



## EPISODE 33

GUEST: DAVID L. BOREN

*"Stand Fast in the Faith of Christ"*

### Show Notes & Transcripts

## Podcast General Description:

Follow Him: 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:

What are we fighting for? Dr. David Boren explores what makes a righteous leader and how to have joy amidst spiritual and physical battles and how the Book of Mormon arms readers to fight against unrighteousness.

### Part 2:

Dr. Boren continues to examine the war chapters of Alma and the principles of righteous leadership as well as the evidence of God's hand in preparing the Book of Mormon for modern-day application and testimony.

## Timecodes:

## Part 1

- 00:00 Part I - Dr. David Boren
- 02:02 Dr. Boren's bio
- 04:05 What are we fighting for?
- 06:50 *Righteous Warriors* by John Bytheway
- 10:21 Power in the Book of Mormon
- 13:00 Great leaders see people as God sees them
- 16:21 John follows a prompting to check arrest listing
- 18:13 Alma 43:1 - Great leaders are action-oriented and lead with love
- 20:58 Dr. Boren shares a story about sheep
- 25:26 Zarahemnah sets the tone
- 29:20 Alma 42:8-9 - Reasons for war
- 32:54 Great leaders clarify and inspire
- 38:11 Alma 42:17 - Moroni takes command at 25
- 41:56 Alma 42:23-29 - Prophets know where enemies will strike
- 45:45 Alma 42:45-47 The Lord's rules of engagement
- 48:14 Alma 44:1-4 - Great leaders reflect and assess
- 52:38 Alma 44:9 - Great leaders are resolute and courageous
- 55:15 Alma 44:5 Sacred support
- 57:23 Alma 44:20-21 Great leaders forgive and act with perspective
- 59:39 Alma 45 - A new enemy and finding joy
- 1:06:38 Alma from sinner to translated disciple of Christ
- 1:09 Amalickiah and Moroni
- 1:16:20 End of Part 1 - Dr. David Boren

## Part 2

- 00:00 Part II- Dr. David Boren
- 03:14 Alma 46:21 - The title of liberty and running together
- 08:00 Alma 46 Joseph of Egypt and covenant reminders
- 11:02 Alma 47 - Amalickiah stirs up Lamanites to anger
- 12:44 Alma 47:12-18 - Lehonti was "fixed in his mind"
- 16:24 Don't come down from your mountain
- 20:53 The Amalickiah's of today
- 22:19 Alma 28:1-5 - Strengthening weak places
- 25:01 Alma 48:7-17 - Moroni's characteristics and preparations for war
- 28:20 Alma 48:19 - Helaman and others serve without recognition
- 32:44 Textual analysis of Amalickiah's 13 words
- 36:31 Alma 48:21-24 - How do Christians go to war?
- 38:40 Alma 49:10-14 - Great leaders make needed changes
- 44:21 Alma 49:26 -Lehi and the people of Morianton
- 45:18 Alma 49:36 - Being hurt by people close to us

- 49:41 Alma 51:2-9 - Contentions and the voice of the people
- 50:45 Alma 51:19-21, 33-34 - End of the king-men and Tancum
- 53:11 Alma 52:1 Amalickiah killed on the first day of the year
- 54:36 The form of the Book of Alma
- 56:44 Alma 52 - Asking for help
- 57:36 Alma 52:19 - Church councils and leadership
- 1:02:57 Inviting the Lord into our councils
- 1:04:42 Dr. Boren's ideas on leadership and testimony of Jesus Christ and the Book of Mormon
- 1:08:25 End of Part II– Dr. David Boren

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## Biographical Information:



David Boren grew up in Mesa, Arizona, and Sandpoint, Idaho. He served a mission to Concepcion, Chile, speaking the celestial language of Spanish. He attended BYU as an undergraduate and studied elementary education and business management. He met his fabulous wife, Sherrie, on a blind date during his final semester, right before leaving for China to do his student teaching. David has been an educator for over 20 years. He taught at the Provo MTC for three years, then worked as a public school teacher and administrator for several years. During his time as a public school educator he earned a Master's and PhD in Educational Leadership from BYU. In fact, he worked hard to keep Hank in line as they collaborated on trust research during their PhD programs. He currently works as the director of BYU's School Leadership Program, preparing future school and district administrators. His writing and presenting focus primarily on fostering wellbeing and trust in schools, innovative education, leadership development, and leading well-rounded deeper learning. David and his wife, Sherrie, have five amazing children and live in Pleasant Grove, Utah. His oldest son is currently serving in the Washington, D.C. South Mission. In his free time, David enjoys running, mountain biking, hiking, fishing, basketball, storytelling, travelling, and puttering around in the yard.

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## Alma 43-52 Part 1

GUEST: DAVID BOREN



- Hank Smith: 00:00:04 Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name's Hank Smith. I'm your host. I'm here with my co-host, John Bytheway, who I describe as if all co-hosts had been and were and ever would be likened to John Bytheway, the very powers of podcasts would be shaken forever. John, a perfect description of you. We're also here with our guest, Dr. David Boren. John, let's start with you. War chapters. You've literally written the book on the war chapters. As you look at this first half, what are you thinking about?
- John Bytheway: 00:00:44 Where do I start? So many things. Some of these men held the priesthood. How do men who hold the priesthood go to war? What do they do? It's interesting to see how often it is repeated. This is why we are fighting. This is what we are fighting for. This is what we are fighting against. How does a man of Christ go through this kind of a thing? That's what's really fascinating to see helpful for our day too.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:09 I know you love studying history and wartime history, so it'll be fun to see you go through this with our guest, Dr. David Boren. David, what are we going to look at today? As you've prepared, how are we going to walk through this?
- Dr. David Boren: 00:01:23 There is so much here like John said. Definitely going to take a look at leadership and the importance of righteous leaders and their impact, and then just the fact that we are in a war and we can win this war with Christ as our captain. Really excited to look at how these warriors exemplify Christ and Christ-like leadership definitely relates to our day.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:50 Beautiful. Both of you, I can tell I'm going to learn a lot today. John, David has never been on our show before. I've known him for quite a while. I'm guessing our audience doesn't know David. So can you introduce him?
- John Bytheway: 00:02:02 Absolutely. David Boren grew up in Mesa, Arizona and Sandpoint, Idaho. Served his mission to Concepción Chile, did I

say that right? Learning the celestial language of Spanish. He attended BYU as an undergraduate. Studied elementary education and business management, met his fabulous wife, Sherry, on a blind date during his final semester right before leaving for China to do his student teaching. He's been an educator for over 20 years. Teaching it in the public schools is exactly why we asked him to come and talk about the war chapters. He taught at the Provo MTC, worked as a public school teacher and administrator. During his time as a public school educator, he earned a master's in PhD in educational leadership from BYU.

00:02:50 In fact, here's the fun part. He worked hard to keep Hank in line as they collaborated on trust research during their PhD programs. Hank, yours was trust relationships or something like that, right?

Hank Smith: 00:03:02 Yup, high trust relationships between principals and teachers, and I really rode the coattails of David Boren, who's a couple of years ahead of me.

John Bytheway: 00:03:11 Brother Boren currently works as the director of BYU school leadership program. David and his wife Sherry have five amazing children, live in Pleasant Grove. His oldest son is currently serving in the Washington, DC South Mission. We're thrilled to have you teach us some things about these wonderful chapters. Thanks for coming.

Dr. David Boren: 00:03:30 Happy to be here.

Hank Smith: 00:03:32 John, David, like I said, was a year ahead of me or so in our PhD program. I heard quite a bit about him from the teachers who had just had him. They would say things similar to what I said about you. If all PhD students could be likened to David Boren, everyone would get their doctorate in six months. They loved him so much that they took him on and hired him there. David, they took you right into that department you graduated from.

Dr. David Boren: 00:03:58 They hadn't fixed me totally. They needed more time to fix me. Yeah, but I'm happy to be there. It's a great place.

Hank Smith: 00:04:05 David, I'm going to read from the [Come, Follow Me manual](#). These opening paragraphs of the manual are so well-written. It says this. "When we read these words at the beginning of Alma 43, 'And now I return to an account of the wars between the Nephites and the Lamanites,' it's natural to wonder why would Mormon include these war stories when he had limited space

on the plates." He frequently tells us, "I can only tell you one hundredth." It says, "It's true that we have our share of wars in the latter days, but there is value in his words beyond the descriptions of strategy and tragedy of war. His words also prepare us for the war in which we are all enlisted the war we are fighting each day against the forces of evil. This war is very real and the outcome affects our eternal lives. Like the Nephites, we are inspired by a holy cause."

- 00:04:53 John, you talked about that. "What are we fighting for? "Our God, our religion and freedom and our peace and our wives and our children, what Moroni called the cause of the Christians." It sounds like we're starting a great inspiring movie. So David, where do you want to go? How do you want to start?
- Dr. David Boren: 00:05:11 Before we even jump into these chapters, I just want to start off testifying of the Book of Mormon. Changed my life. I remember listening to [Ezra Taft Benson](#) as a young man. I'm just going to read a quote because I remember listening to it in our living room, listening to general conference, and it hit me so hard and it's changed my life. He says, "There is a power in the book which will begin to flow into your lives the moment you begin a serious study of the book. You will find greater power to resist temptation. You will find the power to avoid deception. You will find the power to stay on the straight and narrow path. The scriptures are called the words of life, and nowhere is that more true than in the Book of Mormon. When you begin to hunger and thirst after those words, you will find life in greater and greater abundance."
- 00:06:02 And when President Benson said that, I was a young man, it hit me so hard. I had never really read the Book of Mormon, but I started. I started reading every day. The young people know and all of us know that temptation is so real. I felt a power come into my life. It blessed my life and my studies. It blessed my relationships, and it continues to do so this day. And I'm not perfect in my study and reading of it, but I sure feel its power when I'm consistent there. I just want to start off saying that I love this book and it has absolutely been a lifesaver for me.
- Hank Smith: 00:06:40 David, thank you so much. It's a very powerful way to start. This book is unmatched. It's unparalleled.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:06:47 Yeah, I absolutely agree.
- Hank Smith: 00:06:50 Before I let you jump into the war chapters here, David, I got to read something to you. I picked this up in a book the other day. This is from a great author. He says, "All of these reasons help

us understand why the Book of Mormon discusses so many wars. I love the war chapters. I don't love war, but I love these chapters, and I know that I'm not alone. Many of us love the war chapters because of their intriguing mixture of heroism, adventure, treachery, deception, faith and devotion. We're fascinated by brilliant military tactics using prophetic reconnaissance and by deceptively simple stratagems, decoys and snares. We're sobered when we see the effects of raw ambition and political upheaval on the children of Lehi, and we're touched by the profound gratitude and deep sorrow among those who are spared in the aftermath."

00:07:43 That is quite a dramatic paragraph written by one [John Bytheway](#) in a book I have on my shelf, Righteous Warriors: Lessons from the War Chapters in the Book of Mormon. John, it's been almost 20 years since you wrote that book. You still happy with it?

John Bytheway: 00:08:00 Yeah. I'm here to learn more. One of the things that President Packer said was that Mormon could not resist sharing a generous amount of military tactics and strategies because he was a general. Then he said this remarkable insight is also a testimony builder. Yeah, why is this all in here? Well, the person who abridged the book was a general. He saw the application of the principles of the gospel and of faith in Christ even and especially in these difficult times for the children of Lehi.

Hank Smith: 00:08:34 David, hopefully you don't mind that I wanted to use a paragraph from one of my favorite authors. I don't know if he's my favorite author, but he is one of my favorite authors. All right, David. What do you want to do?

Dr. David Boren: 00:08:48 Yeah, a couple of background things. I wanted to read a quote by [Thomas S. Monson](#) real quick about the war chapters and war in general. He says, "The world can at times be a frightening place in which to live. The moral fabric of society seems to be unraveling at an alarming speed. None, whether young or old or in between, is exempt from the exposure to those things which have the potential to drag us down and destroy us, but we need not despair. It is a war we can and will win. Our Father in Heaven has given us the tools we need in order to do so."

00:09:24 It can be really depressing in these war chapters to see the evil it's rampaging, and it can be depressing to watch the news today, to see the evil that's creeping into personal lives, but I love that President Monson is full of hope. I get that same vibe from President Nelson and all the church leaders that, yeah, it's hard, but this is a war we can win. We have the tools to do so.



One of the things we'll want to watch for in these chapters is what are some of those tools that the Lord's given us to help us in this modern-day latter-day war?

- Hank Smith: 00:09:58 All three of us work with young people, college students, and I've felt that way before, David. Looking at the world they face, it can be discouraging. How do you fight evil this big and the resources that they have to get to young people? I just think, "Oh, can we win?" So when I hear something like that, not only can we win, we will.
- John Bytheway: 00:10:21 David, a great way to start the President Benson quotations about the promises, immediate promises of scripture study are power, power, power, power, four times in that paragraph, and I'm reminded of President Nelson. You read this book every day, you will make better decisions every day.
- Hank Smith: 00:10:39 Every day. This is the tool to fight these wars.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:10:44 The other thing I wanted to highlight before we jump into 43 is the importance of righteous leadership. When I was asked to be on the podcast, I did question a little bit. I don't speak ancient Greek. I'm not a scholar of the Book of Mormon. I thought, "Man, what can I bring?" Maybe it's a little unique that I might have some experience in the leadership. Principles is something that maybe I can offer a little bit of. I'm still trying to live those, but these chapters are full of really powerful leadership principles that can bless our lives and serve as some of those tools. Maybe John will use his voice and repeat this quote, but [Elder Perry](#) said this, "We live in a world that is crying for righteous leadership."
- 00:11:28 That's more true today than ever, and [Elder Maxwell](#) said, "Our leadership skills have a carryover into eternity." Learning how to lead, we lead in our families, we lead in our church callings, we lead often in our professions and our neighborhoods, our communities, and we don't always have a lot of training in that and there are some really powerful principles that come through in these chapters and we'll try to highlight those.
- Hank Smith: 00:11:52 What was that quote from [Elder Perry](#)?
- Dr. David Boren: 00:11:54 It's from the October 2002 general conference. "We live in a world that is crying for righteous leadership."
- Hank Smith: 00:12:01 Now, everyone listening out there, John loves Elder Perry. He loves him so much, he can emulate him and his voice.

