: 17:41 The last verse of John, yeah. The world itself could not contain the books which should be written.

Hank Smith:	17:48	So why would anyone think that a single book could hold everything that the Lord wanted to tell us?
John Bytheway:	17:54	That idea of a companion scripture, guys, why was six afraid of seven? Because-
Dr. Tyler Griffin:	18:00	7, 8, 9?
John Bytheway:	18:01	Because 7, 8, 9? Okay, so here's the verse to remember, Mormon 7, 8, 9. Now we all know that the Book of Mormon has some really clear stated purposes on the title page that they may know the covenants of the Lord, that Jesus is the Christ, the eternal God manifesting himself into all nations and that you may become spotless. But there's sub purposes throughout, one of them that you may learn to be more wise than we have been. It's like, "Hi, we're extinct. Don't do what we did." But Mormon 7, 8, 9, listen to this, "For behold, this is written for the intent that ye may believe that and that's the gospel that's sent before you that'll come unto the Gentiles from the Jews." So that's the Bible in verse eight.
	18:41	"For behold, this is written for the intent that ye may believe that, the Bible. And if you believe that, the Bible, you will believe this, the Book of Mormon also. And if you believe this, you will know concerning your fathers," here's audiences that Mormon's talking to, "and the marvelous works which were wrought by the power of God among them." I love that verse to say, "Look, this book is written one of the intents is so that you'll believe the Bible." It's not a rival, it's not a contest. It is a companion so that you will believe the Bible.
Dr. Tyler Griffin:	19:15	Powerful. If you step back here for just a second and take a 30,000-foot look at this restoration proclamation, I love the sequencing. We've done this with the opening lines of many of the paragraphs, but look at each paragraph. The first one is all about Jesus Christ that he came. The second one is all about that first vision. The third one is this restoration of Christ's New Testament church that was lost from the earth and how a prophet was going to be called to be instrumental. So we're going to do our work through prophets. And the fourth one is we're going to have to authorize that prophet with keys and priesthood authority, and the fifth one is Scripture. So it's not enough to give them authority but no instruction manual or no doctrine, no direction. You've got to show them, look, this is what God expects of you.
	20:17	It's fascinating how often we get caught up in debates with people about whether or not God exists. That's important to

understand that God exists, but to just know that God is there is absolutely necessary but it's not sufficient. I've got to know what God is like. I've got to know what God wants for me. Now you get the church established in paragraph six, the coming forth of the church of Jesus Christ. If you look two-thirds of the way down in paragraph six, it says, "He invites all of us to come unto him and his church to receive the Holy Ghost, the ordinances of salvation and to gain enduring joy." I love this invitation that they are inviting all of us to gain enduring joy. I'm reminded a couple months ago, our friend that we've already mentioned earlier, Anthony Sweat came into my office and he asked me a question that caught me off guard.

21:28 He said, "Griff, are you finding joy in your administration assignment right now in religious ed? Are you finding joy?" And I had to pause and think for a moment and realize, you know what? Far too often I'm not. I'm being reactionary. I'm sitting there and responding to emails and people who come through my door and requests that come, but I'm not finding real joy, and that one question from a good friend actually caused me to stop and translate it into other parts of my life. Am I finding real joy in my marriage right now? Am I finding it in my fathering? Am I finding it in my church calling? Am I finding it in my relationship with my friends and colleagues? It was a wake-up call for me to realize, wait a minute, I am not a victim of my circumstances. I'm not stuck. I can change how I go to the temple.

22:32 I can change my mindset and my focus of my heart when I go to church, when I open my scriptures, when I pray, when I interact with my wife and my children and my students and as an administrator in ecclesiastical or professional positions, I can find more enduring joy, but it doesn't come because I generate it. It comes because it's a refocusing effort on the Lord Jesus Christ. That's the pivot point. My personal invitation to anybody who's listening or watching would be as you embark on a new year 2025, not just in your study of the Come, Follow Me curriculum, but in all aspects of your life, to ask the question that Tony asked of me, "Are you experiencing, are you finding real joy in..." And now fill in the blank with all the different roles and aspects of your life and analyze where perhaps you could experience more enduring joy and then take that to the Lord. Don't be a victim of that circumstance.

23:42 Take it to him in earnest prayer and say, "Heavenly Father, I want to find more joy in this part of my life. I know there's fruit to be gained here that I'm not taking full advantage of yet, and I have some ideas, but I'm not exactly sure the best way to access

that joy. So help me, please help me." And then we move forward acting on those promptings that might come.

