

"I Have Seen Your Sacrifices in Obedience"

Show Notes & Transcripts

Podcast General Description:

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

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

Podcast Episode Descriptions

Part 1:

What did Joseph Smith's Nauvoo revelation teach about discerning spirits, the nature of God, and eternal relationships? Historian Brittany Nash Chapman explores Doctrine and Covenants 129-131 and how early Saints lived and understood these profound doctrines.

Part 2:

How did the Saints wrestle with the revelation on plural marriage in Doctrine and Covenants 132 and how can reading their own accounts inform our faith and personal testimony?

Timecodes:

Part 1 -

- 00:00 Part 1 - Sister Brittany Chapman Nash
- 02:56 Being offended on other's behalf
- 03:40 Brittany Chapman Nash bio
- 07:44 *Come, Follow Me Manual*
- 09:22 Reducing the heavenly to the finite
- 12:25 Sister Nash shares about discernment
- 18:20 Joseph's confidence with angelic influences
- 21:16 Information about the next life
- 22:36 Endowment in the Red Brick Store
- 25:35 Heavenly relationships
- 29:48 Friendship: A fundamental principal
- 34:31 Kate Holbrook and Melissa Inoyue
- 37:22 Prize enduring relationships
- 39:06 Gaining intelligence
- 44:16 President Faust
- 46:43 Dangers in this verse
- 48:06 Elder Christofferson's Cosmic Vending Machine
- 50:47 The first anti-Christian writer?
- 54:53 Brigham Young yearned to know this
- 57:23 Clarification regarding kingdoms
- 1:00:21 Spirit is matter
- 1:02:50 End of Part 1 - Sister Brittany Chapman Nash

Part 2 -

- 00:00 Part 2 - Sister Brittany Chapman Nash
- 00:07 Don't need to have a testimony of plural marriage
- 02:01 Context to a revelation for Emma Smith
- 05:21 Emma rejected the revelation
- 08:44 Joseph F. Smith's statement on this section
- 11:44 Preaching publicly about this revelation
- 14:09 Section 132 would have been different if delivered to body of the Saints
- 17:26 Provenance of Section 132
- 20:19 Joseph Smith restoring patterns from previous dispensations
- 22:30 Not a statement about what God thinks about marriage
- 27:25 Some motivations for marriage
- 30:34 Pattern of women (and men) agreeing to plural marriage
- 35:08 Having increase and Abrahamic sacrifice
- 38:35 Finding peace through reading first-person accounts
- 42:10 No social or religious repercussions for those who did not practice
- 46:00 Nephi killing Laban
- 49:40 *Let's Talk About: Polygamy* by Brittany Chapman Nash
- 52:27 The Saints reception of plural marriage

- 55:33 Martha Craig Cox writing about the principle
- 58:20 Consent is an eternal principle
- 1:00:00 Reflections on living plural marriage
- 1:03:21 The results of wrestling with difficult topics
- 1:04:33 Moving forward with faith in Jesus Christ
- 1:07:19 End of Part 2 - Sister Brittany Chapman Nash

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Hank Smith:	00:00:00	Coming up in this episode on followHIM.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:00:04	Some things God withholds from us in mercy for a time. we may not see how he's being merciful, but withholding that from us is. when we do receive something, it's easy to congratulate ourselves and think we deserve it because we're so good and righteous. That's not the case either. It's our lives are good because God is good.
Hank Smith:	00:00:30	Hello everyone. Welcome to another episode of FollowHim. My name is Hank Smith. I am your host. I'm here with my obedient co-host, John Bytheway. John, the lesson this week is titled, I Have Seen Your Sacrifices In Obedience. When I saw that, I thought that's John. Obedient.
John Bytheway:	00:00:49	From what you've seen. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:00:51	Right, right. In public at least. Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:00:53	Right. That's right.
Hank Smith:	00:00:56	John we are honored today to have with us Sister Brittany Chapman Nash. Brittany, welcome to followHIM.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:01:02	I'm happy to be here. Thanks.
Hank Smith:	00:01:04	We've had some fun prior to recording. Well, we, John and I have had fun. Brittany's been tolerant. We've been peppering her with questions about her and her background. It's been a lot of fun for us to learn. John, the lesson this week is on sections 129 through 132. We are nearing the end of the Doctrine & Covenants. Does anything come to mind when you think of these sections?
John Bytheway:	00:01:30	Theological dynamite? Could we say it that way? There's some things in 130 that talk about the nature of God that are pretty unique to us. I'm really looking forward to section 132 because I

		really wanna learn and that's why I'm really glad we've got Brittany with us today.
Hank Smith:	00:01:48	I remember my good friend, Dr. Alex Baugh. He said between 1820 and 1830, Joseph is cautious. He said between 1830 and 1840, Joseph is courageous. And then he said from 1840 to 1844, he is fearless. We're starting to see that here in these sections. Brittany, as you've prepared for today, what are we looking forward to?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:02:12	Like you mentioned, these sections are riddled with interesting doctrinal concepts. We're addressing everything from how to interact with a ministering angel to our celestial exaltation. In Doctrine & Covenants 132 we're dealing with a lot of weighty matters. I'm excited to explore some of these concepts. Particularly I hope to share some experiences that Latter-day Saints had living Polygamously, because right there is where we come to understand the theology a little more of plural marriage, how it was lived out. That's important for us to be able to sort of wrap our minds around the theology itself.
Hank Smith:	00:02:56	John, do you remember Dr. MacLane Heward coming on and telling us, get to know these people instead of being offended on their behalf? Get to know them. Know their stories.
John Bytheway:	00:03:06	I will never forget that. Instead of being offended for them, let's be inspired by them. I thought, wow, like you say Hank, that should be in vinyl on the wall somewhere.
Hank Smith:	00:03:17	Absolutely. John, I have to tell you, when it comes to choosing the guest for a certain episode, I'm navigating it, letting it kind of flow and see what happens. This particular episode, John, I could tell you 100% I knew four years ago when we were with Dr. Kate Holbrook. I knew when we were recording who would come on or who at least I was gonna invite to come on for this episode. So this is for me, four years in the making. Now, there might be people out there who have not been planning on meeting Brittany for four years, so what do we know about her?
John Bytheway:	00:04:00	I have listened to Sister Brittany Chapman Nash's work, but I haven't met her. There's a series of books that Deseret Book has produced in the past several years called Let's Talk About, and it's some of the tough issues. Let's talk about it. What do we know? What don't we know? And one of Brittany's is let's talk about polygamy. Brittany, I'm curious, can you tell us about that whole process of putting that book together?

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:04:27	So I received the invitation to write, Let's Talk About Polygamy when my first born child was three weeks old.
Hank Smith:	00:04:35	You're not busy.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:04:37	I know a huge learning curve there with motherhood and I'd done some work before working on the Women of Faith in Latter-days series, and I'd come to really admire and love the women in Latter-day Saint History and was so inspired by their stories and lives of faith, many of whom practiced polygamy. So when I was asked to write this book, you know, I was totally overwhelmed, as you can imagine with a newborn. My husband encouraged me to give it a try. Think about it. Eventually I decided, and Deseret Book was gracious in giving me a long timeline, and it took three years to write this little tiny book. One reason I accepted was because I knew it was going to be a short book and I thought, okay, yeah, I could do a short book. But little did I realize how difficult it would be to talk about such a huge subject in a hundred pages. That really required a lot of discipline in sifting through the sources and stories. You know, what's the most important thing to include? And you really did have to think about how to use every single word because there's a lot of material to cover, a lot of things that I wanted people to understand about the practice that I wanted to include, and so you just had to be concise and make it as accessible as possible. I really wanted people to come to understand those who practiced polygamy in the 19th century.
Hank Smith:	00:05:57	Well, we all owe a debt of gratitude to Peter then. It is a phenomenal book. It really is. It can be life-changing, testimony changing. I loved it.
John Bytheway:	00:06:08	Yeah. Let me tell our audience more about Brittany. Brittany Chapman Nash. She's been a historian for the Church History department for about 12 years. Even though those who are watching her saying she can't be that old, she specializes in women's history as she talked about. So Let's Talk About Polygamy. That's the book we've mentioned. And she also worked on the Women of Faith in the Latter-days series. She taught English in Taiwan, then she studied Victorian studies in the UK at the University of Lester. She has a a son who's seven, a daughter who's four. I'm just excited that we have her here. Like you said, Hank, who else would you trust to talk about this topic? Honestly, tell you exactly what we know. I'm really glad you're here.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:06:56	Thank you for saying that. I feel like the people that I'm trusting to tell the story are the 19th century Saints themselves.

		Whatever I say comes from them. I'm relying on how they've expressed themselves because who better to talk about polygamy than those who practiced it? It's not me, it's them.
Hank Smith:	00:07:13	I have learned through my years of rotating around the sun that if there's a scandalous story, if you can talk to the person, that helps a lot more than talking to each other.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:07:27	Yes, and sometimes when we're dealing with abstract thoughts of like, oh, I wonder what this is like, we often will go to the worst case scenario of what it could be like or think of that most scandalous story, which there certainly were in plural marriage situations. By and large that was not people's experience.
Hank Smith:	00:07:44	I want to hear it from the people involved. In fact, I would love if people did that to me, right? If someone said, I heard this, I'm gonna go talk to him about it rather than spread the fire. Let's read from the Come, Follow Me manual and jump in. We already are, like I said earlier, the lesson is titled, I Have Seen Your Sacrifices in Obedience. This is how the manual begins. Through Joseph Smith, the Lord took some of the mystery out of eternity. The greatness of God, the glory of heaven and the vastness of eternity can seem almost familiar in the light of the restored gospel. Even to finite minds like ours. The revelations in Doctrine and Covenants 129 through 132 are a good example. What is God like? He has a body as tangible as man's. What is heaven like? That same sociality which exists among us here, will exist among us there.
	00:08:34	In fact, one of the most joyous truths about heaven is that it can include our cherished family relationships if sealed by proper authority. Truths like these can make heaven feel less distant. Glorious yet reachable. But then sometimes God may ask us to do things that seem uncomfortable and unreachable. For many early Saints plural marriage was one such commandment. It was a severe trial of faith for Joseph Smith, his wife, Emma, and almost everyone who received it to make it through this trial. They needed more than just favorable feelings about the restored gospel. They needed faith in God that went far deeper than that. The commandment no longer stands today, but the faithful example of people who lived it still does, and this example inspires us when we are asked to make our own sacrifices in obedience. Wow. Well written and we have the perfect guess for it. Brittany, where do you wanna go from here?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:09:30	I liked the quotation that they included from Brigham Young stating Joseph Smith could reduce heavenly things to the

		understanding of the finite. They were trying to grapple with really big heavenly things and bring them down to a way that a regular person could understand them. We see that happening with some of the direct instructions that are given in Doctrine & Covenants 129 then on in some of these other sections. Thinking back on Brigham Young's quote, that was something he and other early converts loved about the gospel as preached by Joseph Smith. Brigham Young in his own search had been seeking to know not just about the life of God as God asks us to live through morals and he wanted to know God in an embodied and tangible sense. Joseph Smith through revelation was able to offer those ideas to him and other converts.
Hank Smith:	00:10:27	Yeah, taking heaven and making it somewhat what'd they use in the manual, reachable.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:10:33	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:10:33	Accessible. I can't comprehend it, but I can see a piece now.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:10:37	Right. I kind of see some familiarity. As we've seen throughout the Doctrine and Covenants, some of these revelations come as a result of questions that Joseph Smith is asking. He's seeking answers to questions and that spurs revelation. So if we look at Doctrine & Covenants 129, the questions that Joseph Smith is asking like, who are the beings in heaven? What did they look like? How can we detect false spirits? That was a sincere question that people had at the time. If we look at Section 129 answers to the questions, angels are resurrected persons with bodies of flesh and bones, like Jesus. The spirits of perfected, and just men who have not yet resurrected, so those are the beings in heaven. Then how can we detect false spirits? This kind of echoes 1 John 4:1 where it encourages people to try or test the spirits to know whether or not they're from God. Joseph Smith offers this shaking hands test, which as a kid I always found was like, oh, okay. I have to remember this.
John Bytheway:	00:11:44	Yeah.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:11:44	In case I ever receive an angelic visitation. So he is offering this formula of how can you tell that something's from God? The part that's really intriguing to me starts verse eight where it says, if it be the devil as an angel of light, when you ask him to shake hands, he will offer you his hand and you will not feel anything. You may therefore detect him and know it is not an angelic messenger. And then concludes, these are three grand keys whereby you may know whether any administration is

from God. How do these things apply to us who may not receive angelic visitations on the regular?