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| John Bytheway:   | 00:12:08 | I'll try. We live in a world that is crying for righteous leadership.  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:12:16 | Oh, that was beautiful. That was beautiful. John, that was beautiful.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:12:20 | We met Elder Perry together, didn't we, Hank?  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:12:22 | We did.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:12:24 | In a motor home or something in Sacramento.  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:12:27 | Such a great soul. Good, good, good to the core. I love both of those quotes, David, and I like that you're bringing that experience. You've been training teachers and principals for how long? You've been a leader yourself in obviously your home and in schools, right? You've been a principal.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:12:44 | Yeah, it's been a lot of years, probably 15 years.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:12:48 | Do you teach these same principles to your students?   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:12:51 | It is the best job ever. To teach leadership in the context of the gospel is fantastic. I love it.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:12:59 | Let's just jump right in.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:13:00 | We're going to hit several leadership principles in chapter 43. Verse number one, and I just want to hit on Corianton for a minute. One leadership lesson is that great leaders see the best in others, help them to see that in themselves. Alma did such a beautiful job helping Corianton to see that in himself, to see his potential, to see who he really is because here in verse one, it says that, "It came to pass that the sons of Alma did go forth among the people." Corianton, being one of them who had struggled on his mission, Alma helped him to repent to get back out on his mission. He turned his life around. I believe a large part of that was a righteous leader, his father seeing him the way God sees him and believing that he could change. |
|                  | 00:13:55 | <a href="#">President Monson</a> gave a great talk several years ago. He said, "Men can change." You might remember this. He says, "Between the 1940s and 1950s, an American prison warden, Clinton Duffy was well-known for his efforts to rehabilitate men in his prison." Said one critic, "Don't you know that leopards can't change their spots?" Replied Warden Duffy, "You should know that I don't work with leopards. I work with men and men change every day."  |

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|                | 00:14:24 | If you took a snapshot of Corianton while he was on his first mission, you'd think, "Man, this guy's a loser," but the Lord doesn't just look at us in snapshots. He sees us with an eternal lens. If you looked at him 20 years later in a snapshot, he'd be a totally different person. One more story from Elder Eyring. This is one of my all time favorite stories. He tells the story of a man who had...   |
|                | 00:14:48 | When <a href="#">President Eyring</a> was a bishop and a man that a member of his ward was driving drunk and drove into a bank, Elder Eyring was going to meet with this man after he'd been put in jail, and he was planning what he was going to say to really get after this guy, "Hey, you've embarrassed yourself. You've embarrassed the church," and this is what he says, "I heard a voice in my mind say just as clearly as if someone were speaking to me. I'm going to let you see him as I see him, and then for a brief moment, his whole appearance changed to me. I saw not a dazed young man but a bright noble son of God. I suddenly felt the Lord's love for him. That vision changed our conversation. It also changed me." |
|                | 00:15:39 | I believe that Alma saw his son Corianton the way God saw him and gave him that chance to change and I'm sure glad that people can see me that way. I hope I can see others that way. I think that's one of the first leadership lessons is to see others the way God sees them and see the best in them and allow them to change.  |
| Hank Smith:    | 00:15:58 | Fantastic. I wrote that down right between chapter 42 and 43, just what you said, "Great leaders help others see the best in themselves," and Alma did. He saw that in Corianton. It's a very hopeful message, and it seems that Corianton got excited about what his father showed him in himself. That was really great.  |
| John Bytheway: | 00:16:21 | When I was a bishop, I got the strangest prompting one day. I don't even think you can do it now, but the prompting was to check the mugshots who got arrested today locally and I went on the computer and there was a member of my ward. I grabbed my bishop's certificate and I went down to the jail, and with that certificate, they let you right in. This individual continued to ask me, "How did you know that I was here?" This person would not believe me, but it taught me that the Lord knew exactly who that person was and the Lord was mindful of that person.   |
| Hank Smith:    | 00:17:01 | David, I think just what you said there, I would parent differently if I could just keep that principle in mind, my daily   |

interactions, and with my spouse as well, with Sarah. Everything would be different if I could keep this one principle in mind.

- John Bytheway: 00:17:18 I think my wife treats me how she hopes I will become, right?
- Dr. David Boren: 00:17:25 Another story came to mind from [Elder Eyring](#) as well. He tells a story that one of his sons was being really rowdy and jumping on the bed making noise and Elder Eyring was tired and he went in and grabbed his son while he was jumping on the bed and was going to tell him to just be quiet and stop making noise, and he said when he grabbed his son, he had the impression, "You are holding a great man." He gently set his son down, and his son is a great man, but he said it absolutely changed the way he parented just seeing that vision of his son. You don't think of that in the war chapters, but that first verse of 43, I believe that Alma followed that leadership principle really well.
- 00:18:13 Also in Alma 43:1, Alma exemplifies another leadership principle. It says, "Alma also himself could not rest and he also went forth." I believe that great leaders are action-oriented. There are examples of this all over in the scriptures. Ether, it says that Ether could not be restrained, and Jeremiah says, "I was weary with forbearing. I could not stay." Enos says he was wrought upon by the power of God that he must preach and prophesize. There are obviously times when we are prompted to not act, but a lot of times, leaders have this orientation to act, to do something to move the work forward.
- 00:18:57 [Elder Uchtdorf](#), I love this quote. I remember when he said it, April 2011. He said, "Somewhere between the hearing, the writing of a reminder on our smartphone, and the actual doing, our "do-it" switch gets rotated to the "later" position. Let's make sure to set our "do-it" switch always to the "now" position." I love that Elder Uchtdorf taught that principle as well, that we need to be people of action. When we get those promptings, let's act on it. Let's be doers of the word. If we believe all these things, let's see that we do them, not that we just think about them.
- Hank Smith: 00:19:34 You've taken the first verse of this section and I'm inspired to be a better husband and father. That's the power of the Book of Mormon right there and a great teacher in one verse. I'm feeling, "Okay, I can do this. I can be better."
- Dr. David Boren: 00:19:51 One more leadership lesson, I believe, that comes out in verse one is that great leaders engage in face-to-face leadership and lead with love. Alma knew that he had to go out and about among the people in order to truly lead them. I was in a

leadership training recently for the Utah area and Elder Brian K. Taylor shared a quote that he once heard from [Elder Holland](#) that Jesus did not have an office because he was out among the people. I came across this quote from [Pope Francis](#) that I thought really exemplified that. He says, "The priest who seldom goes out of himself misses out on the best of our people on what can stir the depths of his priestly heart."

00:20:39 This is precisely the reason why some priests grow dissatisfied, lose heart and become in a sense collectors of antiquities or novelties instead of being shepherds living with the smell of the sheep. This is what I am asking you. Be shepherds with the smell of the sheep." That's so beautiful.

00:20:58 When I was 11 years old, we were living in Mesa, Arizona. My dad was an architect. Both of my parents the same week got the impression that they needed to move to a farm in Idaho. They didn't know what that meant or how to do that, but they moved forward with faith. They were action-oriented, and long story short, they ended up selling the architecture practice and moving to Idaho. My dad became a watercolor artist and sold cowboy art. We starved for the first few years, but it actually worked out and it became really clear why we ended up moving there. I mean, my dad ended up being called as the stake president up there and had a lot of really neat spiritual experiences. I really appreciate their faith.

00:21:46 One of the things that happened when we moved to Idaho to a little farm is my mom decided to buy sheep. She wanted sheep, and she loved her sheepies. She went out and visited her sheepies every day and would feed them. Each of them had a name. I hated the sheep. They were always getting out and I had to feed them and clean up after them. Well, I just remember one night the sheep got out. It was the middle of the night and my parents got the kids up and said, "Hey, we got to go get the sheep in."

00:22:16 My method for gathering the sheep was the stick and yell method. So I would run behind the sheep yelling and hitting the sheep and they just scattered every direction. They're all over the place. I was not a shepherd with the smell of the sheep. I did not spend time with the sheep. I didn't love the sheep. My mom wanders out to the barnyard and just smiles knowingly and she starts calling her sheep by name. They know her and love her and they come. She opens the corral gate, they walk right in. She closes the gate. And at first, I was a little ticked off, I was a little upset like, "Why did you get me out of bed? Why didn't you just get the sheep?" But I learned such a valuable

lesson about leadership, that if a sheep can tell when you love that sheep, people can absolutely tell. If you want to really lead people, you have got to be with them and be a shepherd with the smell of the sheep.

Hank Smith: 00:23:24 A shepherd with the smell of the sheep. That's fantastic. Wow.

Dr. David Boren: 00:23:29 Alma was that type of leader and was out and about.

Hank Smith: 00:23:33 David, if I remember right, your dissertation work was on principal visibility. Now, if anybody's listening going, "Wow, how did Hank know that?" It was because I was supposed to be just like David Boren, if everyone remembers. From your research, why do we have a tendency to hunker down in our office? Even as church leaders, we do that sometimes.

Dr. David Boren: 00:23:56 Well, I mean, first of all, there is a mountain of administrivia. There is so much to do, paperwork and policies and things that are right in our face. It takes time to be out and about. I'm an Elders quorum president right now and I struggle sometimes to get out and about trying to get the day-to-day stuff taken care of, ministering assignments, sometimes the administrative side of leadership can really make it hard to get to the ministering side, but I do find that when I make the time to be out and about and visiting as a church leader, that is really where the rubber hits the road as a leader and I can be a conduit of God's love to other people.

00:24:46 It actually reduces my administrative load because I learn things and take care of things that if I hadn't have been out and about would grow and multiply and then they would be much bigger than if I hadn't been out. Sometimes it's easier to not be out and about. People are messy. We are all messy, but bishops, stake presidents, relief society presidents, our relief society president in our ward now, not to call her out, but she's fabulous. She is a shepherd with the smell of the sheep. She gets out and about a lot and it makes a huge difference in our ward.

Hank Smith: 00:25:26 Jesus didn't have an office. I wrote that down. Okay. What do you want to do next, David?

Dr. David Boren: 00:25:31 So let's get started with the actual war. Verse two takes us into the war chapters and we find out about the Lamanites getting all riled up and they have a captain named Zerahemnah. He's a piece of work. He also exemplifies some pretty effective leadership principles. Sometimes we think that wicked leaders

or terrible leaders and what they do is they use leadership tools for a bad purpose, but they can be really effective. This is another leadership lesson. The leader sets the tone.

00:26:07 There's actually a lot of research on this that the person in the top position actually really has a huge impact on the culture, the beliefs and the values that are emphasized. Zerahemnah knew this. You see in verse six of [43](#) that he appointed chief captains from the Amalekites and the Zoramites. He wanted those that hated the Nephites the most to set the tone.

00:26:37 There are just example after example of this. I mean, King Noah in the Book of Mormon, it says, "He did cause his people to commit sin," and Jeroboam in the Old Testament, it says, "The leaders of this people caused them to err and made Israel to sin." A wicked leader can have a huge impact. Fortunately, the same can be true for a righteous leader. I mean, King Benjamin, it says he appointed just men and teachers and kings who established peace and taught them to keep the commandments. He had a huge trickle-down effect because he set a really righteous tone.

00:27:12 We've seen that with the leadership of the church. Think about President Nelson and the tone that he sets for the rest of the membership of the church. If our organizations are struggling, if our family's struggling, it might be instructive for us to look in the mirror and just say, "Okay. What kind of tone am I setting? What kind of example am I setting?" because it might be trickling down.

Hank Smith: 00:27:33 I've heard it said, David, that a leader can be a thermostat and not a thermometer. You don't just have to reflect back what the tone is. You can actually set the tone. You can change it.

John Bytheway: 00:27:47 For those who are listening, did you hear that name Zerahemnah and how much it sounds like Zarahemla? If you hear that subtle difference there, [Hugh Nibley](#) says, "Hey, this guy was probably a Mulekite from Zarahemla," which is fascinating because some of the people that cause problems are the Kingmen and the Mulekites, Mulek was a son of King Zedekiah. Maybe when you see a name like that, you think these are maybe people who think by their genealogy they should be kings or they should be rulers. I just think it's interesting. There's names that are so close to Zarahemla and this one is one of those, Zerahemnah. We're going to come to a Zemnarihah at one point too, so yeah.

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| Hank Smith:      | 00:28:33 | It's also interesting that Mormon points out that these other leaders, Amalekites and Zoramites, they're also former Nephites. I think Mormon wants us to see that the Lamanites don't seem to hate the Nephites as much as the former Nephites hate the Nephites.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:28:51 | When I do these chapters, you know the Amazon logo is the word Amazon with an A to Z underneath? I always say the war chapters. I reverse it that Captain Moroni had enemies from Z to A and they start with Zerahemnah and then they go Amalickiah, and then they go Ammoron, and then the Kingmen ruined it because it goes from Z to K, but still, I still put the Z to A thing right there.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:29:20 | Verse eight and verse nine are fascinating because it says what their reasons were for doing things. John referred to this earlier, but really, what is our purpose here? If you look in verse eight, it says for the Lamanites, this is Zerahemnah, his designs were to stir the Lamanites. And then if you look at verse nine, it says the design of the Nephites was to support their lands and their houses and their wives and their children.  |
|                  | 00:29:51 | We're going to talk a little bit today about how leaders inspire. Among all of the things that leaders do, followers are looking for someone that can inspire and there are lots of ways to do that. Frankly, John and Hank, you're both really good at inspiring people for good, which is a real blessing to the church and to people around, but how? How do we inspire people?   |
|                  | 00:30:16 | Let's just take a quick look at one way here in verse eight that Zerahemnah inspires is by stirring up anger. It says that he does this, that he might usurp great power over them, the Lamanites. He's stirring his own people up to anger so that he can control them, also that he might gain power over the Nephites. This is another leadership lesson. Effective leaders are really good at tapping into emotions, and there's a lot of research on this. I find it fascinating that Zerahemnah, out of all the emotions that he could tap into, he chose to tap into anger. Looking at the emotion of anger, I just did a little research in social media is driven by engagement. The more clicks we get, the more money we make, and they have found that the emotion of anger and the emotions of fear get them more clicks. They feed us more and more content that makes us angry and that makes us fear and it stirs us up. |
|                  | 00:31:32 | Nothing against social media. We all use it. It's a powerful tool, but it is designed to elicit a response and often that response is anger. <a href="#">Elder Maxwell</a> says that sometimes anger can cause us to   |



surrender our agency because we move out of our own control and into the control of the adversary. That's one of the leadership lessons is we absolutely need to learn how to leverage and tap into emotions. I mean, a good speaker will do that. A good teacher will do that, but let's just be really aware and cautious. If someone's making us angry, they might be able to usurp great power over us. We just need to be really aware of leaders that are doing that.

- John Bytheway: 00:32:15 The idea of a design, by design I'm going to use anger, love what you said there because I remember somebody saying, "What does some of these social media sites do?" They say, "What should we be outraged about today? What are we angry about today?" That's their goal, and like, wow, it's by design. I love that he uses that word. Thanks for pointing that out.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:32:35 They find that people retweet and reshare angry posts more than others. Why would they not feed us more of those? Be really aware and cautious that that's what we're getting. I have seen it take control of people that I love in my life that have become bitter and angry.
- 00:32:54 Let's talk a little bit about this idea of motives and design, the reasons that we do things. In addition to tapping into people's emotions, great leaders clarify and tap into people's higher purpose, give them an inspiring reason to do things. If you look at Zerahemnah's reasons, it was power, but the Nephites had a much better cause, and this comes up later and I'm highlighting it now so we can see it again and again.
- 00:33:28 They are fighting for their homes and their children and their religion and their rights and their ability to worship God. There's a great story, and I don't know if it's apocryphal or not of John F. Kennedy going to visit NASA. It was when they were trying to get a man on the moon. He asked one of the custodians at the NASA facility what he was doing, and the custodian said, "I'm putting a man on the moon." He didn't say, "I'm sweeping the floor," or, "I'm taking out the garbage." He says, ["I'm putting a man on the moon."](#)
- 00:33:57 There's a lot of research on job orientation and how we frame what we do every day. There are three orientations. There's job orientation, which is basically, "Hey, this is a job. It makes me money. I can pay my bills." The second one is a career orientation, "I enjoy this and I can progress and move forward and make a name for myself." Nothing wrong with that, but then the third one is a calling orientation, and this is where I feel this deep sense of meaning and calling and my work makes

the world a better place. The research is very clear on that we all spend time in all three job orientations.

