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Mosiah 9:39-41

9:39 And now, as ye are desirous to come into the fold of God, and to be called his people, and are willing to bear one another's burdens, that they may be light;

9:40 Yea, and are willing to mourn with those that mourn; yea, and comfort those that stand in need of comfort, and to stand as witnesses of God at all times, and in all things, and in all places that ye may be in, even until death, that ye may be redeemed of God, and be numbered with those of the first resurrection, that ye may have eternal life:

9:41 Now I say unto you, If this be the desire of your hearts, what have you against being baptized in the name of the Lord, as a witness before him that ye have entered into a covenant with him that ye will serve him and keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?

As much as we would like to believe it does, baptism does not transform us into people able to take up residence in God's Holy Kingdom. We must change and to affect that change we need two things. The ways of God within our hearts that we might know the path of growth we need to walk and a gathering of people organized to teach us and walk with us on that path. Baptism endows us with both. One is Holy Spirit. The other is the Church. This composition deals with second: The Church.

As a minister for God I want to believe that my ministry is more than just a pointless effort, but what is it I am trying to achieve. To say it another way, what attributes of a Church can cause its people to become acceptable before God? What does it look like and how does it feel? The Church is supposed to be the answer to that question and I believe that the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 is the very pattern we seek. By opening our eyes and hearts to the pattern given I believe we can become a Church able to accomplish what God designed us to do.

It is a rather lengthy essay so I broke it up into digestible sections that we might more easily ponder each concept offered. This was the purpose of my design, but oddly it transformed the long-winded prose into a rather acceptable class or group discussion. My hope is that many of you will use it as just that. To encourage that, at the end of each section is a "button" that will produce a printable PDF copy.

The format of the essay is easy but important. I target a passage and then expand on its meaning and its application to our lives. Those targeted verses or passages will be **highlighted in bold font**, sometimes more than once in a given area. If this is your first time reading my work I would suggest that you read my blogs deal with My Sources and My Mission.

Enjoy
FRED

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