



## 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:

How can we travel “speedily” without being “in haste?” Dr. Scott Esplin explores what it means to act in faith while addressing the myths surrounding the “destroyer on the water.”

#### Part 2:

Dr. Scott Esplin continues his discussion on building Zion, focusing on helping the poor and needy and becoming a united people.

# Timecodes:

## Part 1 -

- 00:00 - Part 1 - Dr. Scott Esplin
- 02:04 What to look forward to in this episode
- 05:45 Scott Esplin bio
- 08:32 Dr. Esplin's *Come, See the Place*
- 10:32 Hank on Scott's doorstep
- 11:13 *Come, Follow Me Manual*
- 14:58 Anxiously Engaged waiting for the Second Coming
- 16:42 Preach along the way
- 20:27 Courage to move forward without haste
- 24:37 Lessons from Jairus
- 28:50 I'll be happy when I am resurrected
- 30:36 Deadlines on happiness and making time
- 35:54 Should we buy or make a boat?
- 39:19 "It mattereth not"
- 42:28 Practicing Zion
- 44:43 When you don't receive an answer, show gratitude
- 46:33 Canoe woes and LDS mythology
- 49:23 Last Days Apocalyptic
- 54:04 Church leader test
- 57:55 Sometimes you need a boat
- 59:56 Insignificant questions used to teach valuable principles
- 1:00:39 Sharing the Gospel in Gospel Library
- 1:04:36 Elder Stevenson and ways to share the gospel
- 1:07:06 President Nelson and helping others on the Covenant Path
- 1:10:02 - End of Part I - Dr. Scott Esplin

## Part 2 -

- 00:00 - Part 2 - Dr. Scott Esplin
- 01:54 Discovering a lost scripture message
- 04:01 Testimony meeting assumptions
- 07:57 If faithful, they would locate Zion
- 10:24 Asking for signs
- 12:18 Sign seeking and adultery: The connection
- 16:59 "Jump and I'll catch you"
- 19:37 Overzealousness or haste
- 23:12 The Lord's specific instructions
- 29:00 A measured contribution to Zion
- 34:45 God's timing with material things
- 38:14 Zion is a place and a people

- 41:14 Zion includes taking care of the poor
- 43:21 What defines Zion
- 47:24 Keeping the commandments, always
- 49:37 Dr. Esplin addresses people studying Church History
- 51:7 God's hand is in His work
- 56:03 End of Part 2 - Dr. Scott Esplin

## References:

Avant, Gerry. "President Hinckley Reflects on Nauvoo." Church News, January 11, 2024.  
<https://www.thechurchnews.com/2002/5/4/23242366/president-hinckley-reflects-on-nauvoo/>

BYU Studies. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://byustudies.byu.edu/online-book/history-of-the-church-volume-5/volume-5-chapter-14>

Dew, Sheri L. "Go Forward with Faith: The Biography of Gordon B. Hinckley." Amazon. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://www.amazon.com/Go-Forward-Faith-Biography-Hinckley/dp/1573451657>

"Doctrine and Covenants 60–63." Come, Follow Me Manual - June 9–15: "I Am with the Faithful Always," January 1, 2025. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/come-follow-me-for-home-and-church-doctrine-and-covenants-2025/24-doctrine-and-covenants-60-63?lang=eng>

Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Come to Zion." General Conference October 2008 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2, 2008. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2008/10/come-to-zion?lang=eng>

Elder Dieter F. Uchtdorf of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Missionary Work: Sharing What Is in Your Heart." General Conference April 2019 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 1, 2019. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2019/04/14uchtdorf?lang=eng>

Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Eternity's Great Gifts: Jesus Christ's Atonement, Resurrection, Restoration." General Conference April 2025 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 6, 2025. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2025/04/45gong?lang=eng>

Elder Richard G. Scott of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. "Trust in the Lord." General Conference October 1995 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2, 1995. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1995/10/trust-in-the-lord?lang=eng>

Esplin, Ronald K. "Joseph Smith and the Kirtland Crisis, 1837." Joseph Smith and the Kirtland Crisis, 1837 | Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://rsc.byu.edu/joseph-smith-prophet-seer/joseph-smith-kirtland-crisis-1837>

Esplin, Scott C. “‘Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise’: Building Zion by Becoming Zion.” “Let Zion in Her Beauty Rise”: Building Zion by Becoming Zion | Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://rsc.byu.edu/voice-lord/let-zion-her-beauty-rise-building-zion-becoming-zion>

Gillum, Gary P. “Of All Things! Classic Quotations from Hugh Nibley.” Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1055&context=mi>

“Gospel Study Topic: Zion - ‘Come, See the Place.’” “Come, See the Place” | Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://rsc.byu.edu/vol-22-no-2-2021/come-see-place>

“Gospel Topic: Zion.” No Gospel Topic Selected | Religious Studies Center. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://rsc.byu.edu/my-gospel-study/gospel-topic/relevance/303>

Hampton, Jeff. “3 Things We’ll Always Remember About Elder Scott.” LDS Living, September 23, 2015. <https://www.ldsliving.com/3-things-well-always-remember-about-elder-scott/s/79407#:~:text=During%20the%20Savior’s%20mortal%20ministry,to%20come%20closer%20to%20Christ>

Harper, Stephen C. “Doctrine and Covenants Contexts.” ScriptureCentral. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://scripturecentral.org/archive/books/book/doctrine-and-covenants-contexts>

Hoelscher, Diana. “The Missionary Next Door (MP3 Audio).” HOELSCHER, DIANA | Deseret Book Company. Accessed June 2, 2025. [https://www.deseretbook.com/product/5099532.html?srsId=AfmBOooTKQ78SPFRCppB0NJCOZU1UjwpZYuA0abjZT\\_a8po3-oefsfB](https://www.deseretbook.com/product/5099532.html?srsId=AfmBOooTKQ78SPFRCppB0NJCOZU1UjwpZYuA0abjZT_a8po3-oefsfB).

“Inspiring Scripture Study - Listen to the Followhim Podcast.” followHim Podcast, June 2, 2025. <https://followhim.co/>

Jackson, Kent P. “The Marriage of Hosea and Jehovah’s Covenant with Israel.” The Marriage of Hosea and Jehovah’s Covenant with Israel | Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://rsc.byu.edu/isaiah-prophets/marriage-hosea-jehovahs-covenant-israel>

Judd, Daniel K. “The Doctrines of Submission and Forgiveness.” The Doctrines of Submission and Forgiveness | Religious Studies Center of Brigham Young University. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://rsc.byu.edu/sperry-symposium-classics-doctrine-covenants/doctrines-submission-forgiveness-0>

“Newel K. Whitney Store.” Locations - Church History Ohio. Accessed June 2, 2025. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/locations/whitney-store?lang=eng>

Oaks, Dallin H. “Revelation.” BYU Speeches of Brigham Young University, July 15, 2022.  
<https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/dallin-h-oaks/revelation/>

“Preach My Gospel: A Guide to Missionary Service.” Library - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, February 2, 2018. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/preach-my-gospel-a-guide-to-missionary-service?lang=eng>

President Ezra Taft Benson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles. “Jesus Christ-Gifts and Expectations.” BYU Speeches of Brigham Young University, January 7, 2025.  
<https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/ezra-taft-benson/jesus-christ-gifts-expectations/#:~:text=Only%20a%20Zion%20people%20can,prepared%20to%20receive%20the%20Lord>

President Marion G. Romney Second Counselor in the First Presidency. “The Basic Principles of Church Welfare.” General Conference April 1981 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 2, 1981. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/1981/04/the-basic-principles-of-church-welfare?lang=eng>

President Russell M. Nelson and Sister Wendy W. Nelson. “Hope of Israel.” Hope of Israel, Worldwide Devotional for Youth - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, June 3, 2018. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/broadcasts/worldwide-devotional-for-young-adults/2018/06/hope-of-israel?lang=eng>

President Thomas S. Monson President of the Church. “Finding Joy in the Journey.” General Conference October 2008 - The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2, 2008. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2008/10/finding-joy-in-the-journey?lang=eng>

Walker, Sydney. “8 Questions with President Oaks and President Eyring about Revelation in Councils.” Church News, January 11, 2024. <https://www.thechurchnews.com/2022/2/3/23218864/president-oaks-eyring-interview-revelation-in-councils/>

Weaver, Sarah Jane. “Senior Church Leaders Share Lessons They’ve Learned From President Nelson in Honor of His 97th Birthday.” Church News, January 11, 2024. <https://www.thechurchnews.com/2021/9/9/23219192/president-nelson-97th-birthday-church-leaders-experiences-lessons/>

## Biographical Information:



Scott C. Esplin is the dean of Religious Education and a professor of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University. A native of southern Utah, he earned both a doctoral degree (2006) and master's degree (2001) in Educational Leadership and Foundations from Brigham Young University. He joined the faculty of Religious Education in 2006 after teaching seminary and institute in the Church Educational System. His research and teaching interests include the Doctrine and Covenants, the history of Latter-day Saint education, and church historic sites. He is the author of numerous publications on these subjects, including an award-winning book on the restoration of Nauvoo. He is married to Janice Garrett and they are the parents of four children.

Courses Taught: Doctrine and Covenants (REL C 324, 325), Foundations of the Restoration (REL C 225)

Areas of Expertise: Doctrine and Covenants, Church educational history, 20th-century Church history

Areas of Research: Doctrine and Covenants, Church academies, 20th-century Nauvoo Church history, Church history in Ohio

Languages: Italian

## Fair Use Notice:

*The Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* may make use of copyrighted material, the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright holder. This constitutes a “fair use” and any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material on this podcast is offered publicly and without profit, to the public uses or the internet for comment and nonprofit educational and informational purposes. Copyright Disclaimer under Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976, allowance is made for

fair use” for purposes such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship, and research. In such cases, fair use is permitted.

No copyright(s) is/are claimed.

The content is broadcast for study, research, and educational purposes.

The broadcaster gains no profit from broadcast content. This falls under “Fair Use” guidelines:

[www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html](http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html).

## **Note:**

The *Follow Him Podcast with Hank Smith and John Bytheway* is not affiliated with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints nor Brigham Young University. The opinions expressed on episodes represent the views of the guest and podcasters alone. While the ideas presented may vary from traditional understandings or teachings, they in no way reflect criticism of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day leaders, policies, or practices.



Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:00:02	Tomorrow is our 20th wedding anniversary. She has this favorite wedding photo of ours where we walk out of the temple and I have this look, this look of relief on my face. I actually went ahead with it. I'm not sure she was convinced I was going into the sealing room with her. I look back now and I'm grateful that God gave me witnesses sometimes before and sometimes after I made a decision that he wanted me to act. As I acted in faith He gave me light along the way, but he waited for me to act in faith.
Hank Smith:	00:00:37	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of followHIM. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host. I'm here with my co-host John Bytheway who has a thankful heart in all things. John, as I was reading Section 62 and I read that phrase, I thought John Bytheway a hundred percent.
John Bytheway:	00:00:55	I'm a distant relative of Thankful Pratt, who you may have heard of already. So you know.
Hank Smith:	00:00:59	Yeah, There you go. I bet she reads that and thinks, oh, that's perfect. A thankful heart. It's a great name. Great. She definitely has a thankful heart. John, we're joined today by Dr. Scott Esplin, who's been with us before. Scott, thanks for being here.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:01:13	Thanks John and Hank, it's good to be with you. Thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:01:15	We have been looking forward to this for a long time. Scott joined us four years ago for the Doctrine & Covenants and he's back. Wonderful, wonderful teacher and historian. John, when you think of the mission to Missouri that we've been talking about the journey home, what comes to mind? This is a hard road.
John Bytheway:	00:01:35	I don't know about you Hank, but when I was on my mission, I had a, a mission handbook a little, we used to call it the white



Bible in my pocket. You just knew certain things that you could do and not do, these sections about travel, about what to do when you're not doing missionary work exactly and this is all so new. Maybe that's why we get so many sections of the Doctrine & Covenants because they're asking so many questions because it's all so new. I have a lot of sympathy for these guys trying to figure out now what do we do?

Hank Smith: 00:02:05 Yeah. I remember not liking a certain apartment on my mission and then you look at these guys, they must have been camping out as they went. Just around the fire. Scott, as you've prepared for sections 60 through 63, what do you have for us? What are you looking forward to?

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:02:21 Obviously, as you both mentioned, this is part of their mission to Zion. Backing up a little bit in section 52 of the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord had told the early saints, Joseph and the leaders of the church, they were to assemble in Missouri for the next conference of the church. And if they were faithful it would be known unto them the land of their inheritance. This is reference to they're trying to locate Zion, which they've learned about in earlier revelations and in the Book of Mormon, the New Jerusalem that would be on this continent and they're trying to figure out where that is. They've been working on the Joseph Smith translation of the Bible and that's introduced them to the concept of Zion. As they've worked through the book of Moses, they were told, go to Missouri and you'll learn where the land of your inheritance will be.

00:03:00 Previous to this, some elders had already gone to Missouri. We've already talked in earlier episodes about what's called the Lamanite Mission. Oliver Cowdery and some companions had gone on an earlier mission to Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. They were told in their call that Zion was on the borders by the Lamanites. That's already located at somewhere west of where Joseph then at this point lives in Kirtland, but in section 52 they were told, go to Missouri and it'll be made known in the land of their inheritance. The sections for today are the conclusion of that mission. They've been in Missouri for a handful of weeks. They've accomplished what they were sent there to accomplish. They've located Zion, they've dedicated a center place of Zion and a lot for the temple. They're ready to go home. As John and you mentioned they have some questions about how this works as they go home, what should they be doing?

00:03:46 What mode should they travel? What I like about these sections is not only does the Lord answer their questions, I think it gives

them a chance to practice some of the principles they learned while they were in Zion. We learned that Zion is not just a place, it's a people as they are preparing to journey home and then as they journey home, opportunities present themselves for them to become a Zionlike people. In these sections, we can look at answers to specific questions that they ask, as well as principles about how they, and we can become more Zionlike. As we seek to establish Zion, we're going to look at questions about travel, questions about companionships. How big should their group should be? Should they go by water or land? The Lord's going to teach them principles about what does and doesn't matter to him. They're going to get back to Kirtland by the end of the lesson today. Things have happened in Kirtland, in their absence that they need to deal with the community they left behind isn't as Zionlike as maybe it needs to be and the Lord's going to teach them some principles about becoming Zionlike. This is the conclusion of a historical story of going to Missouri, trying to locate Zion. These sections are going to help the Latter-day Saints become Zion.

