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| John Bytheway: | 00:00:00 | <p>Hello everyone and welcome to followHIM. We are continuing with our Voices of the Restoration series that goes along with followHIM This year, along with the Doctrine and Covenants sections. We talk about people. Today we're talking about the Gathering to Ohio. Hank, when you think of Ohio, isn't that the way you say hello in Japanese or something like that? What do you think of?</p> |
| Hank Smith: | 00:00:27 | <p>Here's what I think of when I was younger and just starting to learn church history. I heard about New York and I heard about Nauvoo and maybe a little bit of Missouri, but Kirtland was this kind of, yeah, yeah, we were there at one point, but it's really all about Nauvoo. Then as I start learning the history, it's all about Kirtland. This is where Joseph Smith lived the longest, like in a home. This is where the bulk of the sections of the Doctrine and Covenants come. John, after having visited there, all three of us here do these church history tours. I've had magnificent experiences walking around the temple grounds, walking around Old Kirtland, the Isaac Morley farm, the John Johnson farm. It's a jewel. For me, Kirtland has come to life. What did President Hinkley say? I think at one point, we're gonna bring Kirtland out of obscurity.</p> |
| John Bytheway: | 00:01:18 | <p>Yeah. The first time that I went to Kirtland, all that was there was the Newell K. Whitney store with a pretty busy road next to it. All sorts of things started to happen. The road got moved. There's amazing stories that we'll tell eventually. President Hinkley was right about the way it's changed now. It's really nice. I'm so glad we're able to do this. We have Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat back, our Voices of the Restoration expert, who's gonna tell us about Ohio. So, thanks for coming back.</p> |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:01:48 | <p>Thanks for having me.</p> |

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| Hank Smith: | 00:01:50 | John. I gotta say, I have loved these as a, not a historian, but as someone who loves history. I've listened to them a couple of times, which is pretty rare for me to listen to our own show over and over. Gerrit is fun and informative. It really is a lot of fun. So, anybody who, who's like, wait, what are these? Go back on YouTube. You can find 'em on YouTube on our channel. You can also find 'em on the website. For me, this is one of the funnest projects we've ever done. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:02:17 | Yeah, I'm really glad they added the lessons and I'm glad we are adding them too, because this is all about actual people, not just names, but actual people. And we get to think what they went through when we think of how often they had to move and pull up roots. It makes all of us appreciate our spiritual heritage. You brought up a topic that we'll let Gerrit go off on. The idea of the organization of the church. Well, formally in New York. When everything got put in place and lots of revelations came, that was more Kirtland. Is that what you'd say, Gerrit? |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:02:54 | Oh, for sure. The church starts to resemble much more the organizational structure that we have today because of the revelations that are received in Kirtland. An example of that, you get right off in some of these sections. Today, if you were to ask someone to name a presiding office in the church, name a priesthood office in the church, you'd get two answers. You would get apostle or prophet, right? Or you get apostle and you'd get Bishop. They'd either be thinking locally or they'd be thinking general authority. Well before they moved to Kirtland. Neither of those offices, except at least the Quorum of the 12, doesn't exist. Joseph has been ordained an apostle, but there is no Quorum of the 12, and Bishop is the most central localized leader. Everyone interacts with the bishop, everyone who's a member of the church. And yet there were no bishops before they moved to Kirtland. As you study Kirtland and the revelations that are received there, you see an unfolding of the restorations theology, of what the Lord wants to bring back to the knowledge of the world. And then you also see an unfolding of the organization, how the Lord is going to structure his church to bring about this restoration. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:04:06 | I'm glad you said what you did about the theology. The first vision, yes, there is a God, yes, he loves us, and then watch the doctrine be revealed and the theology and some things that are affirmed, things that are corrected about what the world believes. |

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| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:04:26 | <p>You look at some of the most foundational revelations that we have as a church, the revelations that set our theology apart from our other Christian brothers and sisters, to us, they're beautiful doctrines, maybe not as beautiful to other traditional Christians who would struggle with them. Things like Doctrine and Covenants Section 76. That great vision that Joseph has of the judgment and the afterlife. Doctrine and Covenants section 93, the understanding of both the nature of Christ and our individual natures in relationship to God. These are radical things that set Latter-day Saints completely on the other side of what traditional Christianity believes. And these are early revelations in Kirtland 1832, 1833, the Word of Wisdom, which everyone's a little bit more familiar with. Hopefully none of the viewers are too familiar with breaking it, but it's something that's ubiquitous. I mean, everyone knows a Latter-day Saint doesn't drink, doesn't smoke. It's in this early period in Kirtland that the Lord's gonna give that revelation.</p> |
| John Bytheway: | 00:05:34 | <p>Gerrit, what happened when Section 76 came? Everybody just accepted it right off the bat, right?</p> |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:05:39 | <p>Oh yeah. Everyone was just like, wow, this is amazing. You know what I mean? You mean the fact that Christianity's taught that hell's an eternal place that everyone burns in for the last 1800 years and we're just not gonna teach that anymore? Okay. I mean it--Now you do have some people who love it and embrace it and, and our next Voices of the Restoration, in fact, we're gonna talk some of the members' reactions to it. But then you have others who are all on board with everything. They believe. Joseph's a prophet, they believe the Book of Mormons, the word of God. They've uprooted themselves and moved to Ohio, and Joseph receives the vision and they say, that's it. I am out. And it's crazy when you think about it that way. I mean, all of us know people in our lives who aren't super keen on following the prophet, really for anything. When General Conference rolls around, the prophet teaches something and they, you know, maybe on a family group text or something like, well, I thought that was ridiculous. You're like, oh, really? Surprising. You've--</p> |
| Hank Smith: | 00:06:34 | <p>Yeah.</p> |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:06:35 | <p>Been so supportive up until now about everything else that he's taught, but-- We think of people rejecting these revelations as people that are like that. And yet some of the people that are rejecting these revelations are the most fervent believers who it's just a bridge they can't cross. That I am not going to accept. Yeah, that's too much. And it's not everybody, just because</p> |

Joseph says, stop chewing tobacco. You know, I mean, there are beliefs that they carry with them. And it is a good way to think about the early church. When people are serving missions today one of the more difficult aspects is trying to teach a new investigator, friend, a convert without making them feel inadequate because of the beliefs that they're bringing. Because they're bringing some things that are amazing, a love of Jesus, a desire to serve. But also, you're gonna have to kind of negotiate the fact that this particular convert was praying to Mary.

00:07:33 You probably have to find a way to say, Mary's awesome, we love Mary. We don't, we don't pray to her. I mean, and that can become a very difficult situation for both sides, because someone who's just coming into the church, they, you know, well, that's what I was always taught. And you see in the early church, you can't, but help expect them to bring their Christian tradition and beliefs into the church until the Lord tells them something else in Kirtland or in Nauvoo that changes that perspective. Why does Joseph believe that Alvin can't go to the celestial kingdom? Well, the Lord said you had to be baptized to go to the celestial kingdom. That's the belief Joseph carries right up until the Lord says, actually anyone who hasn't had the opportunity can still go to the celestial kingdom. It's important to have a little bit of sympathy that way, and I think it's how you see some of the earliest revelations we receive in Ohio.

