Lesson 42
3 Nephi 27–30, 4 Nephi

3 Nephi 27

Verse 6: What does it mean to take Christ’s name upon us? (What sermon in the book of Mormon has the most to say about that?) When we are told to endure to the end, what are we to endure?

Verse 7: How do we do all that we do in Christ’s name? It is easy to see how we can pray in his name, offer blessings in his name, or perform ordinances in his name, but what about other things? How do I teach my children in his name? How do I execute my profession in his name? How do I shop for groceries in his name? Or should we not take the word all quite so literally?

Verse 13ff.: Is the Savior giving a definition of the gospel in these verses? Though at first glance it might appear so, perhaps not. Of course, we don’t know what the Nephite word translated “gospel” was, so we don’t know any more about its meaning than we can deduce from the English word, but we do know about the English word and about the Greek word used by those who wrote the New Testament.

The English and Greek words both originally meant “to preach the good news.” For example, in Matthew 2:10, the phrase translated “I bring you good tidings” could also
have been translated “I bring you the gospel.” (It is a verb rather than a noun in this verse, but the meaning is the same.) The word gospel wasn’t used to denote a set of doctrines in New Testament times or in its first uses in English. Only later (perhaps about 1200) did the word come to be identified with the accounts of Christ’s ministry (the four Gospels), and only later than that did it come to refer to the doctrinal content of Christian preaching. It seems most likely, therefore, that in the Book of Mormon the word gospel has the older meaning: preaching glad tidings. If that’s true, we could paraphrase the first part of the verse like this:

*Behold I have preached my glad tidings to you, and these are the glad tidings I have preached to you...*

Notice the first element of the good news: Christ came into the world to do the will of his Father, and he did so because his Father sent him. How is that good news?

We might expect Jesus to say something like, “I came into the world to do the will of my Father in order to make salvation available to all.” What is important about the reason he gives for his mission?

**Verse 14:** The phrase “lifted up” has an obvious literal meaning in reference to the crucifixion. But what else might it say to us? For example, is any analogy intended between Christ being lifted up on the cross and the way in which the Father will lift us up? Does this verse have anything to do with verses that tell us we must take up our cross (e.g., Matthew 16:24; Mark 8:34; 10:21; Luke 9:23;
Galatians 6:12; Jacob 1:8; Alma 39:9; 3 Nephi 12:30; and D&C 23:6; 56:2; 112:14)?

What does the phrase “that I might draw all men unto me” imply? Why use the word *draw*?

**Verse 15:** What does this verse tell us about what Jesus means when he says he will “draw all men” unto him?

**Verse 16:** What does it mean to say that those who repent and are baptized will be filled? Does it have to do with having our hunger satisfied? Or are we missing something that is given with repentance and baptism?

**Verse 17:** How does this verse square with latter-day revelation to the effect that the punishment of the wicked is not eternal burnings? (See D&C 19:6ff.)

**Verse 19:** Why does Christ use the metaphor of washing our garments in his blood? If you give it any thought at all, it is a fairly gruesome image. What’s the point of that image? What does it mean to say they have washed their garments in his blood “because of their faith”?

**Verse 20:** Is this the only commandment? If not, why does Jesus use such a specific form, *this*?

Notice that the commandment has three parts: “repent . . . and come to me and be baptized.” Of what are we to repent? How do we go to him?

Christ gives the purpose of his commandment: “that ye may be sanctified.” Does the word *sanctified* here have the same meaning that it has in our contemporary doctrinal discussions? How would you justify your answer?
The Lord says that our sanctification takes place by the Holy Ghost. Does that have something to do with the gift of the Holy Ghost? If so, what? How will being sanctified by the Holy Ghost make it possible for us to stand spotless before him at the last day? What last day is he referring to? The judgment day? The day of a follower’s death?

**Verse 21:** What is his gospel? What is the pleasing message he has delivered? What works do we see Christ do in the scriptures? How do we do those works?

**Verse 22:** How is “lifted up” being used here?

3 Nephi 28

**Verses 1–32:** Why does the Book of Mormon tell us this story—including the story of those who ask to come to his kingdom speedily as well as the story of the Three Nephites?

3 Nephi 29

**Verse 1:** Does “these sayings” refer to what Mormon has just said, to the sermons Christ has just preached among the Nephites, or to the entire Book of Mormon? How would we decide?

In what sense was the covenant the Lord made with the Israelites “already beginning to be fulfilled” when the Book of Mormon was revealed?

**Verse 2ff.:** How does the book of Mormon serve as a warning to us? How does it serve as a warning to the Gentiles? (Who are the Gentiles?)
4 Nephi

Verse 3: What does it mean that the Nephites had all things in common?

How is it that having all things in common makes them all free?

How does that make them all partakers of the heavenly gift? What is the heavenly gift?

Does this verse mean that those who do not have all things in common are not partakers of the heavenly gift?

Verse 5: What do the great and marvelous works they did have to do with the gospel Jesus preached?

Verse 10: What made these people “fair and delightsome”?

Verse 11: Why is marriage mentioned here?

Verses 15–18: We often say “nobody’s perfect,” but isn’t this a record of a perfect people?

Verse 20: What does the word Lamanite mean to the Nephites at this point? What other meanings has it had?

Verses 23–26: What seems to be the cause of the failure of this society? In what ways do we imitate the behavior described here? How can we avoid that behavior?

Verse 36: Is it significant that the Lamanites call those among the Nephites by various names?

Verse 43: The primary meaning of the word vain is “useless.” In what sense have these people become useless? How is it that love of riches, failure to have things in common, the creation of classes, and so on, make us useless?