- |                   |          |   |
|-------------------|----------|---|
| Hank Smith:       | 00:04:51 | And that trip to Missouri. I don't think we can comprehend how far away that is. When we think Ohio, Missouri, we think of, oh, it's a long bus ride or a quick flight, but we're talking weeks, right Scott?   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 00:05:04 | We're talking weeks and we're talking 900 miles sometimes by water, sometimes by land. They're going to have a harrowing experience, not just physically, but also spiritually on their journey and they're going to have an open vision of the destroyer riding upon the waters. It's a scary experience for them. It's not just around the corner, it's the far western frontier of the United States. It's a challenging mission. As you mentioned, the church is very young that we're, the church is 14 months old, 15 months old when this happens. These are people who are just learning how this works. There's about two dozen of them. It's an interesting experience. So it's a, it's some fun sections that I love teaching on campus and also love studying because of the principles they contain. |
| Hank Smith:       | 00:05:45 | Speaking of on campus, John, can you tell us what campus Scott is talking about, what he's doing and give us some background information on him?  |
| John Bytheway:    | 00:05:56 | Scott Esplin is actually the Dean of religious education, professor of church history and doctrine at BYU. He's actually a native of southern Utah just like you Hank. He earned both a doctoral degree and a master's degree in educational leadership and foundations from BYU joined the faculty and religious   |

education in 2006 after teaching seminary and institute. His research interests include Doctrine and Covenants, Yay! That's why we have him. History of Latter-day Saint education and church historic sites. He's the author of numerous publications on these subjects, including an award-winning book on the restoration of Nauvoo. He's married to Janice Garrett. They're the parents of four children. Tell us about your book, about the restoration of Nauvoo. You mean like the rebuilding of the sites and things?

- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:06:45 Yeah, the rebuilding of the sites. The acquisition of the temple lot again and reconstructing Nauvoo as it presently exists. So it's a social history of interactions between members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and often community of Christ who managed many of those sites for a long period of time. As well as local residents of Nauvoo, the residents of Nauvoo who aren't affiliated with either church and how they feel about our church coming to the area and restoring sites and the impact of tourism on a local small Midwest town and the building of a temple. And it was a fun social history for me too, to work on it. I love being at sites with people and I decided to figure out how we came back to Nauvoo.
- John Bytheway: 00:07:24 Hank often reminds me of how much older I am than him, but I remember traveling once to Nauvoo and seeing four white stone markers of the rectangle of the temple property and that was it. What a feeling to go back there years later and see the temple. Well, to hear [President Hinckley](#) announce it, that was a moment in General Conference, wasn't it? And I've often wondered exactly what you're writing about it. How did the people here feel when all of a sudden there's this gigantic imposing temple there?
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:07:58 Well, you know, this is in the book when [President Hinckley](#) goes to dedicate that temple, they held the cornerstone ceremony at the beginning and you know, getting ready for the dedication, they invited local residents including local officials and President Hinckley quips to the mayor. Mayor, we've changed your town. That's an understatement. The Nauvoo temple changed dramatically their town and it's a story of how did we come back and what impact did it have on the local community and how have those three groups really the us, the community of Christ and non-affiliated residents in Nauvoo learn to interact in a shared sacred space.
- Hank Smith: 00:08:32 That's wonderful. There's a wonderful article that Scott wrote, John called [Come See the Place](#). I just am fascinated by that idea of historic sites Come See the Place.

Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:08:45	Well you recognize that's the phrase that the angels give Easter morning on the morning of the Resurrection. Come see the place where the Lord lay theologically in the scriptures. We have support for the idea of sacred spaces, sacred place and come see the place where the Lord lay.
John Bytheway:	00:08:58	You can read all about places but there's something about reading and then being there and going, wow, so this is where this happened.
Hank Smith:	00:09:08	And the cool part with the internet, John is anyone in the world can now go to the church history website. They can take tours of these places. That's incredible.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:09:19	You know, I watched in General Conference recently, you may have noticed in conference <a href="#">Elder Gong</a> showed a picture of him standing right next to the pulpits in the Kirtland temple.
	00:09:26	The pulpits were the Savior would've stood when Moses, Elias and Elijah appear in the Kirtland temple and Elder Gong showed a picture of him standing right in next to those pulpits that power of place, that space being in the place where the sacred occurred. Come see the place where the Lord lay. So
Hank Smith:	00:09:42	Yeah, that's beautiful John. He won't want us to spend a long time on this, but as the dean of the religion department of BYU, it's a big job. We know that Elder Holland once held that same position. Scott, how long have you been dean of the religion department at BYU?
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:10:00	I'm going on four years. I believe we teach the best content on campus and teach remarkable students. It's a lot of fun. Great job. So thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:10:08	You sometimes just go, do I really? Is this really what I do for a living?
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:10:12	I get to work with people like the two of you so I get to work with great souls. So thank you.
Hank Smith:	00:10:17	And John and I both try to avoid causing Scott any problems.
John Bytheway:	00:10:21	That's right. We do not want to be on the worry list ever.
Hank Smith:	00:10:26	No, but when I have been there, he's been very good to me. Just so you know. You're fine Scott. I was thinking about it as we

were preparing. I think I met you, I think it's been 17 years. It doesn't feel that long.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:10:39 You've aged much better than I have Hank.

Hank Smith: 00:10:40 That's not true. Yeah, I was interested in the religion department John. I was interested in getting my doctorate degree at BYU and here was this, here was this teacher Scott Esplin who had done basically what I wanted to do John, I showed up on his doorstep and said, show me the way. And he invited me in. Is that not crazy that I had the audacity to show up at his doorstep, one that he invited me in and walked me through it.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:11:05 That was fun. That was a great memory. Hank, I love that. Thank you. That was a choice memory. Been friends for a long time, both of you, so thank you. It's good to be with you.

Hank Smith: 00:11:13 We love it. We are happy that you are here. I'm going to read from the Come, Follow Me manual, start where you want to start and walk us through these sections. This is how the [Come, Follow Me Manual](#) starts the lesson. In early August, 1831, Joseph Smith and other elders of the church were preparing to return to Kirtland after a short visit to the land of Zion. It's kind of interesting, they call it a short visit when it took so long to get there, tiny little visit and it's going to take a long time to get home. The Lord had wanted them to preach the gospel during their trip and some of them did so diligently but others were hesitant. They hide the talent which I have given unto them, the Lord said, because of the fear of man, many of us know how these elders felt. Even though we love the gospel, fear and doubt might keep us from sharing it, but the Lord is merciful.

00:12:04 He, and this is a quote, knoweth the weakness of man and how to succor us. Scattered throughout these revelations to early missionaries are reassurances that help us overcome our fears and shortcomings, I am able to make you holy. All flesh is in my hand. I am with the faithful always and he that is faithful and endureth shall overcome the world. I love it. They're doing the best they can and the Lord is here saying, I am with you. Let me help correct you and give you some direction. Alright, with that Scott, how do you want to go about this? Do we need to go backward to set this up?

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:12:40 Yeah, we probably ought to go back just a little bit to sections 57, 58, 59. We can if you'd like to.

Hank Smith:	00:12:46	Yeah, let's do that.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:12:48	As you mentioned, they're ready to go home, but we probably had to go back just a little bit to what they were doing in Zion in the first place. If you go back to section 57 of the Doctrine and Covenants in section 52 they were told to gather for a conference and so they arrive in mid-July of 1831 on the far western edge of the United States in far Western Missouri. Joseph has three questions. They're listed in the section heading for section 57. When will the wilderness blossom as a rose? Where's he getting the idea that the wilderness needs to blossom? Well, he's on the far western frontier of the United States. In another account about this experience, he says, I felt like I'd stepped back in time a generation. Joseph is from New York, New England, especially western New York and Kirtland, that's not terribly advanced but it's certainly more advanced than Missouri was.
	00:13:32	He felt like he'd stepped back in time a generation. When will the wilderness blossom as a rose? I think he's also connecting that great prophecy from Isaiah as well there that the wilderness will blossom as a rose. The second, when will Zion be built up in her glory? And then the third, where will thy temple stand unto which all nations shall come in the last days? So these three set questions are in this heading to section 57. They're answered in part in the revelation in section 57, the Lord answers one of the three questions, He answers the where question. On a lot just west of the temple in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri, the temple will stand and that's in verse three of section 57. But he interestingly doesn't answer the when questions these, when will the wilderness blossom as a rose, when will Zion be built up in her glory?
	00:14:14	And I think what the Lord is doing here, like he does in our lives, there's times in my life when he answers what questions much more frequently than he answer when questions. We've all wondered when is this going to happen in our life? Across scripture people have asked when questions, when will the Second Coming occur? When questions tend not to be answered very often by the Lord. In this case I think it may also be because it might be up to us. Building Zion is something that we have to do. He may say to them, well you tell me when you're ready, when you've become Zion. In any case, the sections that follow then 58 for example, Joseph continues with the same theme. Well you answered the where question. Thank you. But when. The Lord gives, I think the only reference to when the only answer he gives in verse 44 of section 58, the

time has not yet come for many years and what's many years to God?

00:15:05 Many years to us, yeah, how long is many years? but then surrounding it in section 58 he reveals principles for how to build Zion and among them are things like preaching the gospel. A couple that we're going to talk about I hope in section 60 to 63, it says in section 58 verse 27, they should be anxiously engaged and in a good cause and do many things of their own free will and bring to pass much righteousness for the power is in them wherein they are agents unto themselves inasmuch as in they do good, they shall no wise lose their reward. So their agency is enthroned, preaching the gospel is enthroned. If you look over in verses 63 and 64, let them also return preaching the gospel by the way. The end of verse 64, the gospel must be preached unto every creature. If we're going to build Zion, we're going to preach the gospel.

00:15:52 We're going to learn how to use our agency. We're going to faithfully endure our trials. Joseph asked when Zion would be built and the Lord taught how it's going to be built. They continue, sections 59 on the Sabbath day. The Lord reiterates the commandments and how particularly the Sabbath will help us become more of a Zionlike people and then Joseph's ready to come home and so we're now at section 60. It's all part of the same journey. I should have mentioned there's about two dozen of them that have made this trip in company with Joseph. The majority of them are ready to come home in section 57. It did list that a few of them should plant themselves in this place. They're supposed to remain and be settlers, but everyone else is, we're going back to Kirtland. We're going to walk the, or take a boat for part of the way, but we're going to go back the 900 miles to our families, to our loved ones, to the church headquarters.

00:16:42 That's where we are in Section 60. So, they've been in Zion, they've located the temple lot, they've dedicated it, they've learned how to build Zion and now they're ready to come home. A couple of things I like about Section 60, there's many in here, but as John mentioned, there's references here to preaching the gospel in verse two with some of them he had not been well pleased for they would not open their mouths and they hid their talents. Apparently we won't go back there, but in section 52 when they were told to go to Missouri, they were told to preach the gospel along the way and some of them must not have done it. They were in their anxiousness to get there they weren't preaching the gospel as earnestly as they might and the Lord rebukes them for that. Then reminds them

in verses 13 that on their way home, don't do like you did on the way here.

00:17:29 Preach the gospel better than you did on the way here and don't idle your time, don't bury your talents. You have a message to share. Preach the gospel. I think there's lessons in there for us. I think there's times in our lives where we get busy doing what we think is important and we forget what really is important to God in this case, sharing the gospel. The other thing I love about Section 60 that we could talk about, there's references to time here. Look for example in verse five, they're supposed to take their journey speedily in verse five for the place which is called St. Louis, but then in verse eight, but not do it in haste. Over in verse 14, again, thou shalt speedily return proclaiming my word among the congregations of the wicked, not in haste. How do you do something speedily but not in haste? What does the Lord mean by this? What are times in my life when I need to be more speedily but not get too hasty? And those are things I think we should think about or talk about potentially in Section 60.

Hank Smith: 00:18:28 This is wonderful.

John Bytheway: 00:18:30 What a challenge that would be to be one of those missionaries to open your mouth. I am assuming they have copies of the Book of Mormon with them.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:18:37 Presumably yeah I can't imagine why they wouldn't. The book's been published for a year and a half now.

John Bytheway: 00:18:42 I'm kind of a task oriented guy and if you tell me go to this place, I'm more concerned about getting to that place than what I'm going to do on the way.

Hank Smith: 00:18:50 Yeah.

John Bytheway: 00:18:51 I love this context. Thank you.

Hank Smith: 00:18:54 I'm interested in this. They hide the talent which I have given unto them. I'm a New Testament teacher over at BYU and that is a Matthew 25 reference. I've given you this talent. Then he comes back and says, what did you do with it? It's the one servant who says, I was scared. I knew you were difficult to please. I hid the talent in the earth. Interesting that he is relating that to missionary work. That's not something you usually do with that parable.



Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:19:23	That's a good point. He does it again in section 62 for whatever reason. Again, this group, they meet a group who had preached the gospel along the way, done what they were supposed to do. They're praised for not having buried their talent but for having shared their testimony. Verse three of section 62, you are blessed for the testimony which you have born is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon, they rejoice over you and your sins are forgiven you. As we preach the gospel, as we share our talent, as we share our light, the blessings that come into our lives, the blessings that came into these early elders lives are remarkable ones.
Hank Smith:	00:19:56	So there's the difference there. Those of us who are a little bit nervous to share the gospel, the Lord says, don't hide it, share it. It'll be recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon you. That's a beautiful idea and kind of gives you some courage. I'm going to share, Scott, when you talked about speedily but not in haste, that was such a good question. Maybe you could explain to me, maybe I can turn the question back on you. What do you think that means? Go fast, but not too fast.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:20:27	I think there's times where the Lord wants us to move forward, but there's also something different about getting sloppy, getting careless, so I equate journeying speedily, moving forward, pressing forward. Don't just wait, go ahead with life, get on your path and get after it. But then I think sometimes we get hasty, we get sloppy in our actions. I think back to times when I was a missionary many, many years ago, moving speedily from appointment to appointment, from one opportunity to another. Not just wasting my time, staying focused on what I'm here to do, but then when I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing, staying in the moment, not getting ahead of myself and I think that might be what the Lord is saying here. I see students sometimes on campus who are so anxious to get to the end of their semester.
	00:21:15	They're so anxious to get to graduation. They're so anxious to get to... Life will be better when I'm done, when I have my first job, when I have my first home, when I'm married, when I'm settled, when I have a family. When I'm away from BYU. They miss out on opportunities along the way and I think this may be what the Lord is saying here is I want you to move forward, choose a major, progress towards graduation, get married, start a family, take a career, but then live in the moment as it relates to this principle. I think of something <a href="#">President Monson</a> taught in General Conference. He shared from the musical the Music Man, he says, Professor Hill, one of the principle characters in the show, voices of caution that I share with you says, you pile

up enough tomorrows, you'll find you've collected a lot of empty yesterdays.