- 00:34:36 There are times where I would just get up and go to work because I got to pay the bills. Other days where it's a good career and I enjoy it, but there are other times where it's like, "I am meant to do this and it is going to make the world a better place." Those that are primarily found in the calling orientation, that spend most of their time living in the calling orientation world are much happier, are much more effective, much more productive, do their work much better. I think that the Lamanites didn't quite have that calling orientation. Moroni, throughout these chapters, is tapping into this higher purpose.
- 00:35:13 When I was an undergraduate trying to decide what to do for my career, I was major hopping, which a lot of undergraduates do. I was going to do business management and then I was going to do social work and then I was going to do marriage and family. I didn't know what to do. So I called my mom up one Sunday and I bore my soul to her and said, "Mom, I'm wasting my time here. I'm spending a lot of money on housing and food and tuition and I don't know what to do."
- 00:35:41 At the time, I was teaching at the MTC. This was after my mission. My mom knew that I loved teaching at the MTC, so she said, "Have you thought about teaching as a career?" And when she said that, I got that little prick that that might be something I need to consider, but immediately, I started putting up excuses, that I don't make enough money, that it's not very prestigious or kind of curmudgeony. I told my mom, I shared some of my concerns. And then I shared what I thought would be the bell ringer, that would totally resolve her concerns about me being a teacher.
- 00:36:18 I said, "Mom, when I grow up, I want to make enough money so that I can serve missions with my wife. I want to work hard, retire and then have enough money to serve missions with my wife." My beautiful mom said, "David, why don't you make your life a mission?" And that really struck me.
- 00:36:39 So for me, becoming an educator was part of fulfilling my life's mission. It was a way for me to serve God and his children. You can make your life a mission in any profession anywhere on earth, and I know people that have done that. I know doctors and lawyers and dentists and accountants that have made their life a mission, but that mission or that calling orientation has a tremendous impact on the way we do our work and the way we

bless God's children. I appreciate that Moroni basically said, "Hey, this is our mission here. It's a worthy cause."

- John Bytheway: 00:37:17 I saw a photograph once of a US Navy ship in the Middle East on the side of the superstructure of the ship in big black letters, "Why we are here?" and it listed September 11th, it listed the USS Cole, it listed ...and I thought, "Isn't that interesting? You need to know why we're here. We're going to be giving you orders to do things. We need to know why." So I'm looking through my war chapters, how often I've written in the margin, "Why we are fighting. Why they are fighting. Why we are fighting. Why they're fighting." because as you said, they keep bringing it up and we need to know. I like the idea of a calling. Look at verse nine, their wives, their children, their rights and privileges, their liberty and that they might worship God and the title of liberty hasn't come up yet, but you see it's beginnings right here.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:38:11 As we keep going through the chapter, it starts getting pretty scary. They find a leader to lead the armies of the Nephites, and I'm wondering, "Where did they find this guy?" if you go to [verse 17](#). "And Moroni took all the command and the government of their wars and he was only 20 and five years old when he was appointed." We'll talk more about Moroni later. Wow. How did they vet their leaders and find Moroni? Because they scored big on him. Whatever process they had, maybe it was inspiration, whatever process they had, it resulted in a fantastic leader being appointed.
- 00:38:57 One of the things that I love about Moroni, if we jump over to 23, it highlights another lesson on leadership. Great leaders are willing to be led. Moroni was willing to be led by the prophet of God. He knew that he needed God's help, and he asked Alma, "What should we do?" So if you go to verse 23, he asked Alma, "Where are the Lamanites going? What can we do?"
- 00:39:27 If I were playing a game of chess against a grandmaster and I had somebody that knew the future and could see what was going to happen telling me, "Oh, they're going to move to this spot," there's almost no way I could lose. Why would I not tap into that? I love this quote. This is by [M. Russell Ballard](#). He says, "Through the centuries, prophets have fulfilled their duty when they have warned people of the dangers before them. The Lord's apostles are duty-bound to watch, warn, and reach out to help those seeking answers to life's questions."
- 00:40:06 [Elder Dennis B. Neuenschwander](#) said this, "To have living prophets, seers and revelators among us and not listen to them

is no better than having them not at all." It would've been so foolish for Moroni to ask Alma, "Where should we go and what are the Lamanites going to do?" and then to disregard that and say, "Oh, I disagree. I don't agree with you." Sometimes we do that. We take that cafeteria approach to following the prophet. It doesn't work out.

00:40:35 I'll share one more quote. This is a great one by [Elder Eyring](#), "The choice not to take prophetic counsel changes the very ground upon which we stand. It becomes more dangerous." Every time in my life when I have chosen to delay following inspired counsel or decided that I was an exception, I came to know that I had put myself in harm's way. Every time that I have listened to the counsel of prophets, felt it confirmed in prayer and then followed it, I have found that I moved towards safety." Moroni understood that. There's a prophet. If I will listen to the prophet and follow his counsel, we will find safety. It doesn't mean there won't be battles, but we will win.

Hank Smith: 00:41:20 I find that fascinating because if you were going to say, "Who knows more about war, Moroni or Alma?" it's Moroni. He knows more about war, yet he goes to Alma the prophet for instruction. And I think we could do that in any career. Let's say you're a lawyer or an accountant or you are an entrepreneur and you think to yourself, "Well, I know more about this specific field than President Nelson does. So when I get counsel from him, I'm the expert," but yet Moroni gives us a great example of, "Yes, I'm the expert, but I need a prophet."

John Bytheway: 00:41:56 I tried to give a name to each one of these chapters, a name that indicates a spiritual lesson, and I love verse 23, and I call this The Prophets Know Where the Enemy will Strike chapter. Love that, like you said, Moroni sent spies. You can see it, "You, you, you, go follow their camp. Tell me where they're going. You, go ask Alma," because he is better than having an SR71, Google Earth. Reminds me of, listen to this, this is from 1972, "Satan's greatest threat today is to destroy the family, make a mockery of the law of chastity and the sanctity of the marriage covenant." That was [Harold B. Lee](#) in 1972.

00:42:40 In 1972, I think the number one show on TV was Bonanza or something like that. They were pretty safe, but prophets can see things coming and they can tell us where the enemy's going to strike. It was 1995 when [President Hinckley](#) at a Relief Society meeting, Proclamation to the World on the Family, and I think that verse, go ask the prophet where we go to defend ourselves is a great spiritual lesson.

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| Hank Smith:      | 00:43:12 | That's excellent. I remember 1995 hearing the proclamation of the family going, "Huh. A proclamation? Don't we talk about this all the time?" But now, how long has it been? Almost 30 years and everything has changed. Everything has changed since that proclamation. David, where do you want to go next?  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:43:34 | Moroni knows the intention of the Lamanites. It says that in <a href="#">verse 29</a> , and then he is action-oriented. <a href="#">Russell M. Nelson</a> in the 2018 general conference said, "The adversary is increasing his attacks on faith and upon us and our families at an exponential rate. To survive spiritually, we need counter strategies and proactive plans," and that's what Moroni did. He got busy. He jumped in and started making all sorts of preparations, arming his warriors, giving them shields and spears and weapons, and they did all sorts of things to build up their cities. |
|                  | 00:44:19 | <a href="#">President Kimball</a> said this. "It is not a little skirmish with a half-willed antagonist, but a battle royale with an enemy so powerful, entrenched and organized that we are likely to be vanquished if we are not strong, well-trained and watchful." I know it's exhausting as parents and as leaders. Sometimes it just feels like, "Oh, my gosh, so much to do," but if we're not on our A game, we're going to be in trouble, and we really have to do all that we can to proactively prepare purposely toward the enemy. So Moroni was really, really proactive.                         |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:44:58 | The idea is if things feel relatively peaceful, act for when things are not going to be peaceful. Don't wait until, "Oh, now we have another problem coming. We better prepare for it." You have that time to prepare. I don't know if Moroni knows exactly what to do, but he's going to do something.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:45:18 | It's better to get started and then get better than to just wait.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:45:22 | As I'm looking through this, I see in verse 29 why they are fighting. I see in verse 45 why we are fighting. I see in verse 47 why we are fighting. I see in verse 49 why we are fighting. That's inspired leadership. This is what we're doing here.  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:45:38 | What is it, John? The main thing?  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:45:40 | Yeah. The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing.   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:45:45 | One thing that I believe you, Hank, brought up if we look at verses 45 through 47, I mean, it talks about being inspired by a better cause. The Nephites did not want to go to war. They   |

didn't want to fight. These were good people and they were men of God and they felt it was their duty to defend their families even unto bloodshed. I remember when President Hinckley talked about this. He addressed this because it's a real concern for Christians, the cause of Christians to go out and kill people.

- Hank Smith: 00:46:22 Fight.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:46:24 [President Hinckley](#) said this. He says, "It is clear that there are times and circumstances when nations are justified, in fact, have an obligation to fight for family, for liberty and against tyranny, threat and oppression. When all is said and done, we of this church are people of peace. We are followers of our Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of Peace. We are also citizens of nations and are subject to the laws of governments. Furthermore, we are a freedom-loving people committed to the defense of liberty wherever it is in jeopardy." So hard. I don't know the balance there, but there are times when as a nation and as a people, we have to fight to defend the things that are most dear to us.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:11 The word you used there is defend. Interesting rules of warfare that come out here and the Nephites are usually told, "Don't go up and attack them, but stay home and defend, and then the Lord will help you fight your battles." I mean, we start to kind of see some rules of engagement, I guess. Look in the very last verse of 43. Moroni saw their terror, and what options does he have here? Wipe them out?
- Hank Smith: 00:47:41 Finish them, yeah.
- John Bytheway: 00:47:42 He could. They don't even have armor. When he saw their terror, I just put in my margin, mercy. He called a ceasefire, except fire is usually a gun, so cease lunging at each other with sharp pointy objects, and that sets up [Alma 44](#) when he calls this ceasefire, which is so dramatic.
- Hank Smith: 00:48:05 So he's in this battle, they're in this battle with Zerahemnah and his armies and Zerahemnah's men have figured out they're going to lose.
- John Bytheway: 00:48:14 Yeah, and then it's really interesting to see. We get this amazing speech coming up in 44.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:48:21 In 44 verse one, "And it came to pass that they did stop and withdrew apace" This highlights yet another leadership lesson

that effective leaders take time to take a step back and reflect and assess where they are. It would've been so easy for Moroni just to let them keep slaughtering the Lamanites. He was merciful and took a step back and reflected on what was going on, and that allowed him to gather his thoughts and probably his emotions because they were running high.

00:48:56 [President Hinckley](#) said this. He counseled us to pause and take stock of ourselves, "Pray for guidance, for help, for direction, and then follow the whisperings of the spirit." We can get so caught up in the whirlwinds of life and the battles of life that we can forget where we're going and why we're going there. Moroni had the presence of mind to stop and take a step back and withdraw apace. And that allowed them to then make some of these really important decisions.

00:49:26 He says, "I do not desire to slay you," in [verse one](#) and verse two, "Neither do we desire to bring any one of you to the yoke of bondage." And then in verses three and four, he gives all the credit to God in verse five. Great leaders do that. They give credit where credit is due and acknowledge God's hand. I love in verses three and four how many times they talk about faith. That's really fueling their work here. I love the word faithful.

00:49:59 In verse four, when we think of the word faithful, we think of the word obedient, that we're doing all of the things that we need to do, which I believe is part of it. I also believe that being faithful is being full of faith, full of belief, full of hope, and not just going through the motions because I can go through the motions and be pretty faithless as well and not believe.

00:50:27 When the Lord urged Thomas in the New Testament, He said, "Be not faithless, believing," it reminded me of [Stephen Robinson](#)'s book, *Believing Christ*. I don't just believe in Christ, but I believe Christ. It's really easy for us as members of the church to go through the daily and weekly motions, which are really important, but to not believe. We all fall into that. We can ask the Lord to help our unbelief as we continue in those faithful motions, those faithful actions, but I believe that Moroni was helping his people to not only act, but to truly believe in what they were doing.

Hank Smith: 00:51:08 There's a moment here where he's talking to Zerahemnah, but you can tell he's talking to his own men as well. Everybody's listening in. He's saying, "Zerahemnah, you cannot destroy our faith. It's our faith in God. We will be faithful unto him." So he's looking at Zerahemnah talking to him, but I can hear his men going, "Oh, yeah, oh, yeah, that is why we're here." I don't know

if that's a leadership principle, David, but I'm going to teach you, but I'm also teaching everybody else in the room.

- John Bytheway: 00:51:36 Thing that's fascinating is he's got them surrounded. He's got them. He could go right to the terms of surrender, "All right. Swear an oath. Drop your weapons and go home or we will wipe you out," but instead, "I would indeed be ungrateful if I didn't stand on this rock this day and share my testimony of Christ with you." One of the things that I love about this is in the last chapter, it says the Zoramites became Lamanites. And I thought, They're the Rameumptom people. Thou hast made it known unto us there will be no Christ, and here's Moroni saying, "Now that I've got your full attention, do you know why you're surrounded? It's because," [verse three](#), "of our religion and our faith in Christ," and then five more times he mentions that faith in Christ. Remember that you didn't believe in on the Rameumptom there? And then the terms of surrender come out.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:52:33 Zerahemnah is like, "Hey, I'm not buying it. I don't believe it's your faith."
- John Bytheway: 00:52:36 "It's not your faith."
- Dr. David Boren: 00:52:38 No. In verse nine, we do not believe that it is God that has delivered us into your hands, but it is by your cunning that has preserved you from our swords. They parlay it back and forth and Zerahemnah's like, "We'll give you our weapons, but we won't make an oath." Moroni has to make a decision there. That's pretty good. We'll win this battle. He decides, "No, I don't want to win the battle. I want to win the war." That's another leadership lesson is that great leaders are resolute and courageous.
- 00:53:08 Moroni was going with the long view here. He was playing the long game, "I want to win the war and not just the battle in the short term." Recently, I was reading a book about Winston Churchill, his first year in office, the decisions he had to make, the criticisms that came his way and people wanting him to capitulate to win in the short term. And he said, "I refuse to do that." And Hitler really wanted to get him out. Hitler knew that if he could get a different leader in, they could probably make a deal with Britain. It would make the war a lot easier.
- 00:53:45 So I wanted to share a quote. This is a famous quote from [Winston Churchill](#). He says, "We shall not flag or fail. We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France. We shall fight on the seas and the oceans. We shall fight with growing confidence



and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island. Whatever the costs may be, we shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields and in the streets. We shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender."

00:54:16 I'm hearing that same resolve from Moroni. We are not going to give up victory. Victory is our aim. This is just another [Churchill](#) quote that, "We will wage war with all our might, with all the strength that God can give us," Churchill said. Churchill's resolve really did save Britain and that British people as well, their resolve. I see that with Moroni here.