00:12:25 It reminded me of an experience that I had. Well, looking at what senses are people relying on to discern whether or not a message is from God? He is using his physical senses, not feeling anything with his hand. He's seeing something. In verse eight it says, the devil may look like an angel of light. It may seem through this one physical sense, light that it is a heavenly visitor. Through another physical sense, touch and using reason, a person could detect false spirits. As I was pondering how this could apply to me, I was thinking about the importance of reason of using our reason in spiritual things and in understanding perhaps how God may be communicating with us because that's not a tool that I've always used in my life. So often I've depended on just one of those senses. You know how I feel to discern whether or not God is communicating with me, but I haven't used a second sense.

00:13:33 Is God speaking to my reasoning as well? To share an example to hopefully maybe will be helpful to someone. I was thinking back on a story from my young adulthood when I was thinking about what to major in in college. I was in turmoil thinking about what to do 'cause I really wanted this significant manifestation and guidance because I felt it was so critical to my future life. I first went to a small liberal arts college called Southern Virginia University for my first two years. Wonderful experience. I felt that I should major in music at that time 'cause I enjoy singing. I did that and it was a fantastic experience at SVU 'cause you're in this cozy, lovely community. People are encouraging you and you have lots of opportunities to share your talents and you're appreciated for your talents because at the time when I went there were less than 400 students. It was a lovely place.

Hank Smith: 00:14:39 Yeah. I was there in the beginning too. Just a tight, tight little community that went to Subway together.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:14:48 Exactly. Then I transferred to BYU. After two years there I thought I better follow this initial prompting that I received to study music. BYU is a fantastically different experience than SVU. There's tens of thousands of students.

Hank Smith: 00:15:06 And you don't know everyone.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:15:08 No. The music program there is extremely competitive. My first year there I was preparing myself to get ready to try out for the music school. It was a torturous year. I held on because I was

		going to follow this prompting I had received and I was relying solely on feeling and not using my reason as well. I am not speaking comprehensively to all spiritual experiences, but I'm sharing this for what it's worth. I found by the end of the school year, I was praying not to get into the music school because it was just so competitive. I didn't want to major in music, but I didn't know how to get my head out of this commitment I had to this spiritual impression.
Hank Smith:	00:15:55	Heavenly father, please take it back. Right?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:15:58	Yeah, I did not get in through the music school and I was so relieved because I felt this immense relief that I could do what I wanted, like choose my own path, use my reason. At that time in my life, I didn't know how to detect or trust my reason because I was being pulled by emotion. I think by that point we need to be careful mixing emotion with spiritual promptings and our reason can kind of help us make that discernment. If I had trusted my reason a bit more than I did, I would have been spared a very difficult experience potentially. But the Lord makes all things for our good and for me, looking back, thinking about how God does communicate with us, I believe he appeals to both our intellect and our spirits.
Hank Smith:	00:16:57	Brittany, you were talking about the senses right? Touch, sight and you were talking about feeling. It's Alma 32 where Alma's talking about the seed and it grows and he says, you will taste this light.
John Bytheway:	00:17:11	When you have tasted this light. Yeah. Which is a mix of metaphors. Usually we see the light and we taste the fruit. Here we're going to taste light.
Hank Smith:	00:17:23	None of us walked into our studio today and went, that light tastes good, right? Like this is good light. It tastes good. I threw that in as a cross reference. He'll look like an angel of light. So maybe it looks but it's not the same. Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:17:38	Doesn't taste right. I'm not discerning it. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:17:41	It's like a painted fire. It looks right, but it doesn't feel the same.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:17:45	It's easy to forget that God wants to communicate with us, he wants to reach us. It's good to seek for multiple ways that he's trying to speak to us. It is something that takes time and experience to discern. This was one experience from my life that helped me to see more clearly how God communicated

		with me and that it was important to use both reason and feeling. That's in the Doctrine & Covenants as well. I'll speak to your mind and to your heart.
Hank Smith:	00:18:13	Almost like a gas pedal and the brake pedal. Mind and heart. I need both of these.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:18:17	I think that's a great analogy. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:18:20	Brittany, you made me chuckle earlier when you said, for those of us who don't have these regular experiences with angels. Here's Joseph Smith writing this out, he seems almost casual with doesn't this happen to everybody?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:18:35	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:18:36	This is good knowledge 'cause you might use this on a daily basis and you and I are, especially when I was younger, I remember thinking, what, okay, I'll remember this in case this ever happens. In your study of Latter-day Saint history, there's angels.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:19:00	Yeah and people, early Latter-day Saints were receiving visitations. It was more of a spiritual gift that they sought after at the time. Yeah. That's one way that they received messages spiritually that they were open to.
Hank Smith:	00:19:09	Yeah, and I would imagine anyone who receives these type of experiences keeps them pretty close to their...
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:19:15	Right. Right.
Hank Smith:	00:19:16	Pretty close to their heart. Right. I would guess that the things you've read about are probably in journals, letters.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:19:23	They tend to, yeah, not be in published sources.
Hank Smith:	00:19:27	Wow. So John, this probably happens to you. You're probably like I've used this.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:19:32	Yeah, probably.
John Bytheway:	00:19:33	No. In fact, what you got me thinking about was one of the things that we've learned this year, as the first missionaries went out in the restoration they weren't talking about the first vision. They were talking about the Book of Mormon. Maybe that was one of those experiences. Joseph eventually had to tell

how this all started, but he held that close at first. I also am reminded of Elder Bruce R. McConkie. I introduced my students to Elder McConkie because we have a lot of quotations from him and I always say Elder McConkie said something about everything. So sometimes if you can't find a statement on it, you'll probably find something that Elder McConkie said. He said, sometimes these experiences, and I'm paraphrasing a bit, are so miraculous they get written up in the scriptures. It's not the typical experiences sometimes that are written up. It's the miraculous ones and maybe for Joseph Smith, this was typical. But for the rest of us we're, okay I'll keep that in mind if I ever need that and probably the vast majority of us won't.

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:20:38	I think he was also responding to people approaching him and saying, how do I tell the difference if I'm seeing these angels?
Hank Smith:	00:20:45	John, it reminds me, we've had two Olympians on this year, Peter Vidmar and Noelle Pikus Pace.
John Bytheway:	00:20:51	Right.
Hank Smith:	00:20:51	And they've talked about the Olympics so casually. Oh, don't you hate it when you're in the Olympics and you get hurt.
John Bytheway:	00:20:57	And we're both trying to go. Yeah, yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:21:01	He seems to, and some of these early Saints seem to live in a beautiful spiritual realm that maybe we all don't live in, so we shouldn't balk at it. We should probably say, wow, that's amazing that you even need this instruction.
John Bytheway:	00:21:16	Yeah. I like the way the manual is introduced, that they're gonna tell us things about the next life. What kind of beings are there? There's resurrected beings, so flesh and blood is referring to a mortal body, one that's capable of death, and in the resurrection, this section references Jesus saying, handle me and see. For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, so a resurrected being is flesh and bones. A flesh and blood body has bones too. That's why it used to confuse me as a kid. A mortal is referred to as flesh and blood and being quickened by the Spirit. I don't know what, what you guys think that means. Quickened is powered by maybe? So it's interesting that he makes that distinction. Jesus post-resurrection was flesh and bone. Mortals are flesh and blood.
Hank Smith:	00:22:09	Yeah, that's interesting. Brittany, you're the historian here so you can absolutely correct me. This section changed for me

after I went through the presentation of the Endowment, angels shaking hands, detecting, you know, light from dark. Isn't this around the same time period where Joseph is receiving revelation on the presentation of the Endowment?

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:22:36 I love that you bring that up Hank. In May, 1842 is when the first endowment was presented. This section was given February 9th, 1843. At this time, people were only going receiving their endowment for themselves. So they weren't returning back to the second floor of the red brick store receiving another endowment for a proxy endowment. You can see that it was on people's minds. What's the significance of our interactions with the next world of shaking hands of what these things could mean or what implications could they have? This was a good clarification for people, not just with the meaning of the endowment and how to interpret their spiritual experiences.

Hank Smith: 00:23:22 Wow. Maybe I used to, when I was younger, kind of balk at this section, kind of go what in the world? But now I'm pretty inspired that people live in this spirituality, this time of spirituality that they need this instruction. I want to be there. I want to be in that space.

John Bytheway: 00:23:41 It reminds me, Hank and Brittany of the time in the Book of Mormon, when if these things have ceased, then has faith ceased also, and maybe you know, that's part of that period of time. There were a lot of believers and a lot of manifestations and they had to figure out which ones are legit. I was looking in Steve Harper's book, we've had Dr. Harper on the show before with context, and I loved the first paragraph and the last paragraph of what he said about section 129. Section 129 is esoteric. It can only be understood by people with temple knowledge. It's also euphemistic. It's no more about handshaking than kicking the bucket is about actually kicking a bucket. And then his last paragraph, part of being endowed with God's power is the ability to discern true from false messengers. And we might even say messages. As Joseph taught, if Satan could appear in the guise of an angel without having any ability to know better, we would not be free agents. What I love about this is the Lord is telling us, I don't want you to be deceived. I'm giving you the keys to discernment. More about discernment than about shaking hands.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:24:55 Yeah, I would agree.

Hank Smith: 00:24:57 That's beautiful. If Steve's out there listening, we'll test him right now so nobody tell him. Nobody tell him that we're testing to see if he listens. So Steve, if you're listening, you better text

		me the word esoteric. But nobody tell him. Nobody tell him, Jen, not even you.
John Bytheway:	00:25:15	Thank you for what you wrote, Steve 'cause that helped me. It's a bigger issue than just handshaking. It's God doesn't want us to be deceived. I like what it says here. It's contrary to the order of heaven for a just man to deceive.
Hank Smith:	00:25:30	Yeah.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:25:30	I love that.
Hank Smith:	00:25:31	Discernment. Okay, Brittany, what do you wanna do next?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:25:35	Okay, well let's flip to section 130 here. The questions that are being asked are things like what is heaven and what meaning do our experiences and relationships on earth have in heaven? Heaven will be a familiar place to us. It's not something to be scared of but to look forward to. If we begin with verse one, it gives a really revolutionary piece of theology, which I think is unique to Latter-day Saints. It says, when the Savior shall appear, we shall see Him as He is. We shall see that He is a man like ourselves. A lot of early church members are coming from a Trinitarian worldview where the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one God in three persons. The concept of seeing Jesus Christ as a man like ourselves would be mind blowing. To those like myself who are raised in the church it's just like, oh yeah, you know, of course Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost are three separate beings. To a new listener that's striking. Even though the Savior will look like us, that doesn't mean that He is like us. We should not consider Him an equal because He's infinitely higher than us. He's not on our level. We need Him and will continue to need Him and the Atonement that he gifted us. He has the ability to lead us higher and that He is someone familiar and that is a nice thought.
Hank Smith:	00:27:17	I remember Elder Maxwell said, mercifully, he calls us his friends.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:27:23	Not by entitlement, not because we're so good.
Hank Smith:	00:27:27	Right. He says, any relation in where we stand next to him tells us we do not stand at all. We kneel. He is kind to bring us to speak with Him, but I like what you said there. We're not entitled to a let's look eye to eye and talk.

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:27:46	No, it's his condescension and kindness to us and to even give us his physical form is pretty amazing. What a great gift and trust, in a way, to us.
Hank Smith:	00:27:55	That's a great thought.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:27:57	If we move on to verse two, it says, and the same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there, referring to heaven. Only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy. This is one of my favorite verses in all of scripture because of the reassurance that it gives me. We find so much joy in our friendships, familial relationships. What gives meaning to life, I think, is those who are loved ones who we're surrounded by. To know that that can continue coupled with eternal glory is wonderful to think about. I think in my life there's been a few moments where I could say, this is perfect, the people that you're with and there's just perfect unanimity of feeling and you feel understood and loved. There's a few times in my life where I feel like I've tasted heaven and it's always been when I am in the company of others.
	00:28:56	As I think also about the concept of eternal glory, I think of what grace hopefully that gives us, coupled with eternal glory. Maybe we won't have the obstacles that prevent us from having better relationships now in our lives. Whether I think of relationships that I wish I could have a do-over with, I wish I understood that person better. I wish I had not been so prideful in my interaction. I hope that that screen of humanity of misunderstanding is taken away, that that's part of that concept of being coupled with eternal glory. I yearn for a do-over in some situations that I've had with people because we are finite human beings. We don't have the knowledge we wish we had about other people.
Hank Smith:	00:29:48	I think this statement from Joseph Smith could have ended up in section 130 right here. John and Brittany, you both know this, friendship is one of the grand fundamental principles of Mormonism designed to revolutionize and civilize the world, cause wars and contentions to cease, men to become friends and brothers.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:30:11	Yeah, that's fantastic.
Hank Smith:	00:30:12	John, do you remember when Dr. Rebecca Clarke was here and she talked, I think 4 Nephi where she talked about heaven. She said, picture heaven. She said, you don't picture streets, golden streets and harps or clouds. Who do you picture? Your friends, your family, people. Heaven is all about people.

