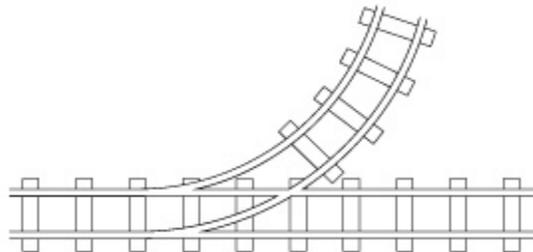


September 21, 2003

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Next Weeks Lesson: "Be Ye Reconciled to God" ([2 Corinthians](#))

Today's Lesson: "Keep the Ordinances, As I Delivered Them" ([1 Corinthians 11-16](#))



Elder Gordon B. Hinckley related the following experience:

"Many years ago I worked in the head office of one of our railroads. One day I received a telephone call from my counterpart in Newark, New Jersey, who said that a passenger train had arrived without its baggage car. The patrons were angry.

"We discovered that the train had been properly made up in Oakland, California, and properly delivered to St. Louis, from which station it was to be carried to its destination on the east coast. But in the St. Louis yards, a thoughtless switchman had moved a piece of steel just three inches. That piece of steel was a switch point, and the car that should have been in Newark, New Jersey, was in New Orleans, Louisiana, thirteen hundred miles away" (in Conference Report, Oct. 1972, 106-7; or [Ensign, Jan. 1973, 91](#)).

How could such a seemingly small change have such a significant effect on the location of the train? What are some potential switch points in our lives?

The last chapters of Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians address four doctrinal switch points where the Corinthians had departed from the truth. As we study Paul's teachings in these chapters, we can strengthen our commitment to follow the path of righteousness that will lead to our Father in Heaven.

1. Husbands' and wives' relationships with each other and with the Lord. ([1 Corinthians 11:1-3](#), [1 Corinthians 11:11-12](#))

A. [1 Corinthians 7:1-2](#) What is Paul saying in these two verses?

B. [1 Corinthians 7:3](#) Webster's defines "benevolence" as "desire to do good to others; goodwill; charity; an act of kindness; a charitable gift." How could this

definition apply to sexual conduct in the bonds of marriage?



- C. [1 Corinthians 7:5](#) How do married couples “defraud” each other?
- D. [1 Corinthians 7:9-14](#) These verses give some good advice to widowed and part-member members. What is that advice?

- E. [1 Corinthians 11:3](#) Why is this “partnership with Christ so vital in a marriage?
- F. What does it mean that “neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord”? ([1 Corinthians 11:11](#)). Why is the relationship of husband and wife so important in the kingdom of God? What does this teach us about how husbands and wives should treat each other?

President Marion G. Romney taught: “[A husband and wife] should be one in harmony, respect, and mutual consideration. Neither should plan or follow an independent course of action. They should consult, pray, and decide together. ... Remember that neither the wife nor the husband is the slave of the other. Husbands and wives are equal partners” (“[In the Image of God,](#)” *Ensign*, Mar. 1978, 2, 4).

2. The purpose of the sacrament. ([1 Corinthians 11:17-29](#))

Many of the Saints in Corinth were not observing the purpose of the sacrament service. Instead of focusing on the sacrament ordinance, they were contending with each other and eating and drinking to excess ([1 Corinthians 11:18-22](#)).



- A. What is the primary purpose of sacrament meeting? ([1 Corinthians 11:20](#), footnote 20b, which provides the Joseph Smith Translation of this verse: “Is it not to eat the Lord’s supper?”)



Elder Jeffrey R. Holland taught: “With so very much at stake, [the sacrament] should be taken more seriously than it sometimes is. It should be a powerful, reverent, reflective moment. It should encourage spiritual feelings and impressions. As such it should not be rushed. It is not something to ‘get over’ so that the real purpose of a sacrament meeting can be pursued. This *is* the real purpose of the meeting” (in Conference Report, Oct. 1995, 89; or [Ensign](#), Nov. 1995, 68).

- B. According to Paul, what are the purposes of the sacrament? ([1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#); [Luke 22:19-20](#)) How can we better keep our minds and hearts focused

on Jesus as we partake of the sacrament?

- C. What did Paul teach about the importance of partaking of the sacrament worthily? ([1 Corinthians 11:27-29](#)) What does it mean to partake of the sacrament unworthily? Why is examining our worthiness an important part of the sacrament?
- D. How has partaking of the sacrament blessed you? How can we make this ordinance more meaningful in our lives?

How can our attitude toward the sacrament be a switch point in our lives?

3. The importance of all spiritual gifts. ([1 Corinthians 12-14](#))

Paul's letter suggests that the Saints in Corinth may have placed too much importance on the gift of tongues ([1 Corinthians 14:2-14](#), [1 Corinthians 14:27-28](#)). In chapters 12-14, Paul explains that all the gifts of the Spirit are important, but that the Saints should seek gifts that will be for the benefit of all.



- A. What are spiritual gifts? (Spiritual blessings or abilities given through the Holy Ghost. See [1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#); [D&C 46:11](#).) Why does God give spiritual gifts? ([D&C 46:26](#))
- B. What gifts of the Spirit have you experienced or observed? ([1 Corinthians 12:8-10](#), [Moroni 10:8-17](#), [D&C 46:13-25](#)) How have these gifts blessed you or others?
- C. Why do you think Paul compared the members of the Church to different parts of the body? ([1 Corinthians 12:12-25](#)) How can we apply this comparison to the different gifts of the Spirit?
- D. The scriptures counsel us to seek spiritual gifts ([1 Corinthians 12:31](#); [D&C 46:8](#)). What should be our reasons for seeking spiritual gifts? ([1 Corinthians 14:12](#); [D&C 46:9](#))
- E. What did Paul teach is the greatest of all spiritual gifts? ([1 Corinthians 13](#)) Why is charity more important than any other spiritual gift? ([1 Corinthians 13:1-3](#), [1 Corinthians 13:8-13](#))
- F. How have you been blessed by another person who has shown charity toward you? How can we develop greater charity? ([Moroni 7:44-48](#))

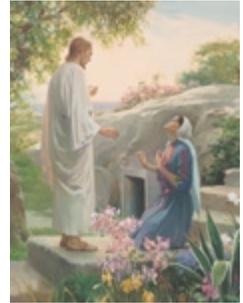
How can charity act as a switch point in our lives?

4. The Resurrection and the degrees of glory. ([1 Corinthians 15](#))

Many of the Corinthians had begun to dispute the reality of the Resurrection ([1 Corinthians 15:12](#)).

A. What witnesses of the Resurrection did Paul cite? ([1 Corinthians 15:5-8](#)) Why do you think Paul cited so many witnesses of the Resurrection? ([2 Corinthians 13:1](#)) Why are witnesses of the Resurrection important to you?

B. What did Paul teach about the relationship between the Fall of Adam and the Resurrection? ([1 Corinthians 15:20-23](#))



C. How did Paul use the doctrine of baptism for the dead to teach about the Resurrection? ([1 Corinthians 15:29](#))

D. What did Paul teach about the kingdoms of glory? ([1 Corinthians 15:35-44](#), [D&C 88:27-32](#)) How does your

knowledge of the Resurrection and the kingdoms of glory influence the way you live?

What are some switch points—attitudes and actions in your own lives that, if followed, could change the direction of your lives? I admonish you to choose directions that will positively affect your lives.