00:22:00 I do think we need to move forward with life, but we don't want to get so hasty that we miss out on the opportunities that present themselves along the way. The Lord's helping these early saints learn this principle as they become Zionlike move forward, don't wait to be told in all things. It's not meet that I should command in all things. He that is commanded in all things the same is a slothful, not a wise servant. Move forward but then don't get moving so quickly that you miss out on the lessons that happen in life along the way. Frankly, I think that's what happens in the next section in section 61. They were told to preach the gospel along the way, but they chose to go home by way of canoe on the Missouri River to whom do you preach the gospel along the way in the Missouri River while you're in canoe?

John Bytheway: 00:22:44 Catfish.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:22:46 Yeah, a catfish. Your companion who keeps hitting you with his oar. They have this harrowing experience and then the Lord says to them in verse three of section 61, behold verily I say unto you, it is not needful for this whole company of mine elders to be moving swiftly upon the waters whilst the inhabitants on either side are perishing in unbelief. I told you to preach the gospel. I told you to move forward. You got moving so quickly that you got hasty. You missed the people who were perishing in unbelief around you and so I had you have this experience to get you off the water so you could preach the gospel. I think that happens in my life. I think that happens in the lives of my students. We get progressing so quickly towards graduation towards the end of a semester, towards whatever it is in our life. I'll be happy when we have children. I'll be happy when my kids are grown.

00:23:32 I'll be happy when we have grandkids. I'll be happy when I'm retired. I'll be happy when... always living in the future. We miss out on the people who are perishing in unbelief around us. I tell my students when I teach these sections in class, I hope you're not moving so quickly towards the end of the semester that you're missing that person in your ward who is perishing in unbelief around you. You might have a little brother or sister who is perishing in unbelief. You're moving so swiftly towards graduation towards the end of the semester that you're missing them. Zionlike people I think move forward with life but don't let life move so quickly that they miss people along the way. If you think about the people you most consider Zionlike there are

people for me who do this, don't just wait for life to happen, but then as life is happening, they still care about people. They don't let people who are perishing around them perish in unbelief. I think the Lord's teaching some interesting principles by this choice of words journey speedily but not in haste. You are going so swiftly on the waters. You are missing people. You miss the people, which is the point.

- John Bytheway: 00:24:37 One of those stories that I feel like presents such a dilemma is, Hey, would you come my little daughter lieth at the point of death and while he's on the way but not in haste
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:24:49 Journeying speedingly.
- John Bytheway: 00:24:50 Yeah, someone touches his garment and he's, "who touched me" and I've always wondered the father at that point, we need to hurry. Interesting dilemma. It must have felt like for him, I suppose Jesus knew exactly what was going to happen.
- Hank Smith: 00:25:06 Yeah. To bring in another [President Monson](#) thought, never let a problem to be solved become more important than a person to be loved. I think we can do this as church leaders. We're after a certain goal, so let's move quickly, let's get through tithing settlement. Let's see how many families we can get through today or as mission leaders or missionaries. It's, let's get our numbers up, let's say, and we forget we're working with people. When I've read these verses, I thought of the children I have taught to drive. Speedily, I have some that are too speedily, it's too much. I have one son in particular, not in haste, not in haste, right. I have another child who I'm teaching to drive who's slow, too slow. We're not moving fast enough. So when I hear speedily, I think gas pedal not in haste, I think brake pedal, you gotta have both to be wise. We do want to move forward, but let's not hurt people. I like what you said there, don't get so sloppy that not only do you miss out on people, you miss out on potential issues that you probably wouldn't have run into had you slowed down a little bit. Scott, I've noticed that in your leadership. Let's slow down a little bit. Let's slow down and take a look at what we're doing. Where someone like me is going, what are we waiting for? Hey, let's go. Move this forward and maybe we're avoiding issues that we would run into if we don't think before we move forward.
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:26:35 There's interesting principles about timing all throughout the scriptures. Going back to where we started, Joseph asked a time question. He asked a when question that set all of this up, when will the wilderness blossom as a rose? When will Zion be built in her glory? In its glory? He's asking about [timing](#). God's teaching

him some things about timing. We move forward but we don't get hasty. We don't miss out on people along the way. You reminded me about another verse in the Doctrine and Covenants section 10 of the Doctrine and Covenants, which we've studied much earlier in Come, Follow Me. This is after the loss of the 116 pages of the manuscript in the Book of Mormon translation. When Joseph gets his gifts back again restored the Lord sets up this principle, do not run faster or labor more than you have strength and means provided you to translate but be diligent unto the end.

00:27:20 He sets up that tension. Don't run faster but be diligent. That same tension is being set up in section 60 journey speedily but not in haste. How do I find that balance between speed and haste between, as you said, gas and brake pedal? Where do I find it? I think the next phrase in section 10 says, pray always. Through prayer we can figure out where the balance is for us. For some of us, for your one son it might be more brake pedal for another child it might be more gas pedal. Each of us is going to be different. Maybe the Lord wants us to move more speedily towards graduation. Again, using my students as an example, there are probably some students on campus who have been there long enough, they really should settle on a major and just move on.

00:28:06 Mom and dad would be perfectly happy on any of the seven majors you've already chosen. Journey speedily. There's others who are probably going too quickly, whose life could be blessed by taking a class that might expand their vision. Say, Hey, have you ever thought about taking a class that isn't on your my map already? That isn't already outlined for you, an elective that might open your eyes to something you've never seen before. Slow down just a little bit. Each of those people, each of those children of God are different. Through prayer we can figure out which one we need to apply in our life. I think there's a valuable principle in Section 60 Zionlike people learn and live in this tension of speed and haste and they apply the brake pedal and the gas pedal at appropriate times.

Hank Smith: 00:28:50 Yeah. What a great application. Kirtland is our goal. That's where we want to get to, but don't go so fast there that you miss out on all of these opportunities. When you were talking about, oh, I'll be happy when, oh, I'll be happy when, I thought of my own grandmother, who told me once when she was really tired, she said, Hank, I think if I was dead and in the Spirit World I would be happy and I'm convinced there's people in the Spirit World saying, you know, once we're all resurrected, I think I'm, I'm going to be happy. It's always the next thing that's going to

be the good part. Scott, wouldn't you say it's that way? Maybe the young parents listening, don't love this. With children if we don't stop and just enjoy our children, sometimes we're so, at least me personally, it's go guys go. Grow up, move, this sport, try this, this school, and all of a sudden the time has passed. I don't know if I enjoyed my time just being. Just being.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:29:49 My wife and I joke about this. We'll say, you know, someday we're going to miss this, but today is not that day. When something happens with our kids, today is not that day is the phrase we will use, but there will come a time when I'll look back and say, ah, man, I'd give anything to have not been so hasty. I was so anxious I wanted to get to here. I wanted to get to there and I'll look back and wonder someday we'll miss this.

Hank Smith: 00:30:16 This is such wisdom here. I think of my own students who are looking to get married and they find someone they want to get married to and that person wants to marry them and sometimes it's, wow, we're going fast. It's okay to slow down a little bit and then others you're like, are you going to get married? Are you going to move forward? Are you going to date ?

John Bytheway: 00:30:36 The whole idea of putting deadlines on your happiness or as soon as this, as soon as this, it just reminds me of Nephi's profound statement when he finally has to split from everybody else. It says it came to pass we did live after the manner of happiness. It wasn't we finally got to happiness. It wasn't a destination, it was a way of life and figuring out that, as you said, tension. Speedily and not in haste maybe is that manner of happiness.

Hank Smith: 00:31:04 Yeah, I really like that. The Lord even says in verse 13, don't idle away your time so it's not, don't sit and do nothing, but it's also don't go so fast that you get to the end going, I missed the journey.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:31:18 And like you were saying, John, this is a manner they were thinking initially on this trip about Zion as a place. These sections are helping them reframe. It's just as much a process as it is a place. Joseph, part of that process is learning this manner of happiness. I used to serve with a gentleman. He told me this story. I think, if I remember right, I think he told the story, I think it was of [Elder Scott](#), where Elder Scott would, if the story is correct, take time for people. He would visit with them, take time for people and he says, I watched him once take time for people and then I watched as he went the next place he had to be and he was running in the parking lot. He was late but he

didn't want the people he was spending time with to know that he was in a hurry. He took time for them then ran and made up the difference. I watched this in my friend who I served with. He was a busy father, stake president, later general church officer. When he was a stake president in a YSA student stake, he would just sit on the couch in the foyer of the student stake center. He would just sit there. Students would come up to him and they would say, oh President, I'm sure you're so busy, you don't have any time. He says, no, I've got all the time in the world. I'm just sitting here. What do you want to talk about? It was his way of signaling to his members, I'm not so busy that I don't have time for you. That's a principle that's contained in these verses as we serve others, as we work with God's children, don't be hasty in that process. Give them the time they need.

00:32:43 You'll make up the time in other ways you'll speedily move from one place to another, but then when you're in the moment with a person, don't make them feel like they're rushed. Don't make them feel like they're just a problem to be solved. They're a person, they're a child of God and he wanted to signal that so he would just sit on the couch in our student stake center, wait for a student to come say to him, I'm sure you're too busy to talk with me. He said, no, I'm actually not. I'm just sitting here on the couch wondering if anyone wanted to talk because he wanted to care about people.

Hank Smith: 00:33:12 I can be a witness of that Elder Scott principle, I met him when I was a college student down at Utah Tech it's called now. He was setting apart my father-in-law, my girlfriend's father at the time, but who was going to be my father-in-law as a stake president. I was very excited to meet an apostle. I went over and said hi, and he asked me my name and I said hello and he was so kind and gentle with me. Well then the man who ends up being my father-in-law invites me to come back with him and his family for the setting apart and a little bit of meeting with Elder Scott. Elder Scott, he remembered my name from four or five hours earlier, shook my hand and I still remember this. He said, Hank, thank you so much for coming back to say hello again and I almost thought, well, you're welcome. Right? Elder Scott, really glad I could do that for you. It was really about people. He had a lot to do. He was very busy, but it became about people.

John Bytheway: 00:34:10 I was sitting in the Marriott Center with my friend Kurt. We had just listened to Elder Neal A. Maxwell, Hank, you were a toddler. I'm just sitting with Kurt and we're just talking about, wow, awesome that was, and talking gospel and Elder Maxwell had moved off the little podium there in the Marriott Center and was talking to people. We just kept talking and at one point we

looked down, there were three people left in line. I was like, Kurt, you want to go down? We ran down. Elder Maxwell extended his hand. He said, thank you for waiting to come and talk to me. Hank, I did what you did. I went, you're welcome, you're welcome. It's nice to meet me, isn't it? But I mean thank you, thank you. How gracious, and I'm not expecting every church leader to be able to do that. That night Elder Maxwell did. What a disciple.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:35:11 What a Zionlike person. That's what I think Joseph is learning here. You want to know when Zion's going to be built? Well here's one of its principles, Zionlike people care about people and they have time for people. They move on with life. They don't idle their time, they journey speedily, but then when the time is right, they pause for the woman who touches the hem of a garment. They pause for a person who comes and wants to talk to them after a meeting, they have time for an individual, then they move on to their next place. Then they take time again and that balance between speed and haste is something they're learning in this section.

Hank Smith: 00:35:46 Wow. Scott, I think we could talk about this all day. It's a beautiful principle that I've never seen before In this section.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:35:54 If you want to look at another principle, this one will bridge us to a couple of other ones. I love verse five of section 60. I've always smiled at this one. Verily I speak unto you concerning your journey unto the land from whence you came, let there be a craft made or bought as seemeth you good. It mattereth not unto me, someone must have asked the question, should we buy a boat or make a boat? Earlier in the Doctrine & Covenants says the Lord used the phrase it mattereth not to me, but it's not something they had asked. In that case it was in the sacrament. It mattereth not what you eat or what you drink. This is section 27 of the Doctrine & Covenants, but it wasn't something they had asked. It was something God chose to teach here. They asked a question, as far as I can find for the first time in the Doctrine & Covenants, the Lord isn't answering their question directly.

00:36:41 It mattereth not to me. Well what do you mean it doesn't matter to you? And then you go over to section 61, which we'll talk about in a minute. In section 61 they have this harrowing experience on the waters. Their boat nearly capsized, they nearly drowned. The Lord teaches them the dangers of the waters and warns them about waters and then in verse 22, he uses it again, it mattereth not unto me after a little if it so be that they fill their mission, whether they go by water or by land.

What do you mean it doesn't matter to you? We just nearly drowned. And in back to back sections, he's used a phrase he never uses in the Doctrine & Covenants and then he does it again in section 62. This is the one maybe I smile the most about. You've already referenced it in verses five and seven.

00:37:27 First of all in verse five, then you may return to bear record even altogether or two by two as seemeth you good. It mattereth not unto me in three straight sections. I don't care if you make a boat or buy a boat, I don't care if you go by water or land, I don't care if you go in a large group or pairs, it doesn't matter to me. In verse seven, he even throws in this idea, I don't care if you want to ride on horses, mules or chariots. I've always wondered about that phrase, where are they going to find a chariot in the middle of Missouri?

John Bytheway: 00:37:56 Over at the Egyptian museum.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:37:58 Exactly what are they doing there? But this phrase doesn't appear in the Doctrine & Covenants until they go to Zion. In Zion they were told, it's not meet that I command in all things. He that is compelled in all things the same is a slothful and not a wise servant. The power is in you, you are agents unto yourselves. Now when they're asking questions, the Lord is answering them differently. It mattereth not, it mattereth not, it mattereth not. I think there's a principle there as well. Zionlike people learn to check with God for sure, but they don't wait to be told all things. They're agents, they act. Elder Bednar and others have taught the power is in us, agents unto ourselves, power to act. Joseph is learning Zionlike people take time for people. Zionlike people aren't commanded in all things. They make decisions. There are some things where God may say it really doesn't matter, just move forward. It really doesn't matter what major you choose, just choose one. It really doesn't matter what school you go to, just go to one. It really doesn't matter between that job or the other job. Just get one. There's times in our lives where this it mattereth not to me is how we become Zionlike.

Hank Smith: 00:39:09 It's almost as if he's saying, do you remember what I said? I said, do many things of your own free will. Thank you for checking. Move forward.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:39:19 I do want to be careful, I think there are things that may matter a lot to us when God says it mattereth not to me that doesn't mean it shouldn't matter to us. Of course my wife knows this. I think about dating and getting married. Some people seem to have really clear answers, who they're supposed to marry and



that they're supposed to proceed. Others I think God wants us to step out into the darkness and move forward with a little bit of faith. Tomorrow is our 20th wedding anniversary. She has this favorite wedding photo of ours where we walk out of the temple and I have this look, this look of relief on my face. I actually went ahead with it. I'm not sure she was convinced I was going into the sealing room with her. I look back now and I'm grateful that God gave me witnesses sometimes before and sometimes after I made a decision that he wanted me to act. As I acted in faith He gave me light along the way, but he waited for me to act in faith and I think that's part of this principle here.