John Bytheway:	00:30:33	Brittany, what a beautiful thought. How did you say that? The times you have tasted heaven, it was with people. I think they're tree of life moments where you feel the love of God, it's with people that you're with. 2 is one of my favorite verses and it seems like most people in or out of our particular faith have this idea that I'll see them again that, oh, they're watching over us now or I felt my mom with me today, or I felt my dad with me today. For him to just come out and say it. Yep. The same sociality which exists here will exist there, is huge and I love it and I have that expectation of seeing everybody again and they seeing us in wonderful reunions. We talk about it all the time. I think I've told you this before, but I had a member of my ward who said, I've been to a lot of meetings, which we all have. Sister Marsh who loves our podcast, she said, but the meetings that have changed me the most have been funerals. One of those is it creates that expectation of we'll see them again. I love this verse to tell us. Yep, you will.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:31:48	Another interesting way of looking at this verse from a historical perspective is it shows kind of a cultural shift of the way people are viewing heaven. They're increasingly viewing marriage as union based on love and romance and also heaven as that our earthly ties are reflected back in heaven again. Heaven is a place where they will not only glorify God, but also continue to be with our loved ones.
Hank Smith:	00:32:18	Brittany, I just want to sit here for a second in these little tastes of heaven that we have with people, Sara and I, when we have an evening with Lynn and Hailey or Jeff and Julie or Tyler and Alicia, those are, they fill your heart and mind and it's just being together. It really is just being together. You're mostly talking about your kids or talking about your work. Very mundane things. I think you're right there. Put a name to something I've always felt, which is just a taste of heaven. John, we should issue a challenge out there for everyone listening to text a friend and say something like that.
John Bytheway:	00:33:01	I had a taste of heaven.
Hank Smith:	00:33:03	Yeah, you give me a taste of heaven. Our friendship gives me a taste for heaven. Yeah. Something like that. Brittany I love it when I've felt something and someone puts a name to it, a description to it.
John Bytheway:	00:33:16	Articulates it.
Hank Smith:	00:33:17	Yeah.

John Bytheway:	00:33:18	Love what you said. I have people, so do all of us, that we miss dearly. There's this hopeful expectation of that sociality, which is a strange word I've only seen in one place in my life right there. That idea that no, that expectation is there will be that kind of community. There will be those moments again with the groups that we love.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:33:43	And that gives such hope to us and such meaning, way to keep us going when things are hard to look forward to. Being in that perfect state with our loved ones forever.
Hank Smith:	00:33:57	Brittany, we've had two of your colleagues who have been on the show and have since passed away, Melissa Inouye, and then four years ago, the same section in the Doctrine & Covenants with Kate Holbrook. I think Joseph Smith said the idea that I will see my friends again, my family again, that is a glorious expectation. It's not just a hope. It's a, it becomes an expectation.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:34:21	And I think that's probably the only way to deal with the depth of sorrow when you lose someone you love so dearly. That's the hopeful view.
Hank Smith:	00:34:30	Yeah.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:34:31	My heart has been full of Kate Holbrook thinking about her all day today, knowing that four years ago she spoke on these sections, how much I loved and admired her as a friend and human being. I was thinking about Melissa as well as another colleague of mine who passed away. I was thinking about my last interaction with Melissa. The last conversation we had in April, 2024. I was going to speak at Southern Virginia University to give a talk there to the students. Melissa had also spoken there and when we talked, she wasn't talking about the cancer that she was seriously suffering with. She wasn't talking about her hardships. She just cheerfully asked me, oh, Brittany, have you spoken at SVU yet? Remembering this conversation we had had before and I just was so struck by that to be in the midst of such suffering, but yet still remembering this silly conversation you'd had with a friend. I'm very grateful to have had those two wonderful colleagues and friends in my life.
Hank Smith:	00:35:28	The same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there only, it'll be better. Right? Like, wow.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:35:37	What better thought. Let's just end there.

John Bytheway:	00:35:40	One of the things that we loved about what Melissa taught us was that we can speak of others and redeem their reputations. This tells us we're gonna see these people again. We gotta be careful how we talk about people. That we're gonna see again and help them redeem their reputation. That goes right along with this. We're gonna see them again. I imagine listeners may be hearing this for the first time going, oh, really? With that kind of a, oh, I'm so glad. When you think of the infant mortality and, and all the babies that Joseph and Emma buried and everybody else, just infant mortality being high and malaria and the sicknesses, that expectation of reunions is, really?
Hank Smith:	00:36:27	John, I had this prepared for a little bit later in our show, but I think it's a good place to read this now. This is Parley P. Pratt when he says, Joseph told me about eternal marriage. He said, it was at this time I received from him Joseph Smith, the first idea of eternal family organization and the eternal union of the sexes in those inexpressible endearing relationships, which none but the highly intellectual, the refined and pure in heart know how to prize and which are at the very foundation of everything worthy to be called happiness. Till then, I had learned to esteem kindred affections and sympathies as appertaining solely to this transitory state, I think meaning this earth, as something from which the heart must be entirely weaned in order to be fitted for its heavenly state. It was Joseph Smith who taught me how to prize the endearing relationships of father and mother, husband and wife, brother and sister, son and daughter.
	00:37:26	It was from him that I learned that the wife of my bosom might be secured to me for time and all eternity, and she had passed away, Thankful Pratt, in Kirtland, and that the refined sympathies and affections, which endeared us to each other emanated from the fountain of divine eternal love. It was from him that I learned that we might cultivate these affections and grow and increase in the same to all eternity while the result of our endless union would be an offspring as numerous as the stars from heaven or the sands of the seashore. I had loved before, but I knew not why, but now I loved with a pureness, an intensity of elevated exalted feeling, which would lift my soul from the transitory things of this groveling sphere and expand it as the ocean.
John Bytheway:	00:38:16	Boy, could Parley write, huh?
Hank Smith:	00:38:19	I wish I could write like Parley P. Pratt.

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:38:21	I know. So Parley P. Pratt had quite a few wives. He was one of the few men I think who was able to make all of his wives feel equally loved. Each of them felt very special to him and uniquely loved by him. That's a special gift that not every plural husband had. There's something about Parley and family relationships that you really seem to grasp and see value in.
Hank Smith:	00:38:50	Well that's a trailer for things to come. Brittany, we've had you for a while now and we've only covered a little bit of the lesson. What else do you want to hit in section 130? I know you'd love to cover every verse. I want to get to 132.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:39:06	We'll jump to verse 18 where it says, whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection and if a person gains more knowledge and intelligence in this life through his diligence and obedience than another, he will have so much the advantage in the world to come. And this is some great food for thought approaching this life as a training ground. We can use our time here well and view it as the great school that it is, or we can squander our time. What is unique about this life that maybe we can't learn in heaven? The reason that we had to come here to our earthly bodies. That is one thing. One way we obtain knowledge in this life is through what we experience in our bodies. We learn so much with our bodies, discipline, doing physically difficult things, how to bridle our passions.
	00:40:06	Our passions can be diverse, you know, gluttony, sexuality, we're trying to learn how to discipline ourselves. Also, illness, it's so difficult to endure illness, to not have our bodies function the way we want them to, but that is also a huge training ground as well. I remember I had a C-section when I gave birth to my second daughter. The recovery process is difficult. For the first time, I got a glimpse into what it might be like to experience chronic illness. The difficulty that that could cause. That made me think of Spencer W. Kimball. I don't know if either of you remember much about his legacy with illness. I'll just jump to one quotation. He suffered with so many things beginning in his childhood with boils in his thirties, multiple heart attacks in his fifties, and then recurring throat cancer that affected the way that he spoke and as an apostle and later prophet, that's essential to be able to speak to church members, and then in his eighties he suffered three brain hemorrhages.
	00:41:17	He's dealt with these incredibly difficult physical challenges while operating under heavy responsibility in a public position. He said this, which I think of occasionally when I am feeling

sorry for myself if I'm not feeling well or something. He says, have you ever seen someone who has been helpless for so long that he has divested himself of every envy and jealousy and ugliness in his whole life and who has perfected his life? No pain suffered by man or woman upon the earth will be without its compensating effects if it be suffered in resignation and if it be met with patience. Sickness sometimes is a great blessing. People become angels through sickness. I reflect on how purifying, if people let it, physical ailments can be and and that's tough to do. That's one thing we can learn, gaining intelligence and knowledge in this life. Eventually that knowledge will be an advantage in the world to come somehow through what it teaches us spiritually.

John Bytheway: 00:42:27 I'm glad that you brought up this verse, Brittany. I've always, whatever principle of intelligence we attain unto in this life, it will rise with us in the resurrection. It kind of makes you wanna make a list. What else can I take with me? What gets past the checkout counter called death?

00:42:47 I remember Og Mandino who wrote something like, death will unload thy cargo. Whatever you attain in this life, so it's a fun question. What actually goes with us? You are talking about things that fit in your spirit, getting our spirit to be in charge of our body. That's one of the things that we learn. I remember hearing a speaker a long time ago, way before Hank was born, before both of you were born before I went on a mission where somebody said, the things we can take with us are our character, our intelligence, and our relationships, and I never forgot that idea. They all fit in our spirit, our character, our intelligence, our relationships. Then he said, why is it we work so hard for things we cannot take with us often at the expense of those we can? Which was a whoa type of a...

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:43:42 Amen.

John Bytheway: 00:43:42 If we're working hard for things that will be unloaded at that checkout counter called death. Sorry, can't take that with you. We can take that with us. It's fun to think of decisions. In fact, when I heard this, it was before my mission and I contemplated would a mission build character, intelligence, relationships? Absolutely. And it helped me make that decision, eternal decisions, that build things that actually I can take with me in the resurrection.

Hank Smith: 00:44:16 It reminds me of this fun little story President Faust told. He's quoting Elder ElRay L. Christiansen who told President Faust about one of his distant Scandinavian relatives who joined the

church. He was very well off, sold his lands and stock in Denmark to come to Utah with his family. For a while he did well as far as his church and activities were concerned, and he prospered financially. However, he became so caught up with his possessions that he forgot about his purpose in coming to America. The bishop visited him and implored him to become active as he used to be. The years passed and some of his brethren visited him and said, now Lars, the Lord was good to you when you were in Denmark. He has been good to you since you have come here. We think now since you're growing a little older that it would be good for you to spend some of your time in the interest of the church. After all, you can't take these things with you when you go. Jolted by this comment, the man replied, well then, I will not go. Then President Faust says, but he did and so will all of us. He says, it's so easy for some to become obsessed with what they possess and lose eternal perspective.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:45:27 Absolutely.

John Bytheway: 00:45:28 You know, one time, Hank and Brittany, Barney Fife is looking at his paycheck and he says to Andy, well look at all these deductions and this tax, and Sheriff Taylor says, you know what they say, Barn, you can't take it with you, and Barney Fife says, well, take it with me. They keep picking at me like this. I won't be able to go myself.

Hank Smith: 00:45:53 It's so much better when you do it John.

John Bytheway: 00:45:57 Even Alma said to Corianton, behold, you cannot carry them with you, and it's a really interesting thing to think, what can we take? And the one who put it so beautifully was President Dallin H. Oaks in his talk, The Challenge to Become. What we get to keep is what we have become. That helps us understand the parable of the wise and foolish virgins too of not sharing. Boy, they were so selfish. Well, no, it's not that. It's that you can't share what you've become. Hank, you're really charitable. Can I have some of your lifetime of charity?

Hank Smith: 00:46:32 Right.

John Bytheway: 00:46:33 Can't share that, you know, so.

Hank Smith: 00:46:34 Yeah, and I'd give it to you if I could, right? Like

John Bytheway: 00:46:37 Yeah, but it's unshareable. We take with us what we have become.