00:54:43 There are so many times in my life where I question, "Man, is it worth the fight? I'm exhausted. I'm tired. I'm going to give in this once or give in to this demand or this request, and I might just capitulate and I'll make an exception here, bring the peace for this short term." I don't see Moroni doing that. I see him courageously playing the long game, having the courage to do that, even though that was a really hard thing to do because after this, more people are going to die on his side.

John Bytheway: 00:55:15 There's phrases in here that are so good. You know that these men are husbands and fathers. Listen to [verse five](#), "By the sacred support which we owe to our wives and our children." That is temporal support. That's spiritual support. That's emotional support, support which we owe, sacred support we owe to our wives and children. I love that he says, "Give us your weapons of war. Swear an oath and you can go home," and they give him the weapons of war and he returns it. "Oh, you're not going to ... Okay. Here's your sword back. Now we will end the conflict." Whoa. I love that in the movie when they hand it back to Zerahemnah, "Okay. Here's your sword. Now, behold, we will end the conflict." How can you skip these chapters? This is amazing.

Hank Smith: 00:56:02 John, I love that phrase, sacred support. We could talk about our families that way. I'm grateful for the sacred support of my spouse, the sacred support of my children. I'm glad you pointed that out.

John Bytheway: 00:56:16 Speaking of the proclamation on the family, and this is, as you said, David, the motive of calling. This is what they're thinking of, "I have to be here to defend because of my wife and my children and the sacred support I owe them."

Dr. David Boren: 00:56:32 Gives the weapons back and they go at it again and the Nephites continue pounding them, and eventually, Zerahemnah

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|                  |          | says, "Okay. We'll make an oath and we'll hand in our weapons," and like you said, John, Moroni is willing to live up to his end of the bargain and lets them go. That's extremely merciful and that is hard for us to do in our personal lives.  |
|                  | 00:56:56 | When we offer forgiveness to somebody or a second chance and they spit in our face, that can be extremely difficult to then later when they come and say, "Hey, actually, I'm really sorry," it's really hard to forgive at that point. You say, "Hey, I tried to give you a chance and you just spurned it," but that's what Christ does. 70 times seven, He'll continue to forgive.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:57:23 | Moroni is so in control. It's amazing. <a href="#">Verse 20</a> , "It came to pass. Moroni caused the work of death should cease again." So he called another ceasefire, as you just said, and then look at verse 21. The number of the dead was not numbered because the greatness of the number. Yea, the number of their dead was exceedingly great, both on the Nephites and on the Lamanites, and 25-year-old Captain Moroni has to go back to the widows and orphans, explained the price of freedom there. I've gotten on my margin, "Freedom isn't free," next to verse 21. |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:58:04 | That verse 17, Moroni was angry because of the stubbornness of the Lamanites, it's like, "Oh, this doesn't have to happen. Why?"  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:58:14 | Yeah, and yet he's in control enough to call that second ceasefire. He could have wiped them out. I mean, what's the saying? Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me, right? But he calls another, "Okay. Another ceasefire. Stop and we need some help putting away the chairs and you can go home."  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:58:34 | What did you say, David, earlier? He's in control of his emotions. It seems like great leadership, doesn't it?  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:58:41 | Yeah.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:58:42 | Calm and steady.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:58:43 | One of the great lessons from chapter 44 is if you are in a battle and you're losing sight of what's most important, maybe take a step back, withdraw apace, gather yourself and offer yourself and the other party an opportunity to get control and to move forward productively. I love, John, that you pointed out that he did that again and again. It's easy to get caught up in the emotion and not offer that, but how often in our lives when we   |

get in a little fight with somebody and we forget what we're even fighting about because we are fighting about our fighting and we don't take a minute just to step back and realize what do we really want to have happen here?

Hank Smith: 00:59:29

Excellent. David, it looks like we just got through with Zerahemnah and we pick up another antagonist.

Dr. David Boren: 00:59:39

He's even better. Let's just jump into [45](#). There's a little bit of a transition here with Alma talking to his son Helaman, but I did want to point out in verse one a little phrase because it comes up again later. So it's talking about the people of the church and it says they did fast much and pray much and they did worship God with exceedingly great joy. It was so refreshing to read that. These people, they had just been through a pretty terrible war, a return to God with much fasting and prayer, and their worship is with joy.

01:00:21

Frankly, there are times when I look down the bench on Sunday, I'm not seeing or feeling a lot of joy going on in our worship. I just wonder, "Can we find that type of joy in living the gospel?" And I know you, Hank, have done a lot of work on wellbeing and happiness and really finding joy in living the gospel. I've done a little work in schools on assessing and addressing student wellbeing. There is remarkable evidence that we can find great joy amidst our trials and difficulties and that in many ways that can actually bring more joy into our lives. So how can we worship God with exceedingly great joy?

John Bytheway: 01:01:11

We get used to it. It's routine to be at church, to be worshiping, but when you think about what it means that there is a God, that there is a Jesus Christ, that He does forgive sins, that we will all live again, that we will all see our families, how can you not receive that with great joy? I mean, that's what I was thinking. Without that, what is there to be happy about?

Hank Smith: 01:01:34

When I think of worshiping with joy, the automatic name that came to my mind was Ammon. This is Alma 26:35. "Have we not reason to rejoice? There were never men that had so great reason to rejoice as we. My joy is carried away even unto boasting in my God. He has all power, all wisdom, all understanding. He comprehends all things. He's a merciful being." He said, "How can I not be filled with joy? This is my joy and my great thanksgiving and I will give thanks unto my God forever." There's this sense of excitement about his worship that I would love to emulate a little more.

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| Dr. David Boren: | 01:02:14 | The gospel is a gospel of joy and happiness. I love this thought from <a href="#">Elder Uchtdorf</a> . He says, "The problem comes when we put our happiness on hold as we wait for some future event, our golden ticket to appear." I think we feel like we have to be martyrs sometimes in the church like, "Oh, I'm going to trudge through this worship service, but someday it'll pay off. I'm going to do this family scripture study and it can be a howling success." I mean, sometimes it is a howling success, more howling than success, but I don't know that it has to be that way all the time.   |
|                  | 01:02:48 | I love this quote from <a href="#">President David O. McKay</a> . He said, "The principal reason the church was organized is to make life sweet today, to give contentment to the heart today, to bring salvation today. Some of us look forward to a time in the future, salvation and exaltation in the world to come, but today is part of eternity."  |
|                  | 01:03:12 | I firmly believe that the Lord would like us to find joy in our worship and in living the gospel today. There are a lot of ways to do that. Part of the struggle with that is a fundamental misunderstanding of God and who He is and our relationship to Him. You both know this quote. It's one of my favorites by <a href="#">Heber C. Kimball</a> . This is how he describes God. "I am perfectly satisfied that my Father and my God is a cheerful, pleasant, lively, and good-natured being. Why? Because I am cheerful, pleasant and lively and good-natured when I have His spirit. That arises from the perfection of His attributes. He's a jovial, lively person and a beautiful man." When we understand God and our divine nature and connect with Him, we feel joy. So hopefully we can find that exceeding great joy in our worship. |
|                  | 01:04:09 | One more from <a href="#">President Nelson</a> , "Saints can be happy under every circumstance. We can feel joy even while having a bad day, a bad week or even a bad year. My dear brothers and sisters, the joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives. Joy comes from and because of Him. He is the source of all joy. Jesus Christ is joy." When Moroni said, "It is by Christ that we have done all these things," that's why they're finding joy, exceedingly great joy in their worship of God. It's likely focused on Christ.  |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:04:48 | I can't wait to show my kids that fasting and joy were in the same verse together on chapter 45 verse one.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:04:56 | Brad Wilcox said once, "Fast Sunday. It's the slowest Sunday in the church."  |

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| Hank Smith:      | 01:05:01 | It's not super fast.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:05:03 | They're fast about it.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:05:04 | Dinner on fast Sunday is a great joy.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:05:08 | Alma talks to Helaman, basically tells him, "Hey, here's a little sneak peek about what's coming up and it's devastating."   |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:05:16 | It's not good.   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:05:18 | We've worked so hard to defend our land and our people and our religion and to find out that at some point that the Nephites are going to be destroyed, that has got to be really hard to hear. Fortunately, Alma tells Helaman, "Hey, don't share this broadly. We don't want to dishearten everybody," but that probably weighed really heavily on Helaman. We know it weighed heavily on Nephi. They suppose that Alma was buried by the hand of the Lord. We don't know, but he departed out of the land of Zarahemla and went into the land of Melek and they didn't hear from him again. |
|                  | 01:05:54 | Again, reflecting back on Alma's life, where he started and what he went through and what he became, if we had taken a snapshot of Alma earlier in Mosiah, we would've said, "This guy is nothing but trouble." The Lord can change us. The Atonement can change us, the power of Christ. Alma was absolutely a changed man.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:06:16 | He was not a leopard, right?   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:06:19 | He was not a leopard. That's right. He's a man and men change every day.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:06:24 | I'm glad you brought this up, David, and maybe I shared this, John, way back when we did Mosiah 27 and 28, where Mormon, what does he call Alma the younger and his friends, the vilest?   |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:06:36 | Vilest of sinners, yeah.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:06:38 | And here we get to chapter 45 where it seems he's translated. That's quite a most improved award. Going from vilest of all sinners to translated prophet. <a href="#">Elder Holland</a> said, "More pages are devoted to the span of Alma the younger's life and ministry more than any other person in the Book of Mormon. The life of Alma the younger portrays the gospel's beauty and reach and power perhaps more than any other in holy scripture." I'm glad   |

you brought that up, what you said in the beginning, people change. Alma the younger is the example that people change. They don't just pretend to change. Everything about them, their natures change.

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| Dr. David Boren: | 01:07:19 | If anyone listening feels like they're the vilest of sinners, I would testify that Christ can change you. Don't give up.  |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:07:29 | He didn't change himself, did he? He just opened himself up to the Lord's power.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:07:34 | He is so good at remaking us. Look what he did for Alma, his start and his finish here, translated even like Moses.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:07:44 | So Helaman takes over.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:07:45 | Yup, Helaman takes over, and then it gets interesting real fast. If you go to verse 21, you see that a lot of little dissensions and disturbances pop up. In verse 23, it talks about there arose a dissension among them. We see this throughout the rest of the war chapters. These little disturbances and little dissensions, if they are not nipped in the bud right away, they grow and fester and they get out of hand. I mean, it's like <a href="#">Elder Uchtdorf</a> 's only by a few degrees. You start a few degrees off and eventually you can get way, way off, and we see that in this chapter here, where they start these little squabbles and quibbles and fights and it gets nasty real fast. |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:08:32 | Thank you for reading verse 21. This phrase, it became expedient that the word of God should be declared among them. This is my title for this chapter, Declare the Word of God in Times of War because it's easy to think, "Hey, listen, we're at war. Let's put all this worship stuff on the back burner. We have bigger problems," but this is reversed. "Oh, no, this is the time, the most important time to declare the word of God. It's not a put it on the back burner." It's a spiritual preparation. It's always first in the war chapters. It's never, "Well, let's solve these wars and then we'll get back to church." It's never that. It's always the other way around.                          |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:09:14 | We're letting the tail wag the dog. We're hacking at the leaves when we're fighting those physical wars. If we could change our hearts, that would end the war. That would change everything. They're having these little squabbles and there's some contentions and dissensions and pride. Then we transition to chapter 46 where it starts getting really out of hand.  |

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| John Bytheway:   | 01:09:41 | Enemies from Z to A, and here comes our first A.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:09:46 | I mean, I'm starting to hear the death march here from Darth Vader. Amalickiah is going to show up.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:09:53 | It seems we're getting set up for almost a satanic versus a Christ-like figure. Doesn't it feel that way, that Amalickiah is really dark and really terrible and Moroni is this Christ figure who will even shed his own blood?   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:10:13 | I'm kind of a Lord of the Rings junkie. I like Lord of the Rings. When Frodo and company first meet Aragorn and say, "Oh, I think an agent of the dark would look fairer and feel fouler." Amalickiah was probably a really charismatic, really handsome, eloquent, I don't know, but he was extremely influential and I don't think he was this evil, ugly, ratty little guy that you could tell was, "Oh, this guy's trouble." I think he seemed good to a lot of people, I would assume. |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:10:49 | Doesn't Mormon point out he was a man of cunning device, a man of many flattering words, and didn't you read, David, that he was tall and mighty?   |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:10:59 | Yeah, large and strong in verse three.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:11:02 | Large and strong.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 01:11:03 | Just look at Hank if you need what that looks like.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:11:05 | Yeah, I was going to say I can really identify here with-   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:11:12 | I think we are setting up this Christ and Satan archetype. They really do exemplify a lot of those attributes. We'll set up that's getting dangerous and Moroni says, "Okay, this is exceedingly ..." In <a href="#">verse seven</a> , this is exceedingly precarious and dangerous. I'm a man of action. I am going to do something about this. That's when he starts the title of liberty. He really draws a line in the sand.  |
|                  | 01:11:41 | Part of the power in the title of liberty is that he had a physical symbol and was able to rally people around him, but I think the vocal minority sometimes seems like the majority. You have some of these followers of Amalickiah that are just making all sorts of noise. They seem to be taking over and Moroni is like, Wait a second. Now, there are a lot of really good people here still that still believe in Christ. They're meek and kind, and                                 |

they're not saying anything. We've got to bring them out and rally them.

01:12:18 Basically, it was their way of announcing, "Hey, I am a follower of Christ." During medieval times, they had a standard bearer. The hosts would gather and then they would be ready to go to war. Moroni is basically saying, hey, everyone that believes in the cause of Christ and the Christians, show yourself, make it known because there are people that need to know that. Otherwise, they're going to stay quietly in the shadows.

01:12:45 I believe that the announcing, building, dedicating and serving in temples has been President Nelson's rallying cry. That's his title of liberty, his standard of truth. He's asking us to rally to the temple, to unify with God, Christ and each other in making and keeping covenants. In verse 20 it says, "Let them come forth in the strength of the Lord and enter into a covenant."

01:13:10 Listen to last conference. I think the building and dedicating and serving in temples is our modern-day title of liberty, and that President Nelson is calling us to come forth in the strength of the Lord and enter into a covenant. I just think it's beautiful.

01:13:28 I was in the Hill Cumorah pageant with family, got to be a Lamanite, and every morning at the Hill Cumorah pageant, we would recite the [Standard of Truth](#) and that is etched into my soul. So I'm going to recite it here because I just love it. It was a really special experience to be on the Hill Cumorah, where the plates had been buried and where Joseph Smith brought them forth and Moroni had appeared to him. It was a really special experience to recite that every day and then to go act out those scenes from the Book of Mormon.

01:14:04 "The standard of truth has been erected. No unhallowed hand can stop the work from progressing. Persecutions may rage." Sorry, sorry, I can't say it. "Mobs may combine. Armies may assemble. Calumny may defame, but the truth of God will go forth boldly, nobly, and independent till it has penetrated every continent, visited every clime, swept every country and sounded in every ear till the purposes of God shall be accomplished and the great Jehovah shall say, 'The work is done.'" Isn't that beautiful? The Book of Mormon is part of that standard of truth. It's so beautiful that we have that.

