

NT 26: Gethsemane and Crucifixion (Friday)

Monte F. Shelley, 24 July 2011

Quotes

- I used to be an atheist, but there are not enough holidays.
- Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
- Jesus partook of the most bitter cup without becoming the least bitter. (Neal A. Maxwell, *Ensign*, May 19s89)
- Never give up on anyone. And that includes not giving up on yourself. (Dieter F. Uchtdorf)

Codes: { } = JST; < > = NIV translation; [] = alternate translation

1. Why Jesus went to Jerusalem

³¹ [Jesus said to the apostles] we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be <fulfilled>. (Lk 18)

2. I tell you this beforehand, that ye may believe

¹⁸ He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

¹⁹ I tell you before it come, that, when it is come... ye may believe that I am {the Christ}. ... One of you shall betray me. (Jn 13:18+)

3. Gethsemane

³⁶ And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane, {which was a garden; and the disciples began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy, and to complain in their hearts, wondering if this be the Messiah. ³⁷ And Jesus knowing their hearts, said} to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. ³⁸ And he taketh with him, Peter, and James, and John, and began to be [astonished], and to be [depressed]; (Mk 14:32–33)

³⁹ [Jesus] ... <fell with his face to the ground>, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I [desire], but as thou wilt. (Mt 26)

⁴³ There appeared an angel ... strengthening him. ⁴⁴ And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and {he sweat as it were} great drops of blood falling down to the ground. (Lk 22:43–44)

⁷ He shall suffer temptations, and pain of body, hunger, thirst, and fatigue, even more than man can suffer, except it be unto death; for ... blood cometh from every pore, so great shall be his anguish for the wickedness and the abominations of his people. (Mos 3:7)

¹⁶ I, God, have suffered these things for all, that they might not suffer if they would repent; ¹⁷ But if... [not,] they must suffer even as I; ¹⁸ Which suffering caused myself, even God, ... to tremble because of pain, and to bleed at every pore, and to suffer both body and spirit—and would that I might not drink the bitter cup, and shrink—¹⁹ Nevertheless, ... I partook and finished my preparations unto the children of men. ²⁰ Wherefore, ... repent ... lest you suffer these punishments ... of which ... in the least degree you have tasted at the time I withdrew my Spirit. (D&C 19)

When Martin Harris lost the 116 pages, he cried “I have lost my soul.” Joseph said “I well remember that day of darkness. ... If a continual punishment, as severe as that which we experienced on that occasion, were to be inflicted upon the most wicked characters ... I should feel to pity their condition.” (I-NT #25)

4. Judas' betrayal and Christ's Arrest (Mt 26:47–56)

⁴⁷ Judas ..., came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders. ... ⁴⁸ He ... gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he. ... ⁴⁹ He came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. ... ⁵¹ [Peter] drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. ⁵² Then said Jesus ..., Put ... thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. ⁵³ Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall

presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled ...? ⁵⁵ ... [Then] said Jesus to the multitudes, <Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out> with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. ⁵⁶ But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

5. First “Trial” (Mt 26)

⁵⁹ The chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, <so that they could> put him to death; ⁶⁰ But found none. ... ⁶³ The high priest ... said ... I <charge you under oath> by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. ⁶⁴ Jesus saith ... Thou hast said: ... Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. ⁶⁵ Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? ... ⁶⁶ They ... said, He is guilty of death. ⁶⁷ Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,

6. Peter denied association with Jesus (Mt 26:69–73)

Peter said “I know not the man. And immediately the [rooster crowed]. ⁷⁵ And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

7. Jesus before Pilate (Mt 27)

¹ When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: ² And when they had bound him, they ... delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. ... ¹⁵ At *that* feast the governor was [accustomed] to release ... a prisoner. ... ¹⁷ Therefore ... Pilate said ... Whom will ye that I release ... Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? ... ²⁰ But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude ... [to] ask <for> Barabbas. ... ²⁴ When Pilate saw that he <was getting nowhere> ... he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person. ... ²⁵ Then answered all the people, ... His blood *be* on us, and on our children. ²⁶ Then released he Barabbas ... and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

8. Roman soldiers mock Jesus (Mt 27)

²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the [governor's house], and gathered unto him the whole band of *soldiers*. ²⁸ And they stripped him, and put on him a {purple} robe. ²⁹ And when they had [woven] a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a <staff> in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! ³⁰ And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. ³¹ And ... they took the robe off from him, and put his own <clothes> on him, and led him away to crucify *him*. ³² And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.