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:46:43	We take with us the knowledge and intelligence, but also obedience and diligence, the knowledge of our Savior that we have received through being obedient and diligent, so we've come to know the Savior in a way we couldn't otherwise. In verse 21, it says, and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated. There can be two dangers in how we read this verse. If we feel we are not receiving the blessings we want, it's because we have been disobedient or have not hit on the perfect formula of how to pray or we're not righteous enough to receive that blessing. But some things God withholds from us in mercy. For a time we may not see how he's being merciful, but withholding that from us is. Second, when we do receive something, it's easy to congratulate ourselves and think we deserve it because we're so good and righteous. That's not the case either. It's our lives are good because God is good, not because of what we've done that makes us deserve it. Even though we certainly benefit from obeying the laws of God, that goes without saying. That's what we're intended to do. That provides the outlet where God can give us certain blessings. I don't think we should go around feeling that we deserve every good thing that happens to us.
John Bytheway:	00:48:06	Was it Elder Christofferson who used the vending machine example? If I do this obedience, I get this blessing, and if it doesn't pop out right now, I get really mad. I'm hitting the machine and everything. Where's my blessing? Sometimes there's a waiting period that occurs.
Hank Smith:	00:48:24	John, I have that quote right in front of me. If you don't mind, I'll steal your spotlight here.
John Bytheway:	00:48:28	Yeah, share it.
Hank Smith:	00:48:29	He said, this is April of 2022, so fairly recent. Some misunderstand the promises of God to mean that obedience to him yields specific outcomes on a fixed schedule. They might think, if I diligently serve a full-time mission, God will bless me with a happy marriage and children, or if I refrain from doing schoolwork on the Sabbath, God will bless me with good grades or if I pay tithing, God will bless me with that job I've been wanting. If life doesn't fall out precisely this way or according to an expected timetable, they may feel betrayed by God, but things are not so mechanical in the divine economy. We ought not to think of God's plan, this is what you said John, as a cosmic vending machine where we, one, select a desired blessing, two, insert the required sum of good works and three, the order is promptly delivered.

	00:49:18	He says, God will indeed honor his covenants and promises to each of us. We need not worry about that. The atoning power of Jesus Christ who descended below all things and then ascended on high and who possesses all power in heaven and in earth ensures that God can and will fulfill his promises. It is essential that we honor and obey his laws, and then this is I think what Brittany you were getting at, but not every blessing predicated on obedience to law is shaped, designed and timed according to our expectations. We do our best, but we must leave to him the management of blessings, both temporal and spiritual.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:49:58	It's truth. And then in verse 22 it says, the Father has a body of flesh and bones as tangible as man's, the Son also, but the Holy Ghost has not a body of flesh and bones, but is a personage of spirit. Were it not so the Holy Ghost could not dwell in us.
Hank Smith:	00:50:15	If we weren't heretics before.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:50:18	I know. Yeah. It explodes the Trinity concept completely if it wasn't already exploded in the first verse of section 130, this further clarifies how divergent it is from other faiths.
Hank Smith:	00:50:31	If people say you're not Christian because you don't believe in the trinity, this verse is evidence. Joseph Smith took hundreds of years of religious tradition and exed it in one verse.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:50:46	One in purpose.
John Bytheway:	00:50:47	Have either of you ever been to maybe the Manti pageant or perhaps the Hill Cumorah pageant and had somebody hand you a leaflet that says these people, they actually think that God has a body? Well, this tradition of passing out pamphlets has a long history. There was an anti-Christian writer, named Celsus who wrote On the True Doctrine, a discourse against the Christians. This is 178AD. This is before the first creed. This is translated by R. Joseph Hoffmann. Now, this is amazing. The Christians say God has hands, a mouth and a voice. They're always proclaiming that God said this or God spoke. The heavens declare the work of his hands, they say. I can only comment such a God is no God at all. For God has neither hands, mouth or voice, nor any characteristics of which we know. They say that God made man in his image failing to realize God is not at all like a man, nor vice versa.
	00:51:52	God resembles no form known to us. They say God has form namely the form of Logos who became flesh in Christ, but we

know that God is without shape, without color. They say God moved above the waters he created, but we know it's contrary to the nature of God to move. Their absurd doctrines even contained references to God walking about in the garden he created for man. We sure do. They speak of him being angry, jealous, moved to repentance, sorry, sleepy, in short as being in every respect more a man than a God. You ready you guys? They have not read Plato who teaches us in the Republic that God the good does not even participate in being. So here is a Plato follower criticizing the Christians for believing the same things that we believe today. If only somebody had prayed and actually seen God and maybe God talked to him, maybe he would point to the other and say, this is my Beloved Son, and point to the other probably using his hand. It's interesting to think that you're right, Hank, who's the heretics? Well, the early Christians thought God had a body and there were anti-Christian Christians writing against that belief.

Hank Smith: 00:53:18 Wow, John, that's pretty cool. A little bit of what Brittany showed us in verse two plays out in verse 22 because how do you have a relationship with a God you can't see? You can't touch?

John Bytheway: 00:53:35 He's everywhere, He's nowhere, he's... Yeah.

Hank Smith: 00:53:39 I know among the three of us and all of our listeners, many of our listeners, that the idea of being held by God, being embraced in the arms of his love is an idea that, yeah is a hopeful expectation.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:53:53 Yeah that tangibility is something reassuring. Yeah. Like you said, we look forward to that experience.

John Bytheway: 00:54:02 The theologians, they took God's body, they took his gender. We have been disinherited. We no longer have a Father in Heaven. You remember, probably to me the finest talk I've ever heard on our belief in the Godhead was Elder Holland. It was called The Only True God and Jesus Christ Whom He Hath Sent, he spoke about after one of the creeds that redefined the nature of God, that a monk named Seraphian fell down, grabbed his head and said, woe is me. They have taken my God away from me, and I know not whom to address or to adore. Elder Holland referenced that and I think, wow yeah. Who am I supposed to worship now? What is God like? And that's what we're getting right here.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:54:53 That was a yearning that Brigham Young expressed. He wanted to know God as a tangible, like, who is he? He's not just

commandments. Who is God. They felt that Joseph Smith, through his revelations, provided that insight they yearned for and we see that clearly here.

John Bytheway: 00:55:14 Where would Satan start? He would start with trying to alter the nature of God. That the articles of faith come in the same order that things were messed up.

Hank Smith: 00:55:27 I bet you both remember President Benson's quote, nothing is going to startle us more when we pass through the veil to the other side than to realize how well we know our Father and how familiar his face is to us.

John Bytheway: 00:55:42 That's my favorite quotation I've ever heard, period. Hank, the one you just read. Brigham Young said, we are trying to become acquainted with our Father in heaven when the fact is we are already well acquainted with him and there's not one of us who has not dwelt in his house year after year, and he said, no other one fact will so much astound us is that we were so stupid in the body.

Hank Smith: 00:56:05 Well, it's already astounding me.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:56:06 That's true. Yeah. I know.

Hank Smith: 00:56:11 Brittany, John and I are having too good of a time here and we're talking too much. Keep going. Keep teaching.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:56:18 All right. If we go to Doctrine & Covenants 131, this is an interesting section. This was not a revelation that Joseph Smith dictated word for word in the traditional sense of his revelations. This was a compilation of notes taken by William Clayton from a sermon of Joseph Smith for the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants compiled by Orson Pratt, as well as teachings that he gave to some close friends of his, Melissa and Benjamin Johnson, when he was teaching them about eternal marriage and preparing them to be sealed to each other. Orson Pratt was compiling revelations and other teachings of Joseph Smith. This was among his additions to the 1876 Doctrine & Covenants. We can think of it as teachings of Joseph Smith, but not someone writing down exactly word for word what Joseph Smith is saying. First one, it says, in the celestial glory, there are three heavens or degrees. There has been some discussion about this first verse.

00:57:23 Does that mean that in the Celestial Kingdom there are three degrees of glory within that, or is it referring to simply the

		Telestial, Terrestrial and Celestial Kingdoms? Those three kingdoms. There's a compelling source by Orson Pratt who was preaching in 1875. Hopefully, we'll have some clarifying doctrine expressing exactly what we can expect in the next life with regard to this principle because we don't have anything directly from Joseph Smith that I'm aware of that gives clarity to exactly what the Celestial Kingdom will look like in the next world. What we, our basic sense is that it's degrees of glory. Orson Pratt in 1875 said, millions and millions that may reach the Celestial Kingdom, if they embrace the gospel that will not reach the higher order of glory in that kingdom for there are different degrees of glory even in that one kingdom. The reading of that verse has gone through different iterations through time.
	00:58:24	It seems most compelling to me that it implies that there are different degrees of glory within the Celestial Kingdom or within all of those kingdoms. We can view that by going back to a quotation by Orson Pratt. He was preaching in 1875 and Orson Pratt was an apostle to Joseph Smith, learned about plural marriage from him, like Parley P. Pratt in that quote that you read earlier, Hank, about learning from Joseph Smith, the order of Heaven and the role of the family in heaven. I would say that those brothers probably have a pretty good understanding of what Joseph Smith had been expressing. Orson Pratt explains that there are different degrees of glory even within the Celestial Kingdom. There will be people of all marital statuses who live in that kingdom in the Celestial Kingdom. I can provide that exact quote if you would like. It's available online, but this particular sermon comes from the amazing transcriptions done by LaJean Carruth in the Church History Department. She has unlocked a whole world of sermons that were written in shorthand and had never been translated before, written out into longhand, so she has a gift for shorthand and has been going through these lost sermons uncovering some lovely details to give more insight into history and theology from this early time period.
Hank Smith:	00:59:54	You are right when you said this is theological just point after point, after point of wow.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:00:02	Putting it side by side to what is being taught by other Christian faiths at the time, you see just how divergent it is, what people are used to experiencing in church.
Hank Smith:	01:00:15	Yeah. God has a body. I'm married in heaven.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:00:20	Yeah.

Hank Smith:	01:00:21	I have the same sociality. This is really fun. I find myself frequently quoting section 131 verse six, that you can't be saved in ignorance, meaning you eventually have to learn all these things. We'll go to the Celestial Kingdom and go, I have no idea how I got here but I'm sure glad I'm here. So sometimes like maybe today, Brittany, we want to avoid some topics like I'd rather not know about that, and I think the Joseph Smith, the Lord is teaching here. It goes back to Section 130 to gain knowledge and intelligence in this life. I'm excited for us to continue our discussion because I can't be saved in ignorance, so I'm excited for Brittany to teach me.
John Bytheway:	01:01:07	I also love verse seven, such a fascinating idea that all spirit is matter, but it is more fine or pure and can only be discerned by pure eyes. Whoa, this is great stuff. What do you call this metaphysics or? It's just so cool that we hear scripture or stories about our eyes were opened, and I just wonder if that's what it means, a purer eye somehow can see spiritual things in a better way, but spirit is matter. It's just more pure and refined. One of the reasons Plato did not like this idea of God having a body, if I understand correctly, is that matter is evil and coarse and unrefined in Greek philosophy. So for God to have a body, but this is talking about refined, beautiful. The resurrection is a resurrected body. It's not like the coarse, corruptible, to use Paul's words, type of body. Am I on the right track here?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:02:10	I think that's super interesting.
Hank Smith:	01:02:12	John, when you said, if we can become pure, we can see it. Do you remember Elisha and the young man where the young man says, we're gonna be destroyed. Elisha prays, dear Lord, open the eyes of this young man. And he sees the, what does he see?
John Bytheway:	01:02:30	The horses and chariots of fire.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:02:33	Chariots. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	01:02:35	Wow. John. I'd never connected those.



John Bytheway:	00:00:00	Let's talk about polygamy with Brittany Chapman Nash Doctrine and Covenants section 132.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:00:07	So before we jump into section 132, the revelation on eternal and plural marriage. I want everyone to understand that we do not need to leave this section feeling that we must have a testimony of plural marriage, that it's a requirement to believe in it in order to be a faithful member of the church. That is not the case. It is no longer practiced by Latter-day Saints. We admire the faith of those who practiced plural marriage as it was commanded in their time. We engage in this section coming to understand eternal marriage as a concept, coming to understand why plural marriage was asked of early Latter-day Saints, why Joseph Smith felt it needed to be restored. So we gain all of those things through Section 132. It's very problematic in many ways. I think if we look at it without being dismissive, in some ways it is a historical text and includes things we no longer need to live. That can affect the way that we read the text. It may not be as simple as discarding at all as, oh, that doesn't apply to me, but we can read it to understand the past and how it affected church members in the 19th century, how it affected the choices they made. We can also look to it in its promised blessings for those who make the eternal marriage covenant and what it can mean for those both monogamous and polygamous unions.
Hank Smith:	00:01:38	That's really helpful. I do something similar in an Old Testament class. We look at some of the commandments given to Joshua and Saul and think, I don't like that at all. Go to that city and destroy it. That's not to you. You're not commanded to live that. So we glean what we can and we are grateful that it's not us.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:02:01	We do get some of the most beautiful and inspiring stories of faith through people who chose to live polygamously. And it's such a rich history to build on. I'm just so grateful for those early saints who loved the Lord, who loved latter-day prophets, and with faith stepped into very difficult circumstances because they believed it was a commandment of God. Doctrine and

Covenants 132 is in a class of its own for a variety of reasons. One is that we have a lot of information about its context. Why was it written? Because like you asked, what's the purpose of D&C 129? How did that come about? We don't know because we don't have the backstory of it, at least that I'm aware of. For D&C 132, we have the backstory. I would love to share that with listeners so that they can approach it knowing how it came about and why we have a revelation written for one person.