John Bytheway:

00:40:19

Do you remember Hank when we had [Tyler Griffin](#) on, he talked about the way that the Lord dealt with Mahonri Moriancumer, the brother of Jared, and how there were kind of like three different answers. What do we do for air? Okay, make a hole in the top. Make a hole in the bottom. If water comes in stop up the hole. Direct instructions. Okay, what do we do for light? And the Lord said, what will ye that I should do for you that you may have light? You know, go figure it out. Learn by your own experience. Maybe some of these things we're talking about are like that idea. That doesn't matter. Use your judgment that I gave you. What's the Lord's Law of Learning? They'll learn by their own experience. I like that idea too. I actually have a quote from then [Elder Oaks](#) that I've always enjoyed.

00:41:03

He said, no answer is likely to come to a person who seeks guidance in choosing between two alternatives that are equally acceptable to the Lord. There are times when we can serve productively in two different fields of labor. Either answer is right. Similarly, the Spirit of the Lord is not likely to give us revelations on matters that are trivial. I once heard a young woman in a testimony meeting praise the spirituality of her husband indicating that he submitted every question to the Lord. She told how he accompanied her shopping. He would not even choose between different brands of canned vegetables without making his selection a matter of prayer. And then Elder Oaks kindly said, that strikes me as improper. I believe the Lord expects us to use the intelligence and experience he has given us to make these kinds of choices. When a member asks the prophet Joseph Smith for advice on a particular matter, the prophet stated, it is a great thing to inquire at the hands of God or to come to his presence. We feel fearful to approach him on subjects that are of little or no consequence. Well, that Joseph Smith part seems to sound counter, but I like the story about the can of beans. Should I go Del Monte or Great Value?

Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:42:15	And I think that's what they're doing and I don't fault them. The church is a year and a half old. None of us do.
John Bytheway:	00:42:20	That's exactly right. Yeah, this is brand new and they're asking about everything. Amazingly sections come that way.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:42:28	Until they make this trip to Zion. And then there's something about having been in Zion that all of a sudden shifts this. Now that I've taught you the principle, I'm going to give you the chance to practice it. It's the words you just said, John, in section 61, verse 22, one of the uses of it mattereth not, you'll notice it ends the section with according to their judgments, hereafter use your judgment. And then if you go over to 62, what I do like about this section is after saying that it doesn't matter, he actually does say what does matter to him. If you look in verse five, we already read this verse, but it says yea, even altogether or two by two, as seemeth you good, it matters not to me, only be faithful and declare glad tidings. I don't care if you go in a large group or I don't care if you go in pairs, but I do care if you're faithful.
	00:43:14	I do care if you're sharing the gospel. Then the verse we started our entire conversation with in verse seven, if you go by horse, mule or chariot, I don't care as long as you receive it with a thankful heart. I care if you're grateful. I care if you're faithful and I care if you're sharing the gospel. These things I care about. What type of car you drive, whether it's a horse, a mule, or a chariot, I don't really care. Whether you go by water or land, I don't really care. Whether you go in a big group or a small group, I don't really care. But I do care about faithfulness, gratitude, and sharing the gospel.
Hank Smith:	00:43:49	I like how you clarified it. The Lord isn't saying I don't care about you. You just showed us the things that I care about really affect you. These other things I want you to choose. I want you to move forward. And that does seem like a little bit of a growth from where they've been.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:44:08	Something has changed in the Doctrine & Covenants here, I believe up to this point, as I mentioned, this phrase is never used with the exception of section 27 when there's an episode involving the sacrament. Now the Lord in back to back to back sections uses it after having empowered them in Zion.
Hank Smith:	00:44:25	Sometimes we can get paralyzed. I've seen my own students do this. I've seen adults do this where if I don't hear from the Lord, I won't do anything. I won't move until he tells me what to do. I

think the Lord is saying, move. I like what you said, Scott, just keep going. Make a decision. Move forward.

- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:44:43 We've referenced [Elder Scott](#), what do you do when you have prepared carefully have prayed fervently, waited a reasonable time for a response and still do not feel an answer. You may want to express thanks when that occurs for it is evidence of his trust. Now, I'll pause there. That's almost never where I go, I've not gotten to the point where I'm grateful for no answer, but that's where Elder Scott is. I love that. Then he continues. When you are living worthily and your choice is consistent with the Savior's teachings and you need to act, proceed with trust. As you are sensitive to the promptings of the Spirit, one of two things will certainly occur at the appropriate time. Either the stupor of thought will come indicating an improper choice or the peace or the burning of the bosom we've felt confirming that your choice was correct. When you are living righteously and are acting with trust, God will not let you proceed too far without a warning impression if you made the wrong decision. I think there are times when if we need to make a decision, we move forward speedily, then don't get too hasty because the answer may come as we're moving. He's just simply waiting for us to act. He wants us to move forward.
- Hank Smith: 00:45:45 They're maturing spiritually and you can tell at first he was okay with maybe this kind of thing, and now he's saying, look, we're moving along, we're advancing. I love that idea.
- John Bytheway: 00:45:55 Reminds me of something [President Marion G. Romney](#) said a long time ago, he said, you can't expect God to guide your footsteps unless you're willing to move your feet. You commit to a course of action, you start moving and if you're going a wrong way, he'll stop you, but it might be, this is just fine. He just wants you to, to get moving.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:14 I've heard it said, God doesn't steer parked cars.
- John Bytheway: 00:46:17 Your kids, they brake too much or they gas too much.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:19 I was going to say, since we're talking about cars today, anyway. Scott, this has been absolutely fantastic. You have shown us things that I can use today, right John?
- John Bytheway: 00:46:29 Absolutely.
- Hank Smith: 00:46:30 I can use them speedily, but not with haste. Let's keep going Scott, what's next?

- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:46:35 I think as they continue on their journey, we should look maybe at 61 for just a minute. In section 61, they continue down the Missouri River. They come to this place called McIlwaine's Bend a couple of days into their journey. In the section heading, it says, on the third day of their journey, many dangers were experienced. Joseph nearly drowns, their canoe hits a submerged tree in the water. They're terrified. They have this life-threatening experience on the waters. Then following up upon it, William W. Phelps, as it says in the section heading in a daylight vision, saw the destroyer riding and power upon the face of the water. So it's harrowing both physically and spiritually for these elders. They get off the waters, they want to know what's going on. This section is given, as I've taught Doctrine & Covenants over the years, it tends to be one of the more misunderstood sections in the text.
- 00:47:24 I think there's a lot of mythology that grows out of potentially this section. People wonder, is this why we don't do this? We don't do that as missionaries, whatever the case is, and I think that the Lord teaches some important principles that we might want to look at in the section we've already talked about. Verse three, I think one reason why he has them have this experience or get off the waters is so they could teach the gospel. They're missing people along the way, but I also like how the section in the very first verse begins, behold and hearken unto the voice of him who has all power. When I was younger, I used to love reading and studying the stories of Greek mythology. This isn't a Greek mythology model where one person gets one power and one God gets another power and one God gets this power and, and so one God is in charge of the water and one God is in charge of the weather and one God is in charge of love and another one's in charge of war and another one's in charge of messages and then... God has all power.
- 00:48:19 We ought to acknowledge, this isn't a section where God seems to be saying, well, I've got the land, the devil has the waters. I can't help you here. I like how the section begins. God has all power. Yes, there are dangers on the waters he's going to go on to describe those dangers, but I think we should acknowledge God is all powerful and that's how the section began. He does have all power. He can help people on the water. We sing about that. Master the tempest is raging. We have hymns, we have scriptures. We have times where God controls the elements or the Savior walks on water, controls the water. I wouldn't want to somehow create a false notion here that our heavenly Father or Jesus Christ has land and the adversary has water. I, that's not, I don't think what's going on in this section and the first verse in and of itself is very clear on that God has all power.

Hank Smith:	00:49:12	We use water in the sacrament. We baptize people in water.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:49:18	This isn't why missionaries don't swim or whatever the case is.
Hank Smith:	00:49:22	Right.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:49:23	There's other things going on. Now, what are some of those other things in the section? If you look in verses 14, 15, 16, 17, the Lord uses very specific phrases here. You'll notice in these verses it's almost always last days references, end of days apocalyptic. You'll notice in verse 16, behold, I the Lord in the beginning blessed the waters, but in the last days by the mouth of my servant John, I curse the waters. The days will come that no flesh shall be safe upon the waters. It shall be said in days to come none is able to go up to the land of Zion upon the waters, but he that is upright in heart. Then in verse 17, again, I the Lord in the beginning curse the land but in the last days have I blessed it. This last days end of days references to the apocalypse. That's probably what we're talking about with water here.
	00:50:10	References that exist in the book of Revelation or other places to signs and wonders on the waters, not just this is why missionaries don't swim or whatever the case is. There's some apocalyptic things going on here and then if you look specifically over in verse 18, you notice he narrows it down to just these waters. I say unto you that thou shalt forewarn your brethren concerning these waters, the Missouri River was a dangerous river in Joseph's day. It wasn't easily navigated. There were seasons of year when it wasn't safe to be on the Missouri River on a boat. Some of these references in Section 61 are specific to the time and the context in which the Lord is speaking. He's talking about the Missouri River system and the dangers that exist therein for someone who's traveling in a canoe. Then he fast forwards to last days things.
	00:51:02	This is not just a God controls the land and the devil controls the water type idea. That's sometimes what the misunderstanding that I think exists when people study this section. But that said, it does teach them powerful things about our Heavenly Father. It teaches that he has all power. You look in verse one, there's other things that teaches about him. The Lord is from everlasting to everlasting. He is Alpha and Omega. If you look in verse two, he forgives sins. He's merciful to those who confess their sins with a humble heart. If you look in verse 36, he is in our midst. He has not forsaken us. While there's potential misunderstanding in the section as people study it, I think it teaches some powerful truth about who our heavenly Father

and who his son Jesus Christ are and the powers and ways and abilities they have to help us in time of need. Just as these people had experienced a time of need when they were journeying on the water

- Hank Smith: 00:51:56 And it seems like the Lord to say, here's a small thing you're dealing with, let's talk about that. Then let me teach you some larger principles that seems to be part of his pattern.
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:52:05 These larger principles including his control over the elements, his all power, his omnipotence. Then he does it again in the middle of verse 22. I've told you how dangerous these waters are but in verse 22, you still need to make a choice. I've warned you about the waters, but you need to decide how are you going to go? Are you going to go by water or land? Just know that you have much greater likelihood of drowning in water than you do drowning in land. That's what he's teaching them.
- Hank Smith: 00:52:31 If someone were to say, what do I do about verses 14, 15, 16, the days come of no waters. I think that's a good place to practice your scripture study to go in and say, if he's not talking about water in general, what could he be talking about? If you're referencing the book of Revelation, that's a place where you practice reading, like you said, Scott, apocalyptic literature and saying, there's more here than I'm seeing. I need to go slow and try to understand and you can really have a lot of interesting insights when you do that.
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 00:53:04 I think it's appropriate to do that because in verse 14, the Lord himself references John, it's not me who's making this connection. It's the Lord himself who says, he draws John into the conversation by the mouth of my servant John I curse the waters. That points us to John's writings. That's where then you expand. Well, what did John say about this? How did John teach? Maybe importantly, what don't we know about these passages and let's not go beyond what we do and don't know.
- Hank Smith: 00:53:31 Yeah, it's a fun thing. I can already see myself going, Ooh, I want to go over to the book of Revelation now. Spend some time over there to see what, in fact, there's a reference in 14 B a place to start. Revelation 8:10, and eight through 11. We can't do it today. We've got a lot to do. I think this is a perfect opportunity to say, alright, I'm going to dig in a little bit and see what I can find. Scriptures usually pay off on an investment. You'll find that they'll, what is it that [Hugh Nibley](#) said? They'll wear you out long before you wear them out.

Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:54:04	Another valuable exercise might be go look and see how church leaders have used these verses. You could look and see how have these verses been quoted across time in General Conference or other places. Some of these verses like verse 15 for example, the days will come that no flesh shall be safe upon the waters. That verse has been used in General Conference, especially in the context of warfare. There have been times in the history of mankind after this section where traveling by water was dangerous, so I've seen that verse used during the context of World War I, World War II, other times where traveling by water was challenging and you might look to see how have church leaders utilized these verses in helping us interpret scripture.
Hank Smith:	00:54:44	Yeah. When the Lord says you can't go up to the land of Zion upon the waters in the days to come, but he that is upright in heart, he doesn't say he that has a good boat. There's something about this that's more spiritual in nature than temporal telling us about the Missouri, although he does seem to say, guys, the Missouri River is pretty dangerous.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:55:05	You'll notice in verse 23, the Lord tells them, don't go by the Missouri. Go on the canal. The canal is a lot safer way to travel. It's not fraught with the dangers that the Missouri is fraught with. There's value in these verses about risk management. We shouldn't take unnecessary risks and that might then lead to a discussion of why do or don't missionaries do certain things that may be a discussion more about risk and keeping focused on what our primary purposes are than the devil controls water or something like that.
Hank Smith:	00:55:38	Love that.
John Bytheway:	00:55:39	Yeah. The skill that you're doing is you've slowed down, you've looked at it, I love these waters. This is not all water on the planet. This is, these waters are the waters I'm talking about and like you said later on, well you can go on the canal. Well that's water. Yeah, but we're talking about a different place now that these rivers like the Mississippi, you guys have been there. The rivers are not exactly the same as they were back then. They don't have the rises and the falls like a tide and different times of year and everything like they used to and maybe they're safer now. I'm not sure, but I appreciate that. I like what you said in verse 18, warn your brethren concerning these waters, your context is really helpful. Joseph Smith almost drowned.

Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:56:26	Well, and I think you could see it. I didn't point it out but it's actually earlier in the section as well. Look in verse five. There it is again. I the Lord have decreed in mine anger many destructions upon the waters, yea especially upon these waters, it's specific to the geography. We're not even thinking or talking about travel on these waters. I've seen prophetic uses of these verses referring to floods in this area. These waters overflowing their bounds and the catastrophic damage that's created. The loss of economic loss and loss of life through flooding and that's not people traveling on the waters. These are some big, big water systems that are prone to danger. We sometimes forget that those of us who live in the west, some of the biggest rivers we see are nothing like the Missouri, nothing like the Mississippi. These waters are prone to flooding and damage. Some of that's been able to be controlled lately through flooding mitigation and other things, but even then, in any given year there is going to be flooding up and down the Mississippi and Missouri riverways.
John Bytheway:	00:57:25	Why do you think missionaries then are counseled about that?
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:57:29	Well you know, even in basketball there have been some missions that have not encouraged full court basketball.
John Bytheway:	00:57:34	Yeah, so many sprained ankles.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:57:36	You think of other things, not just basketball. Missionaries don't typically fire firearms. They don't go snow skiing. They don't ride horseback.
John Bytheway:	00:57:46	Yeah, yeah.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:57:47	It's putting them in unnecessary danger and it's taking them away from their primary focus.
John Bytheway:	00:57:52	Okay. That's it right there. That's kind of the principle.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	00:57:55	As we mentioned, there are all kinds of places where people do need to go by boat. There are missions where historically you do have to travel from island to island or place to place and you're going to be on the waters. That's where I think the logic breaks down. If you just assume, well, the Lord can't help you on the water, how did the section begin? The Lord began with God has all power.
Hank Smith:	00:58:16	I really enjoy sections like this where it's going to take some time to go slow to read. Scott, you've done this obviously with



these sections as a teacher and they do pay off. If our listeners say, okay, I really want to understand this. I have done this, John, I know you have with second Nephi two, I have had to slow down go line by line trying to follow Lehi's teaching. I think you can do the same thing here. I hope everyone will give this a try and stretch yourself a little bit. Just because you don't understand what it means the first time doesn't mean there's not some beauty there.

- |                   |          |   |
|-------------------|----------|---|
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 00:58:52 | I've also learned to be comfortable with saying, I don't know at times. There's verses in this section where I still don't know and I can live with ambiguity. I refuse to let the things I don't know hold hostage the things I do know. I do know God has all power. I do know that he can and does help his children in time of need. Do I know all of the answers to this section? No, I don't and that's true of a lot of places in scripture, but I can find truths here.   |
| Hank Smith:       | 00:59:17 | Scott, you've said the main point of this doesn't seem to be talk about water. It seems to be what's important to the Lord that you're teaching the gospel.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 00:59:29 | In 61. People are perishing in unbelief on either side. You're going so swiftly on the water. It's back to that principle of who do you preach the gospel to when you're in a canoe in the Missouri River, there's just only so many people you can preach to.  |
| Hank Smith:       | 00:59:43 | I really like the way you're saying. There's this verse and this verse, but don't forget the main point of the entire section, which is you're missing out on people you could be teaching.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 00:59:56 | Then section 62, Joseph meets his brother and three others who had done just that, who had stopped to teach people and they're blessed because of it. They did what they were supposed to do and they got blessed for it. In verse two, verily my eyes are upon those who have not as yet gone up to the land of Zion. They missed the conference because they stopped to teach people along the way. They were blessed for it. That's the journey. A section 60, should we make a boat or buy a boat? Section 61, should we go by water or land? Section 62, should we go in a large group or a small group? These are what seem to be insignificant questions that the Lord takes time to teach some powerful principles that can apply to our lives. |
| Hank Smith:       | 01:00:39 | The manual does something wonderful in talking about sharing the gospel. I can share my love and testimony of Jesus Christ and the manual takes section 60 and section 62 and says, what  |

messages from the Lord do you find in these? How did these messages build your confidence in sharing the gospel? And then it takes you to a section of the gospel library. I don't know if either of you have spent any time here. I have with a son preparing for a mission where you can go to gospel library and towards the bottom there's a tab called Sharing the Gospel. There are all sorts of resources including [Preach My Gospel](#) that say, let's help you share the gospel. You want to do it? You maybe don't know how. Let's give you some how's.

- |                |          |  |
|----------------|----------|--|
| John Bytheway: | 01:01:25 | That was their challenge here, sharing the gospel. I'd like to say it the way the scriptures do because I think it's beautiful, sharing the gospel, by the way. I just kind of like the way they, they put that there. How do you do that? Exactly? What words do you say? I'm grateful for that it'll be given you in the very moment that you need it. I'm reminded of a time I was in the Philippines, we noticed there was a tennis court in our town. On preparation day Elder Lewis and I went to buy tennis balls and a little lady just walked up to us very bold, said, who are you guys? Why are you here? And I was like, why are you here? That's our line. You know? That doesn't always happen, but I was so thrilled because we ended up teaching, her name was Lourdes and Lourdes ended up joining the church and going on a mission. |
|                | 01:02:17 | She walked up to us. I wish she didn't have to do that. I wish I would've said, Hey, you know why I'm wearing this neck tie in the middle of this tropical heat, but I didn't think of that. Thanks for mentioning those resources, Hank. I was reminded too when Scott was talking about what has been said in General Conference, so what am I going to say, Hank? What's that reference called? scriptures.byu.edu. Go click on these verses and boom, and somebody is working on the last General Conference so that it's constantly updated every six months. Great scripture study tool to give us some insight.   |
| Hank Smith:    | 01:02:57 | As Elder Uchtdorf has reminded us, sharing the gospel can be a very normal, natural thing. It'll be just part of your conversations. In fact, just as I was coming to this recording before we hit record, I told John and Scott about this. I had a visitor at BYU. I was teaching my class and a student had brought a friend who was an evangelical Christian. She wanted to talk to me after class, had some pretty pointed questions prepared for me. It ended up being a really wonderful discussion. I learned a couple of things along the way that maybe I can share. One, going back and forth between scripture references is not a way to share the gospel. She wanted my answer to this verse and then to this verse and then to this   |

verse. We used to call it Bible bashing. It is just not a way to share the gospel.

01:03:49 Things started to feel good when I asked her about her faith, I said, tell me about your faith. Tell me what you believe and why you believe it. Complimented her on that faith because I think it's a beautiful thing, the way she trusts the Lord. And then the tone changed a little bit. The feeling changed between us. She started to smile and laugh and I was chatting and laughing and we ended up swapping some contact information. By the end, maybe that's how the Lord would have us share this good news. Instead of riding on the water, getting in your car and going so fast, stop and and talk with people. Talk about faith, talk about religion. Talk about what they believe. Make it a positive, encouraging conversation.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 01:04:36 What the Lord said in this section is correct. I do think there are people perishing in unbelief around us. There's people all around us every day opportunities we have to share the gospel if we would in normal and natural ways. I was reading in the [Come, Follow Me](#) Manual this morning, this quote from Elder Stevenson. Elder Gary E. Stevenson taught that proclaiming the gospel can be accomplished through simple, easily understandable principles taught to each of us from childhood. Love, share, and invite. In the example you shared, Hank, and in all of our situations, maybe that's what the Lord wants us to do, love people, share and invite them to come unto Christ. That doesn't have to be challenging or awkward or strange. It can be, as he says, simple, understandable, principles taught since childhood.

Hank Smith: 01:05:24 That's fantastic. I have found in my experience that going back and forth in some sort of debate of scripture, even if you win that argument, you still lose because maybe you created some bad feelings.

John Bytheway: 01:05:39 My wife and I were listening to a talk called The Missionary Next Door, [Diana Hoelscher](#). It was so interesting how she talked at very good ideas of normal and natural ways. She said, you know, if you're a teenage girl, it's hard to say to somebody, Hey, I want to tell you about the law of chastity. But she said, it's a lot easier to say, Hey, do you want to come to the chili cookoff at our ward? She had a whole list of normal and natural ways to share the gospel. It was really, really good. I'm also reminded of the power of everyday missionaries. He said, if somebody asks you, how was your weekend? Don't talk about Saturday, talk about Sunday. I thought, what a great, I just, oh man, we had the best lesson in Elders Quorum.

Hank Smith:	01:06:20	Yeah. What's Elder Quorum?
John Bytheway:	01:06:22	We learned this thing about one of Jesus's parables I'd never heard, or you know, <a href="#">President Uchtdorf</a> I think has helped us with that idea of normal and natural. Don't worry so much, just be you. Tell them, oh, this happened this, this was great. Do you have any friends? Would you like to have a few hundred more? Come over to my ward.
Hank Smith:	01:06:42	Do you remember John weeks ago, I think it was Steve Harper who said, don't reduce souls to numbers to baptisms. That's not what this is about. This isn't about, Hey, let's get our numbers up. This is about the worth of souls is great in the sight of God. Joseph Smith is going to say later, many are kept from the truth. They just don't know where it is,
John Bytheway:	01:07:04	where to find it.
Hank Smith:	01:07:05	They don't know where to find it.
John Bytheway:	01:07:06	<a href="#">President Nelson</a> , I have slowed down as I listened to this statement because it's so good. Anytime you do anything that helps anyone on either side of the veil, take a step toward essential baptismal and temple ordinances. Even take a step, even have a better feeling like you did today, Hank, about the church even taking a step towards that. You are helping to gather Israel. We don't have to start with the deepest things. We can be a friend. This is what I do on Sundays. What do you guys do?
Dr. Scott Esplin:	01:07:42	That's the, in essence, section 61, preach the gospel and they had an interesting experience. The Lord gave them to learn that lesson.
Hank Smith:	01:07:50	Yeah. Get off the water. I wonder what the water would be like for us.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	01:07:57	Quit scrolling on my phone.
Hank Smith:	01:07:58	Yeah, scrolling on your phone.
John Bytheway:	01:07:59	Get off the screen.
Hank Smith:	01:08:02	While all this candy is being crushed, there are people perishing in unbelief on either side of you. That's an important one.
John Bytheway:	01:08:11	This candy isn't going to crush itself.

Hank Smith:	01:08:14	Right. Coming up in part two of this episode.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	01:08:20	There's probably been times in my life when I haven't gone fast enough for those who might know me well. I was into my thirties before my wife and I met and got married and fell in love. I certainly had loved ones, family members, friends, fellow employers or others who wanted me to be a little more speedy. I spent a large portion of my early life, maybe not going as fast as I should have. I learned from that season in life that I needed to move forward. I needed to act in faith that the power was in me. I was an agent unto myself.



- |                   |       |   |
|-------------------|-------|---|
| John Bytheway:    | 00:00 | Welcome to part two with Dr. Scott Esplin, Doctrine and Covenants section 60 through 63. I just love verse three, which you mentioned, Scott. Nevertheless, ye are blessed, for the testimony which ye have borne is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon. Whoa, really that happens. Angels rejoice over you and your sins are forgiven you. Now, you spoke about this being, was it Hyrum?  |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 00:30 | It's Hyrum and David Whitmer and Harvey Whitlock and John Murdock. I think the four of them, their journey had been delayed. They'd preached the gospel. One of them had also got sick along the way, so they stopped to get him better in that process. They missed the conference.  |
| John Bytheway:    | 00:45 | I see that, and I just hope that sort of thing we can apply to our testimony meetings. I have a confession to make. When I was a bishop, sometimes I was tired. To help me stay awake I started taking notes on everyone's testimony, on testimony meetings. That booklet now has blessed me at funerals. It was really nice to be able to get up and say at Brother Wardell's funeral, here's what he said on this date. Here's what he said on this date. Do you remember when he told us this on this date? There's a reason to record those. I love that we get this insight into this is important. On the other side of the veil that they're recording this. Who doesn't love the last six words there and your sins are forgiven you. That one's marked up in my scriptures. I don't know about you guys. |
| Hank Smith:       | 01:46 | It doesn't mean that this person's going to accept it. This person that you talk to, it doesn't mean that they're going to jump right in. It could be just another little step forward.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 01:54 | I'm not a mission leader and I'm not nearly as good at this as you guys are, but I do love as one who teaches and studies the Doctrine and Covenants with some frequency. Sometimes the Doctrine & Covenants can feel repetitive in portions. It feels like, oh, I've already studied this. I've read sections about  |

missionary work. I read section four. I read this, that, or the other section, but I paused a section like this and I think, oh, I don't remember that verse before. Even though it's another section about missionary work, there's something new. Every time there's something insightful. I don't get to the bottom of these revelations. I always find application. We're recording this now a few weeks before when this will be launched, but in our ward, we're getting ready for Easter. They're making a concerted effort in my ward to invite people in our neighborhood, those who may not regularly come to church or maybe people not of our faith who live in our neighborhood to come celebrate Easter with us.

02:48

Come to our sacrament meeting. I got a text yesterday from our ward mission leader specifically asking me to consider inviting a couple of people in my neighborhood who I know really well. I've thought a lot about that text over the last 24 hours. I'm excited about it. I'm excited about the chance to reach out to people whom I love, who I don't always see on a regular basis in the meetings where I might be on a Sunday to try to invite them to come to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and Easter. I think about these verses. I don't know what testimony I'm going to bear as I invite them this week. I'm excited about the thought that heaven may rejoice over whatever I try to do. Maybe it'll expedite forgiveness on my behalf as I do so. I don't get to the end of finding sections in the Doctrine & Covenants that have application. Even if I felt like, man, I've already read 60 sections at this point of the Doctrine & Covenants and it feels like 45 of them have been about missionary work. Well, maybe because I need to work on it and I'm just a little bit slow at learning. It's going to take me 45 or 50 or 60 sections to finally get it right. I'm grateful for sections like this that feel like a topic that's already been covered once because it was really applicable to me. When I got that text last night. I thought about this section.

Hank Smith:

04:01

I remember once I was sitting in fast and testimony meeting and sometimes I covet a cave at church. At least for a while there I did. I would hide away. I can't remember who it was in my ward that said, sometimes we assume that our ward knows what we believe. I've been in this ward for 15 years. I bore my testimony 11 years ago. I'm sure everyone here knows that I'm a believer and then this verse, you are blessed for the testimony which ye have borne is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon, they rejoice over you and your sins are forgiven you. That verse makes me think, I'm going to go back up there on fast and testimony meeting one because it's been way too long. Two, this is a way to apply this verse to testify.