00:08:33 If you were to think about Ohio in these terms, the old members of the church, like the old stock members, they've been member for like a year. Probably the only thing similar to this is when you're on your mission. You've been out for like four months and some missionary that's only been out two months is like on a team up with you and you're just big timing 'em. You're like, oh, well, you know, if you had as much experience as I had then--I've been around twice as long. You've been here four months. Okay? But in the early church, you do have all these people who know Joseph, who were there for the organization, who were a part of the Book of Mormon coming forth, were the earliest converts. And all of them by revelation are going to be uprooted and required by the Lord to move to the new headquarters of the church in Kirtland.

00:09:30 And so in Kirtland, what do you have? You have brand new, fresh out of the font, if there was one, right? I mean fresh out of the lake baptism, they are fervent and they believe, but they have no experience, such as it is. I mean a year's experience is still better than zero experience. You also have all of these people that are arriving from New York who literally gave up everything. Of course, not everyone in Colesville is gonna be

able to sell their farm all at once. Even if they do sell it, the price they're selling it for is so little that these people are gonna go from being relatively well off to being poor and they're gonna arrive in Kirtland almost as refugees. And it's these brand-new converts that are going to need to take them in. So, you look at someone like the Partridges, Lydia and Edward Partridge.

00:10:30 Edward Partridge starts December, being skeptical of all these people joining the church. You have these missionaries, they show up. Joseph's got a gold bible, la la la, and then they're gone and you've got dozens and dozens of people that join the church and he is uncomfortable about it. So, he goes to New York to go try to meet Joseph Smith, to see if he really is who he claims he is. Sidney Rigdon goes with him. Now, Sidney Rigdon, he, he's already converted, he's read the Book of Mormon. He's converted. So, in December, Edward Partridge doesn't believe and is going to New York to try to find reasons to stop the growth. Meets Joseph Smith, gets converted, gets baptized, comes back to Kirtland. Joseph arrives in Kirtland in February, and Partridge is made immediately the first Bishop of the church. And what is the Bishop's responsibility? As it's unfolded, this temporal welfare of the saints.

00:11:34 He's made a bishop right as the dozens and dozens and dozens of now poor Latter-day Saints from New York and Pennsylvania, make their way to Kirtland. And where do they stay? Well, guess what? They're at Edward Partridge's house. They're at his house, they're in his yard. One of the negative effects of bringing in dozens and dozens of people is some of those people that they brought in were sick with the measles. So, the Partridge family all come down with the measles. Just think of how radical that life has shifted and then a revelation commands Partridge to go to Missouri to preach all in the space of less than six months. Partridge goes from, "oh these Mormon guys are saying, there's no way this is true." And now he's the bishop of the church. I mean just two months later. It's a radical time of change in that regard.

Hank Smith: 00:12:35 And he's on his way to Missouri.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:12:36 Which you know, that's only a thousand more miles. You'll get there in a month.

Hank Smith: 00:12:39 And then Gerrit, he's gonna get there and they're gonna say, by the way, you're staying.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:12:44 Yeah, you're gonna live here now. Go send for your family. And that's really what characterizes this first gathering. The Voices

of the Restoration is gonna focus on Phebe Woodruff, who's one of my heroes of church history. So, I'm so glad that it does, and we'll talk about that in a minute. This is the first time that Latter-Day Saints are going to have to decide, physically if they believe. It's one thing to say that you believe and to say, well, I'd give up anything for the church. It's quite another, if you happen to be the Knight family in Colesville. To go from being a fairly well off family, to leaving everything and moving somewhere else sight unseen and living as a refugee. It's easy to say, I believe. It's much harder to put your faith in those footsteps. This is where you first start to see it. These New York members--you cover the saga, the sad saga of James Covell who is converted and believes, and that revelation is commanding him to move too. And the cares of the world kind of say, I don't think so. You have an early winnowing from the very beginning. Do I believe enough that I'm going to pick my family up and move? And some people do, and there's a few people who don't.

Hank Smith: 00:14:15 Wow. Now, Gerrit, I believe repetition is the law of all learning. So, if you don't mind, can you give us just a quick review of how we got to Ohio in the first place?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:14:25 I appreciate the fact that you even suggest that I'd be able to do anything quickly. But in September of 1830, there are several missionaries that are sent off to preach to the Indians. Among them, Oliver Cowdery and Parley Pratt. They stopped to preach to one of Parley Pratt's former friends, I mean, I'm sure they're still friends, but a former minister that Parley Pratt knew, Sidney Rigdon. Rigdon is converted and begins to preach the Book of Mormon to his congregation. You start to have this explosion of converts in this Kirtland, Painesville, Mentor Ohio area. The missionaries themselves move on, they've got their numbers and they're done for the week, and they move on to Kansas and they begin to try to preach to the American Indians, which is what their calling was. And in Ohio now, almost overnight, really in the space of three weeks, you have more members probably in Ohio at the end of that three or four weeks than you did in New York.

00:15:30 Total. Suddenly there's a population shift. You have these key families that were members and believers in New York, and suddenly the gospel has exploded. This is not just relatives of the Knights or relatives of the Whitmers. It is dozens and dozens of people and the gospel spreading everywhere. The other thing that's going on, at the same time that the gospel's exploding in Ohio, in Colesville especially, but also in Palmyra and, and you're starting to get rumblings in Fayette, the antagonism is

ratcheting up to the next level. I mean, things were already bad in Palmyra. I mean, when Joseph left Palmyra to go to Harmony, a mob met him trying to stop him, when he was leaving, things were already bad. But in Colesville, which is where the Knight family lives, the Peck families, and their extended family, they formed dozens of members of the church--this Colesville branch.

00:16:28 There is incredible opposition, and they are trying to prevent the work. They have Joseph Smith arrested multiple times trying to put him on trial. There is such a threat that when Joseph wants to go give the whole gift of the Holy Ghost to confirm the newly baptized member, he can't because mobs will meet him to prevent him from getting in there. So, things are really bad in Colesville. They've always been bad in Palmyra. And luckily like only four people live in Fayette. So, there's not, you know, there's not a lot of people that can be mad. When it's, you know, with a mob, with one pitchfork. You just, well, there's not a lot of people.

Hank Smith: 00:17:07 Even still, you go out there, there's not a lot out there.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:17:09 Yeah, seriously. Yeah, right. Now you go out there, you better packed a lunch because you're not gonna find the local Subway. You have these two things happening simultaneously. Massive explosion of members in Ohio, almost unbearable persecution among the main body of members in New York. And they asked Joseph, what are they supposed to do? Now, my guess is that they hoped that, that the Lord would pull a deliverance from the Book of Mormon. Maybe we'll get the Lamanites drunk and we'll make our way through or some kind of mighty thing. Maybe God will change the hearts of everyone in Colesville. And instead, what you get is Doctrine and Covenants section 37 and section 38, that command the entire church to leave and to go to Ohio. Imagine again, let's say that you're a member of the church in Colesville. You are being persecuted horribly for what you believe. You are begging God for some kind of relief. And when God gives the answer, it's not, Hey, don't worry, I'll keep your neighbors from harassing you.