00:03:04 That person is Emma Smith. The historical context of the revelation is written down by William Clayton, who was one of Joseph Smith's scribes and historians, but there are others that can corroborate with the account of how he recorded it. I'll just read straight from his account where he had written down several of Joseph Smith's revelations. They were in the red brick store. They were talking about plural marriage, and it was weighing on Joseph. He did not have Emma's support to practice the principle. He didn't know how to handle it. He was with his brother Hyrum and William Clayton. Hyrum said, just write a revelation and the principle's so plain I'll take the revelation over to her once it's complete and I'll read it to her and she'll believe because the doctrine's so plain. This is from William Clayton's later reminiscences of that day. He says that Hyrum said to Joseph, if you will write the revelation on celestial marriage, I will take it and read it to Emma and I believe I can convince her of its truth and you will hereafter have peace.

00:04:20 Joseph smiled and remarked, you do not know Emma as well as I do. Hyrum repeated his opinion and further remarked the doctrine is so plain I can convince any reasonable man or woman of its truth, purity, and heavenly origin or words to their effect. Joseph then said, well, I will write the revelation and we will see. We learned from this paragraph that this revelation came about to help appease Emma Smith's concerns about plural marriage. It's being dictated with Emma in mind and we see through the revelation that there are specific references to Joseph, specific references to Emma, which further conveys the domestic relationship in this revelation. Maybe he had other people besides Emma in mind for this revelation, but Emma was its primary audience. Hyrum presented the revelation to Emma. It did not go well.

Hank Smith: 00:05:20 Okay.

John Bytheway: 00:05:20 Surprise, surprise.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:05:21 Yeah. Emma rejected the revelation and according to existing records, she ended up burning it. She did not believe it. She

resisted it entirely. We won't follow that storyline with Emma and Joseph solely. We will more discuss what's inside this revelation and what happened because of this revelation. Joseph Smith and Emma were sealed together on May 28th, 1843. This revelation came July 12th, 1843, so just a few months after they had been sealed. We can learn that Emma was already familiar with the concept of eternal marriage. She and Joseph had already been sealed. Joseph Smith had been teaching the concept of eternal marriage for a number of years. By this time plural marriage was an appendage of that larger concept of eternal marriage. This revelation includes information about eternal marriage, but in my mind, this is a plural marriage document. It's not intended to teach us solely about eternal marriage. This is not all there is to know about marriage. It's intended to explain plural marriage to Emma. In the meantime, we get insight into what eternal marriage is.

Hank Smith: 00:06:43 Brittany, I really like that. I teach scripture classes at BYU and reading things in context is a very important skill. Who is the author? Who is the audience? What did the author intend? What did the audience receive? This likely wasn't written to you with you in mind as the audience.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:07:05 Exactly. And was it intended to go out as an instruction to the entire church? I think we can argue no that it was not. Joseph Smith had started teaching about plural marriage definitely by 1841, likely earlier, but by 1841, Joseph Smith and others were engaging in plural marriages. Why wasn't anything written down before then? It was a practice they wanted to keep tightly controlled. There was something significant. A change happened when something was written down. Once Joseph Smith moves to having a written revelation, there is a difference in how people receive that. So there was a lot of excitement when people heard that Joseph had written a revelation about plural marriage because there was power in starting out with a thus saith the Lord kind of rhetoric. Something that people could go back and see and read, but I'm getting ahead of myself. Perhaps that's why Hyrum felt it was important to have something written rather than something that she's just been taught because certainly many of these principles she had been taught before, she had gone back and forth in her support of polygamy, sometimes allowing it other times not because it was troubling for her, deeply troubling for her as others at the time.

00:08:44 I don't think it was easy for anyone when it was practiced in reality. Kind of how I want to frame this section going forward is in this quotation by Joseph F. Smith. He's the son of Hyrum Smith, later becomes President of the Church. He has what I

think is a good way to look at this revelation as a whole. He says, when the revelation was written in 1843, it was for a special purpose by the request of the patriarch Hyrum Smith and was not then designed to go forth to the church or to the world. It is most probable that had it then been written with a view to its going out as a doctrine of the church it would have been presented in a somewhat different form. There are personalities contained in a part of it which are not relevant to the principle itself, but rather to the circumstances which necessitated it's being written.

00:09:45 At that time, Joseph Smith on the day it was written, expressly declared that there was a great deal more connected with the doctrine, which would be revealed in due time, but this was sufficient for the occasion and was made to suffice for the time being end quote. That really rings true to me in how we should approach this section. It was a revelation made by the request of Hyrum Smith to read to Emma who had preexisting knowledge of eternal marriage and plural marriage. Sometimes as I've read the section, I felt like I've kind of dropped into a topic mid conversation or things are alluded to and you think, oh, you know I, what happened here? What's this? It could feel a little disjointed while reading that is because we are somewhat being dropped into a mid-conversation record. There's that as well to be mindful of as we go through and take a look at this.

00:10:48 Just to reinforce this great observation that Joseph F. Smith made. If it were written with a view of its going out as a doctrine of the church, it would've been presented in a somewhat different form. There's a great case to make because that's a precedent. This was included in the 1876 edition of the Doctrine and Covenants. It wasn't publicly presented to the church until 1852. Once the Saints were in the Salt Lake Valley, they had lived here for several years. They had kept the practice of plural marriage quiet, as quiet as they could for that long. They weren't preaching openly about it from the pulpit. If you were to live in a Latter-day Saint community, it would be obvious some people were practicing it. But if you are not in a Latter-day Saint community, if you lived in Europe, it would not have been something that was taught to you as a doctrine of the church.

00:11:44 But finally in 1852, they decided they would start preaching publicly about it Orson Pratt who we've heard about several times already, who put together this edition of the Doctrine and Covenants was the one who first talked about plural marriage in front of a large audience in Salt Lake City. After that, the

revelation was published, distributed in newspaper form and in some other formats over the years, and then finally came out canonized in 1876. Joseph Smith did not touch the revelation for it to be published. That was done completely without his say in the matter He had long been dead after that. In earlier versions of the Doctrine and Covenants, when they were prepared for publication during Joseph Smith's lifetime, he would make revisions to the revelations before they were printed so that they would be adapted for a broader readership. If we look through the revelations, they're written for people.

00:12:51 This is the same with them in mind as the revelations are being prepared for publication. It still includes the names of the people and the surrounding circumstances in the publications, but he does adapt them so that a broader audience can read them and understand them. Revelation is not necessarily a one and done event. It's ongoing, so I don't think it's problematic to be revising revelations for publication 'cause you're speaking to a different audience and we have an open canon. Revelation can be received in the preparing of publication. All of that is to say that there's a precedent for Joseph Smith having changed revelations in preparation for them going to a broader audience than he originally intended for that revelation. That likely would've been the case for D&C 132.

Hank Smith: 00:13:46 He didn't live to do that.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:13:48 Yeah, but he didn't live to do that. For our purposes if we read it with the understanding that it was for an audience of one primarily for an audience of one, that can help us in our reading. Also acknowledging that this is a historical document as well.

Hank Smith: 00:14:09 Brittany, I wanna make sure I understand. I don't wanna be saved in ignorance. Well, I can't be saved in ignorance. You're saying that quite a few sections of the Doctrine & Covenants were for an individual person and before they were published, Joseph would look at them and make changes based on, well, this was for the individual. This is gonna be better read by a broad audience and he has every right to do that. Revelation is a continuous thing. Section 132 did not go through that process because it's written and then Joseph doesn't revise it in any way for a general audience. So you're saying had Joseph been alive, this would likely be very different knowing it's gonna be read by everyone when it was really, it's kinda like me sending an email to John and it gets sent out to the world and I'm, oh, I wouldn't have said it that way had I known.

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:15:07	Or portions you would have maybe removed. Like in the section we find it's evident only Emma and Joseph Smith would've known what was being discussed that are still in there. So you know, things would've been removed and reflected more of just the doctrine.
Hank Smith:	00:15:25	That feels very important what you've just taught us. I get the feeling of, oh, I wonder what these other sections looked like before.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:15:35	I know, I think you can go see some of them on Joseph Smith Papers. I'm sure there's material there that you could access on that website.
Hank Smith:	00:15:43	And Brittany, walk me through just if you wouldn't mind how a historian says this is a document written by Joseph Smith, like I might read it and go, no, no, no, he didn't write this. You're telling me well, it does look different, but not because it wasn't written by Joseph Smith, but because it wasn't revised for publication.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:16:04	Yes, and it was written at a certain moment of time under certain pressures and circumstances. When you're looking at a document, particularly something as important as what you're going to declare as scripture, you want to make sure you know its provenance. Where did it come from? Who had it, whose possession was it in and for what period of time? That day, the revelation was copied by Joseph Kingsbury word for word. It was read back and verified as being the same document transcribed by William Clayton. Hyrum brought his William Clayton version of the revelation and Emma burned that revelation, but a copy was in the hands of Joseph Kingsbury. That copy was actually read in a very tight circle. It was read to the council of the 50 and a few other people had it in their possession for a short time. It did get small circulation during Joseph Smith's lifetime and of course plural marriage was continued to be taught during and after Joseph Smith's death by that corpus of people who had the revelation.
	00:17:26	It was not read publicly though until 1852. In that time period it had been in the possession of Newell K. Whitney and then was given to Brigham Young. We have record of the hands that it went between. Provenance is really important for establishing whether or not a record can be trusted as being what it says it is and having a line that you can trace of people. There wasn't just a gap of 30 years and then this document shows up out of nowhere. And then what's being said around the document, you like to be able to triangulate your sources. How many sources?

		Bad, good, it doesn't matter if they're friendly sources or unfriendly sources. What mentions this, the more sources you can get that at least make reference or illusion to something existing, the better. It's quite clear that this document is what it says it is, that it was indeed dictated by Joseph Smith and kept in possession of church leaders until it was announced at the pulpit in 1852.
Hank Smith:	00:18:39	That's important, Brittany. It's important because if I don't like something I might decide it's not what it is. I'm gonna throw it out.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:18:47	And there are things in here that are certainly troubling that many people, 19th century Saints included, would love to think didn't exist and throw out. There is harsh language used in this section that doesn't seem to coincide with other sections. So it has a different tone than other sections do. What can we attribute that to? Is it because it was directed just to Emma? Is it because it did not go through a revision process? We don't know what all of those parts may play in what we have now.
Hank Smith:	00:19:24	Okay. I really appreciate this discussion. It's a little intricate, but I think all of us need a little mini history degree to say, okay, how do you do this? Because history is not easy. It's not a hobby that you can just pick up any more than being a dentist. Yeah, I watched a couple YouTube videos, therefore I'm a historian. It's nice to have someone who said no, there's rules, there's evidence.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:19:51	People are always just trying to do their best. You're always looking for more information to help strengthen your position. You were always in the midst of pointing to what makes the most sense based on evidence.
Hank Smith:	00:20:03	I can definitely feel the tension. There's not very many sections of Doctrine & Covenants that we would say that's gotta go. So there's a tension over this one.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:20:14	Yeah, for sure.
Hank Smith:	00:20:15	You're helping us lay out the truth based on the evidence.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:20:19	Yeah. As far as I understand it, and by no means claim perfection or perfect knowledge, just sharing the understanding I've come to, so as we dive into the section itself, it again, like many of the other sections in the Doctrine and Covenants comes as a answer to a question or questions that Joseph Smith

		has had in trying to understand the Old Testament patriarchs. He sees his role to restore all things for this new dispensation of times that he sees himself as being a part of this opening. All things in past dispensations should be renewed in this new dispensation and looking back at the Old Testament for patterns and what's been done in other dispensations, polygamy is something that he observes and he's questioning is that something that needs to be restored?
John Bytheway:	00:21:14	Is this one of those I wish I would never have asked.
Hank Smith:	00:21:20	Well, you're right Brittany. He is searching the Old Testaments where we get Zion, right? Melchizedek Priesthood, Aaronic Priesthood, temples.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:21:27	The early Saints very much identify with the Old Testament Saints like they refer to themselves as you know Israel. He was pondering about these Old Testament patriarchs and then also pondering what does marriage look like? What's the eternal nature of marriage and what is it like in heaven? We see echoes of that question throughout this section trying to see into the next life. I would say the primary purpose of this section is to explain the practice of plural marriage, like we're dropped into a conversation like we discussed earlier, and the concept of eternal marriage, which Joseph Smith had been teaching since the mid 1830s is in this section to give plural marriage context. I wish we had a separate revelation about eternal marriage on its own. I think we would benefit a lot from that additional knowledge. We're just seeing it in part here in this section. So we see eternal marriage in the context of plural marriage and I hope that is not too confusing.
Hank Smith:	00:22:30	That makes sense. So we're not getting a revelation on what God thinks about marriage. Right? Like we're getting a piece of what he thinks about marriage, the plural marriage part.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:22:43	Yeah, so it's like, you know that eternal marriage that we were talking about, this is how plural marriage fits into eternal marriage.
Hank Smith:	00:22:49	We're missing what could be the rest of the conversation.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:22:52	Right. In the beginning, the revelation opens up in verse one with verily thus saith the Lord and acknowledges the questions Joseph Smith had about the Old Testament practice of polygamy. It addresses the ancient roots of polygamy that