Dr. Scott Esplin:	04:52	As an occupational hazard for the three of us. I sometimes think about, well, I teach the gospel every day of the week. I bear my testimony every day of the week. Do I really need to go up and bear my testimony in sacrament meeting? Well, my ward members never hear that every day of the week. They aren't my students. I need to bear it. There's power that comes in a testimony in sharing it. I need to have that reinforced in addition to the blessings listed here. I think you're onto something here, John. The wording is intriguing to me. Whoever does the recording, it doesn't necessarily say that the angels do the recording. I don't know who does the recording. It says that the testimony is recorded and the angels do the looking upon of it. They must get to look at and see or understand or hear and what it is for them. Who are those angels? Why do they rejoice in it? Could it be loved ones that have been near and dear to me and they're excited about, Hey, you know Scott's still on the right path. Maybe they're my old young men's leaders or seminary teachers that I had that might rejoice up in heaven that, wow, that little kid that I taught that was a miserable 15-year-old in seminary. He turned out okay, he's got a testimony.
Hank Smith:	06:06	What a beautiful idea, John. Both of our moms and our dads are in the spirit world. Can you imagine, picture this in your head, John, that you go up and bear your testimony. It's written down and then someone's running it over to your dad. You got to hear what John just said. Here it is. He reads it and smiles and says, oh, he is still telling dumb jokes. Look at that testimony. If that doesn't spur you to bear your testimony, I don't know what will. That's a beautiful thought, Scott.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	06:33	Who are those angels? What connection might we have with them?
John Bytheway:	06:36	We've participated in Christmas programs together and you heard me talk about this idea of joy to the world, all this joy that comes to the world. Is there ever a place where we can send joy back to the heaven, to the spirit world In Luke 15 that says that joy in heaven over a sinner that repented, it says it multiple times in Luke 15 and all those parables of the lost coin, the lost sheep and prodigal son. We can send joy the other way, which is fun to think about. We see it here too. They rejoice over you. That's called joy by repenting, by sharing our testimony, doing anything that moves anyone a little closer causes joy in heaven. A scarier question is what makes them do face palms and go, Ugh. Right?
Hank Smith:	07:27	Oh no, Scott that verse has changed for me. John, haven't you found in our study together on the podcast that someone will



highlight a verse like this and it's no longer just a verse? It stands out from here on out. I'll always remember what Scott taught me about when I bear my testimony where that might go and who might read it.

- Dr. Scott Esplin: 07:51 Thank you. I think it was John who got us started in that verse, so thank you, John.
- Hank Smith: 07:55 Well, we'll give you credit Scott. What do you want to do next?
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 07:57 Well, I think we ought to do something with 63. Ironically, section 63 is the longest of the sections yet and we haven't touched it. In section 63 I tried to picture myself being in Kirtland. Let's say I wasn't one of the two dozen elders that went to Missouri to locate Zion. Joseph Smith's back. How would I feel among the saints in Kirtland, have the prophet back amongst us, knowing what they went for, knowing that they were going to Missouri with the promise that if they were faithful they would locate Zion. With that in mind, you can get a feel for what's going on in section 63. Human nature seems to divide us into different groups or camps. I try to imagine what would these saints be like in Kirtland when Joseph was gone. Then when he came back knowing that he had gone to locate Zion.
- 08:48 As you read section 63, it seems clear that at least some of the saints were anxious to know. Did you find it Joseph? What's it like? When can we go? How quickly can we go? When are we going to build Zion? This almost overly anxious group to go to Zion and that's not a bad group. There's those of us who are like that. The Lord says something and we want to do it immediately and we want it to happen now. The Lord's going to address that group in the section. Then there's the other human nature side of the group. That group that said, sure, you went to Missouri. Joseph, did you really find Zion? Are you sure? Do we really have to go? I kind of like it here in Kirtland, and the section's going to address that group too, so for that group, I think the section begins with a discussion of sign seeking.
- 09:35 If I were in Kirtland, I might say, Joseph, prove to me that you really found Zion. I'm skeptical here and the Lord has something to say about skepticism. The Lord has something to say about people who want signs for faith. People who say, I'll believe you when you show me something. It starts, for example, in verse seven, he that seeketh signs shall see signs but not unto salvation. Verily I say unto you, there are those among you who seek signs. There have been such, even from the beginning. I think he's acknowledging in the Kirtland congregation, some of

you wanted proof. Some of you wanted a sign that Joseph really had gone to Missouri and found Zion and then he continues. But behold, faith cometh not by signs, but signs follow those that believe. Yea signs come by faith, not by the will of man, nor as they please, but by the will of God.

10:24 Yea signs come by faith. When I have this discussion with my students, I try to ask, are signs in and of themselves inherently wrong? And the Lord doesn't seem to be calling out that signs are wrong. In fact, in other places in scripture, he encourages us to seek for signs. To watch for signs to look for signs. Signs in and of themselves seem to be neutral. What seems to be the issue here is where do I place my faith? Is my faith before the sign or is it after the sign? Do I want a sign so that I'll have faith or do I have faith and therefore see a sign? In Kirtland what was going on here is some of the people seemed to have wanted a sign or proof that Joseph really was being guided by God. We sometimes still do that today. We want a sign or proof that what the general authorities have taught us is correct or what our bishop has asked us to do by way of a church calling is from God.

11:20 When God may be saying, I'll give you a sign, but exercise a little bit of faith first. Step out into the darkness. Signs come by faith, not the other way around. Faith cometh not by signs, but signs follow those that believe. This first part of the section is a discussion. It seems to be to an element of the Kirtland community who's wanting proof that Joseph really is a prophet of God. The work he's doing with this thing to build Zion is from God. Where I find it interesting is he pivots from there from this discussion of sign seeking to verse 14 to adultery. That seems like a strange pivot at first glance. Why do you jump from sign seeking to adultery? This then brings us back to the New Testament, a wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. The Lord throughout scripture seems to have connected these two principles or these two shortcomings or these two sins.

12:18 We might appropriately say there's something about sign seeking and adultery that they have in common that they share. We could have a discussion, what is it that adultery and sign seeking have in common? That the Lord linked in the New Testament and he links again here in the Doctrine and Covenants. When I share this with students, I often share this story from [Joseph Smith](#), history of the church. He says, when I was preaching in Philadelphia, Quaker called out for a sign. I told him to be still after the sermon, he again asked for a sign. I told the congregation the man was an adulterer. That a wicked

and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign and the Lord had said to me in a revelation that any man who wanted a sign was an adulterous person. It is true, cried one, for I caught him in the very act which the man afterwards confessed when he was baptized. That's a fascinating story. The Lord seems to be connecting these two sins. What's at the root of them? Why does the Lord connect them? That's where I think we could have some discussion in this section. What do we see between sign seeking and adultery that the Lord is putting together here?

John Bytheway: 13:20

It comes down to a something for nothing attitude. I want the testimony. I don't want to do the work. I don't want to do the prayer. I don't want to do the study. I don't want to do the repenting. I don't want to do the humility. Just show me it's true. First with adultery, I want the pleasure of another person. I don't want any commitment. I don't want any expectation. I just want the pleasure. For me, it always just sounds like a real something for nothing type of mindset that both of them fit into.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 13:51

In the context of Zion, they're antithetical to creating Zion. We've just getting back from Zion where they were counseled how to become Zionlike so they could build Zion. Zion is rooted in people who believe. Here's another possible connection. He said that signs come by faith. We talk about when someone commits adultery, we use the same term. They haven't been faithful. Both are rooted in this commitment of faith that I've made a covenant and I'm going to be faithful to that. Covenant signs come by faith. When someone commits adultery, we say they haven't been faithful. Even in our vernacular, even in our language as we talk, we connect them both to faith in one way or another. The Lord seems to be doing that here in section 63.

Hank Smith: 14:37

In the Old Testament, when Israel goes after a different God or seeks after... The Lord frequently refers to them as an adulterous people. They want some sort of different God than Jehovah. I wonder if that plays into that a little bit and there's something about selfishness. I want what I want. Almost a self-centeredness of I'm the most important person here.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 15:01

Your comment there is a good one, Hank, when you talk about in the Old Testament context, adultery is not just the act of adultery as we sometimes talk about it, but it's going after another God, not being true to your God. Breaking your covenant with God. This section talks about that as well as it relates to adultery. It's not just the physical act. If you look down in verse 16, verily I say unto you, as I said before, he that looketh on a woman to lust after her or if anyone shall commit

adultery in their hearts, they shall not have the Spirit, but shall deny the faith and shall fear. It's not just the physical act. It's our thoughts, it's our desires. It's what we're thinking about that relates I think to your comment in the Old Testament, the Lord used the term adultery in multiple different contexts, not just the physical act that they're talking about here.

- |                   |       |  |
|-------------------|-------|--|
| Hank Smith:       | 15:48 | But you're right on here, Scott. Those are linked throughout scripture, sign seeking and adultery, which you might not automatically think. Oh, those two would be sisters, sister sins.   |
| John Bytheway:    | 16:00 | In the New Testament they came to Jesus. We would have a sign from thee and he would say it is a wicked and an adulterous generation. Yeah that statement of Joseph Smith is always like, wow. If you see somebody seeking a sign, then this, you're like, whoa.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 16:16 | I'll give you another one John, this is the other statement from <a href="#">Joseph</a> . I will give you one of the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom. It is an eternal principle that has existed with God from all eternity. That man who rises up to condemn others, finding fault with the church, saying that they are out of the way while he himself is righteous, then know assuredly that that man is on the high road to apostasy. Then he continues, and does not repent who apostatizes God lives. The principle is as correct as the one that Jesus put forth in saying that he who seeketh a sign is an adulterous person and that principle is eternal undeviating and firm as the pillars of heaven. For whenever you see a man seeking after a sign, you may set it down that he is an adulterous man. Joseph and the Lord put these two sins together. Doctrine and Covenants in section 63 is doing the same. |
| John Bytheway:    | 16:59 | Wow. I just love the phrase in verse nine. That's also in Mark, the sequence of belief. They don't precede. Oh, I saw a sign now I believe. No, they follow those that believe. Believe first. Make that choice, make that exercise of faith and the signs will follow and you'll go, yep. So brief, but it's so good.   |
| Hank Smith:       | 17:24 | I wonder, John, if it, if there's something to the sequence too of faithful people attract miracles. They attract.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 17:33 | They follow them.  |
| Hank Smith:       | 17:35 | Yeah. They're going to follow them. It's not like, oh, you've been faithful. Okay, here's a sign. It's a natural fruit of being faithful.  |

Dr. Scott Esplin:	17:43	You'll see that in verses 10 and 11. Signs come, they will come, I do believe in miracles. I do believe that signs will come as the fruit of faith. They will follow after faith. By their fruits ye shall know them.
John Bytheway:	17:57	The people who consistently write down their tender mercies, I think they have more. They have more of them.
Hank Smith:	18:04	I believe that too. Something simple that I've used before is the Lord says, jump and I'll catch you. We say, catch me first, then I'll jump. I think the Lord says, I don't think you understand the sequence of how this is going to work. I can't catch you until you jump and what did you say, Scott? Step into the darkness.
John Bytheway:	18:26	I was led by the Spirit not knowing beforehand. As soon as Nephi took a couple of steps, the Lord started to guide his feet.
Hank Smith:	18:35	That context helps us, Scott, that there's people saying, I'm not moving to Missouri until you show me.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	18:42	As I read it, the <a href="#">historical background</a> to this section indicates that there was some apostasy that had crept into <a href="#">Kirtland</a> in Joseph's absence. This must be what the Lord's referring to. Things that are happening in Kirtland. The Lord seems displeased in section 63. There's a little bit of a tone in this section. He's displeased with what's happened while Joseph and the saints were gone. It's understandable. That's only half the group, as we mentioned, human nature there. There's another side. We're trying to build Zion here. I think you can ruin Zion by being a sign seeker, by lacking faith, by doing what the first part of this section describes, but I think you can ruin Zion just as equally by being <a href="#">overzealous</a> . The Lord talks about that starting at about verse 24. Now, behold, this is the will of the Lord concerning his saints, that they should assemble themselves together unto the land of Zion, not in haste unless there should be confusion, which bringeth pestilence.
	19:37	Behold the land of Zion, I the Lord, hold it in my hands. There may have been some in the Kirtland congregation who as soon as Joseph was back were ready to go. They wanted to go and they wanted to go now. If not yesterday. God is saying, Hey, you can ruin Zion by being overzealous just as much as ruining it by being under zealous. Don't be hasty. I hold this place in my hands. Skip down to verse 27. Wherefore, I the Lord will that you should purchase the lands. We're not taking over here. We're going to make a purchase. We're going to do things legally. I find this intriguing in verse 29. Wherefore, the land of Zion shall not be obtained but by purchase or by blood.

Otherwise, there is none inheritance for you and if by purchase, behold you are blessed. There's two ways to get Zion. You can fight for it or you can buy it. If you'll choose the buy it option you'll be so much more blessed. That's the other half of the group. There's one group who proved to me, Joseph, that you really found Zion, this group who wants to just run rough shot over the place. Go in in haste and God's got to reign that group in. There's a group that needs pushed forward and a group that needs reigned in in section 63. You'll see both of them in the section.

- |                   |       |  |
|-------------------|-------|--|
| Hank Smith:       | 20:52 | Then you can see both of them around us, even in yourself.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 20:57 | There's times when I need to be reigned in and there's times when I need to be pushed forward.   |
| Hank Smith:       | 21:01 | Yeah. Scott, now when I asked you to come on to the program, I know you're very busy, you're the dean, but I thought I want to have Scott back on the show. I didn't realize that there would be this principle of speedily, but not in haste. This is not good, but the other side of the pendulum wasn't good. In my experience with you, and I've known you a while, you are maybe one of the best people that I know who has mastered this balance between moving forward, but not too hasty. I am one who gets a little too excited, pushes the gas pedal and smashes the car. How did you learn that skill? Did it come naturally? I know you're going to deflect a little bit, say Hank, I'm not that great, but you really are. John, in your experience with Scott, I bet you'd say the same thing. That very measured I think would be the |
| John Bytheway:    | 21:49 | Mm-hmm Good word.  |
| Hank Smith:       | 21:50 | The key. Yeah. I'm excited, but let's be deliberate. And careful.  |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 21:55 | I don't know Hank, thank you. There's probably been times in my life when I haven't gone fast enough. For those who might know me well, I was into my thirties before my wife and I met and got married and fell in love. I certainly had loved ones, family members, friends, fellow employers or others who wanted me to be a little more speedy. I spent a large portion of my early life maybe not going as fast as I should have. I learned from that season in life that I needed to move forward. I needed to act in faith that the power was in me. I was an agent unto myself waiting to be told all the time. Fearful of making a mistake, especially in eternal matters, made me paralyzed to making decisions. So I learned from that that I needed to move forward speedily, but then the Lord balanced that out with good              |

wise people who taught me, who modeled for me how to not go so quickly that you're missing out on people who are need along the way. I don't know what the answer is, Hank. I've been blessed with a lot of really good people who have modeled these principles for me who have come into my life and are the colleagues that I work with, the students that I serve, episodes I've had in my life, people around me, in my ward, in my neighborhood who model for me how to be Zionlike. We've got a lot of really good role models.