The criminal carried his own cross, or at any rate a part of it.

Hence, figuratively *to take, to take up or bear one's cross is to endure suffering, affliction, or shame*, like a criminal on his way to the place of crucifixion (Mt. 10:38; Lk 14:27). (I-NT 26)

9. “They crucified him” between two robbers (Mt 27)

³⁵ And they crucified him, ... ³⁸ Then were there two <robbers> crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

KJV *Thieves* [GR *lēstai*] = robber, insurrectionist, revolutionary

⁷ Barabbas ... *lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder. (Mk 15)

10. Soldiers divided his clothes (Mt 27; Ps 22:18)

³⁵ <They divided up his clothes by> casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

11. Three Temptations (Lk 23)

³⁵ The people stood <watching>. And the rulers also with them <sneered at> him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. ³⁶ And the soldiers also mocked him, coming ... and offering him <wine> vinegar,

³⁷ And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. ...

³⁹ And one of the <criminals> which were hanged <hurled insults at> him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

The three temptations at the beginning and end of Christ's ministry offered Him relief of physical needs, the power of a king, and a crowd of followers.

12. Father, forgive them (Lk 23:34)

³⁴ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do {(Meaning the soldiers who crucified him,)}

13. To day shalt thou be with me in paradise (Lk 23:43)

⁴² [One robber] said ... Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. ⁴³ And Jesus said ..., To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

14. Woman, behold thy son! (Jn 19:26–27)

²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! ²⁷ Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

15. My God, my God; why ...? (Mt 27:46–47; Ps 22:1)

⁴⁶ About the ninth hour [3:00 PM] Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying ... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

Bruce R. McConkie: All of the anguish, all of the sorrow, and all of the suffering of Gethsemane recurred during the final three hours on the cross, the hours when darkness covered the land. Truly there was no sorrow like unto his sorrow, and no anguish and pain like unto that which bore in with such intensity upon him. (*Mortal Messiah*, 4:232)

16. I thirst (Jn 19:28–29; Ps 69:21)

²⁸ Jesus knowing that all things were now <completed>, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. ²⁹ <A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus' lips.>

17. It is finished

³⁰ When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. (Jn 19:30)

⁵⁰ Jesus, when he had cried ... with a loud voice, {saying, *Father, it is finished, thy will is done*,} yielded up the ghost. (Mk 27:50)

18. Father ... I commit my spirit (Lk 23:46; Ps 31:5)

⁴⁶ When Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I <commit> my spirit: and ... he gave up the ghost.

¹⁸ No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. (Jn 10)

19. No bone broken (Jn 19:31–37; Ps 34:20; Ex 12:46; Ps 22:16)

³¹ That the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) [the Jews] <asked> Pilate that their legs might be broken, and <the bodies taken down>. ³² Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the ... [two robbers]. ³³ But when they ... saw that [Jesus] was dead already, they brake not his legs: ³⁴ But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and

water. ... ³⁶ These things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. ³⁷ And ... another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

20. Testimony of nature: darkness for 3 hours

⁴⁵ From the sixth hour [noon] there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour [3:00]. ... ⁵¹ and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; (Mt 27:45, 51) And the sun was darkened, (Lk 23:45)

21. The veil of the temple was rent or torn

⁵¹ the veil of the temple was <rent in two> from the top to the bottom (Mt 27:51; Lk 23:45)

22. Jesus was buried before the Sabbath

⁵⁰ Joseph, a <member of the> [Sanhedrin]... was a good man, and a just: (Lk 23)

³⁸ Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, <asked> Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him <permission>. He came ... and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And there came also Nicodemus. ... ⁴⁰ Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices. ... ⁴¹ In the garden [was] a new sepulcher <or tomb>. ... ⁴² There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand. (Jn 19:38–42)

⁵⁵ And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. ⁵⁶ And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment. (Lk 23)

23. This is my Gospel

¹³ This is the gospel which I have given unto you—that I came into the world to do the will of my Father, because my Father sent me. ¹⁴ And my Father sent me that I might be lifted up upon the cross; ... that as I have been lifted up by men even so should men be lifted up by the Father, to stand before me, to be judged of their works, whether they be good or whether they be evil— ... ¹⁹ And no unclean thing can enter into his kingdom; therefore nothing entereth into his rest save it be those who have washed their garments in my blood, because of their faith, and the repentance of all their sins, and their faithfulness unto the end. ²⁰ Now this is the commandment: Repent ... come unto me and be baptized in my name, that ye may be sanctified by the reception of the Holy Ghost, that ye may stand spotless before me at the last day. ²¹ Verily, verily, I say unto you, this is my gospel. (3 Ne 27:13–21)