		modern polygamy can be seen of as an extension of the ancient practice.
Hank Smith:	00:23:16	It's interesting that he says in verse three, prepare your heart to receive and obey.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:23:22	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	00:23:23	In other words, brace for impact.
Hank Smith:	00:23:27	Wait, what?
John Bytheway:	00:23:28	Here it comes.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:23:30	You're not going to like this. He goes on after that very wary introduction there to explain what is eternal marriage. That's a concept that most people love to learn about and have no problem with. You know, we love the thought of being able to be with our loved ones as we've talked about so much today. We love that eternal sealing, eternal marriage exists so we can be united with our loved ones forever. In verse six it talks about, and as pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant, it was instituted for the fullness of my glory and he that receiveth a fullness thereof must and shall abide the law here pertaining to the new and everlasting covenant. I think we can think of that as eternal marriage as opposed to a new and everlasting covenant referred to in verse four. As we enter this section, we're kind of interweaving eternal marriage and plural marriage and when it's being referred to verse three, prepare yourself, prepare thy heart for I will reveal unto you a new and everlasting covenant that we can think of as being polygamy. Verse six, the new and everlasting covenant is eternal marriage. We can see how polygamy may be an element or a part of the bigger concept of eternal marriage.
Hank Smith:	00:24:59	Okay. That's very helpful, Brittany. I really appreciate that distinction between verse four and verse six, a new and everlasting covenant, the new and everlasting covenant. I remember four years ago, John, when Dr. Holbrook was here, we'll put a link in our show notes and on YouTube for that episode as well. So then Brittany and Kate can be mission companions on this.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:25:23	Yes.
Hank Smith:	00:25:23	We can have our listeners listen to both. John, do you remember she said, can we agree that God uses monogamous

marriages to bring about his purposes, which is of course, yes, and she said, can we also agree that not all monogamous marriages look the way God wants them to look? Yes. Right, yes. That then she bridged that to can we agree that sometimes God uses polygamous marriages to bring about his purposes and here we've got Brittany pointing out Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, and we said, yes, John, if you remember she said yes and she said, and then can we agree that not all polygamous marriages look the way God wants them to look? There's some clarity in that statement. God is commenting Brittany on both in this section.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:26:13 Yeah, in this we see that, and I adore that statement not only because it's from Kate who I adore and admire, but because it rings true in many different ways because oftentimes it's easy to think of polygamy as being something so different from monogamy, but in reality the same thing is happening like in Latter-day Saints theology, like the same ordinance is occurring. Just how that is manifest is different, but the covenants and blessings are the same. How we choose to live them is our opportunity.

Hank Smith: 00:26:53 Brittany, I really appreciate how gentle you're being with us because when you're talking marriage, you're talking about the most intimate relationship of someone's life. I've noticed in other sections of the Doctrine & Covenants when things happen or now there's scriptures where things happen that we don't like and we don't get as emotional about this section 132 and plural marriage. It brings out just a lot of emotion. I think that's important to acknowledge. That's okay.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:27:25 Absolutely. I mean we feel very protective of people. Some tension comes when there's question about the abuse of authority. Is Joseph Smith abusing the trust that people have placed in him as a prophet and asking something contrary to God's will? That was a very real thought, then at that time period, and now it's still a question. When we ask that question, we can look at the people who were heeding the council to marry polygamously. What was their rationale? Why did they choose to do it and what were the fruits of plural marriage in their lives? For some plural marriage was a negative and horrible experience. For others, it was beautiful and a wonderful choice that they made for their lives. By and large, people were motivated to marry plurarly because they believed it was a commandment of God. Most had a holy motivation. I would say, you know, it was a decision based out of religious conviction.

	00:28:32	We have such an emotional reaction to it because it involves those very tender relationships that we hold most dear, and marriage in itself is a huge step in trust. When you're trusting someone else to walk with you through life. For Latter-day Saints to walk with you through eternity, you would never want that trust to be tossed away or treated as unimportant. This is where we must look back and rely on the stories of those 19th century Saints who received this revelation during the time that polygamy was being asked to being lived. How did they hear this revelation? How did they see it being acted out? In verse seven, the revelation begins talking about the sealing power. There's a phrase that says, I have appointed unto my servant Joseph to hold this power in the last days and there is never but one on earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred.
	00:29:35	So there's one person who holds the keys and we suggest that even today one President of the Church who holds the keys, but even in Joseph Smith's day, he passed those keys to others and allowed them the sealing power as well. So Joseph Smith never sealed his own unions. He wasn't going around marrying himself to other people. He gave the keys to other men who would then seal him to his spouses. That's something that's always been part of the Latter-day Saint practice of marriage, including plural marriage is the sharing of those priesthood keys to seal. In saying that he did tightly regulate the practice in giving permission for those who could seal who had the sealing power, so not everybody did.
Hank Smith:	00:30:29	It was invitation, it was calling, it was I am trusting you.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:30:34	Right, and it was not something flippantly done. There are really fascinating stories over and over. You see similar patterns of women during this novel period asked to practice and it's a similar pattern of being like absolutely horrified that such a practice would exist and then a period of intense prayer seeking. Then if it's asked of them submitting or accepting the practice, some chose not to practice it personally, but had a testimony of the principle and others rejected the principle, and I'm probably getting too ahead of myself there. We're in verse seven, there's one portion that says that marriages should be entered into and sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise and my dear friend Jonathan Stapley has written a book that's published by Oxford University Press, it's called Holiness to the Lord. In there he explores what exactly this Holy Spirit of promise is and how it was understood at that time.

00:31:38 I'm just gonna read straight from his book. He says, the Holy Spirit of promise is a New Testament term referring to the Holy Ghost and Joseph Smith understood it to mean the power and authority to solemnize relationships that endure for eternity. Smith taught that through this power, the human family could be sealed together in a durable network. Being sealed together meant creating heaven or as participants called it the Priesthood. The Holy Spirit of promise was seen as the power and authority to solemnize relationships that endure for eternity. So the sealing power is essential for an eternal relationship and is part of that vision there that we see in verse seven. If we turn to verse 18, it says, and again verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me or by my word, which is my law and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, so like what we just learned about the sealing power through him whom I have anointed and appointed unto this power, then it is not valid neither of force when they are out of the world because they are not joined by me saith the Lord.

00:32:54 He's reiterating here the importance of receiving a temple marriage that's sealed by the sealing power. One thing I think is really amazing about our faith is that while emphasizing the importance of receiving the sealing ordinance on earth, there's also a way provided to allow people who are not Latter-day Saints who lived long before the Restoration to be sealed as well through proxy work in the temples. I really love that in conjunction with all of these declarations that it must occur in this life, there's also always this redemptive option in proxy work in the temple that it's never too late for a person to not partake in these blessings because of the work we have in the temples. This is not an exclusive club of people who have chosen to marry in the temple during this life. It's for all people, all places, all times.

00:33:57 What are those blessings for being sealed in the temple? We read in verse 20, this amazing, amazing promise then shall they be gods because they have no end. Therefore, shall they be from everlasting to everlasting because they continue. Then shall they be above all because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods because they have all power and the angels are subject unto them. My husband brought to my attention while reading this verse, the word they all throughout it then shall they be gods because they have no end. Therefore, shall they be everlasting to everlasting because they continue. This is a journey with two people. It's not just the man having no end. It's not just the woman. It's a partnership that's required to achieve this glorified state in the next life of being

		able to create. That is what it means to be a god, a lowercase god. You have the blessing to continue to create and progress. That is a gift.
Hank Smith:	00:35:08	That you can continue when the Lord says, I think in this section he says it a few times, ye shall be damned. I don't think he's saying I'm going to punish you. I think he's saying the opposite of what you just said. You don't continue.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:35:23	Yeah. I was curious how did they use the word damned scripturally and did they refer to what the word meant with regard to this section, in the early days, people who were actually taught by Joseph Smith, did they say anything about this? There wasn't a ton, but what I did find seemed to confirm your reading, Hank of it, discussing a period of not being able to progress because of decisions made or not made.
Hank Smith:	00:35:52	We read a tone there in our 2025 vernacular of ye shall be damned. It's this horrific, like, the tone seems so harsh. That's not, right is that what you're saying? It's not that.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:36:07	That's my understanding.
Hank Smith:	00:36:09	Brittany, I do want to hear from the people themselves, and I know you've brought some of that. We can't hit every verse. Are there any particular verses you'd like to highlight?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:36:21	I think it's important to highlight what people saw as the blessings for entering into plural marriage. What was the motivation that they looked forward to receiving by making that decision? We see in verses 19 and 20 things like inheriting thrones, principalities, rise in the first resurrection, exaltation, continuation of seed, meaning continuing to be able to have children. These are all blessings of the marriage covenant, not just plural marriage, but the eternal marriage covenant. Then we also look to this section because it contains doctrinal reasons for why people were motivated to practice plural marriage in verses 36, 50, 51. We see a theme here of Abrahamic sacrifice. This is an interesting insight as we look to Latter-day Saints in the past, people in the 19th century are reading this for direction about the choices they should make with their lives looking to this for why God is asking them to practice plural marriage.
	00:37:33	We know the story from the Old Testament where Abraham is asked to sacrifice his precious son. People look at this like, and Abraham was blessed for having been willing to make that

		sacrifice, so they thought, okay, well, let me place my all on the altar. My most precious relationship with my spouse. Let me offer that to God and this is an Abrahamic sacrifice so he will see how faithful I'm willing to be. A lot of people looked at plural marriage as being sort of this test as the Lord was making his people the Israelites, modern Zion. Because the Saints saw themselves, they related a lot to Israel and they recognized God would have a tried people, were being purified through this practice. Those were reasons that they felt polygamy was being asked of them to perform because God was creating a people through trial and struggle.
Hank Smith:	00:38:35	Brittany, what you just said reminds me of a thought. I actually shared this four years ago. This is a incredibly bright individual. She said, when I first began my journey studying polygamy, I was angry by what I saw as an injustice that God required such a difficult principle to be lived by these faithful tried people, but as I studied the personal writings and stories, accepting them on their own terms, I found peace. The practice could have never been sustained for a half century by compulsion, manipulation, or simple sexual desire. Those who set the foundation of the Latter-day Saint faith were not two dimensional superheroes as they're sometimes portrayed. They were complex, strong, intelligent, full-bodied kingdom builders who were willing to leave loved ones, wealth, comfort, and native countries for what they believed to be true. This same willingness drove them to accept polygamy, a practice they accepted as a commandment of God instituted in their time for His unique purposes. I have since come to view plural marriage as part of the Latter-day Saint history to unapologetically own and to hold as one of the most valuable testaments of faith in the history of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brittany Chapman Nash wrote that.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:40:01	Yeah, that's a hundred percent how I feel and how I feel we should look at polygamy and how we can view the topic as a whole. I mean, I wish I could just say that and be all done.
Hank Smith:	00:40:14	But it was an Abrahamic sacrifice, which should be honored.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:40:20	Yeah. They really were offering their all on the altar, whatever that was required of them.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:41:15 As I researched people's stories, I became reassured that most marriages were entered in with consent, with good faith, with all the mature understanding made in good faith intentionally done because people believed in the promises outlined in Doctrine and Covenants 132, wanting to give those blessings to their descendants. They were worthy impulses. There are so many good sources out there that can help people process the theological nitty gritty of D&C 132. A couple of things I would like to address is what were people's reactions to the plural marriage revelation? We start getting into the Utah period at the time because the Saints are in Utah. By the time it's read publicly, how did people receive this commandment and how did people apply it to their own lives? Because as we read scripture today, we see ourselves in the revelation to Oliver Cowdery where the Lord says, you should have done more than just ask me.