- |                   |       |   |
|-------------------|-------|---|
| Hank Smith:       | 23:17 | Well learning from someone who has seemed to work out that yes, let's move forward. Yes, this is exciting, easy, easy, slow down where the Lord says we're not going to go in guns blazing and taking over the land of Zion. In fact, that may be one of the problems later on in Zion. There are some of the statements, right Scott, the Latter-day Saints make in Zion saying, oh, you better convert because this is ours.  |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 23:43 | This is our land. God has given it to us. Or there will be people who will go up to Zion without a recommend. They're going to overwhelm the place. Then the Lord's going to have to give some very specific instructions. Those who go to Zion without recommends are going to be excommunicated. That's really strong rebuke for this group in Zion. I like also, we probably could look at verses 40 and 41. These have application for us today. How can I build Zion today? Am I supposed to relocate to Missouri? Probably not right now or if ever I don't know. But in verse 40, here's something I can do. Let all the monies which can be spared it mattereth not unto me. There's that phrase again. The fourth time in four sections, it mattereth not unto me, whether it be a little or much be sent up unto the land of Zion unto them whom I've appointed to receive. |
|                   | 24:30 | I can build Zion by paying my tithes and offerings, whether it be little or whether it be much. I can build Zion by making contributions in time, talents, and energies to build God's kingdom. I can live a consecrated life, whether it be little or whether it be much, whether I give a lot or a little. If I will give it to those whom God has appointed to receive, I will build Zion. Then verse 41, behold I the Lord will give unto my servant Joseph Smith, Jr. power that he shall be enabled to discern by the Spirit, those who shall go up to the land of Zion and those of my disciples who shall tarry. I believe that the Lord holds Zion in his hands. He says that in verse 25, and I believe it's up to the Lord's servants to discern how and when it's going to be built in a physical way.  |

	25:13	It'll be President Nelson and or his successors who will discern who and how until that day comes about, what can I do? I can make my tithes and offerings, I can contribute to the building of Zion in that small way. Help build up God's kingdom. You'll see it again in verse 48. He that sendeth up treasures unto the land of Zion shall receive an inheritance in this world and his work shall follow him. Also, a reward in the world to come. I love the good saints who whether it be little or much build up God's kingdom, I believe the reward will follow them in this life and in the next. Those are things I can do. You've got this one group who I think needs to be pushed. Another group who needs to be reigned in. The Lord teaches these balancing principles for both.
Hank Smith:	25:56	Yeah. I'm enjoying this balancing the tension you called it, between important, not too far this way and not too far that way. What do you think, John? You're also a very measured person. Why am I the only person here that just goes gangbusters into something and ends up ruining it?
John Bytheway:	26:17	Well, thanks for that unearned compliment. I may think too hard. Does anyone have analysis paralysis? They think too hard before diving in. That may be more my side. My analysis paralysis not moving fast enough. Isn't it wonderful? The Lord works with all of us. I watched an <a href="#">interview</a> with <a href="#">President Eyring and President Oaks</a> about President Nelson. They made such an interesting comment about his background as a heart surgeon. As a heart surgeon if you see a problem when somebody is opened up in front of you, you don't say, let me think about this for a while. They said that when he knows that something needs to be done, he just does it and I thought, how interesting. Seeing let's renovate the Salt Lake temple. Let's do it now. Those were all measured too. I love that insight that a surgeon would say, I'm not going to go home and read my scriptures about this while this patient is opened up on the operating table. Act right now. I need to be more on that side. Probably.
Hank Smith:	27:29	You can learn to trust yourself, trust that you're being guided. I'm really enjoying today's balance because that's where wisdom is. I hope someone out there can identify with me in that. I'm one that acts too quickly, thinks later. What is it John? Ready, fire, aim. Sara has said to me before, if we would've talked about this, I could have maybe helped you not act so quickly because now we're cleaning up the mess.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	27:57	What's wonderful in that Hank is you have someone like that that balances you. You can bring strengths to the companionship. Those strengths are important. She can bring



strengths to the companionship and those strengths are important and together you build God's kingdom and we need both kinds. We need the Hanks and the Johns. We need the different perspectives. We mentioned going back to my past, I have on my shelf in my office a little sign someone made for me when I was dating my wife that says, move forward. They just made a little sign. Move forward Scott, this analysis paralysis, just move forward, Scott, move forward and things will work out and eternally and gratefully they have. You want to find someone like that. Who completes you. Who makes you whole. You mentioned President Nelson and his background as a heart surgeon. John, think about the wonderful balance you get in the current entire first presidency between a heart surgeon, an attorney and a judge and a university professor and the strengths and talents and backgrounds and abilities all three of them bring to decision making that's valuable in councils, that's valuable in a marriage. I think there's wisdom in that.

- |                   |       |  |
|-------------------|-------|--|
| Hank Smith:       | 29:00 | Scott, I see that balance here with what you've taught us about Zion. Well, I want to go up to Zion. I want to build it today. The Lord says, how about here's something you can do, pay what you can towards the building of Zion. That's a very measured way of contributing that is unlikely to run anybody over, but it's also something you can do to move forward.   |
| Dr. Scott Esplin: | 29:23 | The other group who needed some repenting to do you, you need to repent. You need to repent of sign seeking of adultery, of sins that are keeping us from building Zion. There are a couple of interesting historically, and this will set the stage for where you're going to go next week. I find a couple of interesting episodes in this section as well. Almost balancing perspectives, compare and contrast verses 38 and 39 with verse 42. If you look in 38 and 39, wherefore let my disciples in Kirtland arrange their temporal concerns who dwell upon this farm. Let my servant Titus Billings, who has the care thereof, dispose the land that he may be prepared in the coming spring to take his journey up in the land of Zion. So he's supposed to sell this farm. If you read carefully, it seems pretty clear it's actually not his farm. |
|                   | 30:07 | He only has the care thereof, but he's supposed to sell this farm. Whereas <a href="#">Newel K. Whitney</a> in verse 42 is told to retain his store for a little season. Again, we're balancing one person's supposed to move and move immediately to Zion and the other person's supposed to stay in Kirtland for a little season longer. The Lord in his wisdom knows there's times in life when some people need to move forward, others need to wait. You're balancing Titus Billings and Newel K. Whitney. The end of the   |

story for the Titus Billings one I mentioned that it doesn't say that it's actually his farm. It isn't his farm, it's his brother-in-law's farm. A guy by the name of Isaac Morley. Isaac Morley is one of those missionaries who's been with Joseph in Missouri. He left his farm in the care of Titus Billings before he got home.

30:57 The Lord gave a command that Titus Billings should sell Isaac Morley's farm, section 64, which you'll study next week. Isaac Morley's now home and you can imagine what his question is. What do you mean my farm was sold? This culminates with our discussion of Zion. The Lord addresses Isaac Morley and says about his farm in section 64 verse 20, and again I say unto you that my servant Isaac Morley may not be tempted above that which he is able to bear and counsel wrongfully to your hurt. I gave commandment that his farm should be sold. God sells Isaac Morley's farm then teaches this great principle in verse 34. Behold the Lord requires the heart and a willing mind and the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land of Zion in these last days. If you want to be part of Zion, God's going to require your heart. That might be, I don't want your heart set on a farm. I don't want your heart set on anything besides building my kingdom. That's the Titus Billings bridge to the next week's lesson with Isaac Morley.

John Bytheway: 31:55 That's cool.

Hank Smith: 31:56 Wow. [Isaac Morley](#), from my knowledge, stays faithful his entire life. I can't imagine when some of our children come home from missions, they find out their bedroom has been turned into a craft room, but he gets home and his farm, which is a large farm, has been sold.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 32:15 And bless his eternal soul. Like you said, he stays faithful. It's an interesting phrase that he may not be tempted above that which he's able to bear. It's almost as if I knew this would be hard for you, Isaac, almost more than you could bear, so I did it before you got home. I saved your soul. I mentioned this I think before, but Isaac's my third great-grandfather, I'm eternally grateful he didn't up and leave the church here. He stayed with it, stayed in the kingdom. If you want to be part of Zion, God's going to require the heart. These sections from section 60 to 63, 64, Joseph has gone to Zion to try to locate and establish it and the Lord says, well, as Elder Christofferson taught, Zion is both a people and a place, here we're learning how Zionlike people act.

Hank Smith: 33:02 Talk about something you could be offended by. I went on a mission and they sold my farm. I'm officially offended, but he doesn't. Wow. All the descendants out there of Isaac Morley.

It's time to do a little cheer. Wow, Scott, he's your great-great-grandfather.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 33:18 Yeah, I think he's my third great-grandfather. Titus Billings sells his farm, his brother-in-law and but then on the flip side, Newel K. Whitney who I assume would've wanted to go to Zion is told retain his store for a little season. He'll do an important work in Kirtland. I mean, think about everything that the Newel K. Whitney store means for church history. That's the place for the school of the prophets, the word of wisdom, all the things that come out of. I guess we should have mentioned this. I didn't even say this fascinating verse back to that Isaac Morley, Titus Billings sell the farm. Joseph and Emma live on that farm. Imagine being Joseph and saying Emma, guess what? I just got a command that we're selling the place where we live too.

Hank Smith: 33:56 Yeah, we're moving again.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 33:59 This is when they will move out to the Johnson Farm, in Hiram. Newel K. Whitney's going to keep his store and then that store is going to be an important place in church history. I think the Lord knows what he's doing.

Hank Smith: 34:09 Yeah, the Lord knows what he is doing. I will always think of Isaac Morley just a little differently. I did not know that. Isaac I knew it would be so hard for you, but I thought let's just do it right now. I wonder about Titus and Isaac having this. I just want to see that discussion. Yeah. Wait, what?

Dr. Scott Esplin: 34:31 Guess what happened before you got home?

Hank Smith: 34:33 Yeah. Oh wow.

John Bytheway: 34:35 Hank, I'm glad you went to speak the other night, but we sold your truck while you were gone.

Hank Smith: 34:41 I come out to the parking lot and it's gone.

Dr. Scott Esplin: 34:45 That you may not be tempted more than you can bear Hank. It was too great a temptation. I don't know if this is helpful or not, but if you go to section 64 verse 28, but behold it is not said at any time that the Lord should not take when he please and pay as seemeth him good. I think in this case the Lord is taking something as he pleases and it was never said God could not do that. It was never said at any time that God should not take when he pleases and pay as seemeth him good. I think sometimes it's human nature. We get mad at God when

something is taken from us or when we don't think we get paid fast enough. We were good and God hasn't paid us yet. God gets to set the timing. It is not said at any time that the Lord should not take when he pleases.

35:29 For those parents who have had a child taken early in life, that's a Zion building experience. That's a heart testing experience. To have something taken like that we're lightheartedly talking about a farm, there's much more significant things taken. We think about the loss of a loved one or someone's health or other things and that's a sobering verse. It is not said at any time the Lord should not take when he please and pay as seemeth him good. Then jump down to verse 34. The Lord requires the heart. If I want to be part of Zion, my heart sometimes gets tested. Is my heart set on a farm? Is it set on physical objects? Sometimes he takes when he pleases and pays as seemeth him good.

Hank Smith: 36:18 Scott, I'd like to ask you a question about Zion. I've marked every time Zion comes up in section 63. It seems to be important. It seems that it's a major topic in 1831. In your studies, what is Zion to these people?

Dr. Scott Esplin: 36:38 I think [Zion](#) has progressed across time in scripture. Early in the Doctrine and Covenants I think the first reference to Zion is section six. Chronologically the Lord says, seek to establish and bring forth the cause of Zion. It starts off as a cause. Then by section 25, Emma Smith is told if she's faithful, she shall receive an inheritance in Zion. It seems to pivot to a place. Then section 28 of the Doctrine & Covenants Oliver Cowdery is told that Zion is located on the borders by the Lamanites. We're still thinking about physical place here. Joseph goes and tries to locate the place in section 57 and it's on a lot the center place of Zion, a temple lot just west of the courthouse in Independence, Jackson County, Missouri. They're still thinking in terms of physical place. I think early in the Doctrine and Covenants, it moves from being a cause to something physical, a tangible location.

37:29 They're eventually driven out from that location. They aren't able to establish Zion in their lifetimes. They're still wondering what's going to happen. One of the latest references chronologically in the Doctrine & Covenants in 136. This is the revelation organizing the camp of Israel to come west from Winter Quarters. That must have been an interesting thought for them. Wait, we're going to the tops of the mountain. We're going to Utah. That's the wrong direction. Joseph had taught that Missouri was Zion and we're going the wrong way. We're going further, not closer. What are we doing? And the Lord says

here in verse 18, Zion shall be redeemed in my own due time. I don't think God ever gives up on Zion. I just think he changes their perspective. In our own modern church, we hear church leaders referring to statements like this one from the prophet [Joseph](#).

38:14 The building up of Zion is a cause that has interested the people of God in every age. It is a theme upon which prophets, priests and kings have dwelt with peculiar delight. They have looked forward with joyful anticipation to the day in which we live and fired with heavily and joyful anticipations they have sung and written and prophesied of this our day. I still think we're trying to build Zion. We're maybe not so focused on a location, but we're focused on becoming Zionlike, living the principles of Zion. Zion is both a people and a place. Zion is a process. I could read you quotes that we sometimes use in class on this one. This one is [Elder Christofferson](#). Zion is both a place and a people. And this is [Elder Hales](#), This promised Zion always seems to be a little beyond our reach. We need to understand that as much virtue can be gained in progressing towards Zion and us dwelling there. It is a process as well as a destination. Many are perfected upon the road to Zion who will never see the city in mortality.

39:09 This is Elder Christofferson again. Zion is Zion because of the character attributes and faithfulness of our citizens. We cannot wait until Zion comes for these things to happen. Zion will only come as they happen. And then [President Benson](#), only a Zion people can bring in a Zion society. I think we've shifted from focused as they were early in the church on where is it going to be located to how are we going to build it because only a Zionlike people can build Zion.

Hank Smith: 39:37 I loved what you said earlier that the when questions don't get answered perhaps because the Lord says, I'm ready when you are. Build Zion and I am ready. The king will come as soon as there's a kingdom to come to.

John Bytheway: 39:52 I love that idea of Jesus ministering one by one and in the same way maybe Zion will be built one by one, one heart at a time. We get Zion in our hearts. What was the famous statement Hank? That it wasn't so much getting the children of Israel out of Egypt as of getting the Egypt out of the children of Israel. We've got to get Zion in our hearts. Then it will be more of a cause. Maybe someday will be a place. I mean I'm looking forward to that, but...

Hank Smith: 40:20 Yeah.