24. Signs of Christ's offering

²⁵ [Thomas] said ... Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. (Jn 20:25)

Feel the prints of the nails in my hands and in my feet (3 Ne 11:14)

Behold the wounds which pierced my side, and also the prints of the nails in my hands and feet (D&C 6:37)

⁵¹ Then shall the Jews look upon me and say: What are these wounds in thine hands and in thy feet? ⁵² Then shall they know that I am the Lord; for I will say ... These wounds are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends. I am he who was lifted up. I am Jesus that was crucified. I am the Son of God. ⁵³ And then shall they weep because of their iniquities; then shall they lament because they persecuted their king. (D&C 45:51+)

¹⁵ Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. ¹⁶ Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands. (Isa 49:15–16)

25. Psalm 22

¹ *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* ... ² I cry <out by day, but you do not answer, by night,> and am not silent. ... ⁴ Our fathers trusted in thee: ... and thou didst deliver them. ... ⁶ But I am ... <scorned by> men, and despised. ... ⁷ All they that see me <mock me>: they <hurl insults>, they shake the head, *saying*, ⁸ He trusted on the LORD *that* he would deliver him: let him deliver him. ... ¹¹ Be not far from me; for trouble *is* near; for *there is* none to help. ... ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint. ... ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like [broken pottery]; and my tongue <sticks to the roof of my mouth>. ... ¹⁶ <A band of evil men has encircled me,>: they pierced my hands and my feet. ¹⁷ <I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me.> ¹⁸ They <divide> my garments among them, and cast lots <for my clothing>.

26. Isaiah 53 (□) = P-HIsa)

³ He is *despised* and *rejected* of men; *a man of sorrows*, and *acquainted with [sickness]*; <Like one from whom men hide their faces>; he was *despised*, and we *esteemed him not*. ⁴ ... He has *borne* our <infirmities> and *carried* our [pains]; yet we did esteem him [plagued], *smitten* of (Elohim), and *afflicted*. ⁵ But he was <pierced> for our transgressions, he was <crushed> for our iniquities; the chastisement upon him [*made us whole*]; and with his <wounds> *we are healed*. ⁶ All we, like sheep, ... have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquities of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, ... he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is [silent] ... ⁹ because *he had done no evil* <or violence>, neither was any deceit in his mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it [was the will of] the LORD to <crush> him; he [*made him suffer*]; ... ¹¹ *my righteous servant* will make many righteous; for he shall bear their iniquities. ... ¹² he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was *numbered* with the transgressors; and he *bore* the sins of many, and *made intercession* for the transgressors.

27. Nail in a sure place (Isa 22:21–23)

²¹ I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle <or sash>, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. ²² And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open. ²³ And I will fasten him *as a nail in a sure place*; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house.



28. Remembering Christ's sacrifice

Each week we are invited to the Lord's house to partake of the sacrament "in remembrance" Christ's body and blood which he "shed for them." Some people silently change "them" to "me" as they listen to the prayer. We also covenant "to always remember him that we may have his spirit to be with" us. (D&C 20:77, 79)

My son, be faithful in Christ; ... may Christ lift thee up, and may his sufferings and death, and the showing his body unto our fathers, and his mercy and long-suffering, and the hope of his glory and of eternal life, rest in your mind forever. (Moro 9:25)

29. Purpose of the atonement

²³ The Lord ... ²⁴ doeth not anything save it be for the benefit of the world; for he loveth the world, even that he layeth down his own life that he may draw all men unto him. (2 Ne 26:23–24)

¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. (Jn 15:13)

¹¹ He shall ... [suffer] pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind. ... ¹² He will take upon him death, that he may loose the bands of death which bind his people; and he will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy ... that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities. (Al 7:11–12)

Christ to Joseph in Liberty Jail: ⁷ If thou shouldst be cast ... into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; ... if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good. ⁸ The Son of Man hath descended below them all. Art thou greater than he? (D&C 122:7+)