- Hank Smith: 24:10 Tyler, John, I'm sure you'll both remember this quote from Think Celestial, [President Nelson](#). "Here is the great news of God's plan. The very things that will make your mortal life the best it can be are the exact same things that will make your life throughout all eternity the best it can be. Mortality is a masterclass in learning to choose the things of greatest eternal import, so think Celestial."
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 24:41 Amen and how hard it is sometimes to think Celestial when you're in a work setting or when you're in a frustrating family setting or relationship, but literally, if you take the prophet's words to heart and apply them, it will give us access to the Savior's love, his mercy, his grace, his infinite atonement. We will be empowered to produce more fruit, good fruit in that part of our life. I love that. It's part of why I walk around with a smile on my face most of the time is because life, it is so good. It is so full. It is so rich thanks to the Savior, Jesus Christ. There's so much to be discovered and so much to look forward to.
- John Bytheway: 25:30 Such a good question. Are you finding joy? I loved your answer because all of us have had callings where we've thought, "Am I supposed to be more joyful here? This is hard. This is not any fun." [Elder Kearon](#) called it the church of joy. Am I in the wrong door? Where did I walk in? I remember years ago in the first few months of my calling as a bishop struggling with that very thing. Maybe I shouldn't even say this, but I got on a 767, so we're talking two seats in an aisle and three seats in an aisle and two seats. This is a big jet. And tender mercies of all tender mercies, I look to my left and sitting next to me is Dr. Robert L. Millet.
- Hank Smith: 26:21 That just doesn't happen.
- John Bytheway: 26:23 I know. I wrote him a note and said, "Can you help me not have that pit in my stomach on Saturday night when I'm going to my calling the next day?" He wrote me the most beautiful note about finding joy and I just thought, "Okay, there's not an accident that Dr. Robert L. Millet is sitting across the aisle from me in this jet right now." And that alone was part of the answer. "You got this and I got you," as Brad Wilcox said. You're going to be fine and it's a process. How did you put it, Tyler? Asking and help me find joy and help me focus on the joyful things involved in this. It's a process. Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 27:07 Do you remember the episode where [Dr. Dan Belnap](#) came in and he said, "In the ancient world, sacrifice wasn't giving



something up. It was making something holy." That really changed my perspective on am I going to take this time to go to the temple? Am I going to sacrifice this time to go to the temple? Am I going to sacrifice this time for this? And he said, "No, the real question is, do I want to make this time holy? Do I want to make this money holy?" Really, just a small shift in perspective.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 27:42

Okay. As we jump into the seventh verse or paragraph, whichever way you prefer to refer to them. It says, "200 years have now elapsed since the Restoration was initiated by God the Father and his beloved Son, Jesus Christ." I love that by the way. The restoration wasn't initiated by men or women or any group. It was initiated by God the Father and Jesus Christ, and they know how to manage cosmic clocks. Millions throughout the world have embraced a knowledge of these prophesied events.

28:19

I love that because it's this idea of as marvelous and wondrous as this work may be, millions have found a way to embrace a knowledge of all of these prophesied events. It's kind of this invitation to the rest of the world to say, "I know it's hard, but it's been done millions of times and the most important time for it to be done is inside of your heart and inside of your mind as you make that connection yourself with Christ." Which then brings us to the eighth verse, "We gladly declare." I love that you can see them all smiling as these words come off the page, "We gladly declare that the promised restoration goes forward through continuing revelation."

29:07

How many times have we heard [Elder Uchtdorf](#), [President Nelson](#), [President Holland](#), [President Oaks](#), others talk about this ongoing continuing revelation that it's going to continue to grow. The earth will never again be the same as you mentioned earlier, John, as God will gather together in one all things in Christ. I love that. That it's in one. Christ is a gatherer. Satan is a scatterer. He's a divider. Christ is a unifier. We live in a culture, in a society, in a world that always wants to separate, that always wants to divide and contend and fight, and who's better and who's worse and who's more important. None of those questions matter in the restored gospel of Jesus Christ because he brings all good into one and the one is in Christ, Christ Jesus, that center rallying core of everything else we ever talk about or read about or study about in the gospel or the church.

John Bytheway: 30:17

Obviously Satan has his own spin machine, but how often, not just the birth of Christ but the gospel itself is glad tidings of great joy? How often do we take that message and we listen too

much to Satan in the world and we think it's the gospel of guilt, inadequacy? It's never characterized that way. It's glad tidings. It's great joy. There's a chance to repent. What did [S. Michael Wilcox](#) tell us? He went through a long list that whenever anyone in the Book of Mormon asked for forgiveness, they got it immediately and then he went through this long, long list and he's like, "What are we supposed to notice there?"