00:18:23 It's you're gonna need to move and it needs to be quick. And they that have farms that cannot be sold, let them be left or rented as seemeth them. Good. That's what the Lord commands in Doctrine and Covenants section 38. Instead of God delivering them he's asking them, like the children of Israel, that they're going to have to leave. They're gonna have to move. We get some early accounts of this. I mean, one of my favorite accounts from the early history of the church is not

from a pro Latter-day Saint source. I know that's the reason why you have me on, so that I can quote antagonists, what they have to say. But there is a local person in the Fayette area who writes to a newspaper after Doctrine and Covenants Section 38 is received commanding everyone to leave. And the whole point of them writing is to mock and make fun of how imbecilic these Mormons are, these gold Bible believers.

00:19:29 He talks about how when this revelation comes, people struggle with it. This is not just, Hey, you know how your family's lived here for decades? You need to give that all up and you're gonna move somewhere where you don't own any land, where you don't know anybody, where you don't have any family. And it's not easy to get there in the first place. It's hundreds of miles away. But that's what you're gonna need to do. And this is what the newspaper reported this person said. This command was at first resisted by such as had property, the brethren being from the neighboring counties being all assembled by a special summons. But after a night of fasting, prayer and trial, they all consented to obey the holy messenger. This person thinks that he's making fun of these early saints. And what he's really doing is demonstrating that being a faithful Latter-day Saint in 1830 is the same--1831 is the same thing as being a faithful Latter-day Saint today. Confronting something that is difficult, that isn't what you want to believe. That isn't what you already believe. That requires a huge amount of sacrifice. And asking yourself, do I really believe? Those early saints almost unanimously said, yeah, this is worth it. My pearl of great price is following the Oracles of God as they move to Kirtland. It's not staying on my family farm here.

John Bytheway: 00:21:04 And how did you put that? There's a spiritual testimony, but now you're going, how did you put it? A temporal test. Do you really believe this?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:21:12 A lot of us have a spiritual witness and a lot of us really feel like we believe. But what happens when the bottom falls out? What happens when my belief is no longer just something that I can do along with my job, but I lose my job because of it? What happens when I lose my friends, when I lose my family? We talked about this last time. Sidney Rigdon loses literally his house because it was built by the congregation for him. So, he's making a decision, by converting, the decision he's making. 'cause he's converting to a lay ministry. I mean, if you're a for-profit minister, worst economic decision you can ever make is become a Latter-day Saint. It's like, well, good luck. I mean, hate to break it to you. You'll be lucky to be getting a Rice Krispy treat in the primary, right?

00:22:03 I mean, you're not getting paid anymore. He's gonna lose his means of making money. And the congregation had built him a house out of like consecrated funds, and so they kick him out of his house. So, he's literally making the decision to lose his home and job, to believe that the Book of Mormon's true. These early saints, they are asked to make a very, a very physical, very public, very real sacrifice. I mean, you can think that you have a testimony all day long. When you're walking to Kirtland after having left your farm and home and family behind you now know that you do. Because people without testimonies didn't walk to Kirtland. It reminds me of a great quote that a former Lieutenant Governor of Utah gave. It was the commemoration of the horrific Bear River Massacre that took place in 1863 in Idaho where federal troops massacred hundreds of Shoshone Indians.

00:23:08 I mean, it's a terrible, horrible thing. And it was a commemoration of this event, you know, a somber thing. And it just so happened that day was one of the worst snowstorms that had ever been. All night and the next day. Apologies to everyone who lives in the Cache Valley area, not the easiest place to get to if there's ever been snow at all, right? And it had dumped feet of snow. As we were trying to start the proceedings, most of the early proceedings were, oh, so and so was gonna make it, but they can't make it. Oh, well so and so wanted to make it, but they couldn't make it so and so just because almost no one could make it for how bad the weather was. The Lieutenant Governor from Utah was there. He had said that he'd seen the weather report.

00:23:51 And so he told the staff that they needed to all go early because they had to be there because it was that important. And he said, my staff, you know, kind of pushed back a little bit 'cause I had so many other things going on. And I said, well, if we don't go, we may not make it. I always remember what my dad taught me. My dad said, you can pretend to care, but you can't pretend to show up. The level of commitment is such, you're either there or you're not. And in a lot of ways, that is what the Lord is asking of these new converts to the church. You can say that you believe. How I know whether or not you believe is you just gave up your business. You just gave up your home and your farm, you just said goodbye to your family. And you moved to gather with the saints because the Lord commanded it. It wasn't in your economic interest, it wasn't where your friends were going. When we read Phebe's account, I mean, goodness, her family holds a funeral for her, basically. They're so upset that she's becoming a Latter-day Saint. That's what God commanded. That's what she was going to do.

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| Hank Smith: | 00:25:02 | Wow. What would that be like? You know, Hey John, Gerrit, hand over your 401k. Hand that over, hand that over the deed to your house. Get in your car and go that way. And if you can't, just leave it behind. If they can't be sold, let them be left. I'm the type of guy that could come up with so many good reasons not to go. Right? Good reasons, good reasons... |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:25:28 | All of us could. That's why we were born in this century and not, and not that one. I mean... |
| Hank Smith: | 00:25:32 | I'd get out my Bible and say, let me show you all the things that Jesus said and these are all reasons I need to not sacrifice. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:25:39 | It is one of the really interesting aspects of Christianity, I mean of what Jesus taught, is instead of focusing on the world that is, it's to sacrifice the world that is for the next life that is to come. That requires that ultimate faith to really believe that there is not any that have sacrificed lands and cattle that will not receive an hundred fold in the kingdom of my Father. That yeah, you might be impoverished here, but the here doesn't really matter. It's the next life when everything matters. And these early Latter-day Saints, they believed it. They believed that God would reward them for their sacrifices. And even if he didn't, they were going to do what God commanded him to do. An account I'd like to share from Newell Knight, part of the knight family there in Colesville. So,, one of the people praying God deliver us. |
| | 00:26:36 | This is a reminiscent as he's, as he's looking back on this, he says: A new year dawned on us--so this is beginning January of 1831--with everything around us, bright and cheerful, and the prospects ahead to give us joy. In the midst of persecution, we rejoiced knowing that God was with us and that his great work would roll on and that man could not stop its progress. On the 2nd of January, 1831, the third conference of the church assembled, many of the saints came together from the region around and much good instruction was given. The saints manifested unshaken confidence in the great work in which they were engaged and they all rejoiced under the blessings of the gospel. It was at this conference that we were instructed as a people to begin the gathering of Israel. And a revelation was given to the prophet on that subject. |
| | 00:27:30 | Having returned home from the conference in obedience to the commandment, which had been given, I, together with the Colesville branch, began making preparations to go to Ohio. They all travel the Fayette for the conference and Fayette's not close. Fayette, if you've ever traveled at Colesville, the Fayette |

is, is a good couple days journey for people. They all travel up to this conference, they get up there to learn, you're all going to Ohio. And they go back home and they don't do what we would do, right? Well, you know, I've promised my father-in-law that I'd get that wheat crop in for him. So, I really, I wouldn't be able to leave until then because I've already prior commitments and all, you know and then plus, I mean, I've gotta wait till the housing market's better 'cause that way I can sell.

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I mean, we could come up with all kinds of reasons. What Newell Knight writes is they went back and they immediately began making preparations. Towards the latter part of January, Brother Joseph Smith and wife, Sidney Rigdon and Edward Partridge, he hasn't even introduced Edward Partridge. Suddenly there's Edward Partridge. They made, they started for Kirtland. As might be expected, we were obliged to make great sacrifices of our property. Most of my time was occupied in visiting the brethren into helping to arrange their affairs so that we might travel together in one company. Having made the best arrangements we could for the journey, we bade adieu to all that we held dear on this earth. And in the early part of April, we started for our destination.