⁹ The world, because of their iniquity, shall judge him to be a thing of naught; wherefore they scourge him, ... smite him, and ... spit upon him, and he suffereth it, because of his loving kindness and his long-suffering towards the children of men. ¹⁰ ... The God of Abraham, ... Isaac, and ... Jacob, yieldeth himself, ... as a man, into the hands of wicked men, to be lifted up, ... and to be crucified, ... and to be buried. ... Three days of darkness ... [will] be a sign given of his death unto those who should inhabit the isles of the sea. (1 Ne 19:9–10)

30. Death and hell

⁷ Our first parents were cut off both temporally and spiritually from the presence of the Lord; and thus ... became subjects to follow after their own will. ... ⁹ Therefore, ... the fall had brought upon all mankind a spiritual death as well as a temporal, that is, they were cut off from the presence of the Lord. (Alma 42:7–9)

¹⁰ Our God ... prepareth a way for our escape from the grasp of this awful monster; ... death and hell, which I call the death of the body, and also the death of the spirit. ¹¹ And because of ... the Holy One of Israel, this death ... which is the temporal, shall deliver up its dead; which death is the grave. ¹² And this ... spiritual death, shall deliver up its dead; which spiritual death is hell; wherefore, ... hell must deliver up its captive spirits, and the grave must deliver up its captive bodies. (2 Ne 9:10–12)

Quotes

Jeffrey R. Holland: In spite of life's tribulations, there is help for all of us on this journey. When Christ bids us to yield, to submit, to obey the Father, He knows how to help us do that. He has walked that way, asking us to do what He has done, but He has made it very much easier for our travel. He knows where the sharp stones and the stumbling blocks lie and where the thorns and the thistles are the most severe. He knows where the path is perilous, and He knows which way to go when the road forks and nightfall comes. He knows that because He has suffered "pains and afflictions and temptations of every kind ... that he may know ... how to succor his people according to their infirmities" (Alma 7:11–12). *To succor* means "to run to." ... Christ will run to us, and is running even now, if we will but receive the extended arm of His mercy.

When we stagger or stumble, He is there to steady and strengthen us. In the end He is there to save us, and for all this He gave His life. However dim our days may seem, they have been a lot darker for the Savior of the world. As a reminder of those days, Jesus has chosen, even in a resurrected, otherwise perfected body, to retain for the benefit of His disciples the wounds in His hands and in His feet and in His side—signs ... that painful things happen even to the pure and the perfect; signs ... that pain in this world is not evidence that God doesn't love you; signs ... that problems pass and happiness can be ours. ... It is the wounded

Christ who is the Captain of our souls, He who yet bears the scars of our forgiveness, the lesions of His love and humility, the torn flesh of obedience and sacrifice. These wounds are the principal way we are to recognize Him when He comes. He may invite us forward, as He has invited others, to see and to feel those marks. ... It was for us that a God was “despised and rejected ...; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,” that “he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed” (Isa. 53:3, 5). (*Ensign*, Jan 2003, 33)

Gordon B. Hinckley: My heart goes out to Peter. So many of us are so much like him. We pledge our loyalty; we affirm our determination to be of good courage; we declare, sometimes even publicly, that come what may we will do the right thing, that we will stand for the right cause, that we will be true to ourselves and to others. Then the pressures begin to build. Sometimes these are social pressures ... personal appetites ... [or] false ambitions. There is a weakening of the will. There is a softening of discipline. There is capitulation. And then there is remorse, followed by self-accusation and bitter tears of regret. ... I pray that you may draw comfort and resolution from the example of Peter, who, though he had walked daily with Jesus, in an hour of extremity momentarily denied the Lord and also the testimony which he carried in his own heart. But he rose above this and became a mighty defender and a powerful advocate. So, too, there is a way for any person to turn about and add his or her strength and faith to the strength and faith of others in building the kingdom of God” (*Ensign*, Mar. 1995, 2–4, 6).

Brad Wilcox: A BYU student once ... said, “I just don’t get grace. ... I know I need to do my best and then Jesus does the rest, but I can’t even do my best. ... I said, “Jesus doesn’t make *up* the difference. Jesus makes *all* the difference. ... Jesus ... paid our debt in full.” ... She said, “Right! Like I don’t have to do anything?” ... I said, “You have plenty to do. ... We will all be resurrected ... [and] go back to God’s presence. What is left to be determined ... is what kind of body we plan on being resurrected with and how comfortable we plan to be in God’s presence and how long we plan to stay.” ...