- Hank Smith: 30:55 Yeah.
- John Bytheway: 30:57 And that's a pretty joyful message. You ask for forgiveness, you get it.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 31:01 It reminds me of when a group of us from BYU Provo went up to BYU Idaho to watch some religion faculty up there and to build some relationships and connections, and we love our good colleagues up there in Rexburg. One of the teachers in one of the classes that I was observing, he said something. It may have even been the one that I was observing with you, Hank, when he said, "It is impossible to out-sin the Lord's power to overcome sin. You can't out-sin Jesus's ability to cover up and repair and forgive sin."
- Hank Smith: 31:37 "It's impossible," [Elder Holland](#) said, "to sink lower than the light of Christ can shine", sink lower into that darkness. Tyler, when you brought up, we gladly declare that the promised restoration goes forward through continuing revelation. Something that I have been more and more impressed by as I've studied the gospel, and that is the articles of faith. When I was younger, had to memorize them. Think of that job. If someone said, "Hey, you need to summarize everything you believe a page and a half." That would be impossible.
- 32:12 All of a sudden I'm, "Wow, these are clear, beautiful statements." The one that I think has had significant impact on me lately thinking of this continuing revelation is Article of Faith 9. We believe in all that God has revealed, all that he does now reveal, and here's the continuing revelation. We believe that he will yet reveal many great and important things pertaining to the kingdom of God. As far as I know, you both could tell me, I don't think that's been rescinded. I don't think I've ever had a prophet say, "Well, all the great and important things are out. We're just going to work on good and trivial." No, I mean, there are many great and important things still coming. To me there's a level of excitement about that.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 32:58 Which as you say that, Hank, isn't that beautiful for the collective Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. That is

absolutely true collectively for all of us combined. No question. That's going to happen. But I think the deep power of the gospel is unleashed and unlocked in our life when we find the ability to liken all of these truths to us at the individual, therefore what? level to say Article of Faith number nine isn't just a collective truth, it's an individual truth. God has revealed multiple things to me in the past. He's revealing things right now and he will yet reveal many great and important things to me.

33:45 What an amazing thing if you take that same excitement that you had, and if people translate that into their own discipleship and into their families for 2025 to say, "Let's make this the greatest year of ongoing and continuing revelation of any year that we've experienced and we seek and expect those miracles." We expect that God will give revelation, not just for the church revelation, for our lives, to use President Nelson's title from his inaugural address as the prophet. To me, that's just exciting to say, "I'm not just going to coast through 2025. I'm going to seek for a continuing, ongoing restoration of gospel truth in my life, not just in the organization that I'm a part of."

Hank Smith: 34:37 That's exciting. I believe that he has yet more things to give to me. Isn't it Moses who says, "I have more things to inquire of him?"

John Bytheway: 34:48 Yeah, I will not cease to inquire of the Lord. I have other things I want to ask him.

Hank Smith: 34:54 That's exciting. Tyler, I love that you said that. It's almost like a patriarchal blessing. There's more. There's more for you. Come back to me. Come back. I have more to offer, more to show you. Brother of Jared, right? I have more to show you.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 35:08 Go after it. Seek it. Don't wait for it to hit you. Go get it with faith.

Hank Smith: 35:14 That's beautiful. That's an exciting idea.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 35:16 Well, now we jump into the last verse or paragraph of this proclamation. Again, we've pointed this out, the opening with reverence and gratitude. That's two amazing words to use here. This reverential respect and awe for God and his work that he's given to us and that he's sharing with us and that he's letting us be a part of, it's reverential and gratitude. This attitude of gratitude that President Monson used to always talk about, I love that. We as his apostles invite all to know as we do that the heavens are open. We affirm that God is making known His will

for his beloved sons and daughters. You're keeping track. That's at least the third time by my count that he's referred to us as beloved sons and daughters of God. We testify that those who prayerfully study the message of the restoration and act in faith will be blessed to gain their own witnesses of its divinity and of its purpose to prepare the world for the promised second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

36:34 That is a loaded sentence that ends this whole proclamation, this strong testifying that if we study it and act, it's not enough to know. Korihor knew. He says, "Now I know. I'm convinced." But he didn't change his actions. He didn't act on what he knew. The New Testament repeats the idea, even the devils fear and they know, but they're not acting on it. The powerful invitation here to close that I would say, again, bringing back to 2025, this opportunity to dive into the Doctrine and Covenants and studying church history is make this the year more than ever before, that we not just study in faith, but we act in faith and move forward with the Savior. Revelation will come as we prepare the world for the promised Second Coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and President Nelson has referred to the Second Coming I think more than any other prophet in the history, unless I'm miscounting. He's emphasizing the need to prepare because the Lord Jesus Christ will come again.