Hank Smith: 01:15:01 It's got to be that same type feeling chapter 46, seeing that title of liberty go up, that emotion that comes? You're right. You said earlier that great leaders channel that emotion. You can see Moroni doing that.





- John Bytheway: 00:00:01 Welcome to part two with Dr. David Boren, [Alma 43 to 52](#).
- Dr. David Boren: 00:00:06 Amalickiah, he understands leadership, he knows how to leverage emotions and tap into people's emotions. So in [verse five](#), "That they had been led by the flatteries of Amalickiah." He told them exactly what they wanted to hear, whether or not he believed it. And in verse nine, we can go back and hit some of these others, but I love in verse nine, "We see the great wickedness, one very wicked man can cause to take place among the children of men."
- Hank Smith: 00:00:35 And it's only been 20 years really that they've switched from Kings to Judges. We've gone quite a ways from Alma 1, when we made the switch, but time-wise, we haven't covered a lot of time and it seems that there are some people who did not want that switch, and they want to go back. It's a constant pull to go back to the way things were.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:00:59 What's really scary is in verse seven, "There were many in the church who believed the flattering words." Guarding ourselves and really reflecting, are they tapping into my emotions and flattering me to go against what I really believe in? And we need to be really careful. We quickly forget, as it says in verse eight.
- Hank Smith: 00:01:22 Mormon's quick to point that out.
- John Bytheway: 00:01:25 Yeah, this is Mormon shaking his head, "Can you believe this?"
- Hank Smith: 00:01:28 Yeah, I'm doing it again.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:01:29 Moroni, he was willing to stand up for what was right. I love this quote by [Elder Richard G. Scott](#), "Develop the capacity when circumstances demand, to lay everything on the altar to defend a principle. There are so few willing to do that. The world needs men and women like you who are willing to place principle above personal gain. You can be the shining light, that righteous

influence, the leaven and the loaf to increase the moral fiber of your nation."

00:02:00 And Moroni was that man of action, [Elder Holland](#), one more, "Be strong. Live the gospel faithfully, even if others around you don't live it at all. Defend your beliefs with courtesy and with compassion, but defend them." I love that Moroni was willing to put it all on the line. And it reminds me of a quote by [Elder Maxwell](#) where he says, "Sometimes we get so busy discussing the doctrines of the gospel, that talking about them almost becomes a substitute for applying them." He wasn't on social media saying, "Man, I wish they would change this." Or griping to his friends. He's like, "I'm going to do something about this." He was willing to put his life on the line, to defend a principle that he cared about.

Hank Smith: 00:02:45 What you pointed out earlier comes into play here because he could use anger. He could say, "Let's all be angry at Amalickiah." He could make it all about Amalickiah. "Let's be angry and I'll use that anger to control the people." But instead, as Mormon calls it later, a higher cause. It's bigger than anger, this is about God and freedom. I'm seeing what you pointed out to us early in 43, playing through the rest of Moroni's strategy.

Dr. David Boren: 00:03:14 I guess I'll point out one more thing from the Title of Liberty section, I love in verse [21](#) where it says, "The people came running together." I'm just seeing all these people running together to take upon themselves this covenant. I know, Hank, you've run a few marathons, I've run a couple of them. Those that run, and cycle and row, know the power that comes from running together, from being with other people and drafting. A few years ago, my sister-in-law, bless her heart, invited me and my high school son to run a marathon with her. And at first I thought she was crazy, and looking back, she was crazy, but we said yes and we didn't realize what we were saying yes to. It took a lot of training and it was actually really a beautiful experience with my son. One of the reasons I said yes is because I wanted to spend more time with my son, and I knew that training with him would allow us to spend a lot of time talking with each other. And what I realized is he did all the talking and I was just sucking air because I could hardly breathe, while we trained.

00:04:24 But the day of the marathon came, and my son was... He ran cross country in high school, he was a good runner. And we started running and he had a goal, he wanted to run the marathon in under three hours and 30 minutes, and I thought he was crazy. And we started running, we felt good, and we

made it to the halfway point in about an hour and 45 or 46 minutes, so we were close to our goal. Just within the next mile, he said, "Dad, I can't keep up this pace, I got to slow down." I was expecting just the opposite. I trained hard. I had a split second decision to make at that moment, and I'm ashamed to say that for a split second, I thought about leaving him, saying, "Okay, well see you at the finish line. Because I know they're going to publish these times and I want to get a good time, and people are going to ask me about my time."

00:05:19 And then I stopped and thought, "Wait, wait, wait, wait. Why am I doing this marathon? Why did I even decide to do this in the first place? Well, it was to build a relationship with my son, to spend time with my son. If I take off, what is going to be going through his mind as he sees me run off while he's struggling? In that split second, I said, "Nathan, I'm not going anywhere, we're in this together." And we ran the rest of the marathon together. And to his credit, he finished, and one of my favorite pictures of me and Nathan going through the finish line together. We ran together. It was a beautiful experience. And I think there are times in the church where we can lose sight, or in our families, we can lose sight of what we're really about, why we're doing what we're doing. We need each other, we need to run together, to help each other in our struggles. That's part of what we do in this church is we make these covenants and we run together, and we take turns pulling each other along when someone's hurting. And you know, Hank those marathons, they're tough. I mean, you hurt.

Hank Smith: 00:06:31 It's a good way to lose your toenails, I'll tell you that.

Dr. David Boren: 00:06:34 It is, yeah, they're overrated. But life is not a sprint, and membership in the church is not a sprint. Living in a family is not a sprint. This war, this war is exhausting, that the Nephites are in, it goes on, and on and on. They have to stick together. Our ward families, and our quorum, and class families and our actual families, we need each other. We've got to run together in this covenant relationship. That was my other thought on Title of Liberty, and he brought them together and said, "We're in this together. You are not independent contractors doing parallel play. We are running together."

Hank Smith: 00:07:11 Strength in our group, our ward family, our stake, our church. We've talked this year about, it's not about the evidences for the Book of Mormon, it's about the text. The evidence can convince you, but the text converts you. However, I just find this one so much fun that I wanted to share with you. There's a story in Alma 46, you can miss it if you're reading too fast,

where Moroni starts talking about Joseph and the coat, way back from Genesis. And he says something about a part of the coat, that after it was torn up, didn't decay. It sounds like it was made of animal skin, and that a portion of it didn't decay. The portion of the coat not decaying is not found anywhere in the Bible, it's not in Genesis.

00:08:00 [Hugh Nibley](#), who we've talked about on the podcast many times, he found that in the 10th century, a Muslim scholar, and there's no way I can pronounce this name, Muhammad Ibn Ibrahim al-Halabi, I don't know how I did. He back in the 10th century, John, David, so this is a thousand years ago, he gathered legends about the ancient biblical figures. He preserved one account, not found anywhere else, about the [coat of Joseph](#), how it was torn and how a piece of it remained undecayed. That lore is preserved nowhere else, that is except in Alma 46, which also records the ancient tradition about a remnant of Joseph's coat, which was undecayed. [Nibley](#) said, "This is a test no forgery could pass." That somehow Joseph Smith had access to a 10th century Muslim scholarship. I thought it was a fun little Hugh Nibley story, who we love, right John?

John Bytheway: 00:09:10 Yeah.

Dr. David Boren: 00:09:12 That caught me by surprise and I didn't know that history, but I was really impressed that Moroni knew his scriptures so well. He was not just a military guy, and he didn't separate his discipleship from his job as the military leader. [Russell M. Nelson](#) said this about that, he says, "In my own experience, I have preferred not to compartmentalize my interests, but to synergize them. To say that your highest priority will be your occupation, or to your family or to the Lord, is really much more difficult than it is to merge strengths and pursue those interests concurrently." I think Moroni was a better military leader because he knew the scriptures and he knew the Lord, and he didn't compartmentalize those. They were mutually reinforcing, they helped each other because he did know the scriptures, and he wasn't afraid to preach to his people.

Hank Smith: 00:10:05 And it's no wonder then that Mormon likes him so much, because Mormon's trying to live almost that exact life, of a faithful Christian military leader.

Dr. David Boren: 00:10:17 Like verse 36, there's a nice way to apply this. "It came to pass," This is after Amalickiah escaped, "Moroni caused the Title of Liberty to be hoisted upon every tower, which was in all the land, which was possessed by the Nephites." A good way to

apply this is put reminders of your covenants where you can see them. [President Kimball](#), back when I was a teenager, was, "Have a picture of the temple in your home. Have a picture of the Savior in your room." Remember what King Benjamin said? "Keep these before your eyes." I remember Alma 46 is, that is the place reminders of your covenants everywhere, chapter.

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| Hank Smith:      | 00:10:58 | That's fantastic. I love that.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:11:00 | Yeah.   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:11:02 | Let's go on to chapter 47. We see that, because he understands leadership and people, in verse one of chapter 47, what does Amalickiah do? He stirs up the Lamanites to anger. To anger. The King says, yeah, we are going to go attack the Nephites. There's a group that fears that and we get a group of Lamanites that leaves, and they go up to the Hill Antipas, their leader is Lehonti.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:11:33 | John, do I need to get my copy of Righteous Warriors out? Because I'm pretty sure you covered this, didn't you?   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:11:38 | Oh yeah. It's a story we love and it's so sad because when we find a character, a name in the scriptures, they're usually an example or a warning. We know Amalickiah is a warning, we know Moroni is an example. Lehonti starts out as example because this Amalickiah goes in and says, "Hey, King of the Lamanites, let's go attack the Nephites. They won't elect me to be king. Let's go force them to make me king." And this particular Lamanite king says, "Yeah, good idea." So they're marching with this army, as you know, and then the more part of the army says, "We got no reason to go fight the Nephites." And they go up to the Mount Antipas with Lehonti as their leader, and Amalickiah sends, three different times, "Go tell Lehonti to come down from his mountain, tell him to come down here and talk to me." Lehonti won't come. In fact, this sounds like an example, look at verse six, "Being fixed in their mind with a determined resolution, they would not be subjected to go against the Nephites." And they keep inviting him to come down and he won't come down. |
|                  | 00:12:44 | So finally, I love verse 12, "It came to pass that when Amalickiah found he could not get Lehonti to come down off from the Mount, he went up into the Mount, nearly to Lehonti's camp. And he sent again the fourth time his message onto Lehonti, desiring that he would come down and that he would bring his guards with him." You've got, "Come down." "No." "Come down." "No." "Come down." "No." "Okay, I'll come up. I'll come  |

up nearly to your camp and I will say, Lehonti, 'Come down just a little. And bring your guards with you, you'll be fine.'" We're all reading it going, "Don't do it, Lehonti. I've read this book, I know what happens." In fact, every time I read this, the same thing happens. You can imagine this scene, there's a really nice painting on Book of Mormon Central, of Amalickiah, the cunning, flattering murderer, on his knees going, hey Lehonti, here's my idea. Bring your army down in the nighttime, surround my smaller army. And Amalickiah knows, I can't conquer the Nephites unless I have Lehonti and his army. So bring your guys down, surround my smaller army. When they wake up, my army will see they're surrounded by you. And Lehonti, I will surrender my army to you, if you'll make me, end of verse 13, a second leader. I just want to be your second-in-command. You are such a good leader, Lehonti, I want to learn from you.

00:14:15 We're reading it going, "Don't do it, Lehonti." And boy it all happens the way he plans. And he says, okay, we'll be coming down the mountain when we come. You'll see us, we'll be riding six white horses when we come. Sorry, Hank. And thank you for letting me tell this, I just love this story. Lehonti's army comes down in the nighttime, surrounds Amalickiah's smaller army, they wake up, they all see they're surrounded, they say, Amalickiah, we don't want to fight those guys. They're Lamanites, in fact, that's my brother. Hi Ted. Let's surrender and be one big happy army. And now we've got Lehonti in command, Amalickiah as second-in-command. Now if you are second-in-command and you really want to be first in command, and you have no conscience or scruples, what do you do?

Dr. David Boren: 00:15:06 You got to get rid of him, but you can't be the one to blame.

John Bytheway: 00:15:08 Yeah, look at verse 18, "It came to pass that Amalickiah had caused that one of his servants should administer poison, by degrees, to Lehonti, that he died." Thank you Mormon for being such an awesome abridger of this story. Abridger, is that a word? It could have said, "The servant of Amalickiah killed Lehonti." And it would've been factually accurate. But he did it in such a subtle way. If I come at you with a spear, or a javelin, or a knife or a sword, you know something of my intentions. But what if I come at you with a refreshing beverage, and this Amalickiah, like you said, man, he's cunning, flattering. "Hey, try this." Lehonti's last heartbeat, he thought he was in command, "They poisoned him by degrees." That's I think why we have this love hate relationship with this story, because Lehonti was, "We are fixed in our mind with a determined resolution." And then

he got poisoned by degrees, and he didn't even realize it was happening. So the applications of course are, don't get poisoned by degrees, incrementalism.

- Dr. David Boren: 00:16:21 That flaxen cord will get you.
- John Bytheway: 00:16:24 Yeah. For me, this is the, don't come down from your mountain, story. I think about the story in Nehemiah, and they're like, "Hey, come down to the plane of Ono." Which probably should tell you something. He says, "They meant to do me mischief and they called four times after this sort, and I said," [President Uchtdorf](#) gave a talk about this, "'I'm doing a great thing, why should the work cease while I come down to you?'" Thanks for letting me talk about that, that's just such a fascinating story. But now, oh great, you've got Amalickiah back in command, with an army that's united again. And he goes back to the king of the Lamanites kills the king of the Lamanites, becomes the king of the Lamanites, marries the queen of the Lamanites. This is crazy.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:17:15 I loved what you pointed out there, that he thought he was in control the entire time, but when did he lose control? The moment he lost control is when he came down just a little, from that time onward, Amalickiah is in control of the entire thing, letting Lehonti believe he's in control, the entire time. You got to wonder right before Lehonti dies, if Amalickiah comes in and says, just whispers to him, "You shouldn't have come down off that mountain."
- John Bytheway: 00:17:47 Man.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:17:48 It was me, from that point on.
- John Bytheway: 00:17:50 Yeah.
- Hank Smith: 00:17:51 Both of you brought up the idea of this illusion of control that Amalickiah created in Lehonti, and partially by coming up, and then allowing him to bring his guards down with him. It caused me to think, "How does Satan do that to me, where I bring my guards down? What is that? Oh, well I did my scripture study in prayers this morning. I went to the temple last week."
- John Bytheway: 00:18:15 "So I'm okay.
- Hank Smith: 00:18:16 "So I'm okay. I can go to this website or I can engage in this activity because I'm armored up. I've put on the whole armor of God. I can go to the hottest part of the battle if I need to." Not a

good idea. When we have our guards with us, we've done the things that we need to do, we feel like we're invulnerable, and we can come down even a little bit. And then they went down all the way, and they had all their guards, they had everybody. The whole army's like, "Gee, I've got my whole army with me." This illusion of control.