00:42:26 We see ourselves in all of these different revelations and try to apply them to us. In the 19th century, Saints were no different. The women saw themselves as Emma. The men saw themselves as Joseph, so how did their readings of these scriptures affect them? The doctrine is hard and unpopular now, just as it was then. People had all different kinds of reactions to it from the moment it was articulated and read for the first time to Emma, she burned the revelation. It's been received with tension ever since. There is forceful language used in Doctrine & Covenants 132 for Emma to accept plural marriage. That made me wonder, well, with such harsh language, how were women who were asked to be married in Nauvoo respond? Did all of them feel pressure to accept Joseph Smith's or others marriage proposals and if they didn't accept, how did it go for them?

00:43:25 Were they damned like the scriptures say? What did it look like on the ground in actual practice, not just in the word of the scriptures? I was interested to find that there were women who rejected Joseph Smith's marriage proposals. There were no negative social repercussions to them. They weren't slandered in society or suffered anything negative. From what I can tell, Sarah Kimball is one of those women who's a very prominent woman. She helped found the Relief Society. In her 1883

autobiography she records this following instance. She says, early in the year, 1842, Joseph Smith taught me the principle of marriage for eternity and the doctrine of plural marriage. He said that in teaching this, he realized that he jeopardized his life, but God had revealed it to him many years before as a privilege with blessing. Now, God had revealed it again and instructed him to teach it with commandment as the church could travel or progress no further without the introduction of this principle.

00:44:26 I asked him to teach it to someone else. He looked at me reprovingly and said, will you tell me who to teach it to? God requires me to teach it to you and leave you with the responsibility of believing or disbelieving. She chose not to marry him, but you know there was no negative repercussion. They still enjoyed a friendship. She accomplished great good and was very much an essential part of the community and continue to be a believer in Joseph Smith even after rejecting a plural marriage proposal. There's another story about a young woman named Cordelia Morley Cox. Joseph Smith would often go through people's trusted friends or family members to approach plural marriage proposals. He wouldn't always go himself and make the proposal like he did in this case with Sarah Kimball. In Cordelia's case, she learned about the principle through her parents. She rejected it outright.

00:45:27 In her words, she said, she refused, stating, I knew nothing of such religion and could not accept it neither did I. There were no negative social repercussions for her or her family. Interestingly, in her case, later on after Joseph Smith's death, she chose to marry polygamously. She was eventually converted to the principle of plural marriage. We see that in practice. Nothing harsh happened to people who did not choose to practice polygamy, and we see that in Nauvoo and we also see that in Utah where there were always a minority of people practicing polygamy. They were still considered faithful, valuable, worthy Latter-day Saints.

Hank Smith: 00:46:12 I'm sure there's exception. I'm sure we could search and find somebody who says they were rejected by their family. You're saying the vast experience of people was they didn't want to do it, and they were...

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:46:25 Exactly. Every story is different. It's hard to make generalizations.

Hank Smith: 00:46:30 There wasn't a standard church practice of reject this and we march you out of Salt Lake and...

Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:46:36	Absolutely not. Yeah. Yeah. These two scenarios I shared deal specifically with Joseph Smith and how he understood there was no ill feeling when he was rejected in his marriage proposals.
Hank Smith:	00:46:51	This is so difficult Brittany. You're walking us through this in such a tender way and I really appreciate it. Let me throw something out at you both, in 1 Nephi chapter three and four we get to a very difficult story, and I don't know if I saw it as difficult until I presented the Book of Mormon to someone who'd never read it. They tell me, I don't wanna read this. Your prophet is decapitating someone. I thought, oh, I guess that's true. I never thought of it that way. As I've thought about that, I thought, okay, well that's a very natural response. Thou shalt not kill, Nephi kill, and I've thought, well, I trust Nephi. Everything else in Nephi's record tells me I can trust him. It's none of my business really. It's between him and the Lord. I can't see myself inserting myself.
	00:47:45	I need an explanation for this. I'm sure the Lord would say, what do you have to do with any of it? and I'm okay waiting to hear it from Nephi. If there is gonna be a good explanation, it's gonna come from him or the Lord. I feel that same way about plural marriage, that here's this commandment, here's this opposite instruction. This is between them and the Lord. Everything else in their lives tell me they can all be, these are all very trusted, faithful individuals. I don't know about both of you. I bet you'd say the same thing. I'm okay waiting, if there is an explanation to hear it from them. I can stay active in the church, love my church, love my testimony, and say, yeah, one day I bet we'll hear it from them.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:48:33	Right. Also to recognize, no matter how a person feels on this principle, they're likely not alone in their reaction or emotion to things. It was likely experienced by the Saints then and now. No one should feel ashamed about how they may read or feel about D&C 132 or the topic of polygamy.
Hank Smith:	00:48:56	I wanna be careful here. I find it heartbreaking that many of our friends would throw out their entire faith over this, and it's not that they're bad people. I just find that heartbreaking. In your mind, that doesn't have to happen. If I don't feel good about this, do I have to throw everything out that Joseph Smith ever said or did?
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:49:18	That's a really hard issue because for some people it calls into question Joseph Smith's character, and because we base so much on his testimony, I mean his, is he telling the truth about

his story? That when you feel like, oh, maybe there's an unrighteous exercise of power so I can understand where someone is coming from. Certainly. At the same time, I would take the qualm up with the people who actually had to practice and what they had to say about it and their experiences. How did they defend themselves in their practice? And there's no shortage of writing from Latter-day Saints in the 19th century defending themselves saying, this is why I'm choosing to practice. This is how I'm manifesting my faith. I think if a person reads them and their words, the anger and offense we may feel on their behalf, like I once certainly felt, it just kind of goes away because you realize they were making a choice and they understood the choice that they were making and why they were doing it. For me, I came to a point where I could just trust them, trust in what they were saying, that it was true.

Hank Smith: 00:50:39 Brittany, one of the many positive reviews of your book, Let's Talk About Polygamy, this one was written by a woman named Erin. She said, back in 2006, I had a major faith crisis centered around the position of women in my religion, past and present. I particularly was grappling with the polygamy in our history. As I was wrestling with this, I had a life altering flash of revelation for all my angst about it. I had never once in my life read what one of these women had to say about her experiences or her life. In fact, if you asked me to even come up with the names of five of them, I couldn't do it. I realized that if I was going to experience angst, I should really have a better understanding of what I had angst about and who I was feeling it on behalf of. She goes through and tells about reading your book.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:51:36 That's key is to understand who these people are and why they chose to practice it, and in the end, you'll have nothing but admiration because we are human. There are people who did not practice polygamy well, just as there are people who did not, do not practice monogamy well, but it can be an exceptionally faith promoting topic to learn about.

John Bytheway: 00:51:58 I keep remembering what MacLane Heward taught us rather than being offended for them, then let's be inspired by them. In a similar way instead of thinking about what people think of Joseph Smith today who've never met him, why don't we talk about people who actually knew him? What did they have to say about him that interacted with him? We can meet him later and ask him stuff if we need to, but right now I've gotta learn to be nice to my neighbors and my cat, and I've gotta learn, you know, I've got my own things I gotta worry about. Yeah. I love Section 101. In that day when the Lord shall come, He shall reveal all things, things which have passed, hidden things which

		no man knew, and I just think we don't have all the facts right now. I think it's part of the test. Will I go forward with faith when I don't know the reasons for everything? It's part of of our test.
Hank Smith:	00:53:02	Yeah. I've learned in the temple to wait for further light and knowledge and I know not save the Lord commanded me, right?
John Bytheway:	00:53:11	Good old Father Adam. That is one of the best stories. If we can take that instead of, okay, heavenly Father, I'm willing to do everything, but I need to know exactly why I'm doing everything and you better explain it really well, or I'm not doing it.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:53:27	If we loop back to 1852, how did the Saints receive it? It was totally diverse. There is a missionary named Fanny Stenhouse serving with her husband Thomas in Switzerland, and so she received a publication of the revelation while they were there and she said, before I had got through one half, I threw it aside feeling altogether rebellious against God and began to feel perfectly reckless and even willing to throw aside my religion and take my chance of salvation rather than submit to polygamy for I felt that the new doctrine was a degradation to womankind. So she really struggled with those feelings. She later allowed her husband to marry plurally, so there was some kind of reconciliation, but eventually both she and her husband left the church partially over this principle. But for others, the revelation inspired their joining the church. A woman named Emily B. Spencer, she said that when she was 18, she read the revelation on plural marriage. She said, my mind being already prepared, I readily believed it. I clearly saw that if I did not join The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I could not be united with my husband through eternity as I had fondly hoped. I believed then, as I know now, that this revelation on celestial marriage was from the Lord, and I have been blessed in believing it.
Hank Smith:	00:54:53	I have never heard of someone joining the church.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:54:58	Isn't that interesting?
John Bytheway:	00:54:58	That's a new one.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	00:54:59	Yeah. I think she had been reading the Old Testament in her reference to her mind being prepared. She had been thinking and pondering on that. A woman named Sarah C. Jensen, she joined the church in Denmark in 1850, was asked to translate the revelation from German into Danish when it had come to

Europe. Later, she recalled being asked to do this and said, this was the first I had ever heard or seen of this doctrine of polygamy. I must say that I was thunderstruck. It was so contrary to my feeling and tradition that I stopped. Some doubts came to me and after a severe struggle with weeping and praying, I saw some light and the Lord speak peace to my soul, and I had a testimony of the divinity of this great revelation, and by the help of God, I felt willing to make this great sacrifice and in due time to obey this command.

00:55:51 I lived in this order for 33 years until my husband's death. I translated the revelation, which was the first printed in the Danish language. This wrestle and reconciliation was a frequent pattern that you see, so this pattern continued through the second generation, and once people came to Utah, polygamy became part of the fabric of society. Children were born into polygamous families, had polygamous relatives. It was normal in their community. That doesn't mean that it was necessarily embraced fully or practiced universally. There was always a minority of people who chose to live that way. There's a woman named Martha Craig Cox. I just love her autobiography. She was married in 1869 through reading what became section 132. By reading that revelation, she became converted to the principle of polygamy. She became converted to the principle of plural marriage and wanted to marry that way, and her family was very upset and I'll read you their reaction and then her subsequent reaction to that.

00:57:00 She writes in her autobiography, my decision to marry into a plural family tried my family, all of them, and in giving them trial, I was sorely tried. I had studied out the matter. I knew the principle of plural marriage to be correct, to be the highest holiest order of marriage. I knew too that I might fail to live the holy life required and lose the blessings offered if I had not learned before to go to the Lord with my burden. I surely learned to go to him now having decided to enter this order, it seemed I had passed the Rubicon. I could not go back, though I feign would've done so rather than incur the hatred of my family. If the Lord would've manifested an answer to my sleepless nights of prayer that the principle of plural marriage was wrong and it was not the will of heaven that I should enter it, I felt I should be happy, but it only made me miserable beyond endurance.

00:57:47 When I tried to recede from the decision I had made to enter it, my only relief was in prayer, and prayer only strengthened my resolve to the decision I had made to enter it. She said, when the final decision was made known to my family that I could not

recede from my purpose, the storm broke upon my head. It was not a marriage of love they claimed, and in saying so they struck me a blow for I could not say that I had really loved the man as lover's love, though I loved his wives and the spirit of their home, I could not assure my family that my marriage was gotten up solely on the foundation of love for a man. The fact was I had asked the Lord to lead me in the right way for my best good and the way to fit me for a place in his kingdom.

00:58:29 He had told me how to go and I must follow in the paths he dictated, and that was all there was to it. Women came to their own decisions about what to do to direct their life path just as we do now. Personal revelation was a key element for these marriages, as was agency. Each person has had their individual journey of what made them eventually accept the principle. Some lived their entire lives of believing Latter-day Saints and never accepted the principle of polygamy. I feel kind of heretical saying this, but they weren't considered unfaithful by not practicing polygamy. It was a choice that people made.

John Bytheway: 00:59:11 So Brittany, you would say that consent was always part of it as it was taught.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 00:59:17 As it was taught for sure. Thanks to Orson Pratt he wrote out the entire plural marriage sealing ceremony in the periodical. The Seer. It's available online, written in 1853. And agency is actually a crucial part of the sealing ceremony. The expectation of consent is built into plural marriage in the ritual itself and in the way it is meant to be practiced. Of course, there were times where coercion occurred unfortunately, or social pressure. Those things did happen and that was wrong. That was not the intention of the practice. It was meant to be engaged in through free will.

Hank Smith: 01:00:03 I like how you've taken us through some of these stories. You've done exactly what you want our listeners to do, which is let's hear from

John Bytheway: 01:00:11 from the people who actually know.

Sis. Brittany Nash: 01:00:14 Yeah. Who wrestled with the feelings just like we do, but for them with the reality that it was a way to live. They would choose to live.