Hank Smith: 37:52 Tyler, this is beautiful, prayerfully study and act in faith. As a family, when we do our Come, Follow Me studies like last year in the Book of Mormon, it was not anywhere close to perfect, but we can do this. We can prayerfully study and then act in faith. It doesn't mean it's going to be like a perfect study or perfect actions, but whatever you study this year, it's persistence. Right, Tyler? Keep coming back. Keep coming back. Prayerfully study, act, then do it again. Prayerfully study and act.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 38:29 Again and again and again. You're growing fruit. You're growing a tree. It takes time and it's not going to be perfect. There are going to be some bugs in some of the fruit. Some of it's going to be small, some of it's not going to be sweet, but you're growing and the Lord of the vineyard is working with you. It's powerful.

Hank Smith: 38:50 One way you can keep going is there's this part in the manual I just really love. It's a very small heading. Joseph Smith had questions. That to me is part of this prayerfully study is have questions. Take your questions to the scriptures, take your questions to the Lord. John frequently reminds me if any of you lack information, let him ask of Google, but what Joseph Smith wanted and what we all want is wisdom. If any of you lack wisdom, ask God. The Restoration started, opened with some

questions. That same thing can happen to you. Those questions can push you towards experiences and you'll find out the heavens are really open.

- John Bytheway: 39:39 I like to tell my students, "Don't expect Google speed answers to golden questions." You can ask Google, Siri, Alexa in a couple of seconds and they'll tell you something and there's a slim chance it might even be true, but they'll always tell you something. But a golden question, sometimes the Lord might answer you in an experience and not in words, and it might take a while. We are not asked to check our questions at the door. No way. You bring them all, you own them and you wrestle with them. You wrestle, you'll get stronger. I love the idea of having questions. We're all here because this young man had questions.
- Hank Smith: 40:17 Oh, I have a question. Can I tell you both just a quick experience that I had, which makes me feel really foolish, but hopefully someone out there can use this in their own life. My shoulder was hurting. It's getting older. It's had a few birthdays, so I went online to see what do you do for a hurt shoulder, and I found a guy on YouTube who quoted a lot of studies and seemed pretty fit, so I took him on. Okay, this guy knows what he's talking about, and I started to do the things that he was showing to do for your hurt shoulder and my shoulder was not getting better, and so I finally went to an expert. I have one just down the street. He's my friend, Blake Gillette. He came in and he says, "Okay, what's the problem?" And I told him the problem and I said, "Well, here's what I've been doing for it," and I didn't tell him where I got this.
- 41:08 I just said, "Here's what..." And he just laughed. He said, "Who told you to do that? That is the exact worst thing you could do for your shoulder." He just laughed at me and I said, "Well, I don't know." And nothing against the guy online. I'm sure he's trying to do some good, but John, what you said, I was looking for healing on Google when there's someone down the street who's ready to give me wisdom if I'll just take the time to make an appointment and go see him. So Dr. Gillette, I'm sorry I didn't tell you if you're listening, I didn't tell you where I got that. But you should have seen his face when I said, "Well, here's what I've been doing." "Why? Why would you do that?" He said that if you wanted to hurt your shoulder, that's the way to do it. Oh, man.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 41:59 That's good. We all saw that this wasn't going to end well when you started the story.

John Bytheway: 42:04 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 42:06 And we do that so often in many parts of our lives. I'll tell you one more embarrassing story. My doctor said, "Hey, why don't we try this medication here for a couple of months?" And me being smart decided I was going to be my own doctor and went online to learn about this medication. Of course, I learned online that this medication had ruined people's lives, so I went back and I said, "Well, I'm a little bit nervous about this." "Well, why?" "I went online." And you should have seen his face when he... "Okay, you went online and what'd you learn?" And I told him what I learned.

John Bytheway: 42:38 Brilliant.

Hank Smith: 42:40 And then Dr. Boud he said, "You know how good the gospel is, right?" And I said, "Absolutely, I do." He said, "Why don't you go online, see what people have to say about the gospel?"