00:18:46 I love the talk that [Sister Dew](#) gave, several years ago at BYU when I was an undergraduate. She says, "You're smart, you're even exceptional, but you're not that smart. You are not resilient enough to tangle with the adversary. You can never match his cunning or his talent for deception and diversion. He will outsmart, outmaneuver and outlast you every time you willingly consent to a duel." Well, Lehonti consented, he didn't even realize he was consenting to a duel. It's dangerous. This is [Elder Larry W. Gibbons](#), "Stay on the straight and narrow path." No, stay in the middle of the straight and narrow path. Don't drift, don't wander, don't dabble. Be careful. Remember, do not flirt with evil, stay out of the devil's territory. Do not give Satan any home field advantage. Living the commandments will bring you the happiness that too many look for in other places."

John Bytheway: 00:19:48 I've heard my good friend Hank Smith say, "Don't confuse your friends with your enemies. Here is Amalickiah saying, "I just want to be second-in-command. Can I be the second leader?" That's exactly what he did, he got his enemies confused with his friends. And I think of my own children, boy Amalickiah or Satan coming out to them and saying, "Hey, come down from your mountain. I'm not your enemy. You know who your enemy is, it's that church. Man, you guys can't do anything in your church. I want to give you freedom." I love that Sheri Dew quote. Do you know what it reminds me of? All of us struggle with that, "Daddy, don't you trust me?" question. Right? President Hinckley told a story, and I found out later it was [President J. Reuben Clark](#), but his daughter was leaving. Well, he gave her a, remember who you are, type of a thing. And she said, "Daddy, don't you trust me?" And President Clark said, "I don't entirely trust myself. One never gets too old or too high in the church that the adversary gives up on him."

Dr. David Boren: 00:20:53 That's amazing. We talk about Amalickiah and I think it would be wise for us to maybe with our families or students to say, "What does Amalickiah look like, today? Where is he in the world today?" His name's not going to be Amalickiah. [Elder Holland](#) gave a talk called, Place No More for the Enemy of My Soul. That's really what Lehonti should have thought, "Wait, that guy's the enemy of my soul, I'm not going to do anything he says." Well, Elder Holland is talking about pornography, and he



says, "Along with filters on computers and a lock on affections, remember that the only real control in life, is self-control. Exercise more control over even the marginal moments that confront you. If a TV show is indecent, turn it off. If a movie is crude, walk out. If an improper relationship is developing, sever it. Many of these influences, at least initially, may not be technically evil, but they can blunt our judgment, dull our spirituality, and lead to something that could be evil." Oh man, if Elder Holland could have talked to Lehonti, "Well it's not evil for me to go down there and meet him." "But it could lead to destruction." And then Elder Holland says this, "An old proverb says that a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step," And then these four words, "So watch your step."

Dr. David Boren:

00:22:19

Like John said, Amalickiah gets control of the entire Lamanite army, like, is this for real? This is like Hollywood stuff. [Chapter 48](#), "More than half of the Lamanite army did not want to fight the Nephites." We go to verse one and two. It says that, "He obtained the kingdom and began to inspire the hearts of the Lamanites and he appointed men to speak unto the Lamanites from their towers against the Nephites." He's employing the same tactic that John pointed out that Moroni used, he's putting those symbols and those spokesmen all over the place that are going to just message, message, message, his message. And he did inspire, verse two, he did inspire their hearts against the Nephites. And in verse three, "He hardened their hearts and blinded their minds." He's totally tapping into their emotions. He knows how to do that effectively, through the power of PR and through story.

00:23:17

And then in verse five, "He appoints chief captains of the Zoramites. Yet again, these Zoramites who were with the Nephites, "They being the most acquainted with the strength of the Nephites, and their places of resort and the weakest parts of their cities." Yeah, that's pretty scary. The enemy that knows me so well, is going to try to capitalize on my weaknesses and my weak times. [President Kimball](#) said this, "Remember the adversary knows our weaknesses. And he will exploit them, he will find our weak spots and use them to his advantage if we are not vigilant and constantly on guard." Fortunately, the Lord, as it says in D&C 62:1, Knoweth the weaknesses of man and how to succor them who are tempted. If we'll humble ourselves before God and have faith, he will make weak things become strong unto us. As it says in Ether 12:27. We know he is going to hit these weak places, but fortunately, Satan's not the only one that knows our weaknesses, the Lord knows our weaknesses and will succor us and make those weak things become strong, if we're vigilant and turn to him.

Dr. David Boren: 00:24:28 You can tell he's a Christ figure here. He says, "Come unto me, I will show you your weakness and I can make weak things become strong." And that's really... But doesn't it even say, "By the means of Moroni, this once weak city," I think there's two of them, "both become strong."

John Bytheway: 00:24:46 That's way up in Alma 49 verse 14, but you see it in Alma 48 verse nine too, that idea.

Dr. David Boren: 00:24:53 Yep. "They put the greatest number of men to fortify and strengthen their weakest fortifications." In verse nine.

00:25:01 We move on to the famous verses about Moroni. When I was a fourteen-year-old young teacher living in Sandpoint, Idaho, Brother Cam Buck, one of our teacher's quorum advisors, challenged the teacher's quorum to memorize verse 11 and verse 17. And he bribed us a little bit with his gooey marshmallow brownies, he said, "Okay, I'm bringing gooey marshmallow brownies, this is my special recipe." I think he brought one that day. Well young men will do just about anything for brownies. He gave us two weeks, and so I spent two weeks memorizing verses 11 and 17. And true to his word, he showed up with a plate full, heaping with these marshmallow chocolate brownies. Well, for those two weeks, it was amazing to read about Moroni.

00:25:52 I'll read these verses, "And Moroni was a strong and a mighty man. He was a man of a perfect understanding. Yea, a man that did not delight in bloodshed, a man whose soul did joy in the liberty and the freedom of his country, and his brethren from bondage and slavery. Yea, verily, verily I say unto you, if all men had been and ever would be, like unto Moroni, behold the very powers of hell would have been shaken forever. Yea, the devil would never have power over the hearts of the children of men." And those words sank deep into my soul, I'm like, "Man, I want to be that guy. I want to be like Moroni." [Elder Ulisses Soares](#) said, "All of us need to transform ourselves into modern Captain Moronis, in order to win the war against evil." I think it would do all of us well to study all these chapters about Moroni. Because we're facing an adversary that is as scary as Amalickiah is, we're facing even worse, we've got to be like Moroni.

John Bytheway: 00:26:52 I like what Hank said a minute ago about Amalickiah is a Satan figure, and Moroni is a Christ figure. Look at verse seven, and here's Mormon being an awesome abridger again, [Alma 48:7](#), "Now it came to pass while Amalickiah had thus been obtaining power by fraud and deceit, Moroni on the other hand had been preparing," And what do you think is going to come next?

Swords, forts, places of resort? No, spiritual preparation is always first. "Preparing the minds of the people to be faithful unto the Lord their God." That's job one. Then the next verse, "Strengthening the armies of the Nephites with forts, places of resort, banks of earth." I love that same thing, spiritual preparation first, and then we can start building our fortifications and our defensive weapons. Sometimes we wonder, "How do you serve God with all your mind?" And so I always see verses that use mind instead of heart, "Preparing the minds of the people to be faithful unto the Lord their God." In verse seven, there.

Dr. David Boren: 00:27:56 Sometimes we put our physical preparedness over our spiritual preparedness, and it's certainly important to have wheat, and water, and food supply, and food storage and enough money on hand, but that spiritual preparedness is going to serve us even better. That should come first.

John Bytheway: 00:28:17 The War Chapters always put it first, which is fascinating.

Dr. David Boren: 00:28:20 Yeah, we know Moroni is this amazing guy. And then it says in verse 18 that he was like an Ammon, the son of Mosiah, and the sons of Mosiah and Alma and his sons, and then in 19, "Now behold, Helaman and his brethren were no less serviceable unto the people than was Moroni." We'll remember the recent talk by [Elder Bednar](#), from a couple conferences ago, In the Path of Their Duty, of October 2023 and he talks about the last wagon. And [Howard W. Hunter](#) gave a talk in 1990, and he says this, "If you feel that much of what you do this year or in the years to come does not make you very famous, take heart, most of the best people who ever lived weren't very famous either. Serve and grow faithfully and quietly."

00:29:09 A couple of weeks ago we had ward conference and our bishop, who's amazing, stood up and shared a couple of little stories that brought this no less serviceable thought to mind. And this bishop's been in for a while. He said there was a couple in the ward right after he was called that came to him and said, "Bishop, if there is ever an assignment or a calling that no one else will take, you come and ask us and we'll take care of it." And he said, "Nobody knows who this couple is, but I have relied on them time and time again. They've always stepped up and done it without fanfare and recognition."

00:29:49 And then he shared another story. He said, there was a man in the ward at Christmas time, a brother that asked him if there was anyone in the ward that could use some financial help at Christmas. The bishop said, "Yeah, there is." And the man said,

"Well, how much do you need?" And the bishop said, "Oh, whatever you can give him." And the man said, "No, I want an amount." So the bishop gave an amount. The bishop said a few days later there was an envelope taped to his front door with Mark 5:41 written on the front, with some money inside. And well, Mark 5:41 is, "And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." And there was double the amount of money in the envelope that the bishop had asked for. Nobody knows about who this brother is.

00:30:32 I mean the stories go on and on. We've all heard a lot of these stories. What [President Benson](#) calls members that live quiet lives of goodness, service and commitment. There are so many wonderful members of the church that are no less serviceable, because of something that they've done that maybe they don't have a prominent calling or anything that's very visible.

00:30:56 So I'll share one more quote. [Elder Maxwell](#), I love Elder Maxwell. One of my favorite talks that he gave was called, Content with the Things Allotted unto Us, that he gave in 2000. Here's what he says, "Performance is what matters, not the size of the stage. The Sea of Galilee only 13 miles by seven, was nevertheless large enough to provide the disciples with a vital experience involving faith and walking on the water. There were certainly much more prominent hills than Golgotha and much more resplendent gardens than Gethsemane, no matter, these were sufficient to host the central act of all human history." It's beautiful to consider that we can really serve wherever we're called.

00:31:42 I'll share one more. This one is a poem by [Meade MacGuire](#), it's called Father, Where Shall I Work Today? "And my love flowed warm and free. Then he pointed out a tiny spot and said, 'Tend that for me.' I answered quickly, 'Oh no, not that. Why no one would ever see no matter how well my work was done, not that little place for me.' And the word he spoke, it was not stern, he answered me tenderly. 'Ah, little one, search that heart of thine, art thou working for them or for me. Nazareth was a little place and so was Galilee.'" It's beautiful and there's actually a ton of research on humility in the scholarly literature that colleagues and followers in an organization, when they rate their leader as humble, they're 18 times more likely to follow that leader, than someone that doesn't demonstrate humility. Organizational performance skyrockets when we are humble.

00:32:44 No less serviceable, these were humble men. One other thought on this, this idea of humility. I know [John Hilton](#)'s done a lot of stuff with text analysis and things, and I did a little text analysis

of some of the leaders in these chapters, it's similar to some things we've done with principles. I took all of the words spoken by Moroni, Pahoran, Helaman and Ammoron. Amalickiah only has 13 words that he spoke, so it's hard to do a textual analysis of his 13 words, but I did a pronoun analysis of the words that they spoke. If you look at the I words like, I, me, my, and the we words like, we, our, us, I printed off this little chart, I don't know if you can see it. Helaman, his we-focused words are a lot higher than his I-focused words. But Ammoron is just the opposite.

John Bytheway: 00:33:39 Wow.

Dr. David Boren: 00:33:39 And if you go this way with Pahoran and Moroni, it's the same.

John Bytheway: 00:33:42 Yeah.

Dr. David Boren: 00:33:43 We did a very similar analysis of effective and less effective school principals. We found the exact same thing, in every single case, that their ratio of the way they talk about their work, the ratio of I to we words, was inverse for the less effective and more effective principals.

00:34:06 I find that fascinating, that it's us, and you see that in the book of Moses with the way Satan talks and the way Christ talks about their work, in Moses 4. It can be hard to be humble in leadership, especially when somebody is less educated or seems to have less to offer, but we'll learn a lot more if we're open to that. And I remember as an elementary principal, we had a dad that would call the school all the time, to yell and swear, and it was exhausting. And I remember one day he called and I was listening to him scream at us and I just thought, "Man, what an idiot. I'm so tired of this guy." I'm like, "I've got a Ph.D. And he didn't even graduate from high school probably." It was right after General Conference, and [Elder Christofferson](#) had said something that rang me. He said this, "Even when we encounter mean-spirited criticism from persons who have little regard or love for us, it can be helpful to exercise enough meekness to weigh it and sift out anything that might benefit us." Elder Christofferson had just taught that. And I'm listening to this guy scream and swear at us, and I thought, "Huh, I wonder... I'm going to listen."

00:35:24 And you know what? This guy had some really good ideas and some really good points. I thanked him for what he was saying. I didn't appreciate the way he was yelling at me, but I thanked him for what he said and we made some changes, and he changed the way he treated us. He was never a front office favorite after that, but he mellowed because we humbly

listened. And when my kids are upset with me and maybe their manner of speech is not really conducive to a good conversation, they might still have some important matters to talk about, even if the manner is not great. Having the humility to listen is an important leadership lesson, great leaders are humble. And the next verse in verse 20, it shows that the people humbled themselves as well. They had humble leaders and the people were humble, and you can see that trickle down again.