John Bytheway:	40:21	Maybe the sequence is messed up.
Hank Smith:	40:24	I find myself sometimes I think I have the attitude of, well I can't wait to build Zion as soon as other people do then I will consecrate because if they are not going to consecrate, and they are not going to consecrate, well then why am I going to move forward in my consecration? That seems to be the attitude that stops everyone from trying to build Zion is I want other people to do this first. With that in mind, how do I decide that no matter what anybody else is doing, I'm doing this. Zion is my mission. Building Zion in my home, in my ward, in my stake in the church. How have you both done that?
John Bytheway:	41:06	And I'm sitting here just hoping something doesn't get sold while I'm sitting here right now that I didn't know about so I've got a long way to go.
Hank Smith:	41:15	Consecration is hard.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	41:17	I think about a couple of verses in section 105 of the Doctrine & Covenants. So this is after they were driven out of Zion in 1833 and then a year later went and tried to redeem Zion. The Zion's camp and section 105 outlines what I need to work on what I can do to build Zion. If you start in verse two, Behold, I say unto you, were it not for the transgressions of my people, speaking concerning the church and not individuals, they might have been redeemed even now. You could have done this. If it weren't then for some problems. But behold, they have not learned to be obedient to the things which I required at their hands, but are full of all manner of evil, and do not impart of their substance, as becometh saints, to the poor and afflicted among them; And are not united according to the union required by the law of the celestial kingdom;
	42:03	And Zion cannot be built up unless it is by the principles of the law of the celestial kingdom. For me, those are the principles. Zion can't be built unless I learn to be obedient unless I learn to impart of my substance to the poor unless I learn to become united. You'll recognize those are the same principles in Moses 7:18 and the Lord called his people Zion because they were of one heart and one mind. They dwelt in righteousness. There were no poor among them. Zion cannot be built up unless it's upon the principles of this law. I should ask myself, which of these principles am I not living that is keeping Zion from being built? Could I care for the poor and needy among me better? Could I be more united with my ward, with my family, with my loved ones, with the church? Could I be more obedient? Could I

		work on my righteousness? And as I do those three things, I'll build Zion.
Hank Smith:	42:57	What a great reference. Zion's problem seems to be more internal than what's happening externally. It's it's happening internally. John, are you going to teach me how to be more Zionlike?
John Bytheway:	43:09	We hear it a million times. You know the law of Moses was very out there and the Lord said, you've got to get the commandments written on your heart. It's always in here where it matters.
Hank Smith:	43:21	I would add that section 105 reference. I think that's a brilliant place to go to identify some specific things. It helps me think in this terms that the opposite of Zion is Babylon. If I identify what I don't want to be, maybe it can help me move to where I do want to be. I know Babylon is sinful and selfish. Babylon seems to mock others. I could identify those things in my own life when I am sinful, selfish, mocking other people. I would maybe take a look at it a different way and yes, identifying what I need to do and then identifying what I need to stop doing.
John Bytheway:	44:04	Like what are my un-Zion behaviors?
Hank Smith:	44:08	Lord help me to do this. I think he might tell us like he did to Isaac Morley, I'm going to help you do this because I know it's going to be hard. I've heard often that we can start building Zion in our own home. If someone's listening going, I don't even know where to start. This is such a huge thing. Building Zion on the earth. Where do I start? And you might say, well you start at home. What have you seen works at home. John, you've taught me to repent with my family, to my family
John Bytheway:	44:41	In family prayer.
Hank Smith:	44:42	In family prayer. When we're all gathered, it's okay to say I was wrong.
John Bytheway:	44:47	In the Proclamation to the World on the Family, it talks about wholesome recreational activities. My kids, when we can spend time together and get along and have a blast, it has gone a long way. There's some moments of Zion, we've had some Zion moments in our family and it's not all when we're in family prayer, scripture study, sometimes we're playing a game. It creates memories. I've seen them stick up for each other and defend each other and it makes me so grateful. But I think as

part of it, they have a history together. My wife told me when she was in high school that her best friends were not in school. They were her siblings, which not everybody could say that, but she loved her family because they did so much stuff together.

- Hank Smith: 45:36 John, I remember you asking a group of youth once, if you treated your friends the way you treat your family, how many friends would you have?
- John Bytheway: 45:45 Would you have any friends? I think I saw that in the New Era or something.
- Hank Smith: 45:48 Stuck with me. Scott, knowing your family a little bit, how have you tried to build Zion at home?
- Dr. Scott Esplin: 45:58 Try is the operative word. I'm not sure we're perfect at it and those who know our family will certainly attest to that. They should do more trying I think. We've talked about a couple of things. Interestingly, we talked about preaching the gospel and we sometimes think about that as something we do external. When I'm a full-time missionary or when I'm working with someone who's not a member of our faith or whatever the case may be, I have people right around me who with whom I should be preaching the gospel. Finding overt ways to let my children know that I believe that the Lord is good to me. Helping them see his hand in our lives is one way we can build Zion in our home. Help identifying for our children times when they feel the Holy Ghost. At times when we felt it together.
- 46:42 I don't think preaching the gospel is something we do formally when I wear a badge. I probably more frequently will do it with my family than I will ever in a formal setting. That's one thing we've talked about. We didn't even look at these verses because it really wasn't part of the lesson for this week. But back in section 58 of the Doctrine & Covenants, we talked in 57 how Joseph asked when, when and where. And the Lord answered where but not when. When He seems to follow up with a when question. You'll notice in verse one of section 58 Hearken elders of my church and give ear to my word and learn of me what I will concerning you and also concerning this land unto which I have sent you. Zion is both a place and a people. Now he's going to talk about both of them, you and the land.
- 47:24 Then he says in verses two and three, verily I say unto you, blessed is he that keepeth my commandments, whether in life or in death, he that is faithful in tribulation. The reward of the same is greater in the kingdom of heaven. Ye cannot behold with your natural eyes, for the present time, the design of your



God concerning those things which shall come hereafter, and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation. For after much tribulation come the blessings. Sometimes becoming Zionlike we go through trials, we go through tribulations. There's something about our difficulties, our challenges that if approached properly, can perfect us, can move us more quickly along the path towards Zion. You know Hank that my wife had some health challenges the last little over a year now. And I think about these verses you cannot behold with your natural eyes for the present time, the design of your God and the things which shall come hereafter and the glory which shall follow after much tribulation for after much tribulation come the blessings.

48:22

I'm grateful for God's hand in our lives. I'm grateful for the blessings we've seen through tribulation. It's united us as a family. I've watched my children, they become a lot more clingy to their mother in the last year. They want to be with her. They want to touch her. They want to hold her. That's just a natural child's reaction to the scary thought that they could lose her. It's united us as a family. It's brought us closer together as a family. It's made us more like Zion. I've watched what it's done for my neighbors, for my neighborhood. I live with some of the best people in the world. The people who surround us, the people I work with, the people I live with in my neighborhood. Their kindness, their generosity has introduced a new aspect of living in a Zionlike community. I live in a stake of Zion. They are stakes of Zion. That is their formal title. Trials and tribulation, and ours are small. I don't want to make them bigger than they are. Things are good, things are great. Things are going really, really well and we're blessed. But through trials it's made me appreciate Zionlike people around us and it's made us a little bit more like Zion. We're at least a little more united than maybe we were before. And if that's the price we pay to become united in the eternities, that may be worth it.

Hank Smith:

49:37

Scott, thanks for that. I can tell when I'm feeling the Holy Ghost, when I think I can do better, I can be better. I can do my part in building the kingdom of God, building Zion on the earth. Scott, since we have you here, maybe we'll ask one more question. There's a narrative maybe out there among some that if you really dive into the history of the church, you'll probably lose your faith. Yet we have had guest after guest after guest tell us that that's not true. You've spent, you don't look it, but we're getting up there in the decades of teaching this, studying it and teaching it, researching it. It's been your career. What a blessing to study the history of the church as a career. What would you say to someone who thinks, I don't know if I can trust the

history of the church. I don't want to look at it. I don't want to lose my faith. And yet here you've studied it more than most. Your faith is even stronger. What would you say to someone in that position?

- Dr. Scott Esplin: 50:41 That's a good question, Hank. I think in the end, faith is a gift. We could pray for it. We're taught to pray for gifts, pray for the gift of faith. When I was a young seminary teacher decades ago, I had a quote on my wall. It was from President Joseph Smith that said, the hand of the Lord may not be visible to all, but there are those in every moment of this church from its beginning until now, who see the overruling almighty hand of God. The year I was teaching that year in seminary, I wasn't seeing God's hand in my life and I was frustrated. It was challenging and things weren't working out for a variety of levels. I remember looking at that quote thinking, yeah, that's not true. Where's God's hand in my life? And where is God's hand? And I started praying to see God's hand.
- 51:27 I won't say that's always happened. I won't say that I've always seen it, but I believe that God's hand is in this work and I've seen it over and over again. The more I study, the more I read the Doctrine & Covenants, the more I study church history, the more I see God's hand, the more I see his hand in the early history of the church and the more I see his hand in my life, there are those who see in every moment of this church from its beginning until now the overruling Almighty hand of God. And I wanted to be one of those people. I believe that faith is a gift and if we pray for it, we might be able to see, pray for the gift of faith. Don't be afraid of our history. I don't shy away from our history. I don't shy away from teaching it. I don't shy away from studying it. I love the words of the Lord because I believe you can see God's hand there. I believe that happens.
- Hank Smith: 52:13 I've been fascinated, Scott, as you've been teaching us. John, I've said this before, but I think it bears repeating that the wisdom that Scott has shown us here, these principles are life changing, family changing. This was written by a 25-year-old. Imagine what we've just discussed for the last few hours being written by a 25-year-old. That alters your perspective. Looking at this. Well, the wisdom is there I've seen it. Where does he get this wisdom? Where does he get this insight?
- John Bytheway: 52:50 The evidence just keeps piling up. You read the Book of Mormon and you think this is beyond what a farmer. This is beyond Sidney Rigdon, and this is beyond, and then you get stack after stack of these. This is the pen of heaven, as you've said in some of these spots. Yeah.

Dr. Scott Esplin:	53:10	What the introduction to the Doctrine and Covenants says in the revelations one hears the tender, but firm voice of the Lord Jesus Christ speaking anew in the dispensation of the fullness of times, and I can't read these revelations and not hear his voice. These are not just Joseph's words. These are in the one hears the tender, but firm voice of the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking anew. I love the Doctrine & Covenants. I love the principles it contains.
Hank Smith:	53:33	Well, Scott, thank you. Thank you for spending your time with us.
Dr. Scott Esplin:	53:36	Thank you both. It's good to be with you. Thanks for all the good you do. Thank you for letting me join you and talk about these sections. I appreciate it.
Hank Smith:	53:44	It's been so much fun.
John Bytheway:	53:45	Thank you.
Hank Smith:	53:46	Speedily, but not in haste. Not in haste. I'm going to have to integrate that into my, into my psyche. Scott, it's been wonderful. We want to thank Dr. Scott Esplin for being with us today. If you'd like to come on to YouTube, tell Scott, tell us where you're listening from. It's always fun to share with our guests where people were listening from. Anywhere from Orem to New Zealand. We want to hear from you. Also, while you're on YouTube, if you would subscribe to the channel that helps us quite a bit. You can come over for any show notes, quotes, anything was mentioned today. You can just go over to follow him.co. Follow him.co. We want to thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and every episode we remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. He was all about building Zion.
	54:39	The entire Sorensen family is. We hope you'll join us next week. We're going to talk more about returning from Zion to Kirtland on followHIM. Thank you for joining us on today's episode. Do you or someone you know speak Spanish, Portuguese, or French? You can now watch and listen to our podcast in those languages. Links are in the description below. Today's show notes and transcript are on our website. Follow him.co. That's follow him.co. Of course, none of this could happen without our incredible production crew. David Perry, Lisa Spice, Will Stoughton, Krystal Roberts, Ariel Cuadra, Heather Barlow, Amelia Kabwika, Iride Gonzalez, and Annabelle Sorensen.



## THE PRANK CYCLE



Hank Smith:	00:00	Hello! Welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I are sharing a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, we are in Doctrine & Covenants 60 through 63. You've told me that you read a verse and it reminded you of a great story.
John Bytheway:	00:17	Right in Section 61 at the very end, verse 36, and I love that the Lord ends with this because there's some heavy things in some of these sections. Verse 36. Now, verily I say unto you and what I say unto one, I say unto all, be of good cheer little children. I am in your midst. I have not forsaken you. He wants us to be happy. Happiness manifests itself sometimes in a sense of humor. When I was taking the teach seminary classes, they wanted us to read this book, Teach Ye Diligently from President Packer. He said, A sense of humor is powerfully important attribute of a good teacher. The gospel is a happy and a pleasant gospel. There are times when we may be solemn to tears, but a good teacher will develop a sense of humor. Following are a few illustrations of humor that can be used in a classroom, and then he tells one of his own experiences, which was so hard for me to imagine President Packer doing this.
	01:17	To have a sense of humor is a lesson a teacher must learn. When I was attending college, I enrolled in a physiology class. One day during a lecture, the professor asked me to sit up on the high table in front of the room so he could demonstrate the principal of reflexes. What do you think he's gonna do Hank? He took a little mallet similar to the one a medical doctor would use. Proceeded to tap me on the knee, expecting my leg to jerk noticeably in the typical reflex action. However, held my leg very rigid and flipped my arm in the air. When he tapped my knee, the class roared with delight. The professor was not amused. We did not thereafter appreciate one another. I was branded as an impudent upstart, and at the end of the semester, my grade reflected that categorization. We are all going through this life. It's tough. Maybe I can cheer people up a little bit.

Hank Smith:	02:17	I want to add to that story then John, because my father-in-law, Sara's dad, when he walked in late to a meeting with President Packer, he walks in. He quickly knew that he was in trouble for being late. He looked around the room at the other stake presidents. He noticed one wasn't there besides him. He walked in and he said, I'm sorry I'm late. I'm President Morby. That's not his name. That was the stake president that wasn't there, and they said all the stake presidents laughed except for Elder Packer. He said he looked over at him and he did not laugh one bit, I have to share with my father-in-law the story of Elder Packer trying to make a joke for that teacher. It came full circle. That's funny. I gotta read this quote from Elder Holland. He says, we should honor the Savior's declaration to be of good cheer. Indeed it seems to me we may be more guilty of breaking that commandment than almost any other. Be of good cheer. It's a commandment.
John Bytheway:	03:18	Hank, you're really good at that.
Hank Smith:	03:20	What does the Lord say? Not with much laughter, for this is a sin. I'm like, oh no.
John Bytheway:	03:25	I thought you said be of good cheer. Thanks for bringing that up. I love the distinction that Brother Truman Madsen made. He said there's a difference between being light minded and lighthearted.
Hank Smith:	03:35	Good.
John Bytheway:	03:37	Like-mindedness is making fun of sacred things, which we just don't do Hank. Lightheartedness, Hank, we do that all the time.
Hank Smith:	03:44	We do that all the time. It keeps things light. President Hinckley said a good sense of humor is like the shocks of a car keeps things from being a little too bumpy, makes a smoother ride. We hope you'll join us on our full podcast. It's called followHIM. Get it wherever you get any podcast. We are in section 60 through 63 this week with Dr. Scott Esplin. He's the dean of the religion department at BYU. It's pretty incredible what he does with these sections. Come over, join us there, and then come back next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.