John Bytheway:

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All that we held dear on this earth--a place we've never been. So, if I were to say the reason that church moved to Ohio, is these four missionaries went to the borders of the Lamanites, and on the way they stopped in Ohio and saw Sidney Rigdon. Because of him and because of his congregation, the Lord said, let's all just move to Ohio. I would be missing the persecution piece that you just mentioned in Palmyra and Colesville.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat:

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Yeah, in Palmyra, you know, there haven't been a whole lot of converts, but we know that it's bad because Joseph can't even be there. And so we know that that's a problem. But in Colesville especially, which is this isolated branch of probably half of the members of the church at that point, they are really being treated horribly and they try to extend that to Joseph. They try to arrest Joseph multiple times, as Joseph writes about it, for setting the country in an uproar by preaching the Book of Mormon, that he was a disorderly person. That's probably one of those charges. You're like, yeah, guilty.

Hank Smith:

00:30:12

Right. A hundred percent. They're the ones that are tearing down the little dam they had put up and he's the disorderly one, right? Yeah.

John Bytheway:

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That helps then. So, it wasn't just that they had great success in Ohio and many in Sidney's congregation joined, it was also

persecution. But they thought, as you said, maybe the Lord will solve this in some miraculous way.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:30:35 And it really is the first time that every believer is going to be in the same place. You have a cadre of believers in the Palmyra area, primarily Joseph's family, but you also have Martin Harris and you're gonna get Porter Rockwell. I mean, sometimes. I mean he's always a believer, but he may not be keeping all the commandments. So, you have a cadre of believers in Palmyra. You have the Whitmers and their extended family in the Fayette, Waterloo area, and there's lots of them. And so they make up a huge portion of the membership of the church. And then you have this Colesville branch, which is centered on the Knight and Peck families, and their extended family members and constitute dozens of people, but they are not geographically in the same place. They are days apart from one another. With the move to Kirtland, what you get very briefly, and I mean very briefly, for about a month, essentially all of the members of the church are living in the same place. And then God commands them to go to Missouri. For about a month they're really close--maybe a month and a half before, that they're all in the same place.

Hank Smith: 00:31:50 Gerrit, let me throw an idea out at you. Something that I've been thinking about and you tell me where to go with this. Joseph Smith, though he loves these people in New York, he leaves. He's not okay who's gonna come with me? He doesn't seem overly concerned with, okay, how can I help you follow me? How can I help you follow me? He, it seems, doesn't he say, okay...

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:32:12 Yeah, Joseph is one of the first ones to go. So, he's gonna arrive in February. Most people are going to arrive between April and May. You're gonna move your household. It's gonna take a little bit longer, I mean, then just a week. Luckily for Joseph, if you don't own very much, it's pretty easy to move, I guess. But Joseph does exactly what the revelation says too. Joseph can't sell his farm, so he leaves it. Now, he'll eventually rent it, but he won't sell that farm for another three years. All of us do this in our lives when we move, we sell our house--if we own our house. We take the equity that we have because we sold the house and we use that money to buy our next house. Well, now imagine that you are forced to move somewhere where you don't have a job and you don't get any equity out of your house.

00:33:05 You've gotta go start over with no equity. You've just got to go. I wouldn't be able to do it. I'm not saying I wouldn't follow, I'd follow, but I wouldn't be able to go buy another house.

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| Hank Smith: | 00:33:15 | Yeah. And are there even houses available in Kirtland? |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:33:17 | I mean, for a high enough price. So, either you're gonna have to build some. And this is what you see from these early believers in Kirtland. The sacrifices they make where, okay, the Colesville Saints are putting their money where their mouth is. They are marching away from their property and heading to Kirtland. In Kirtland, you have people like Frederick G. Williams, who is a pretty well off guy. He owns a farm in the center of Kirtland. That's worth about \$2,000. Now, again, that sounds like nothing to us today. The average American's making \$250 a year. So, he owns a farm that's worth eight times, whatever the average income is, that's okay. And that's not all that he owns. That's one thing that he owns. Frederick G. Williams is going to sign the entirety of that farm over to the church for the settlement of these people coming from Ohio. Fredrick G. Williams just barely became a member. He was in Ohio. The missionaries come, they convert him. His zeal for the gospel as such, that almost instantaneous with his conversion, he is giving up almost all of his property for the other believers so that they have a place to settle. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:34:45 | Wow, that's inspiring. It's like, yeah, what do you say? Don't worry, honey, Bishop Partridge will take care of all our temporal needs. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:34:55 | Yeah. Bishop Partridge will be using that gigantic handbook of instructions that he doesn't have to figure out what it is that they're supposed to do. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:35:03 | Yeah. He'll write us a food order. We'll be fine. Yeah. That's... |
| Hank Smith: | 00:35:07 | Wow. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:35:09 | I love, I mean, you just elevated what little I knew about Frederick G. Williams, just to imagine that. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:35:16 | And so quick to make such a big sacrifice. He just barely got converted. He lived in Ohio, so it's not like he was traveling with Parley Pratt and they've been preaching the whole way and they preached to Sidney Rigdon and he is like, you know what I've decided I'm gonna commit. He lives in Ohio, the missionaries come, he's so converted, he goes with them to Missouri. He hasn't even gotten commanded to go. He just goes. And it's not because he doesn't have any prospects. He's a well-off businessman and landowner. It's like he can't give up |

enough for the kingdom. He's giving lands away. He's giving his time away. He's gonna do anything for the kingdom.

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| John Bytheway: | 00:36:05 | Now Gerrit, that's a name I think all of us have heard. Frederick G. Williams, can you finish his story for us? |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:36:12 | Well, Frederick G. Williams, he has a complicated history as a lot of people do. For a long time. First, he's gonna be a member of the Presidency of the High Priesthood, which will eventually become what we now today call the First Presidency. Again, as the church is unfolding over time, you start off with the Presidency of the High Priesthood. It'll come to be called the First Presidency and then eventually you'll have the Quorum of the 12 apostles. But Frederick G. Williams is an early member of that Presidency of the High Priesthood. In fact, he replaces Jesse Gause who's called to it--we don't know hardly anything about him. He's called to it and he for whatever reason, doesn't do it. Almost immediately is replaced by Frederick G. Williams in that Presidency of the High Priesthood. He is going to be a fixture in the church all throughout the Kirtland period. He is going to be a scribe for Joseph. He is going to be someone who's giving sermons and preaching. He is going to be one of the key leaders of the church in the Kirtland period. |
| Hank Smith: | 00:37:20 | And Joseph Smith is gonna name his son Frederick Granger Williams Smith. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:37:26 | Frederick Granger. Yep. And that's of course--he's born during that Kirtland time period when they are very close with one another and he's one of Joseph's staunchest supporters. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:37:36 | This is great. The move to Ohio is something that I'm thinking now more. This is brutal. This is walk away. We read that section, didn't we, Hank? If you can't sell your farm, then leave it. And not to mention the Ohio saints, states that are suddenly--here come all these people, how do we help 'em? Which you've taught us about, Gerrit. In our Voices of the Restoration lesson, however they talk specifically about Phebe. My lesson says Phebe Carter, but who does she become? |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:38:09 | Well she becomes Phebe Carter Woodruff. So, she going to play a prominent role in the church for the remainder of her life. But yeah, this is long before she's met Wilford. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:38:21 | So, Phebe Carter, who becomes Phebe Carter Woodruff--if you're reading this online, and that's where the lessons are. This is how it introduces her to us as one of the Voices of the |