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| Hank Smith:      | 00:36:22 | Humility it looks like is the key to becoming favored of the Lord, because you're open now. You're open to being taught and being directed.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:36:31 | As you continue there. Here's this question we've been wrestling with, how does a man of Christ go to war? We have, probably listening, men and women in the armed services and we love them and respect them for their service, and thank them for their service. Look at these words here, I'm in verse 21, "Notwithstanding their peace amongst themselves, they were compelled, reluctantly to contend with their brethren the Lamanites. Yea and fine, their wars never did cease for the space of many years with the Lamanites, notwithstanding their much reluctance." Now, they were sorry to take up arms against the Lamanites. They did not delight in the shedding of blood. "Yea and this was not all, they were sorry to be the means of sending so many of their brethren out of this world into an eternal world, unprepared to meet their God." And then in verse 24, "However," it's this nevertheless, here's the Title of Liberty, "They could not suffer to lay down their lives that their wives and their children should be massacred by the cruelty of those who are once their brethren." Look at the frame of mind, it's Captain Moroni, we're reluctant, we're sorry, and yet we have to defend our families and our liberty. |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:37:42 | <a href="#">Elder Zwick</a> said something that I have used several times. He says, "A soft answer consists of a reasoned response, disciplined words from a humble heart. It does not mean we never speak directly or that we compromise doctrinal truth. Words may be firm in information but soft in spirit." <a href="#">Elder Uchtdorf</a> says, "Of course, we must always stand for what is right, and there are times when we must raise our voices for that cause. However, when we do so with anger or hate in our hearts, when we lash out at others to hurt, shame or silence them, chances are we are not doing so in righteousness." There are absolutely times where we have to contend and we may do so reluctantly, but we don't have to be jerks about it. We can do so with a soft answer.  |

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| John Bytheway:   | 00:38:31 | That is a great scriptural phrase, we don't have to be jerks.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:38:34 | Be jerks about. I love it.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:38:36 | That's right.  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:38:37 | Now here we go again. Major war.   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:38:40 | Yeah, here we are. Big war, the Lamanites are geared up and they are going to attack some of the cities they feel are the weakest. For whatever reason in verse 10, Amalickiah did not come down with them. He was missing in action. But when the Lamanites arrived, we see in verse eight, that, "The Nephites were prepared for them in a manner which never had been known." And if you jump down to 11, "They had altered the management of affairs." This is another leadership lesson that great leaders make needed changes. They will alter the management of affairs when needed. We are facing pretty stiff odds these days, pretty vicious attacks. <a href="#">Elder Quentin Cook</a> said this, "Parents, the days are long passed when regular active participation in church meetings and programs, though essential, can fulfill your sacred responsibility to teach your children, to live moral righteous lives and walk uprightly before the Lord."  |
|                  | 00:39:41 | Maybe three, four years ago it was okay to just go to church and that would be enough. But we have seen in the last five years, and we think about the last five years in the church, we are being asked to prepare in ways which never have been known, and to alter the management of affairs. The changes that have happened I think are inspired to help us be prepared for these oncoming attacks. These cities of Ammonihah and Noah were prepared in ways that had never been seen. The Lamanites get there and they're like, "Whoa, look at the mounds of earth and these forts, and this is crazy." Because Amalickiah wasn't there, the heads of the armies said, "No, let's go on to Noah. That one will be better. They'll be weak." And made an oath to destroy it. Probably shouldn't have made any promises before seeing the City of Noah because Moroni had anticipated this very thing, and I'm sure he had some inspiration there because, "It had hitherto been a weak place," As it says in verse 14, "And it became a strong place." |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:40:50 | A long time ago, anciently, I was involved in something called Boy Scouts. We had a motto which we worked for weeks to memorize. It was, let me see, "Be prepared." Yeah, that's it.   |

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| Dr. David Boren: | 00:41:02 | Be prepared.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:41:03 | When you watch for the word prepared and preparation in these chapters, it's inspiring. And what does our Doctrine and Covenants say? "If ye are prepared..."  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:41:13 | "Ye shall not fear."   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:41:14 | "... Ye shall not fear." And I love that you brought that out, David. There was some manner they had never seen before, or following God and the way he tells us to do things, it's not the world's manner, it's a different way of preparing for our spiritual battles. And then in verse 14, "A weak place had now, by means of Moroni, become strong." There's your Ether 12:27 idea, "Come unto me, I will make weak things strong." A missionary asked <a href="#">Harold B. Lee</a> once, "What's the most important commandment for me as a missionary?" And apparently President Lee thought about it for a bit, and then he said, "The most important commandment for you is the one you're having the most trouble with." Such a great answer. And then <a href="#">chapter 50</a> verse one, "Moroni did not stop making preparations for war."   |
|                  | 00:42:02 | "First, okay, let's dig up heaps of earth, round about the cities." Now, this is without Caterpillars or diesel equipment, you can imagine the work. "Are we done now?" "No. Now let's make a work of timbers on the top of these ridges of earth, to the height of a man." "Okay, are we done now? Because I've got a blister." And in verse 3, "Okay, no, we're not done. Let's make a frame of pickets on top of the work of timbers, on top of the heaps of earth." "Are we done now?" "No. Now let's put towers on top of the frame of pickets, on top of the work of timbers, on top of the heaps of earth." "Now, are we done?" "No. Let's put somebody in the towers. They can cast stones according to their pleasure and their strength on the top of the city." Maybe this is part of that manner of, "I've never seen anything like this before." I've seen drawings and probably you guys have too, in fact, there's a letter that Cortes writes, which it sounds exactly like what is described here in Alma 50, about an ancient city and how it was fortified. But this is just a great lesson on preparation, and in a manner that nobody had ever seen before. And don't you think that spiritually speaking, the Lord gives us a manner of preparing, the world might not get or it might seem strange to them. |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:43:23 | And I like that. It's the idea John and David, I think of, prepare more than you think you need to. Get to where, "Okay, that's a lot." And then double it.  |



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| John Bytheway:   | 00:43:34 | And what's so cool about the towers is if you're up in a tower, what can you do that nobody else can do?   |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:43:42 | Yeah, you can see far away.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:43:44 | What do we call a prophet? What's one of their nicknames?  |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:43:47 | A seer.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:43:50 | A watchman on a tower, and a seer, one who sees, can you imagine if a prophet says, "Hey, danger, approacheth two o'clock, prepare thyself."? And you can imagine, we look up and say, "I don't see any danger."? "Of course you don't, you're on the frame of picket maintenance. I'm up here in the tower, I can see what's going on." It's an awesome idea about, "Now put people on the towers and now you better listen to the people in those towers because they're going to be able to see things that you can't see."   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:44:21 | Fantastic. Let's look at the story of the people of Morianton and Lehi real quick. In chapter 50, well we've got these neighboring cities, and here we go again. In verse 26 of Alma 50, "There began to be a warm contention." Red flags, no warm contentions, again, they're just having this issue, and then it escalates, and it becomes a heated contention. And very similar to what happened with Amalickiah, Morianton with a group decides to leave. Fortunately in this case, Moroni and his armies were able to stop them and head them off. They got tipped off by Morianton's servant that had been beaten. But they head them off, their people are so stubborn, it says in verse 35, I mean, they're clearly going to lose... You've got Teancum, we haven't really been introduced to Teancum before, but you do not want to mess with Teancum and his armies. |
|                  | 00:45:18 | And Morianton inspires, again that word inspire, he knows how to inspire his men. They decide to fight and they lose. But what I love is <a href="#">verse 36</a> , "And thus were the people of Morianton brought back, and upon their covenanting to keep the peace, they were restored to the land of Morianton, and a union took place between them and the people of Lehi; and they were also restored to their lands." This is a pretty serious fight here that they're in, and I think it's a beautiful story of healing and forgiveness. These were neighbors. I think we've all been hurt by people that are close to us.   |
|                  | 00:45:59 | Not too long ago, I had an experience with someone I was close to and it really hurt. And I came across this verse in the book of  |

[Psalms](#), this is King David, he's talking about one of his counselors, Ahithophel, I guess is his name. He was one of David's closest counselors. He was betraying him behind his back to his son Absalom. And this is what David says in lament, he says, "For it was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have borne it. Neither was it he that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then I would've hid myself from him. But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and my acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together and walked unto the house of God in company." It really hurts when someone close to us, whether it's a neighbor, or a family member or a friend, betrays the trust that we have in them, and I think it's beautiful that these people were able to reconcile. There's a story that [Elder David Sorensen](#) told, in the 2003 General Conference, in his talk, Forgiveness Will Change Bitterness to Love.

Hank Smith: 00:47:13 Some people might know that name because it's right at the end of our podcast. If you listen all the way through the end, we talk about our sponsors, David and Verla Sorensen.

Dr. David Boren: 00:47:24 Oh, perfect. Oh, that's just right then. I think he grew up in Arizona, I'm not sure, but he grew up on a farm, a farming community, and he talks about these two neighbors that were boyhood friends. Apparently it was a dry year, which is pretty common in Arizona. They shared water rights and a common irrigation ditch, they got into a warm contention over water rights, it turned into a hot blazing fight. Elder Sorensen calls them Chet and Walt, I don't think that's their real name, but he said Chet and Walt got into an argument. Walt struck Chet's eye with a shovel, and he was blinded. Chet, he was really mad about that, so a few months later, he stopped up all the water knowing that Walt would come see what's going on with the water, and when Walt came, Chet shot him dead. Chet was sent to prison. And this is what Elder Sorensen says, "My father often lamented how tragic it was that Chet and Walt, these two neighbors and boyhood friends had fallen captive to their anger and let it destroy their lives. How tragic that the passion of the moment was allowed to escalate out of control, eventually taking the lives of both men, simply because two men could not forgive each other over a few shares of irrigation water."

00:48:50 I appreciate that in this story, there were some shovels swinging and some swords and some other things, and they were able to come back together as friends and neighbors, and they were restored to their lands. [President Nelson](#) taught this during the 2018 Christmas Devotional, he says, "Through his infinite atonement, you can forgive those who have hurt you and who

have never accepted responsibility for their cruelty to you. It is usually easy to forgive one who sincerely and humbly seeks your forgiveness, but the Savior will grant you the ability to forgive anyone who has mistreated you in any way. Then their hurtful acts can no longer canker your soul." Forgiveness can really heal. God can help us do that, and I believe he helped these people of Morianton and Lehi to do that.

- Hank Smith: 00:49:38 Wow. They came back together again.
- Dr. David Boren: 00:49:41 Yep. All right, let's move on to [chapter 51](#). So sorry to say in verse two, "There began to be a contention among the people." Oh gosh, these warm contentions keep popping up, and it's over a few particular points of the law. It's the king-men again, verse four, it says, "A warm dispute concerning the matter came up, but not unto bloodshed." In verse seven, said, "This matter of their contention was settled by the voice of the people." But it wasn't. The king-men would not go along with the voice of the people. And in verse nine it says, "Behold, this was a critical time for such contentions to be among the people of Nephi." As we said earlier, Satan has impeccable timing, just like Amalickiah did. Amalickiah comes down during this time, Moroni is pretty upset by all of this and he goes to the people and says, "Hey, can I stop this? Can I take care of this?" And he does.
- 00:50:45 It's really interesting though, he basically confronts the king-men, in verse 19, "There were 4,000 of those dissenters that were hewn down by the sword, that would not agree to work with the Nephites." That's a lot of people. And the rest were compelled to go along with the Nephites. And certainly there are times where we have to play hardball and use compulsion. But verse 21 says, "And thus Moroni put an end to those king-men, and there were not any known by the appellation of king-men." But if you go forward five years, to chapter 61 of Alma, they're back. Here's what Abraham Lincoln says about compulsion, and he knew a little bit about armies and fighting and compulsion, and he says, "Force is all conquering, but its victories are short-lived." I've found that compulsion in leadership, usually does not work out for the long run. It does not stick, it does not have a very sticky factor. I won't share the quote because it's long, but [Larry Y. Wilson](#), in May of 2012, said some great things for parents and leaders, on compulsion. Take a look at it sometime. Then verse 31, we got Teancum and his men, and they stop Amalickiah.
- John Bytheway: 00:52:10 Teancum's like a Navy SEAL, Ranger, Green Beret, they don't stop at night. In verse 33, "I'm not going to bed." He gets his

servants, they went into the camp of Amalickiah, "Sleep had overpowered them because of their much fatigue caused by the labors and heat of the day." And verse 34, "Stole into the tent of the king and put a javelin to his heart, and he did cause the death of the king immediately." This is interesting because later Teancum's going to get Ammoron too, but he cast a javelin at him. With Amalickiah, he just woke up dead, I mean he was gone. It says, "He returned privily," Again to his own camp, and it says, "Woke everybody up." "Hey you guys, I was just over there. I just took out Amalickiah. I probably ought to..." "You what?" "Yeah, we just went over to Amalickiah, we put a javelin to his heart, applied about five inches. So everybody wake up because they might be coming back and-"

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| Dr. David Boren: | 00:53:09 | They might be upset in a minute.  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:53:11 | What day did they take him out, according to Alma, 52 verse one?  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:53:15 | It was the end of the year, right?  |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:53:18 | It's New Year's Day.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:53:20 | Yeah.   |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:53:21 | First morning, first month, they found Amalickiah was dead in his own tent. To find your king... That is such a bad omen for superstitious folks, the first day of the first month, the king's dead in his tent. I think that's why Mormon's giving us the date.  |
| Dr. David Boren: | 00:53:38 | John, you mentioned Teancum doing the same thing to Amalickiah's brother, Ammoron, and the differences. There's a difference too in Alma 62 where, Mormon points out that Teancum, when he goes into the tent of Ammoron, he goes in his anger, and in that time he ends up getting killed.                                       |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:53:56 | Good point.   |
| Hank Smith:      | 00:53:58 | I don't know if Mormon meant to do that, but you could compare those two assassinations and say, "One, he goes in to take care of business. The other one, he goes in with a heightened emotion and he ends up being killed in that one." Now, not to place blame on Teancum, because you know that Lehi and Moroni love Teancum. |
| John Bytheway:   | 00:54:20 | Yeah, what a gutsy thing to do. Everybody's asleep, "Come on, let's go." Yeah, wow. He may have known Amalickiah, and   |

Amalickiah was originally a Nephite. He has caused all of these problems for so many years and chapters

- Hank Smith: 00:54:36 As we're moving from Amalickiah to Ammoron, I wanted to show you both something, and this was done by our friend [Joe Spencer](#), who we've had on the podcast before. Basically what Joe shows is that you can split the Book of Alma, right down the middle, Alma one through 29 being the first half, Alma 30 through 63 being the second half. What Joe shows here is that the two halves line up almost perfectly, where you have Nehor in Alma one, you have Korihor in Alma 30. Where you have the Amlicites in Alma two and three, you have the Zoramites in Alma 31 through 35. And then the three cities that Alma the Younger goes to, Zarahemla, Gideon and Ammonihah, match almost perfectly with the three sons that Alma speaks to, Helaman, Shiblon and Corianton. And then a little bit further down, you've got Ammon and Aaron going on missions to the Lamanites, Nephites going to Lamanites, and then on the other half you have Amalickiah and Ammoron, both Nephites going to the Lamanites.
- 00:55:46 What I think this points out is how wonderful Mormon is, in putting this together. He's saying, "I'll take Alma, I can write the first half and then I can take history and put it into an organization that fits almost perfectly in the second half." Again, we can link that in our show notes, but for anyone who's interested in looking at the Book of Mormon that way, it can be a really fun, fun way to look at it.
- John Bytheway: 00:56:10 [Elder Bednar](#) talks about looking for patterns, and where you see order and organization, you think, "How does this come out of Joseph Smith's mouth this way? This is highly organized." We are still noticing things, like Joe just did, that have never been talked about before. The book doesn't say, "Now notice what I'm doing here." Somebody just noticed it and it's hard to miss, this is very orderly how this is put together here.
- Hank Smith: 00:56:37 It's a really fun way to think about Mormon, as he is putting it together. David, what else do you have for us before we let you go?
- Dr. David Boren: 00:56:44 Okay. Final chapter, Alma 52. We get Amalickiah's brother, Ammoron. Wow, we were hoping for a better leader and he proves to be just as rotten. Teancum and his men are going to try to take the city of Mulek. We learned how amazing Teancum is, and how strong his men are, but Teancum realizes, "Hey, this is bigger than me, I can't do this on my own." He waits for Moroni. That shows some humility, and I know that sometimes I

struggle accepting help from others in the church. I know that sometimes members I work with don't want to accept help. That's a principle of the gospel, is asking for and receiving help.