Christ’s arrangement with us is similar to a mom providing music lessons for her child. Mom pays the piano teacher. ... Because Mom pays the debt in full, she can turn to her child and ask for something. ... Practice! Does the child’s practice pay the piano teacher? No. Does the child’s practice repay Mom for paying the piano teacher? No. Practicing is how the child shows appreciation for Mom’s incredible gift. It is how he takes advantage of the amazing opportunity Mom is giving him to live his life at a higher level. Mom’s joy is found not in getting repaid but in seeing her gift used—seeing her child improve. And so she continues to call for practice, practice, practice.

If the child sees Mom’s requirement of practice as being too overbearing (“...None of the other kids have to practice! ...”), perhaps it is because he ... doesn’t see how much better his life could be. ... In the same way, because Jesus has paid justice, He can now ... say, “Follow me”, “Keep my commandments”. If we see His requirements as being way too much to ask (“... None of the other Christians have to pay tithing ... go on missions, serve in callings, and do temple work!”), maybe it is because we ... have not yet comprehended what He is trying to make of us. ...

I know a young man who just got out of prison—again. Each time two roads diverge ..., he takes the wrong one. ... When he was a teenager dealing with every bad habit a teenage boy can have, I said to his father, “We need to get him to EFY.” ... How

long do you think he lasted? ... By the end of the first day he called his mother and said, “Get me out of here!” Heaven will not be heaven for those who have not chosen to be heavenly.

In the past I ... [imagined] the final judgment would be ... something like this: Jesus standing there with a clipboard and Brad standing ... nervously looking at Jesus. Jesus ... says, “... You missed it by two points.” Brad begs Jesus, “Please. ... There have to be two points you can squeeze out of that essay.” ... But ... the more I understand this wonderful *plan of redemption*, the more I realize that in the final judgment it will *not* be the unrepentant sinner begging Jesus, “Let me stay.” No, he will probably be saying, “Get me out of here!” Knowing Christ’s character, I believe that if anyone is going to be begging ..., it would probably be Jesus begging the unrepentant sinner, “Please, choose to stay. Please, use my Atonement—not just to be cleansed but to be changed so that you *want* to stay.”

The miracle of the Atonement is not just that we can go home but that—miraculously—we can feel at home there. ... Think of your friends and family members who have chosen to live without faith and without repentance. They don’t want to change. They are not trying to abandon sin and become comfortable with God. Rather, they are trying to abandon God and become comfortable with sin. If Jesus did not require covenants and bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost, then there would be no way to change. We would be left forever with only willpower, with no access to His power. If Jesus did not require endurance to the end, then there would be no internalization of those changes. ... They would forever be surface and cosmetic rather than sinking inside us and becoming ... part of who we are. Put simply, if Jesus didn’t require practice, then we would never become pianists. ... When a young pianist hits a wrong note, we don’t say he is not worthy to keep practicing. We don’t expect him to be flawless. We just expect him to keep trying. Perfection may be his ultimate goal, but for now we can be content with progress in the right direction. ...

Too many are giving up on the Church because they are tired of constantly feeling like they are falling short. They have tried in the past, but they always feel like they are just not good enough. ... They say, “I can’t do this Mormon thing. I’ve tried, and the expectations are just way too high.” So they quit. ... [They] don’t understand grace. ... There should never be just two options: perfection or giving up. When learning the piano, are the only options performing at Carnegie Hall or quitting? No. Growth and development take time. Learning takes time. When we understand grace, we understand that God is long-suffering, that change is a process. ... When we understand grace, we can ... “continue in patience until [we] are perfected” (D&C 67:13). ... Christ is not waiting at the finish line once we have done “all we can do”. He is with us every step of the way. ... “The Savior’s gift of grace to us is not necessarily limited in time to ‘after’ all we can do. We may receive his grace before, during and after the time when we expend our own efforts.” So grace is not a booster engine that kicks in once our fuel supply is exhausted. Rather, it is our constant energy source. It is not the light at the end of the tunnel but the light that moves us through the tunnel. Grace is not achieved somewhere down the road. It is received right here and right now. ... [The pioneers] sang: *Come, come, ye Saints, no toil nor labor fear; But with joy wend your way. Though hard to you this journey may appear, Grace shall be as your day.* ... As sure as each brand-new day, grace—the enabling power of Jesus Christ—is constant. Faithful pioneers knew they were not alone. The task ahead of them was never as great as the power behind them. (BYU Devotional, 12 July 2011; <http://speeches.byu.edu>)