Restoration. Among the many saints who gathered to Ohio in the 1830s was Phebe Carter. She joined the church in the northeastern United States in her mid-twenties, though her parents did not. She later wrote of her decision to move to Ohio to unite with the saints. These are her words: "My friends marveled at my course as did I, but something within impelled me on. My mother's grief at my leaving home was almost more than I could bear; And had it not been for the spirit within, I should have faltered at the last. My mother told me she would rather see me buried than going thus alone out into the heartless world. '[Phebe]', she said, impressively, 'will you come back to me if you find Mormonism false?' I answered, 'yes mother; I will.'... My answer relieved her trouble; but it cost us all much sorrow to part. When the time came for my departure I dared not trust myself to say farewell; so I wrote my good-byes to each, and leaving them on my table, ran downstairs and jumped into the carriage. Thus I left the beloved home of my childhood to link my life with the saints of God."

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| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:39:39 | That's powerful. She doesn't even say goodbye, she just writes it in a note. And she's not going with a husband. She's not going with siblings. She believes and she's just going herself. And she's gonna gather to Ohio 'cause she knows that that's where the prophet is. |
| John Bytheway: | 00:39:58 | In her mid-twenties, it sounds like, at this time. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 00:40:01 | Yeah. In fact, when she later receives her patriarchal blessing, it talks about this particular fact that she kind of forsakes family or blessing. At least in part, reads: Thou hast suffered in former days by being deprived of friends on whom thou couldst unbosom thy mind. Thou sorrowed in the night season and in solitary places. No one knew thy sorrow or saw thy tears, but God thy Father. Be comforted for thy troubles are over and God will pour out his blessings to thee. Now that's in 1835. But the relationship that Phebe Woodruff and Wilford Woodruff will have it is an incredible one. And like I said, she really is one of the heroes of early church history because she makes this decision to believe and forsake everything. Not even going with her family, just her. She's not going there knowing anyone. She's just gonna believe and she's gonna go. You know, after she gets to Kirtland, things aren't all rosy. |
| | 00:41:06 | I mean, she's eventually going to marry Wilford Woodruff, but the letters that they share with one another, which anyone can read on Wilfordwoodruffpapers.org . They've put up all of these wonderful Wilford Woodruff documents and Phebe factors very prominently in them. She writes a letter to Wilford. Wilford's |

out on a mission. In the midst of the whole Kirtland apostasy that takes place. It's a little bit of a spoiler alert, but eventually things go south in Kirtland. In late 1837 and early 1838, there is a massive apostasy in the church. So, she's writing to Wilford Woodruff telling him about this. Now she's actually not in Kirtland herself at the time, but she's heard about what's going on and she's writing to him to tell him about it. And she says, Joseph and Sidney took their family Saturday night and it's supposed that they've gone to Missouri.

00:42:00 There's a revelation that Joseph Smith receives. It's not in the Doctrine and Covenants, but he receives a revelation in January of 1838 that commands him and any other believers to leave Kirtland and to go to Missouri. And so the church's headquarters will shift from Kirtland to Far West. There is a great division in Kirtland and a number have left the church and raised what they call a Standard of Truth and Liberty and drew up a remonstrance against wickedness and the proceedings that have been illegal. Taking for their guide, the Book of Mormon and the Bible and the Covenants for their guide. I will mention some of their names and she goes off to list a bunch of 'em like here's Warren Parrish, a bunch of these people. And then she writes, but I hope not the names of Wilford and Phebe. Everyone's apostatizing around them.

00:42:50 We're not going to. And she writes, oh Wilford, what is this world coming to? My heart almost shrinks within me when I look around at the state of things. I think that these times will try the faith of the saints, but I feel as strong as ever. There will be great persecution for these things, but there is a God in Israel yet. Thanks be to God for it. Here's someone who already having made the very difficult decision. When things are falling apart all around them in Kirtland. For her, it's not even a question. She's not siding with the apostates who are trying to take control of the temple. She's siding with the prophet and with the leaders of the church.

John Bytheway: 00:43:35 What's interesting about the apostates you just mentioned, to me, is it's not, we don't believe any of this, it's all wrong. It's we need to teach the Book of Mormon and the Bible. Is it a problem with the leadership basically?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:43:50 At least that's what the early claims are. But Warren Parrish is a great example of how it really ends up being a moving target with apostate groups. They start with, well, Joseph is a fallen prophet because of the Kirtland Safety Society and things surrounding that--the collapse of the Kirtland banking system. But very quickly after Warren Parrish starts his group, they

denounce the Book of Mormon as scripture. So, they start off with this church is true, it's just Joseph who's fallen. And then, okay, well not the Book of Mormon, I mean...Very rapidly, what you find when these groups apostatize is they find reasons to get rid of the doctrines that are uncomfortable and to burnish their apostate group. But Phebe Woodruff is someone who not only is gonna make that suffering decision to leave and join and come to Kirtland, she has a very, very difficult life, especially when it comes to her children and to the suffering that she has.

00:44:54

Now, first of all, her husband is gone all the time. Wilford Woodruff is on a mission essentially always. You would never stop at the Woodruff House and say, is Wilford here? Because he would be, where is he serving now? Because he was always gone. He was constantly gone on missions. She's having to do a lot of this herself. And while Wilford Woodruff's on his mission in England, she has to write him a letter to tell him that their little daughter, Sarah, passed away. I can't imagine, how do you even write that letter? A good friend of mine that used to be in my ward, an older gentleman who's just a great guy, he once told us- he was teaching Elders Quorum. He once told us about how he and his wife, they only have daughters. As he was teaching his lesson--one of the, one of the greatest lessons I've ever heard, by the way--he explained that they actually did have a son, that his son was born with complications and they rushed the son out of the room, you know, into the intensive care unit.

00:46:02

And while he was with the son in the intensive care unit that that the baby died. And that was the question he asked us, how would you go back in and tell your wife that her son has passed away? And here Phebe is in that position. Tell her husband, who's thousands of miles away, in a letter that won't get there for months. My dear Wilford, what were your feelings be when I say that yesterday I was called to witness the departure of our little Sarah Emma from this world. She is gone. The relentless hand of death has snatched her from my embrace, but ah, she was too lovely, too kind, too affectionate to live in this wicked world. When looking on her, I've often thought how I should feel to have part with her. I thought I could not live without her, especially in the absence of my companion.

00:46:58

But she's gone. The Lord hath taken her home to himself for some wise purpose. It is a trial to me, but the Lord has stood by me in a wonderful manner and I can see and feel that he has taken her home. Has taken her home, and will take better care of her than I possibly could for a little while until I shall go to meet her. Yes, Wilford. We have one little angel in heaven and I think it likely that her spirit has visited you before this time. It's

hard living without her. She used to call for her poor papa and putty papa many times in a day. She left a kiss for her papa with me just before she died. She ate her dinner as well as usual, Thursday. Was taken by about four o'clock with a pressedness for breath. The elders laid hands on her and anointed her a number of times, but the next day her spirit took its flight from this to another world without a groan.

