Lesson 35
Doctrine and Covenants 4:3–7; 18:10–16; 52:40; 81:5–6; and 138:58

The historical relevance to this lesson is the experience and rescue of the Martin and Willie handcart companies. If you aren’t familiar with that story, use the materials available to you and read about it. As you read the scriptures for this week, ask yourself what they have to do with that event. As you think about that event, recall this from President Hinckley:

Stories of the beleaguered Saints and of their suffering and death will be repeated again and again. . . . Stories of their rescue need to be repeated again and again. They speak of the very essence of the gospel of Jesus Christ. (October Conference, 1996; Ensign, Nov. 1996, p. 86)

President Hinckley might say the same thing or something very similar about many of the events of early Church history. Why do we need to repeat those stories?

A friend of mine once wrote a short tongue-in-cheek essay about the stupid things his ancestors (who were in the Willie and Martin companies) did. The point was to wonder why we glorify the Willie and Martin handcart companies when their story is a story of what happens when people make bad choices. If we look at the facts of
the story without romanticizing them, why is it and the other stories like it important to us?

What if we don’t have pioneer ancestors? Is it still important to us? How might it be?

**Doctrine and Covenants 4**

**Verse 3:** Why is having the desire to serve God enough to make us called to the work? What is “the work”?

**Verse 4:** Why is the work of the gospel often compared to reaping a field? How does the image in this section compare to other, related images in the scriptures? For example, how does it compare to the parable of the sower (Mark 4:3–8) or the parable of the seed growing secretly (Mark 4:26–29)?

D&C 88:15 says that the spirit and the body of man are the soul. Is that the definition that applies here? If so, what does this verse promise? If not, what does the word *soul* mean here?

**Verse 5:** Why does this verse speak of both charity and love? In most cases in scripture, they mean the same thing. Are they distinct things here or is the Lord repeating the same thing in different ways in order to emphasize it? If they are distinct things, explain that distinction.

What does it mean to have one’s eye single to the glory of God? When is my eye not single to his glory? Compare this qualification with the promise made in D&C 88:67.

**Verse 6:** As we did with D&C 4 (Lesson 11), compare this list to 2 Peter 1:5–9. What does that comparison tell us about the qualifications for the work and about the goal of
the work? Why do you think the Doctrine and Covenants implicitly refers to these verses in 2 Peter so often?

**Verse 7:** How do you square this verse with the fact that all of us have had the experience of asking and not receiving what we asked for? What does it mean to knock and to have it opened? In other words, what is promised and how do we obtain that promise?

**Doctrine and Covenants 18**

What do these verses have to do with things like the rescue of the handcart companies?

**Verse 10:** How do you think we should understand the word *soul* here, the same as in D&C 4:3 or D&C 88:15?

Why is the worth of souls great in God’s sight?

**Verse 11:** This verse begins with the word *for*, as if what follows explains what was said in the previous verse. Does it explain that verse or does verse 10 explain verse 11?

Why is Jesus called by his title *Redeemer* in this verse? Why use that title here rather than another?

Why does this say “suffered death in the flesh” rather than “suffered death”? Does “suffered the pain of all men” mean “suffered all the pain of each person” or does it mean “suffered the pains that all men suffer”? How would you justify your answer?

Does Christ’s behavior when he suffered in the garden and on the cross give us a type of what our relation to our fellow human beings should be? Can you explain your answer?
Verse 12: We often speak of Jesus’s resurrection making possible our resurrection. Here, however, we are taught that his resurrection makes possible our return to the Savior. What is the connection between these two teachings? Does the necessity of resurrection tell us anything about why ministering to the poor and the afflicted is so important in the gospel?

Verse 13: If we understand the word soul to mean “body and spirit,” how do we repent bodily?

Verse 14: How do we cry repentance to others?

Doctrine and Covenants 52

Verse 40: In what ways did Christ remember the poor, the needy, the sick, and the afflicted?

The word disciple and discipline have the same verb at their root, meaning “to learn” or “to understand.” As a noun, the word first meant “someone who puts his mind to something.” What does it mean that we are the disciples of Christ? How does helping those who are poor, needy, sick, or afflicted demonstrate our discipleship?

Doctrine and Covenants 81

Verses 5–6: How are being faithful, standing in our appointed offices, and succoring the weak parallel to each other? What do these things have to do with being faithful to the end?

Doctrine and Covenants 138

Verse 58: What does this verse have to do with the theme of our lesson?