John Bytheway: 42:51 Good point.

Hank Smith: 42:53 Oh, yeah. Oh yeah. He said, "I've been doing this for 40 years. I think you can trust me. How long have we known each other?" So again, two embarrassing stories, but it goes right with what you said, John. Sometimes we seek for wisdom in all the wrong places.

John Bytheway: 43:08 Go to the source.

Hank Smith: 43:10 Tyler, I know I'm speaking for John and all of our listeners when we just want to thank you for spending your time with us today. This happens consistently over and over and over when we record and we get these minds like Tyler, these people have studied this for their entire lives, that you feel so edified and uplifted and motivated.

John Bytheway: 43:30 I'm excited that maybe all of us will open up that proclamation again and go through it again, that came during the time of the pandemic and go through that again and see everything that you showed us. That'll be a great fruit that we can all enjoy.

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 43:48 We just scratched the surface. It was a privilege to be with you two. Two great friends.

Hank Smith: 43:52 Tyler, I think our listeners would be interested. I'm going to ask you to do something impossible, but you've done it before and that is we would all love to hear how you feel about the

restoration of the gospel and the Savior Jesus Christ, and I know that's impossible. If you had to, if I forced you to here on followHIM, what would you say?

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 44:18 Yeah, that's interesting. Often when you're asked those deep core questions like that, you find that your tongue can't tell what heart knows and feels, but you can try, and that's the beauty of music and art because they provide ways to express things that words alone can't always do. For me, it would probably be summarized in the word everything. What does the gospel mean to me? What does Jesus Christ mean to me? Everything. Without Him, I'm nothing. I have nothing to look forward to. I have no hope, but with him I have everything. I literally have the promised blessings of those covenants with Him, with my family, with loved ones. The same sociality that exists among us here will exist among us there. It's so beautiful and it's so hope-filled, and it motivates me to want to try a little harder to be a little bit better, a little more like the Savior as President Hinckley and Ardeh Kapp used to say that phrase, "Try a little harder to be a little better." It's powerful. That's the simplest way I can express the inexpressible.

Hank Smith: 45:49 Wonderful. Tyler, what do you want to leave us with?

Dr. Tyler Griffin: 45:54 That's a great question. I would hope that anybody listening to this doesn't focus on Hank and John and Tyler, but that we become sounding boards or lenses through whom you can better and more clearly see the Savior Jesus Christ as the perfect example and a desire to connect with God in ways that maybe we haven't in the past, deeper and more often and more meaningful ways. The way that I would sign off, I think, for everything that we've talked about here actually is best embodied in the words of that hymn that we referenced earlier, written by Stephen Schank hymn 1004. I'll just read the first two verses and then the chorus. This is the essence of what I hope, what I feel and what I desire for myself and hope that you desire for yourself and for your families and your loved ones and those around you moving forward into 2025.

46:57 "Jesus walked in wisdom. Jesus grew in truth. He showed love to God and man while in his youth. Jesus wants to guide me. Jesus shows the way, calling me to come and walk with him each day. I can grow like Jesus. I will try each day promising to walk his path and there to stay, standing by my Savior safe within his care. Step by step I'll follow and His love I'll share. As I walk with Jesus to my home above, He will bless me with His Spirit and fill me with His love, change my heart forever and

help me clearly see. I will walk with Jesus and he will walk with me."

- Hank Smith: 48:07 Tyler, we want to thank you again for your life and your goodness and your testimony. I've known you for a long time now and you consistently point me to the Lord consistently. Go to him. Go to him. He will speak to you. John Bytheway, do you remember four years ago when we started and we said episode one is in the books? It feels very familiar, doesn't it?
- John Bytheway: 48:33 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 48:33 Episode one of our next four-year study is in the books. How are you feeling?
- John Bytheway: 48:38 I'm pretty excited to go through this again, to go through the Doctrine and Covenants that if we had it in red ink, it would mostly, except for a couple of sections, it would just be all the words of the Lord.
- Hank Smith: 48:52 And as Tyler's taught us today, he'll walk with me. I will walk with him. We hope that everyone will take this opportunity to walk through the Doctrine and Covenants this year, whether you do it with us or a different show or on your own, however you do it, walk with the Lord. Tyler, that was just inspired and beautiful.
- Dr. Tyler Griffin: 49:13 Thank you.
- Hank Smith: 49:14 With that, we want to thank Dr. Tyler Griffin, a great, great soul for being with us today. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen; our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen. And every episode we will always remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. John, he'd be excited that we were starting back up. Join us next week as we jump into the text of the Doctrine and Covenants on followHIM.
- 49:43 Before you skip to the next episode, I have some important information. This episode's transcript and show notes are available on our website [followhim.co](http://followhim.co). That's FollowHim.co. On our website. You'll also find our two free books, Finding Jesus Christ in the Old Testament and Finding Jesus Christ in the New Testament. Both books are full of short and powerful quotes and insights from all our episodes from the Old and New Testaments. The digital copies of these books are absolutely free. You can watch the podcast on YouTube. Also, our Facebook and Instagram accounts have videos and extras you