00:47:59 And then she has a postscript that she adds to the letter. Today, Wilford, I with quite a number of friends accompanying us, came over to Commerce to pay our last respects to our little darling in seeing her decently buried. She had no relative to follow over to the grave or to shed a tear for her, but her ma and little Wilford. I've just been to take a pleasing and melancholy walk to Sarah's grave. She lies alone in peace. I can say that the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. May the Lord bless and return whole again. You can feel the testimony of Phebe Woodruff dripping from the pages of the letter that she writes. If I could have an ounce of the faith that she has. Her faith in the gospel is not dependent on what is happening to her.

00:49:04 She believes and her family rejects her and she believes. She moves from Kirtland to Missouri to Illinois. She loses children along the way. Her faith is not based on things going well for her. Her faith is centered in knowing that Jesus Christ is her Savior. And even in that moment, writing to Wilford Woodruff, she is going to be resurrected. And she knows that because she knows that Joseph Smith, the prophet, received this revelation. It's a powerful thing to see that. If I could even share some more, I mean, I would love to say that no bad things ever happened to Phebe Woodruff after that, and yet the reality is her suffering is very difficult. After Joseph Smith is murdered, there's lots of other people who apostatize too. Some go one way, some go another. Even members of the Quorum of the 12 Apostatize. Wilford Woodruff doesn't.

00:50:07 Phebe and Wilford Woodruff, they follow the president of the Quorum of the 12 Apostles, Brigham Young. What does Brigham Young command that they should do? Well, we're gonna do exactly what Joseph Smith said we're going to do. We are going to leave Nauvoo and we are going to leave the country. That's what we're going to do. That trek across Iowa and to Winter Quarters is a devastating one for the Wilford Woodruff family. For Wilford Woodruff personally, when they get there in October of 1846, he goes out to start chopping down trees to start building log cabins so that by the time the winter comes, there's cabins for all these people that are going to be arriving

there in Winter Quarters. And he has a horrible accident where he cuts a tree and it drops, and when it hits the ground, it bounces up and into him and smashes him up against another tree and essentially shatters everything.

00:51:08 Shatters his ribs, his arm breaks his hip. He is a completely crushed individual and he's by himself, so there's no calling out to any help. He has to get himself back up on his horse. And he writes and says, you know, every single step was like an arrow shooting through me. So, that's pretty awful. While he is out trying to build houses for the Saints for three weeks, he doesn't have the ability to move. If you read Wilford Woodruff's journal, this is November 3rd, he says, today I was dressed for the first time since my accident. Finally, things are getting better. November 4th, our little Joseph was taken sick today. He's taken a cold and it's settled on his lungs. November 5th. Now Joseph is a year and four months old. November 5th, Joseph is failing. He's dangerously sick. November 6th, Joseph is not any better. November 7th, I'm gaining daily in strength, but Joseph is failing.

00:52:13 I called on the elders to administer to him. November 8th, Mrs. Woodruff, Phebe has had to spend her entire time day and night with Joseph as he is in such a dangerous situation. November 9th, Joseph is still failing. November 10th, Joseph had the appearance of dying in this afternoon and evening, but he revived about 12 o'clock. November 11th, I spent several hours with Joseph, supposing that each moment was going to be his last. November 12th, we found that our little boy was failing and could not possibly hold out any longer. Every exertion had been made to make him comfortable and if possible, to restore him to health, but it seemed he must go. He continued to fail through the day and the night. Sister Abbott took the main charge of him during the night as Mrs. Woodward's strength was mostly exhausted. He had suffered much from convulsions during his sickness, but he breathed this last and fell asleep this morning, 15 minutes before six o'clock. We took his remains to the grave at four o'clock in the afternoon.

00:53:23 We truly felt that we were called to make a great sacrifice in the loss of our son, Joseph. Now, why is he sick? Because they're out there in the middle of nowhere. How easy would it be to say, why did Brigham lead us here where my son could get sick? Why didn't God intervene and save my son when we're doing what God wants us to do? Again, part of the reason why Phebe Woodruff is exhausted during this is she's actually seven or eight months pregnant. Only a few weeks later, December 8th,

at half past three o'clock, Mrs. Woodruff was delivered of a son. The boy was alive and smart and active. We call his name Ezra. Mrs. Woodruff is doing as well as can be expected. December 9th, the child seemed quite distressed throughout the day. December 10th, Ezra Woodruff died this evening at half past nine o'clock. December 11th, we attended to the burial of our child today being only two days old when he died.

00:54:32 This is the second son that we have buried in such a short time. Mrs. Woodruff is quite unwell. There's another entry a few weeks later where Wilford Woodruff comes home from a meeting and Mrs. Woodruff took out of her family box, her portrait to see the likeness of her little Joseph that was buried. Joseph was born in England. We actually have an artist made a painting of Phebe holding Joseph in England that came west. So, we still have that image today. These are early saints that are making these sacrifices. I mean, at one point, probably one of the most haunting things that's in Wilford Woods's journals is that they have yet another daughter die just another year and a half later, another little girl. It's a very difficult thing for Phebe and for Wilford. One of the most haunting things I've ever read is in the journal shortly after Shuah, their daughter dies.

00:55:34 Mrs. Woodruff expressed her feelings concerning the loss of her children, and she refused to be comforted because of her children, which were taken away. In such a short span of time they've lost four kids. How easy would it be to then say, clearly this isn't God's gospel. If it was, God would intervene and help us. My husband's an apostle. He's constantly going around preaching the word. He's making all kinds of sacrifices. Not only is he almost killed in the fall of the tree, my kids are being taken from me. And instead what you have is someone who, while struggling, this is not easy, she maintains her faith and she keeps heading west. That's why I think that these women and these men who gave up so much, we absolutely should venerate them. I have the gospel today because men and women like Phebe went through all kinds of hell on earth and didn't give up. And said, no, I believe and my family rejects me and I still believe, and I have horrible things happen to me, and I still believe. And everyone else apostatizes and I still believe. If we could have the faith of Phebe Woodruff, we would all be golden.

00:57:02 We'd be ready for Zion tomorrow if we could all be Phebe Woodruff.

John Bytheway: 00:57:09 Yeah. What do you say to that?

Hank Smith: 00:57:12 I know.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 00:57:13 There are women like her, like Mary Fielding for instance, I mean, and Mercy Fielding who go through very similar things and their husbands are murdered and die and they lose children. They head west. Obviously, there are people today who don't have any pioneer stock. There are people who just got baptized yesterday in Macon, Georgia and they don't have any pioneers that made their way across. So, they might say, well, celebrating the pioneers, I mean it's hard for me to really relate to them. In fact, if you are someone who's a recent convert to the church, boy, you actually have a better chance of identifying with them than any of us do. Because you're going through some of the similar things that they went through--the alienation from the family, that having to alter your existing life because you believe something different than everyone else around you.