- Hank Smith: 00:57:30 And David, I like what you said there and being vulnerable to say, "I need help."
- Dr. David Boren: 00:57:36 Yeah, that's a leadership lesson, great leaders know when to ask for help. Then Moroni comes and in verse 19, it says, "Moroni, and Teancum and many of the chief captains held a council of war, what they should do." And we are a church of councils, we believe in councils. [Elder Neil Anderson](#) said, "Revelation is scattered among us." [President Ballard](#), who wrote that book on, Counseling with Our Councils, and spoke a lot about this. He says, "The best leaders are not those who work themselves to death trying to do everything single-handedly, the best leaders are those who follow God's plan and counsel with their councils." It says, "Working in councils broadens the base of experience and understanding, leading to better solutions, you prepare future leaders, you can lift much of the load from your shoulders, people can feel ownership of a problem. We can get the work done better in councils." What have you seen that leads to effective decisions in action? When we are meeting with a ward council, or a quorum meeting, or a family council, or even a couple or any other council, what are some of those attributes that you've noticed?
- Hank Smith: 00:58:49 I was really impressed, John. We had [Sister Reyna Alberto](#) on our show for Easter. If anybody missed that episode, go back, because she talks about her time, and they generally study presidency in councils. How many councils was she on, then how they wanted to listen to each other and how she kept telling Elder Bednar in one meeting, "I don't mean to take so much time. I don't mean to take so much time." And Elder Bednar said, "You don't need to apologize, we want to hear everything you have to say. Give us everything." And then do you remember John, what she said? She said, "In a council, you put out your idea, but you're not emotionally attached to your idea." Let's say you put out your idea. You think it's a powerful one and the council doesn't take your idea. She said, "Once you put it out there on the table, it's no longer yours. It's the council's and you're not emotionally attached to it."
- 00:59:43 That has helped me immensely since she taught us that, that I put it out there and it's no longer about me, it's about, like what you said, David, you quoted Elder Anderson there, I gave a piece of the revelation, but I didn't receive the revelation. That's the point of the council, is for me to give my piece and I'm not

emotionally attached to it. I quote that all the time in our group thread with our podcast team, and we say, "Well, what should we do here? What should we do here?" And I say, "Here's what I think. By the way, I'm not emotionally attached to this idea."

- John Bytheway: 01:00:17 Yeah. The idea of giving, that everyone is safe and sharing what they think creates a spirit. Without that, I don't know how revelation inspiration can come, if people don't feel safe, in sharing what they think. But with that, you've got the blessing of heaven, is going to help you out. And what is it, section 88? "Let not all be spokesmen at once, give everybody a chance to speak." Every idea is safe. And particularly you're having a ward youth council, you've got some young people there, it can be huge for them to see how their ideas are listened to and respected. They're training to be future leaders when they're in youth council, they're going to watch how that meeting runs and that's where they're going to learn how to do it someday.
- Dr. David Boren: 01:01:03 Yeah, those are fantastic. I mean, this is proof that councils are effective. You hit most of the things that I had listed for effective councils, and added to it. The multiplicity of ideas and voices and diversity of thought, really enriches our decisions. There are a few things in research that come through as important in councils, one is equality of airtime. It doesn't mean everyone speaks the exact same amount of time, but that everybody contributes, you don't want anyone dominating or anybody not participating. I mean, there's no point in them coming if they don't participate. The second one is ostentatious listening. The people are actually attending to what others are saying, they're not on their phones, they're not thinking about anything, they're actually listening. Teams that have everyone scoring, do better than just having a superstar. Ostentatious listening.
- 01:01:57 John, hit the next one. Make it safe. I love this quote by [Elder Maxwell](#), with respect to councils, "We ought to build a climate around us in which we are in all situations open to the comments of others. We should not make it too expensive emotionally for others to try to communicate with us." I think, "Ooh, I have been expensive emotionally to communicate with." And then expecting candor and engagement, "We are actually going to speak our minds here. We're going to make it safe where we can do that."
- 01:02:29 There's a great story about [Joseph Smith](#). Soon before his death, he created the Council of 50, and here's what he said. He told them to speak their minds and to say what was in their hearts, whether good or bad. He did not want to be forever surrounded

by a set of doughheads. He wanted them to speak. Brigham Young said, "When you come to a meeting, bring your minds with you." We want people to speak up and to feel safe enough to actually share what they're thinking, so that candor is important.

- 01:02:57 And then John, you hit the last one, inviting the Lord into our councils. In first Nephi, Nephi and his brothers are trying to get the plates. It says, "Nephi and his brethren did consult one with another." But it doesn't mention anything about them consulting with the Lord. And it didn't work.
- Hank Smith: 01:03:12 Good point.
- Dr. David Boren: 01:03:13 The first time, when they only talked to each other, I mean, we can counsel with-
- Hank Smith: 01:03:16 Good point.
- Dr. David Boren: 01:03:16 ... each other all we want, but we really need to invite the Lord into our councils. [Elder Christofferson](#) said, "The objective is not simply consensus among council members, but revelation from God."
- 01:03:28 I love this quote by [Henry Bennion Eyring](#), when he was first called to the first presidency, he gave a press conference, and you can Google this video, it's great. He talks about his first experience with councils of the church, he says, "Here are the prophets of God and they are disagreeing in an openness I had never seen in business. I watched this process of them disagreeing and I thought, 'Good heavens. I thought revelation would come to them all and they'd see things the same way.' And it was more open than anything I'd seen in all the groups I'd ever studied. I was dumbfounded. But then after a while, the conversation cycled around and they began to agree. And I saw the most incredible thing, that here are these very strong, very bright people all with different opinions, and suddenly the opinions just begin to line up. And I thought, 'I've seen a miracle. I've seen unity come out of this wonderful kind of open exchange that I've never seen in all my studies.' We can be open, we can be direct, we can talk about differences in a way you can't anywhere else because we're all just looking for the truth and not trying to win. We're not trying to make our argument or dominate, we're trying to find what's right."
- Hank Smith: 01:04:42 David, I'd like to ask one last question of you before we let you go, and that is, John and I frequently ask this of all of our guests,



what are my major takeaways? As we walk away from this?  
What are you hoping people do, change, think about?

- Dr. David Boren: 01:04:57 I will share three short thoughts. First one, on leadership, we talked about a lot of lessons. This quote by [President Kimball](#) sums it up for me, "Those individuals whom we most love, admire, and respect as leaders of the human family, are so regarded by us precisely because they embody in many ways, qualities that Jesus had in his life and his leadership." We can disentangle all the leadership principles, try to list them out, but what would Jesus do? is probably the best leadership principle I can think of. If we'll emulate him, we will lead righteously.
- 01:05:34 And probably the second one actually comes from a scripture outside of this block. I think this scripture represents a lot of what we talked about in, [1 Nephi 14:14](#), Nephi's vision, he says, "And it came to pass that I, Nephi, beheld the power of the Lamb of God, that it descended upon the saints of the church of the Lamb, and upon the covenant people of the Lord who were scattered upon the face of the earth. And they were armed with righteousness and with the power of God in great glory." He was seeing our day. We are engaged in a latter-day war, and if we will seek to live our covenants, he will arm us with power and righteousness, and we will be able to fight these wars and battles that we have.
- 01:06:27 So I think that would be one. And then I would testify of the Book of Mormon, again, that if you're having a hard time, I would testify that the Book of Mormon will bring life to you. This is [Russell M. Nelson](#), and you may have read this earlier, I can't remember, "Few things build faith more than does regular immersion in the Book of Mormon. No other book testifies of Jesus Christ with such power and clarity. It's prophets as inspired by the Lord, saw our day and selected the doctrine and truths that would help us most." Even the war chapters, especially the war chapters, that's my addition. The Book of Mormon is our latter-day survival guide, our ultimate security comes as we yoke ourselves to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. Life without God is life filled with fear. Life with God is a life filled with peace. Even among these trying times, lead like the Savior, arm ourselves with righteousness and study the Book of Mormon. Those would be my takeaways.
- Hank Smith: 01:07:30 I love it. John, David just walked us through 10 chapters, in the Book of Mormon. And it's almost impossible and he did it.
- John Bytheway: 01:07:37 Yeah. And some powerful quotations. It's been great. Look at my pencil, it's almost gone now. I've been marking so much.

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| Hank Smith:      | 01:07:45 | Yeah, I was just marking along the way. I've read this book a lot and then I'm seeing things I've never seen before, it tells you about the book and tells you about our guest today.   |
|                  | 01:07:53 | David, thanks for spending your time with us.   |
| Dr. David Boren: | 01:07:56 | Oh, what a joy. How much fun is this?   |
| Hank Smith:      | 01:07:58 | And we could do this all day. With that, we want to thank Dr. David Boren for walking us through this first half of the War Chapters. We want to thank our executive producer, Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors, who David mentioned earlier, David and Verla Sorensen, and we always remember our founder. And David, the fact that you quoted the Standard of Truth, that is the favorite quote of our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week, we're going to cover more of the War Chapters on FollowHIM. |

## WHEN YOUR LIFE IS ON THE LINE



- Hank Smith: 00:02 Hello, and welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I share a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we're in the first half of the war chapters this week, Alma 43 through 52. Lot of chapters. I thought of a story that I would share as I was reading Alma chapter 46. Prepare yourself, I want to hear your thoughts.
- 00:20 In Alma chapter 46, captain Moroni makes the Title of Liberty, waves it around, and then calls the people to him, and he gives them this speech. It made me think of a story I read many years ago. The year was 1859. Not when I read the story, but when the story takes place, 1859. At Niagara Falls, there's a man named Jean Gravelot. He's from France. He's a daredevil. He is there with his friend, Harry Concord. And this is 1859, John, this is before color.
- John Bytheway: 00:53 I was born just a few years after that.
- Hank Smith: 00:55 Were you? Okay, you might've been there. You maybe have met Jean. They're looking out over Horseshoe Falls. You've been there. Jean Gravelot, his stage name, because he's a daredevil, is The Great Blondin. And I guess he had this poofy blonde hair. He says to Harry, who is his friend and manager, he says, "I'm going to cross Niagara Falls on a tightrope." They decide they're going to get to work.
- 01:17 They make their own tightrope, because I guess in 1859 you can't run down to Walmart and get yourself a tightrope, so they have to make it themselves. Takes them about a year to get the whole event ready. They made these flyers. For 10 cents, you could come, either be on the Canadian side or the American side of the falls and you can come here and watch this guy walk across Niagara Falls on a tightrope. And really, I think, John, those who bought a ticket were coming there to see this guy die because it's a long ways down. And even if you survive the fall, it's like a washing machine with razor blades. It is a churning machine. You're never going to make it.

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| John Bytheway: | 01:57 | And hello, it's called Niagara Falls.  |
| Hank Smith:    | 01:59 | Falls.   |
| John Bytheway: | 02:00 | What do you think is going to happen?  |
| Hank Smith:    | 02:02 | Not Niagara walk.  |
| John Bytheway: | 02:05 | It's not Niagara floats.   |
| Hank Smith:    | 02:08 | You and I know of people, we've heard the stories of people who go over in barrels, people who jump over the falls; they don't live. It's a miracle if you live. Well, the day comes and he gets out there on the edge, and he's got his long pole that he used, balancing pole. He starts to walk across this tightrope. He does it. Takes him 15 minutes. It is a long ways across. He makes it to the other side, and people are screaming and yelling, and he's famous. He's amazing. He's wonderful. He didn't die.   |
|                | 02:40 | I haven't seen the video of this, John, but apparently he says, "I'm going to go back. I'm going to go back to the other side." And people are, "What? This is outrageous. This is more than what I paid for. This is more than my dime's worth." He gets his balancing pole back out and he walks back to the other side of the fall. This would be so stressful for people watching. Of course for him, he's got to be so tense the entire time. Well, the story goes that he is a showman and he's working up the crowd. He throws his pole away, and he says, "Bring me the wheelbarrow." Somebody brings out an 1860s wheelbarrow. I have no idea what that looks like. |
| John Bytheway: | 03:21 | Whatever that looks like.  |
| Hank Smith:    | 03:22 | If it was like mine, it would have duct tape.  |
| John Bytheway: | 03:24 | The wheel looks like from a covered wagon or something. Yeah.  |
| Hank Smith:    | 03:28 | They pull out this wheelbarrow. He said, "Who here believes that I can walk this tightrope pushing this wheelbarrow?" And I can imagine the crowds quiet, like, "Really?" And he says, "Do you believe?" And pretty soon, "I believe." "Do you believe?" "I believe. I believe." "Do you believe?" And pretty soon, the crowds, "We believe, we believe." They're knocking each other. "Do you believe?" "I believe. We believe." And they're all yelling, "This is wonderful. This is great. We believe."   |

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|                | 03:56 | And then he says, "Quiet down. Quiet down. I'm so glad you all believe because I only need one volunteer. Who will get in the wheelbarrow?" And you can see the crowd go, "Didn't you say you believed? I think he said he believed." He will. He said, "What's wrong? I thought you all said that you believe."   |
|                | 04:27 | The story goes that one man raised his hand and said, "I will get in the wheelbarrow." One man raised his hand. I remember I was teaching this once, John, to a group of youth, and I said, "Who do you think it was?" And this little girl in the front row, she goes, "Joseph Smith." I'm like, "No, no, it was not Joseph." Joseph Smith just happened to be at Niagara Falls in 1860.  |
| John Bytheway: | 04:52 | Oh, that is awesome.   |
| Hank Smith:    | 04:53 | Yeah, it would've been a great story. But no, it's his manager. It's Harry Concord who knows him so well.  |
| John Bytheway: | 04:58 | No kidding.  |
| Hank Smith:    | 05:00 | Who says, "I'll do it. I'll do it." He ends up crossing Niagara Falls. And The Great Blondin was there for a long time, I guess many years doing all these tricks. People would come out and watch him.  |
|                | 05:11 | Well, John, look at this. Alma 46:15, "The true believers in Christ will take upon them the name of Christ." Moroni in verse 19 waves this rent part of his garment, his title of liberty, and he says in verse 20, "Behold, whosoever will maintain this title upon the land, let them come forth in the strength of the Lord." Almost as if Moroni is saying the same thing. "If you believe, then act. If you believe, I..." Because don't you think, John, so often, I believe. I believe. And the Lord says, "I'm so glad you believe. I need you to go on a mission." Oh, wow. |
| John Bytheway: | 05:46 | He wants to go... Yeah.  |
| Hank Smith:    | 05:49 | He said he believed. "I believe, I believe." "Oh good, because I need you to bear your testimony to these friends. I need you to walk out of this movie and I need you to..." Fill in the blank. Well, we can't just be those who say we believe; we have to step up and get in the wheelbarrow.   |
| John Bytheway: | 06:05 | Boy, and you mentioned verse 15, "All those who are true believers in Christ took upon them gladly the name of Christ." Like when we take the sacrament, that they're willing to take upon then the name of Christ, I hope we're also glad to, we're   |

honored, we're thrilled to take upon us the name of Christ. And it reminds me of Moroni later on. "What say ye, my sons? Okay." Let's say you want to take them on. That's good. Let's go.

Hank Smith:

06:28

I'll get in the wheelbarrow. Let me be first. Love that attitude. Well, we hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. You can get it wherever you get your podcasts. We're with Dr. David Boren this week. You're going to love him and his stories and all the insights he pulls out verse after verse after verse about leadership. It's a really amazing episode. And then come back here next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.