Hank Smith: 01:00:23 Yeah. What was that like, Brittany reading all those?

Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:00:27	It was really inspiring. Some things made me upset and those feelings of righteous indignation came, surfaced. You know, you just need to go back and just like Martha Craig Cox, it was a decision she made and her family was upset, but she was committed and determined that for her this was the path she wanted to take. It was faith in God and what she felt he wanted for her life that made her make that decision, and this is one of my all time favorite polygamy quotes, but this is what Martha.
Hank Smith:	01:01:07	We've rarely heard that. Just, yeah,
John Bytheway:	01:01:09	I don't think anybody else has a list of those.
Hank Smith:	01:01:11	Has ever said.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:01:12	I have a long list of great quotes or I should say of stirring faith promoting quotes from these polygamists. Martha reflecting back on her lifetime with her two sister wives. She says, to me, it is a joy to know that we laid the foundation of a life to come while we lived in that plural marriage that we three who loved each other more than sisters, children of one mother love, will go hand in hand together down through all eternity. That knowledge is worth more to me than gold and more than compensates for all the sorrow I have ever known. You just get the sense of like the depth of relationship that these plural families allowed women to have as well. I mean, along with its difficulties, it came with unique blessings too. For Martha it was these intensely rich and loving relationships with her sister wives and their children.
	01:02:07	How she says here, their children of one mother love, they all shared each other's children, so that was really lovely. It wasn't just women who wrote about polygamy. There's a bunch of men as well, but one of my favorite quotes from a man, his name is Andrew J. Hansen. He had three wives. He wrote his autobiography after the 1890 manifesto, the beginning of the end of polygamy. He's reflecting back on his life as a husband to multiple wives, the faith that drove him and his wives to marry. So after telling those stories, he says, to future generations who will have been brought up under monogamy conditions. The foregoing will no doubt seem absurd, but I make no apologies. I owe none. Celestial and plural marriage is a law of heaven, and at that time enforced among God's people on earth, sanctioned and approved by him, and I knew it.
	01:03:05	Sorry, that quote makes me teary. It stirs emotion in me because I see the faith in their, you know, the fearlessness and the determination to obey God in a difficult commandment,

		recognizing that at that time it was enforced. He's saying this after the manifesto, after polygamy is no longer being practiced, he saw it was a period of time that God commanded the practice of polygamy, and he knew it because it was within his stewardship at that time to act upon that commandment. So he was given the testimony to act upon it. We don't have that same stewardship, that same need to have a testimony of polygamy because it's not in our stewardship to practice that now. We leave the testimonies with those who practiced it. Polygamy is not something we should feel ashamed of or feel sheepish about or apologetic. It's history. It's our history, and it gave the Latter-day Saints a great legacy of faith to build on. The polygamists in our Latter-day Saint past would be happy to have offered that legacy of faith to us.
Hank Smith:	01:04:21	Brittany, I've found that not only am I inspired by the people you've been telling us about, but I'm inspired by you. There's a sense of spiritual depth to someone who's gone through the process of reading and writing and grappling, and then they come and talk to you and you can feel it.
John Bytheway:	01:04:42	There are probably very few people who have done what you have done, Brittany, and gone through those actual stories. We may never do that, but I can look at the outcome of what you have come to know. Yeah, and it gives me a measure of peace to know.
	01:04:58	She's looked at hundreds of these stories and I can go and look at her. She's okay. Testimony intact. And I can go. Okay.
Hank Smith:	01:05:10	I'm sure you'll say no, no, but you know, we talked in the beginning about visiting angels, how you can know if they're full of light. I think John, would you, I would describe Brittany that way we can clearly discern.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:05:22	Mm wow.
Hank Smith:	01:05:23	Yeah. We can clearly discern. For a lot of our listeners, Brittany, you're gonna be that angel of light in maybe a dark place that they're in when it comes to this topic.
John Bytheway:	01:05:34	And maybe they can say, you know, I still don't have a testimony of this. She told me I didn't have to have one, but I can put this on the doesn't fit yet pile and I can move forward with all of the things that I know that do fit. I'm gonna move forward with those.

Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:05:51	Yeah. That's the hardest piece. It's okay to not expect it to ever fit. It may not ever fit, and that that's okay with polygamy.
John Bytheway:	01:06:00	And you don't have to have a testimony of it right now.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:06:03	You do not. You do not need to. And there's nothing wrong with you if you feel negatively about it, people have wrestled with it, have lived it, and we can leave it with them. We can leave it with the 19th century Saints.
Hank Smith:	01:06:17	If you wanna get a message to Brittany, come on to YouTube and leave a comment there, or come to our website and we'll make sure she gets all of those. Brittany, I think there's going to be many, many, many people who we love 'cause they're part of our family. Right, John?
John Bytheway:	01:06:32	Right.
Hank Smith:	01:06:33	You know, listeners will say, thank you so much for what you do, and I say, no, thank you for listening. We are a partnership here and I think you've blessed many, many of them. We'll refer to you Brittany, as our angel of light here.
Sis. Brittany Nash:	01:06:49	Thank you.
Hank Smith:	01:06:51	With that, we want to thank Sister Brittany Chapman Nash for joining us today and giving up her time and expertise. We wanna thank our executive producer Shannon Sorensen, our sponsors David and Verla Sorensen, and every episode we remember our founder. John, when Steve and I talked about starting this, he said, we need to get these faithful, brilliant scholars to Latter-day Saints. It's exactly what we did today.
John Bytheway:	01:07:19	That's what we get to do. Yeah.
Hank Smith:	01:07:20	We remember our founder, Steve Sorensen. We hope you'll join us next week. We only have a few more episodes on the Doctrine & Covenants coming up 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. FollowHIM.co. That's followHIM.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, Sydney Smith and Annabelle Sorensen.



Hank Smith:	00:03	Hey, welcome to followHIM Favorites. This is where John and I share a single story to go with each week's lesson. John, do I have a story for you. We are in sections 129 through 132 this week, we're talking quite a bit about eternity, Celestial kingdom, sealing. Well, what would you say if I told you that on Saturday, May 2nd, 2015, the Rexburg Temple was abuzz? Because John listen to this, an 82-year-old man was going to be sealed that day to his 35-year-old mother and his 38-year-old father. Are you interested?
John Bytheway:	00:45	They were born on leap year? I don't know, how does that happen? Yeah.
Hank Smith:	00:49	I think you're gonna love this. Now, this story is told by Diane Packer. She's a friend of mine. Her daughter is Julie Lewis, and I need to give them credit for this, John, because Diane is an excellent writer, and Julie is an excellent speaker. I actually heard Julie tell this story, and I was able to get the copy of what Diane had written, so they get full credit for how well this story is told and how beautiful it is. John, this story starts on September 9th, 1932. A baby is born to young parents. He is mentally handicapped, and at some time in his early, early childhood, he is quote institutionalized. So apparently this is very common for that day to take a mentally handicapped child and give them to the state. John, this boy, this little boy, his name is Harry.
	01:39	He's gonna spend most of his life in mental hospital group homes, things run by the government. Now, 47 years after Harry is born, Megan is born. She has a completely different life than Harry. There's almost no information about him but her from the minute she was born, Diane writes, to her first sounds, she had dotting parents and siblings who cuddled her, nurtured her, and delighted in her very existence. She has lots of pictures and journal entries as evidence. About the time that Megan is taking her first steps, Harry was moved into yet another group home where he would spend 30 years. It was a converted motel. There were several cabin type rooms. He's got his room

and to go eat somewhere, he has gotta go outside and go down to that room and eat. Not a lot of information about him. Definitely a hard situation, John.

John Bytheway: 02:37 Yeah.

Hank Smith: 02:37 A sad situation. Megan grows up, she goes to college. She meets the amazing Cody, apparently, and they welcome their first child in 2000. They end up having two other children, one in 2003 and another in 2005. John, what happens next is that Megan becomes certified to care for mentally handicapped adults. It was much like foster care. They help these older adults. Maybe their parents are aging and they can't care for them, or maybe there is no family at all. So you interact with these mentally handicapped adults, and this is something that Megan and Cody and their family did. In December of 2008, the home that Harry is in, there's some investigations. They find out that he and the others there have been in deplorable living conditions. John, there's locks on the heaters so they can't use them if they need them.

John Bytheway: 03:33 Oh man.

Hank Smith: 03:33 They are gonna shut down this home. 33 of these mentally handicapped adults are going to need somewhere to go. They have nowhere to go. A caseworker calls Megan and Cody. She said, there's someone I think you should meet. He could be a good fit for your home. His name is Harry. He's 76 years old, but he has the mental age of a five-year-old. Megan questioned how this could be a good fit. She has an eight year old, a five-year-old and a three-year-old. He was much, much older than anyone they had ever had in their home before, but Meghan trusted this caseworker and they set up a meeting. Okay, listen to this, John. This is what Megan writes. I remember walking into the office where Harry was sitting. He looked up at me and did the cutest chuckle laugh. She said, I smiled and laughed back. This sweet old man who was just four feet, eight inches tall.

John Bytheway: 04:34 Hmm.

Hank Smith: 04:35 From the parking lot. Megan calls Cody and says, I'm bringing Grandpa home. They learned a little bit more about Harry. And within just a month, they were packing up Harry's few belongings and were moving him from this very unpleasant place where he had been hidden away for so long and he settled easily into his new home. I would love to tell you all of this, John. He chuckles and giggles. He loves to have a good

time. He loves John Wayne movies. He wants his meals on time. He wants to be in bed precisely at 8:00 PM, and he wants to get up as early as possible. Says Megan tries to hold him off and says, please be quiet and wait until 6:30 AM to get dressed. So he has two clocks in view and his clothes in hand. When the clock hits 6:30, he now can begin to dress. He starts calling Megan and Cody, mom and dad and their parents, grandma and grandpa, just like the other kids in the house. As Megan and Cody learn more about him, they find out he literally has no family. Unlike these other clients, there's no history here. I guess Megan and Cody's children started asking, who is Harry gonna spend eternity with?

John Bytheway: 05:48 Wow. I think I know where you're going.

Hank Smith: 05:52 An idea was born as Megan called it a feeling. A feeling that Harry should be part of their family, their eternal family, John, there's a lot of details here, and things just start falling into place where Cody is spending time with a bishop who's interested, and then a lawyer friend who says, I think I could help with that. Finally, in March of 2015, at the age of 82, Harry is legally adopted into Megan and Cody's family. Megan asked him, do you know what it means to be adopted? Harry said, it means I don't have to worry anymore. John, one thing they decide is that Harry does not need to be baptized, but get this, he's going to need a name and a blessing. This is kind of an unusual event, isn't it? On a Sunday, Harry walked to the front of the chapel with the help of his father who had just celebrated his 38th birthday.

John Bytheway: 06:52 Hmm.

Hank Smith: 06:53 The Ward had embraced and then fallen in love with Harry, and they looked with joy on this occasion. He was surrounded by uncles, grandfathers, and friends, all of which were younger than him and his father gave him a name and a blessing.

John Bytheway: 07:11 Imagine that.

Hank Smith: 07:13 Then, like I told you at the beginning of the story, John, on May 2nd, 2015, with his mother and his father, his 12-year-old sister, his two brothers, his aunts, his uncles, his grandparents, even his great grandmother who is just three years older than him,

John Bytheway: 07:33 His great-grandmother.

Hank Smith:	07:36	Harry kneels at an altar and is sealed to his family, to his eternal family. Diane writes, this mentally handicapped orphan boy was sealed for time and all eternity to his new family. It was a story 82 years in the making. Beautiful. Diane writes, it warms my heart to hear that when he passes the computer and the picture of his family all dressed in white in the temple, he points at it, laughs and says, that was fun. Yes, Harry eternity is fun. John, Megan and Cody Searle adopted their son, Harry. John, what do you think?
John Bytheway:	08:19	I've never heard anything like that, but it makes me think about the importance of feeling connected to a family. Isn't that a great message?
Hank Smith:	08:27	Yeah.
John Bytheway:	08:27	Yeah.
Hank Smith:	08:28	And John, that's what we're talking about this week on followHIM is sections 129 through 132. Connections. Eternal connections.
John Bytheway:	08:36	Eternal. Yeah, and that's the only case I've ever heard of your parents being 30 years younger than you are. 40 years younger than you are. Great story.
Hank Smith:	08:46	John, like I said, that's what we're spending our time on our podcast this week. We are with Sister Brittany Chapman Nash, and wow, John does she know a lot. She's going to help us with a bit of a difficult topic, which is polygamy, plural marriage, in Section 132, and she does an incredible job with that. You can find it wherever you get your podcast. Then come back here next week. We'll do another followHIM Favorites.