00:58:06 The possibility of having to give things up that everyone thinks you're crazy for. Whether you have every ancestor on both sides pull the handcart or whether you're the first member of the church in your family. These men and women who went before us, they held aloft, the flame of the gospel. They carried it through the darkness of the persecutions in Ohio and the murders in Missouri and the deaths in Iowa and across the plane. So, that we would still have access to those essential temple ordinances. So, that we would still have this gospel and it wouldn't fade away, that it wouldn't be the withered fig on the vine. My family, on my dad's side, they're all Dutch. Not a lot of early Dutch converts to the church. My family converted in the 1920s. On my dad's side, we just don't have any pioneers who crossed the plane.

00:59:15 But the faith of these men and women who I was not related to temporally in this life, is what brought me the gospel that has completely transformed my life. Because they didn't give up, I have something now. I don't have to be related to these people to be so grateful that when things were horrible, when the whole world was against them, they kept putting faith in every footstep and walking towards an unknown future. Hopefully I can do the same thing. I honestly have to tell you, I do think about Phebe Woodruff all the time. The first person I thought about when my brother died unexpectedly. The first thing I thought about was how Phebe had to overcome losing her four children in that space of four years. Obviously, I was still upset that my brother passed away, but her faith and perseverance gives me strength. She's not related to me, but it gave me strength.

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| John Bytheway: | 01:00:23 | What I love hearing about Phebe too is her testimony of the Savior was never in question. These things didn't throw her into that area of thinking. Her grief was still filled with faith. |
| Hank Smith: | 01:00:38 | Yeah, it was, I've gotta deal with this pain. I've gotta deal with this loss. In my moving forward. I think maybe a little bit of, oh man, I need to do better is okay in these lessons. |
| John Bytheway: | 01:00:53 | Oh, I'm feeling a lot of it today. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 01:00:57 | It's pretty hard to study the life of someone like Phebe Woodruff and not come away going, I guess maybe I could try to do my ministering. |
| Hank Smith: | 01:01:06 | Yeah, like... |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 01:01:09 | I could at least call those people this month. |
| John Bytheway: | 01:01:11 | Yeah. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 01:01:12 | That's what great examples from the past do for us. They hopefully prick our hearts and the Holy Spirit says to us, Hey, maybe you should be a little kinder than you normally are. . Maybe you should be a little more patient. Maybe you should put a little bit more faith in God without knowing what the outcome's going to be. That's the other thing--that all these saints gathering to Kirtland, I mean some are coming from England, they're coming from Canada, they're coming from the south, they're coming from the northeast. Kirtland becomes this melting pot of members from all different places, and there they are all seeking after that same thing, the establishment of the cause of Zion, the restoration of the gospel. Eventually they're gonna be focused on building the temple. They're going to put all of their efforts into how do we do what God wants us to do in building this temple? |
| Hank Smith: | 01:02:04 | I sit and go, how did they do it? |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 01:02:06 | The other thing we didn't even talk about, she also has to deal with Wilford Woodruff being commanded to practice plural marriage. And her response to that is, this is what she writes, she says, when the principle of polygamy was first taught, I thought it the most wicked thing I'd ever heard of. Consequently, I opposed it to the best of my ability until I became sick and wretched. As soon, however, as I became convinced that it originated a revelation from God through Joseph and knowing Joseph to be a prophet, I wrestled with my |

Heavenly Father in fervent prayer to be guided aright at that all important moment in my life. The answer came, peace was given to my mind, and I knew it was the will of God. And from that time to the present, I've sought to faithfully honor the patriarchal law.

01:02:55 Of Joseph, my testimony is he is one of the greatest prophets the Lord ever called. That he lived for the redemption of mankind and he died a martyr for the truth and the love of the saints for him will never die. Like I said, she's always bringing it. Phebe Woodruff, she confronts things and she brings it. So, this is what Vilate Kimball said: After our gathering to Kirtland, the church was in a state of poverty and distress. Well, obviously because everyone moved in and left everything to get there. It appeared almost impossible that the commandment to build the temple could be fulfilled. The revelation requiring it to be erected in a certain time period. The enemies of the church were raging, threatening, destruction upon the saints. The brethren were under guard night and day to preserve the prophet's life. And the mobs in Missouri were driving our people from Jackson County.

01:03:54 In this crisis, the camp of Zion was organized to go to the defense of the saints in Jackson. Heber, her husband, being one of that little army. It was truly a solemn morning on which my husband parted from his wife, children, and friends, not knowing that we should ever meet again in the flesh. On the 26th of July, however, the brethren returned from their expedition. The saints now labored night and day to build the house of the Lord. The sisters knitting and spinning to clothe those who labored upon it. When the Quorum of the 12 was called, my husband was chosen one of them, and soon he was out with the rest of the apostles preaching the gospel of the last days. They returned on the 27th of September following and found their families and friends and enjoying good health and prosperity. The temple was finished and dedicated on the 27th of March, 1836.

01:04:43 It was a season of great rejoicing indeed to the saints and great and marvelous were the manifestations and power in the Lord's house. I like how she kind of encapsulates this entire thing. People move to Kirtland, they're poor. They labor hard to follow the commandments. They have all kinds of opposition. They've got mobs that are assembling, that are trying to take the life of Joseph Smith, trying to stop the work. They throw all of their labor into following the commandments of God to build this temple so that the Lord can reveal himself there and the keys can be restored. They of course don't know that yet, but that is

what's going to happen. And then at the tail end, after that temple is dedicated, shortly thereafter, the apostasies and dissensions and outward strife becomes such that the church has to leave Kirtland altogether. But for that space, for that brief time period between 1830 and 1837, really January of 1838, this is the headquarters of the church beginning in February of 1831. It is the place where the saints gather. It's the place where when someone shows up from somewhere else, you know immediately that they must have at least as much faith as you do because they left somewhere that they lived to come move to Kirtland. That first gathering is that first call to sacrifice that demonstrates not just to the Lord who these people are, but it demonstrates to themselves who they really are. Am I someone willing to sacrifice for the kingdom of God, as they move there?

John Bytheway: 01:06:33 Awesome. We've talked about this a lot, haven't we, Hank? The idea of is Zion, a place or is Zion, what we're trying to become in here? I remember hearing somebody years ago, say, when you read the scriptures, there's two kinds of people, examples and warnings. So, an example says, do what this person did. A warning says, don't do what this person did. And then he said, if your name ever ends up in a book, make sure it's an example, not a warning. And given us two examples today, Phebe and Vilate Kimball you just read.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:07:11 Amazing women whose faith stretches over the centuries at this point, right? That their legacy of faith. You're right. Not everyone does. Some people are like Joseph Wakefield and they are amazing early missionaries and they convert the George A. Smith family. And then Joseph Smith teaches the vision and they apostatize and become one of the founders of the anti-Mormon Committee in Kirtland. Life really is about agency and choices. And one of the great lessons that's taught in the Book of Mormon at the end of that great horrible war in Alma, Mormon gives that soliloquy that because of the great length of the war, there are many people that become hardened in their hearts and turned against God. And because of the sufferings and because of the length of the war, there are many people that have become humble and then turn to God more. So, we have all of us, that agency and that choice.