won't find anywhere else. If you'd like to know how you can help us, if you could subscribe to, rate, review, and comment on the podcast, that will make us easier to find. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Jamie Neilson, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, and Annabelle Sorensen.

President Russell M. Nelson: 50:38

Whatever questions or problems you have, the answer is always found in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Turn to him. Follow him.

## SACRED GROVE SHENANIGANS



Hank Smith:

00:02

Hello, everyone. Welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I will share a single story to go with each week's lesson in the Come, Follow Me manual this year. Now, John, the very first lesson this year is called The Restoration of the Fullness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. If you go down in the manual, there's a talk that is referenced. It's from Elder Uchtdorf. It's called Are You Sleeping Through the Restoration? And it made me think of a story for this week's followHIM Favorites. So John, I'm going to expose a little bit of my own lack of spirituality here. Anybody who listens to the show enough knows that's not a surprise. So this was back when Sarah and I didn't have any children. We flew out back east to see her sister and her sister's husband. This is Amy and Derek Booth. They had a little boy named Broderick, who we call Brody. So Brody was just a little two-year-old, I think, at the time.

01:09

We decided since we were out there that we should drive over to see the Sacred Grove. So the five of us drove out to see The Grove. In my head, I had this idea that the Sacred Grove would be a specific spot, 30 by 30 foot area where there would be a plaque or something that says, "This is where Joseph knelt and prayed." Now, John, I've been there many times, and so have you. It's not that way at all. It's a big vast area with pathways running through it. Well, John, can you imagine me not knowing that? And being irreverent, I threw Brody on my shoulders. He would direct me using my ears as handles. We were running and playing through these pathways. He was steering me into trees, and there were people who were sitting on benches who looked up at us being really noisy and laughing, looking at us like we were crazy. And I thought, "Well, I don't know why these people are so uptight. Maybe they haven't seen the Grove yet."

02:15

So I kept going through, and even Sarah looked at me and thought, "Huh, I guess he's just trying to be a fun uncle." Well, we did this John for 15 minutes, and I'm still waiting, when are we going to get to the Sacred Grove? When my brother-in-law, Derek, he says to me, "Well, should we go?" And I said, "Go where?" He said, "Go get in the car." "We haven't been to the

Sacred Grove yet." He said, "We've been in it this entire time." And John, I felt so terrible. I had disrupted everyone's experience in this Sacred Grove except for Brody's. I think he had a wonderful first time there, two-year-old on my shoulders. I went, "Oh, no." I put Brody down, and I said, "I'll be right back." And I ran into the Sacred Grove and had a 30-second spiritual moment where I tried to be calm and reverent. Now that when I go there, every time I think of that and I tell that story to groups I take there, I say, "This whole thing is--"

- John Bytheway: 03:21 Just so you know.
- Hank Smith: 03:22 Yeah. I wonder if we could make this jump that oftentimes we think, "When the Restoration happens, I want to be there. For right now, I'm not really going to pay attention or focus, but I'm going to be there." And the Lord might say, "You're in it."
- John Bytheway: 03:39 You're in it.
- Hank Smith: 03:40 You're right now, don't sleep through the Restoration.
- John Bytheway: 03:43 I love that a lot. You could be right there and not even see it, and not know it, here we are. And how many times have we been told, Hank, that we're part of the greatest work that possibly have been President Nelson? We're right in the middle of it. Don't sleep through it. That's good.
- Hank Smith: 04:00 Don't miss it. The title of my talk, I guess, would be, Are you Goofing Around Through the Restoration With Your Two-Year-Old Nephew?
- John Bytheway: 04:09 With Brody.
- Hank Smith: 04:10 Yeah, with Brody. So Brody, if you're listening out there, I'm sorry that we're related. I feel terrible that you're associated with me. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. In fact, this year, you can get it in Spanish, French and Portuguese. Please come find us and then come back here next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.