

Trying the Word of God

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Please turn in the Book of Mormon to Alma, chapter 31. The prophet Alma went to the land of Antionum to teach the Zoramite people. Many of the Zoramites desired to worship God but were confused and discouraged. Alma wanted life to change for these good people. He believed that hearing and trying the word of God would be the best way for them to become happy and contented. He believed that the word could actually change the minds of people if they should try it. Alma, chapter 31, verse 5:

“And now, as the preaching of the word had a great tendency to lead the people to do that which was just—yea, it had had more powerful effect upon the minds of the people than the sword, or anything else, which had happened unto them—therefore Alma thought it was expedient that they should try the virtue of the word of God.”

The word of God could be another way of saying “scriptures.”

Alma used a seed to stand for the word. He taught the discouraged Zoramites that if they would “give place, that a seed may be planted in [their] heart[s]” (Alma 32:28), and then notice if good feelings went with it, they would begin to understand and life would be different for them.

Could that be a way of saying: “Decide, just for yourself, that you will make a place for scripture reading. And then, as you begin to do that, notice what feelings go with it”?

Alma then taught that “as the tree beginneth to grow” (Alma 32:37), it would need to be nourished with great care.

Could that be a way of saying: “Nourish the desire to read. Do some things that will keep you reading and help you to understand in new ways. Let others keep you excited and help you learn more from the scriptures so that the word will continue to grow”?

Alma taught that if this nourishing continued for a long time, there would be wonderful fruit. Please turn to Alma, chapter 32, verse 42:

“And because of your diligence and your faith and your patience with the word in nourishing it, that it may take root in you, behold, by and by ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, and which is white above all that is white, yea, and pure above all that is pure; and ye shall feast upon this fruit even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst.”

Could that be a way of saying: “When you continue reading, and doing the things that you read about, eventually life will change in a way that is difficult to even imagine. Your daily discouragements will be replaced with a knowledge of how much God loves you. You will feast and be filled”?

Every song, every scripture read, every story told, and all counsel given tonight is meant to encourage each of us to (1) make an individual decision to read the words of God, to understand more ways to (2) nourish and enjoy scripture reading, and to (3) recognize the good feelings and changes that eventually come with regular

scripture reading. In Alma's words, to (1) give place, (2) nourish, (3) feast.

[Sister Pearce's remarks ended with six young women reading from Alma 32:27–28, 42:]

“Behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith, yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you. ...

“Now, ... compare the word unto a seed. ... If ye give place, that a seed may be planted in your heart, behold, if it be a true seed, or a good seed, if ye do not cast it out by your unbelief, that ye will resist the Spirit of the Lord, behold, it will begin to swell ... ; and when you feel these swelling motions, ye will begin to say within yourselves —It must needs be that this is a good seed, or that the word is good, for it beginneth to enlarge my soul; yea, it beginneth to enlighten my understanding, ... it beginneth to be delicious to me. ...

“And because of your diligence and your faith and your patience with the word in nourishing it, that it may take root in you, behold, by and by ye shall pluck the fruit thereof, which is most precious, which is sweet above all that is sweet, ... and pure above all that is pure; and ye shall feast upon this fruit even until ye are filled, that ye hunger not, neither shall ye thirst.” In the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

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