01:08:06 Because there is one thing that we're all very similar to our pioneer forebears. Whether are there our pioneer forebears or not. To these early men and women in church, all of us will experience the horrible feeling of losing a member of our family. All of us will. Now, if you're lucky, it will only be your parents before you happen to pass away, before your siblings or your children. I mean, that's the hope that I want to be the one

who goes out first so that I don't have to deal with the loss of the others. But everyone who's ever lived, everyone who ever will live, will experience that gaping hole that is left, that unstaunchable pain that comes from losing someone that you love so fervently. So, many of us have a time of crisis and trial. When that happens, hopefully as we look to these men and women, we can say this is very, very, very, very hard. And I can refuse to be comforted because of my children that were taken from me, to quote Wilford Woodruff and Phebe. But I can still look forward with hope to the day of the resurrection, which is exactly what Wilford Woodruff does in his journal. At the end of that horrible year where he's lost these children, where he's had this horrible accident and nearly died, he ends off that conversation by a statement of faith that his children lie in the dust until the resurrection. He's gonna see him again because of the resurrection.

John Bytheway: 01:09:49 That's it. It all comes back to victory over death that Jesus Christ gave us. That's the fire, the hope that there's always that. There's always that hope, thankfully with everything else that goes on.

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:10:07 Yeah. That all of your losses will be made up to you in the resurrection by the vision of the Almighty, I have seen it, is what Joseph Smith says. One of the great reasons people are like, oh, why do you venerate Joseph Smith? Well, I venerate Joseph Smith because I understand the Savior Jesus Christ, because of the revelations that Joseph Smith received. I know who my Savior is. I know that He lives. I know that my family members who have passed away are going to be resurrected because I know that Joseph Smith saw Jesus Christ. And these early members, these gatherers to us, that's what they know. They know the Lord Jesus through the fact that Joseph Smith has been given these revelations. The restoration unfolding through him. And so, yeah, you know, we don't worship Joseph Smith, but boy, I am so grateful that he received the revelations that told me who I really am, why I'm here, why this is a veil of tears, why this is a place of suffering, and what my eventual end is going to be. Those are precious things that are more precious than anything. To know why you're here, who you are, why things are going on, and that eventually everything will be made right. That's the greatest knowledge you can have.

Hank Smith: 01:11:26 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 01:11:26 Joseph Smith said, what? And though we mourn, we did not mourn as those without hope. There's always hope in Christ. Hank, you talk about knowing that you have felt the spirit, I

think turns you inward. Gerrit even articulated, maybe I can do better on my ministering. Maybe I can have a better attitude about this or that. And just inspired by these women that you've talked about today and it held up a mirror to say, Hey, you need to do better. It helps my testimony because that's what they relied on. Their faith in God moved them forward. Wow, amazing. This has been great. Our next Voices of the Restoration, we talk about the first vision, but this one was just called the vision. Can you tell us more about that?

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:12:17

Well see, you've got a little bit of an interlude, so thankfully for all of your listeners, they don't have to hear from me for a little while, because we don't have another Voices of the Restoration for a little bit. And in the interim, what's going to take place is many of these early revelations and early events that are gonna happen. The saints, no sooner do they gather to Kirtland that the Lord reveals through the prophet Joseph Smith through Revelation that it's actually Jackson County, Missouri, where the city of Zion is going to be built, where the temple of Zion is gonna be built. And there are members that are called not only to go there to preach, but members who are called there to go live. So, then you start having really two locales of the church for this. Most of the time period during the 1830s you have Kirtland, which is where Joseph lives and where the headquarters of the church is.

01:13:07

But you also have a growing and substantial amount of members in Missouri who are not super welcomed by the Missourians. And eventually that's going to lead to some problems. But the vision, I'm glad there's a Voice of the Restoration on it, because it really is one of the greatest doctrines that has ever been revealed. I can't tell you how excited I am. I know that you're gonna have a whole thing on Doctrine and Covenants section 76, and you're just gonna have to edit every single thing that I say. 'cause I'm gonna be so excited. I'm gonna try to redo it. It was such a powerful vision to these early members of the church that if you're ever reading a talk, a journal, a letter from someone in the 19th century where they say, oh, Joseph's vision was so powerful. They are almost never talking about the First Vision.

01:14:05

Almost never. When they say, Joseph had a vision, what they mean is the vision of the degrees of glory. And when you think about it, Doctrine and Covenants section 76 answers the great question that every person who's ever lived has. And that is, what happens when I die? How is it that God can be merciful and just? What is the point of this life and this creation? It is such a powerful vision that for some people like Wilford

Woodruff, he is going to say, as soon as I heard about that vision, I didn't care whether his hair was long or short. 'cause you know, it wasn't BYU grooming standards yet. Right? So, the man who received that vision was a prophet of God. I knew it for myself. For him, the converting power of this truth being unfolded. But then for other people, it's so radical they struggle to come to terms.

01:15:11 One of them is Brigham Young, who's a fervent believer in God and a fervent believer. When he hears about the vision, he struggles. Because one of the things that the vision is going to teach very radically is that the concept of eternal hell fire and damnation. The concept that you go to hell and you cook and you cook forever. Not a million years, not a billion years, not a trillion years. You suffer there forever. Joseph reveals through that vision that that's not true. One thing that all Christian denominations agree upon is that hell exists. Many people are going and that they're gonna be there forever. The definition of hell is that it's forever. And Joseph's gonna teach that it's not, and that even those who are suffering are going to go to a kingdom of glory. And for some people they can't do it. It'll be great, when we talk about that. We've seen the church progress quite a bit before you see me again, where God has given multiple revelations to help regulate the church, to give them the law of the church, to help them understand what their relationship to Zion and consecration is. Then he will begin to unfold the mysteries of the eternities to them. You'll get to bring me back in on some of the reactions of these mysteries of eternity.

John Bytheway: 01:16:30 Can't wait.

Hank Smith: 01:16:32 John, we talked before having visited that John Johnson farm, the excitement that Gerrit has, it's almost still there, right? It's almost when you step on the property...

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:16:41 You can feel it when you're there.

John Bytheway: 01:16:43 Yeah. The first time I was there, when Hank was a toddler...

Hank Smith: 01:16:49 Were the Johnsons still there? Did some of the...

Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: 01:16:54 Yeah. When John Bytheway was there, he was like, well, brother Johnson, you planning to sell this farm?

John Bytheway: 01:17:01 Elsa, how's the arm? Yeah. So, I actually was talking to a couple of the senior missionaries and they said, oh, there's a couple of

women downstairs that are coming up that are not members of the church, that are excited to see what this is, and this true story. These women walk into the room and both of them looked at each other and then looked at this senior missionary and said, what happened in here? I mean, I'll never forget that because they were like, something happened in here. And I thought, oh boy. Yeah, we can't wait to tell you. But they sensed it. They sensed it when they were there. We're looking forward to that.

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| Hank Smith: | 01:17:47 | Yeah, it'll be fun. Gerrit, we're gonna miss you here for the next few weeks. |
| Dr. Gerrit Dirkmaat: | 01:17:50 | Yes. I think your listeners though will say, what a welcome respite from having him in my ear too often. |
| Hank Smith: | 01:17:59 | We hope everyone will go check out Standard of Truth, Gerrit's podcast with Dr. Richard LeDuc. It's a sister podcast to followHIM and we love supporting it. |
| John Bytheway: | 01:18:10 | Yeah. Can I stop over and get a cup of your enthusiasm? If I could bring a trailer and get some of your knowledge to, that'd be great. But, thank you for being with us today. Thank you again for being with us on one of these special Voices of the Restoration episodes and we look forward to seeing you next time on followHIM. |